

# PROVINCIAL CIRCULAR

## SALESIAN PROVINCE OF HYDERABAD



INH/TVB/CIR 08/2016

August 2016

### On Leadership

Traditionally leadership was understood as a position of authority and a leader as someone who had to command and exercise control over his subjects. We call it the Vertical Leadership or Pyramidal Structure of hierarchy, where the leader is at the top and the rest listen to the leader. In modern times, the understanding of leadership has undergone drastic changes both in the secular and religious circles. Particularly in the post-Vatican era, the vertical structure of leadership has collapsed to a great extent and a different sort of understanding is slowly taking roots.

### Leading by Example

During our planning for the year, as a province we collectively felt 'leadership' as one of the most pressing needs to be addressed. There can be several things that can be said when speaking about leadership and leaders. However, I would like to focus on certain key elements of leadership bearing in mind our context. Central among these points is the person of the leader. Leadership is at times described as 'that process, where an individual influences an organized group to attain a common goal.' That is why we think of leadership not as a title or position, but as the personal ability to inspire transformation in a given group. The leader sets the tone, not by his position or authority, but by his personality. He brings about changes not merely by his words but primarily by his very own example. Jesus during his life time on this earth, did not go about claiming authority and exhorting changes citing himself as the 'son of God', rather everywhere He went, people 'felt' his presence. Encountering His exemplary presence, and with the added fervor of his words, people began to change, bringing on a transformation wherever they were or went.

I had a very humbling experience of what it means to lead by example, some years ago during my teaching days at Karunapuram. It was the beginning of the scholastic year, a time when all the confreres start gauging the other. There was one young newly professed confrere, who found it difficult to relate with the staff and the staff found it difficult to relate with him. He

never wished the staff or approached them. He always avoided all the members of the staff. As the Dean I was delegated, by the staff to enter into a fraternal dialogue with this young Salesian, to find out the reason for his strange behaviour and if possible ask him to correct the same. As I dared to spend some time with him, moving away from my prejudices, I was in for a revision of my basics! On asking for an explanation of his odd behaviour, he was quite surprised. He blurted out that it was actually the behaviour of the staff which was odd! He complained, "You elders, so called leaders don't wish me. I showed myself several times around, waiting for you to wish me, but none of you cared, none of you wished. I felt unwanted." I retorted, still with the pyramidal structure in mind, "If you would have wished first, they would have naturally responded."

The young Salesian then proceeded to explain that in his culture, it was the Elder who wishes the younger. The first step is always taken by the elder as a sign of his attitude of care, of love and of interest towards the younger ones. That was when a series of images flooded my mind: the Good Shepherd who goes in search of the lost sheep; young Johnny Bosco, who exclaimed, "When I become a Priest, I will be the first to wish children and approach young people." I was also reminded of the short novel of Herman Hesse, *Journey to the East*, a good read about servant leadership. Our Constitutions too, talk about the Rector's fundamental duty as service to the confreres (C.172).

### **To lead is to be consciously involved**

Asserting that primary aspect of leadership, let me highlight certain related aspects. First of all, a leader is actively involved in the life of the community. Being a witness does not mean being a passive spectator. Neither is a leader called to give example in the confines of his room or merely to some people. In a community when a leader does not lead, everyone leads - in different directions! It is true that when a leader does not fulfill his role of guiding and animating, everyone else leads, and sooner or later the community disintegrates. Without good leadership, any group is most likely to degenerate into senseless conflict, which often reeks of individualism. It is a natural consequence of the fact that we see things in different ways and lean toward different solutions. It may not involve malice or sabotage. Therefore a genuine leader helps in facilitating a convergence of energies and thoughts. Inspired by love and moved by the needs of our brethren, he actually helps in producing synergy. He facilitates a process by which each individual feels that his contribution is necessary and worthwhile yet without losing the focus, the vision.

### **The clarity of vision**

The leader is to have this vision, clear for himself as well as for the community. Without a direction in which to move, we may find ourselves moving in circles - doing much but achieving little. For us, this is one way of leading by example: having a clear vision ourselves and possessing the ability to help others focus their individual energies in realizing that vision. The leader thus ensures that we move ahead in the right direction, collectively fulfilling our roles in the common mission. In offering the clarity of vision for the community and its mission, the leader becomes the soul of the community. He coordinates and blends together the different dimensions and sectors of activity in a place so as to make all our efforts meaningful and more effective. In doing so he cannot afford to get so immersed in one or the other activity of the mission that he loses sight of the overall scenario. The leader is thus not merely a facilitator of convergence but is himself a unifying reference for everyone and everything in the community.

### **The importance of physical presence**

For this to happen one of the concrete requirements is the actual physical presence of the leader in the community (R. 172). To offer guidance and direction, one must belong to the community, be aware of its dynamics, be immersed in the daily life of its members and most importantly know each confrere at an in-depth personal level. This is what makes him the 'father' of the family. He is perceived neither as a visitor nor an interference. He is one whom anyone can approach for assistance or clarification just as he can approach anyone else in the community. His role neither threatens anybody nor tolerates anything.

Dear confreres, let this exhortation of leading by example, being meaningfully involved with a clear vision, resonate in our hearts and minds. May it become concrete in our efforts. Each of us, whether rectors of canonically erected communities or not, is called to lead - lead young people, lead children who are entrusted to our care, lead the oppressed and marginalized of the society, lead the faith-filled. Though the vestiges of vertical leadership still plague our structures, we have resplendent models who have shown in life what genuine and exemplary leaders can do solely relying on their spiritual and moral authority. Jesus Himself is the best model we can look up to. Emulating Him let each one of us take the initiative and live by these values of genuine leadership.

## **Congratulations**

### **Installation of the New Provincial**

We congratulate Fr Felix Fernandez on his installation as the new provincial of the Salesian Province of St. Joseph Vaz, Panjim. He took charge on 1 August 2016, during the solemn Holy Eucharist, presided over by Rev. Fr Ivo Coelho, the General Councillor for Formation and Rev. Fr Maria Arokiam Kanaga, the Regional Superior. We wish him God's graces and the constant intercession of Mother Mary, to guide the province and to do God's will. At this moment we also congratulate and thank Fr Ian Figueiredo for his inspiring leadership the last six years.

## **Upcoming events**

### **Past Pupils' meet**

There will be a meeting of the National Past Pupils Council at our Provincial House from 12 to 14 August 2016. On the occasion of the Silver Jubilee of the birth of our Province, we are organizing a Past Pupils' Congress on 13 August at Don Bosco Navajeevan Ramanthapur, from 6 pm to 9.30 pm. It is a joyous occasion to revive and revamp the past pupils movement in our province. It will also be an opportunity to make our alumni, partners, promoters and share-holders of our work for the poor and abandoned young. Kindly encourage the past pupils, whom you are in touch with to contact Fr Vice Provincial and participate in this event.

### **South Asia Formation Commission Meet**

This year the SAFC (South Asia Formation Commission) meeting is being held at our Provincial House. The meeting is from 16 to 20 August. Fr Ivo Coelho, SDB the General Councillor for Formation will be present to animate the meeting. We extend a hearty welcome to him as he visits the Province.

### **Head Masters' Meet and Administrators' meet**

On 21 August we have the Head Masters' Meet and on 22 and 23 August we have the Administrators' meet. I request all the Head Masters, Principals and Administrators to be present for these meetings.

### **Conclusion of the Marian Month and Feast of the Assumption**

From 15 July we commenced the Marian month, a time we specially remember and venerate our Blessed Mother in our institutions. I trust each community is already preparing to give a

fitting conclusion to the month long events held in view of the great feast of the Assumption. May Mary, our mother continue to guide and protect us.

### **Death anniversary of Fr John Varricatt and Fr Benjamin Puthota**

On 21 August we commemorate the death anniversary of Fr John Varricatt, the first confrere to pass on to his eternal reward from our Province. On 28 August we remember Fr Benjamin Puthota, the first provincial of our province who was also one of the pioneers who brought the Salesian Ministry to our land, way back in 1964. Please do remember to pray for these great Salesians; Let us also be inspired by their loving example of religious fidelity and missionary zeal.

### **Information**

#### **Fr Rajesh Salagala returns to the Province**

Fr Rajesh Salagala, a missionary from our province to the province of Hungary has returned to our province permanently. We welcome him back whole heartedly and wish him all the best for his ministry in our province. We also assure him of our fraternal support and constant love. He will render his service as administrator and assistant parish priest at Don Bosco Mission, PT Paruru.

#### **Fr Kalyan Kumar Yandava transferred to Colle Don Bosco, Turin**

Fr Kalyan Kumar Yandava has been transferred to the Province of Piedmont, Italy (ICP) by the request of the Rector Major. He will be helping in the hospitality at Colle Don Bosco, the birthplace of Don Bosco. We wish him all the best for this new ministry of his and promise him our fraternal support.

#### **Fr Kalukula Rajesh transferred to St. Michael's Boys Home Guntur**

Fr Kalukula Rajesh is transferred to St. Michael's Boys Home, Guntur. He will be shouldering administration and other responsibilities there. I wish him all the best and assure him of our fraternal support.

#### **Project Soft Copies to the B.S.K. office**

As proposed in the Leaders' meet, I request all the confreres who are forwarding the projects to the B.S.K. office, to send also a soft copy of the same. This will facilitate the B.S.K. office to make necessary changes as required by the agencies and forward the same to them.

### **Change of the name of the Silchar Province**

Our Rector Major Rev. Fr. Angel Fernandez has authorized the change of the name of the Province of Silchar. Henceforth, it will be called as St. John Paul II, Province of Shillong.

### **One more group in the Salesian Family**

Rev. Fr. Angel Fernandez, our Rector Major has sent out a declaration recognizing the FRATERNITA' DI CONTEMPLAZIONE DI MARIA DI NAZARETH, founded in Uruguay, as a new member of the Salesian Family. Contemplation is their specific mission and contribution in the Salesian Family.

### **Condolences and Prayers**

*When a Salesian yields up his life while working for souls, the congregation has registered a great triumph.* Fr Vallicherry Mathew (VG) sdb of the Province of Sacred Heart of Jesus (INK), Bangalore, passed away on 9 July 2016. Br E. C. Joseph sdb of the Province of St. Joseph Vaz (INP), Panjim, passed on from this life to the joy of heaven, on 10 July 2016. We extend our condolences to Fr Thonikuzhiyil Mathew, Provincial of Bangalore and to Fr Felix Fernandez the provincial of Panjim and the confreres of these Provinces at the loss of these veteran Salesians. Through the mercy of God, may they rest in peace.

We are deeply saddened and shocked at the unexpected and sudden death of Fr. Joffie Puthuva, Rector of Don Bosco, Sachivothampuram (Kerala). He died in a bike accident on 3 August 2016. We offer our sincere condolences to Fr Thonikuzhiyil Mathew, Provincial of Bangalore and the confreres of the Bangalore Province.

### **Saints for the Month**

#### **Blessed Augustus Czartoryski - August 2**

Prince Augustus Czartoryski, was a Prince of the Polish Royal Czartoryski Family. He was born in Paris during the family's exile on 2 August, 1858. Augustus was a sickly child and he spent much of his youth being shuttled to various places for his health. He was accompanied and tutored by a Polish Priest, Fr Raphael Kalinowski.

His father Prince Ladislaus wanted his son Augustus pursue a diplomatic career, but the young prince Augustus felt his calling was to be a priest. Encouraged by Pope Leo XIII, he joined the

Salesians with the blessing of Don Bosco in the year 1887. He studied philosophy and theology but his health continued to decline. In 1892 he was ordained a priest, though his family discouraged this and did not attend the ordination ceremony. After a year, on 8 April, 1893, he died in Alassio, Italy, of tuberculosis at the age of 34. His characteristic virtues as a Salesian were humility, obedience and the spirit of poverty.

### **Bl. Maria Troncati - August 25**

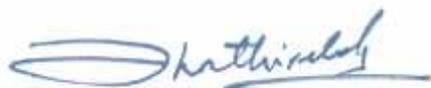
Blessed Maria Troncati was born in Cortegno Golgi (Brescia) on 16 February, 1883. She grew up happy and hardworking in her numerous family, dividing her time between the farm and caring for her little brothers and sisters, in the warm and loving atmosphere created by her exemplary parents. She made her first profession in 1908 at Nizza Monferrato. During the First World War (1914-18) Sr. Maria took a course in health care in Varazze and worked as a Red Cross nurse in the military hospital. This experience was to prove very valuable in the course of her long missionary life in the Amazon forests of Ecuador. She was a great missionary in Ecuador's Amazonian forests and become 'doctor' for both bodies and souls. While she assisted people, she also evangelized, proclaiming and testifying to everyone of the Father's infinite love and the motherly tenderness of the Help of Christians. Whether she was sewing or attending the sick, she always sowed the Word of the Gospel in terms of intimacy between people. She died on 25 August 1969 in a plane crash in Morona- Santiago Ecuador.

### **Conclusion**

The 15th of August marks the twin feasts of the Assumption and Independence of our nation. It is truly a day of liberation: liberation from everything that holds us captive and in bondage. May this solemn occasion inspire each of us to be efficient instruments of liberation to all whom we work with and for. May our Blessed Mother be our model and guide in this endeavor to liberate ourselves and others from everything that enslaves both from within and without. I wish each one of you a very happy and meaningful feast of the Assumption and Independence of India, our motherland.

Journeying together with you and assuring you of my constant support,

**Yours Affectionately in Don Bosco,**



**Fr. Thathireddy Bhaskar**  
Provincial

