

PROVINCIAL CIRCULAR

SALESIAN PROVINCE OF HYDERABAD



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Faithful Stewards: Transparent and Accountable

Dear Confreres,

On 24th May we had the perpetual profession of four of our brothers and we were also blessed with eight new Salesians. Attending these solemn celebrations and listening to the 'yes' pronounced by these young men, it struck me that this acceptance of God's will for a particular way of life was not a momentary one, but an *experiential continuum*. A 'YES', which is supposed to guide our everyday lives and choices. By answering the call of God, we through religious profession, dedicate ourselves, our whole energies and our entire life in the service of the Lord. We renew this commitment every day through our prayer of Consecration. Doing so we offer ourselves a greater possibility of discerning God's will through obedience, seeking the abundance of spiritual graces through poverty and genuinely loving all of creation in chastity. We renounce our personal will by professing obedience, our right to own personal property by professing poverty and exclusive and particular friendships by professing chastity. Our vows assist us to discern and accomplish the will of God, choose Him to be our only treasure and our only love. As Consecrated Religious, we have freely and publicly chosen to be totally available and give of ourselves totally to the Lord and His people, and particularly as Salesians, we opt for the young, especially who are poor and abandoned.

As those called by the Lord and as those who have freely opted to respond to His call, we are called to a very specific mission. For us Salesians, this mission, even though enriched by our individual charism and skill, is neither an individual effort nor a merely personal initiative. It is one entrusted to us by God, for His people. As professed religious we are called to be the light of Christ in the world. Our task is to facilitate God get in touch with His people and assist people to savour the Lord. St John Paul II reminds us to, "allow the light and the healing presence of Christ, shine brightly through your lives. In that way, all those who come into contact with you will discover the loving kindness of God." This is possible only when we are transparent, both to God and His people. By our very profession we vow to God and before all

people that we will let the light shine *through* us; that at no point in time or place are we to obstruct, appropriate only for ourselves or deviate for personal gains, this light.

Sometimes, this bright light of Christ does not glow within us and through us, because we become opaque or non-transparent. This happens especially when we let ourselves be trapped in personal attachments and achievements, by an excessive desire to possess material goods, through particular and exclusive friendships, through holding onto ideologies and clinging onto pet projects. There has been an increasing inclination, especially in the recent years, towards a more personal life (cutting us off from others - confreres, laity and youngsters), individualism, personal friendships and unnecessary possessions. We become less transparent when we have something to hide - hide from God and hide from other people. This hampers our mission and gnaws at our own consecrated vocation.

Linked very much with transparency is the virtue of accountability. In a sense it is a responsibility to let God and others see us through and through. By our profession we agree to render an honest account to God all that He blesses us with (graces, vocation, time, inspiration, energy...) and to His people that what we receive through them (trust, respect, affection, collaboration, money, property...).

We often think of accountability only in terms of finances and of material goods. This is a huge misconception. We need to become accountable, first and foremost, with our own lives, which we through profession have pledged for the salvation of the young. Once we strive to be genuinely accountable of and by our personal lives, the rest will fall in place. Let us not hesitate or fear to ask ourselves and one another as to how accountable we are to God, to each other and the young people entrusted to our care.

Don Bosco did warn us in his spiritual testament: *Be on your guard and see to it neither the love of the world, nor affection for relatives, nor the desire for a more comfortable life lead you to the great mistake of profaning your sacred vows and betraying the religious profession by which we are consecrated to the Lord. When the desire for ease and comfort grows up among us, our pious society will have run its course.*

As we continue to re-dimension and reinvigorate our mission and vision, let us be courageous to let the light of Christ shine through us. Let God and our young people see, *through* us, each other. Let us not dissipate our graces and resources in concealing our personal agendas, rather help young people discover their own God given graces and resources.

Congratulations

New Leaders of Communities

We have three new rectors, who were installed during the past month. Fr Pandicherry Joseph - Don Bosco Provincial House, Fr Puthussery Sojan - Don Bosco Mission Complex, Mariapuram and Fr Thota Mariadas - Assumption Church, Pezzonipet. We congratulate them for their generosity in shouldering the responsibility of animation of their respective communities. We assure them of our prayers and constant support in making effective the mission of Don Bosco in our local settings.

New Provincial of the Province of St. Joseph Vaz, Panjim

We rejoice with the province of St Joseph Vaz, Panjim (INP) at the announcement of Fr Felix Fernandez as the new Provincial. We congratulate Fr Felix for accepting this great responsibility and assure him of our prayers and support as he will continue his ministry of service in the Province of Panjim in a different role shortly. We wish God's grace and the inspiration of the Holy Spirit upon him, his plans and endeavours.

Appointment of the New Bishop of the Diocese of Guntur

His Holiness Pope Francis has appointed Rev. Fr Bhagyaiah Chinnabathuni as the new Bishop of Guntur Diocese. We extend hearty congratulations to Rev. Msgr Bhagyaiah and pray for God's blessings upon him as he takes up this important responsibility of leading and guiding the Diocese of Guntur.

Upcoming Events

PAR - Participatory Action Research Meet and Study Days of Education to Faith

Our province will be hosting two national events at our Provincial House this month. The Participatory Action Research training is to be held from 5 to 7 July 2016 and Study days of Education to Faith on 16 and 17 July 2016. Let us pray that these events may be fruitful and these moments of study and reflection help Salesian India grow.

Marian Month

Every year half way through the month of July, we commence the Marian month, a special opportunity we offer our young people - and ourselves - to deepen our knowledge and love for our dear Mother Mary. Don Bosco made use of every occasion, every opportunity to promote devotion and love for the Blessed Mother. As true sons of him, let us be creative and truly honest in expressing our love for our Mother.

Local Youth Coordinators and Young Priests' Meet

There is a great need to revive the youth ministry in our province, hence there will be the Local Youth Coordinators meet held on 28 July (9.30 am to 4 pm). This meet would also be the occasion to plan the province youth meet and the Rector Major's Visit. This would be followed by the Young Priests' meet that will commence on 28 July at 6 pm and conclude on 29 July with Supper. Kindly make your travel arrangements accordingly. Both the meetings will be held at Don Bosco Navajeevan, Ramanthapur. On 29 July the young priests will have the opportunity to interact with the Provincial and his Council. The lists are attached. These moments of ongoing formation are essential for our renewal. Kindly take part in the meeting without fail.

Practical Trainees' and Student Brothers' Meet

The Practical Trainees' and Student Brothers' meeting will be held on the 1 and 2 August, 2016. I invite all the clerics and brothers doing their practical training and college studies in the province to take part in this animation programme. The list is enclosed.

Visit of the Rector Major rescheduled

The visit of the Rector Major, Rev. Fr Angel Artime Fernandez, has been rescheduled.

16 November: Arrival

17 November: Meeting with the Provincial Council (DBPH), Youth Fest and Holy Eucharist at Ramanthapur, Hyderabad.

18 November: Meeting with the Aspirants and Brothers in Initial Formation at Gunadala and Holy Eucharist at St. Michael's, Guntur.

19 November: Meeting with Leaders, Holy Eucharist/Jubilee Celebrations at DBPH, Hyderabad.

20 November: Holy Eucharist at St. Theresa's Church, Sanathnagar - Departure to Rome.

Information

SEPP of the Province

During the Provincial Commission, Sector/Centre Heads' meet, held on 17 July at Don Bosco Provincial House, we discussed the SEPP of the province and approved the same. This document is the fruit of much discussion and deliberation. Hence we are all exhorted to put it to practice for greater efficacy and meaning of our mission. The soft-copy of the document has been mailed to all the communities.

Committee for Professional Standards

Following the directions of the SPCSA and in accordance with the Child Policy, there is a committee set up for assessing and ensuring Professional Standards in our service to children and young in our communities. The members of the committee are: Fr Yeruva Joji, Fr Salibindla Balashowry, Sr Alphonsa, Mr Manohar, and Mr Lourdu Prasad. I thank the committee members for their availability to assist the Province in its commitment towards the welfare and wellbeing of the children in our institutions.

Reports to Kaburlu and Website

'Good is multiplied when it is announced'. There is an enormous amount of good that is being done in our communities. Most often we do not share about the good that we do with our confreres and well wishers. I request all the communities to take interest in sending reports to Kaburlu and the Province website regularly about the activities and programmes of each community.

Condolences and Prayers

On 23 June 2016 we received the sad news of the death of Mr Yerramaneni Joachim, aged 73, father of Fr Yerramaneni Balaswamy. We express our deep condolences and support to Fr Baly and his family members and pray for the repose of the soul of Mr Yerramaneni Joachim.

Death for the Salesian is made bright by the hope of entering into the Joy of the Lord (Const. 54). Fr Peter Schiavon sdb of the Province of St John Paul II, Silchar, passed away on 19 June

2016. Fr Porcu Mario sdb of the Province of Mary Help of Christians, Guwahati, passed on from this life to the joy of heaven, on 24 June 2016. We extend our condolences to Fr George Maliekal, Provincial of Silchar and to Fr V.M. Thomas the Provincial of Guwahati and the confreres of these Provinces at the loss of these veteran Salesians. Both of them played a major role in the spread of the Salesian mission in the North-East. Through the mercy of God, may they rest in peace.

Salesian Saint of the Month

Bl. Maria Romero Meneses (Jul 7): She was one of eight children born to a wealthy, upper-class family. At the age of twelve she spent a year extremely sick from rheumatic fever; she was paralyzed for six months and her heart was permanently damaged. She was cured by the intercession and apparition of Our Lady, Help of Christians, during which she understood her vocation to be a Salesian sister. She joined the *Daughters of Mary, Help of Christians* in 1920, and on 6 January 1929 in Nicaragua, Maria made her final profession as a Salesian Sister. Transferred to San Jose, Costa Rica in 1931 she taught music, drawing and typing to rich school girls, trained catechists and trades to the poor. Many of her students were won over to her way of life, and worked with her to help the poor and abandoned.

Maria developed a ministry of fund raising and of showing the wealthy practical ways to bring their charity to the poor. She opened a school for poor girls in 1961, and in 1966 a clinic staffed by volunteer doctors. In 1973 she organized the construction of seven homes, which became the foundation of the village of Centro San Jose, a community where poor families could have decent homes. An excellent teacher, manager and fund-raiser, she was known for her way of bringing God into the personal lives of people, especially through a sincere love and devotion to the Eucharist.

Conclusion

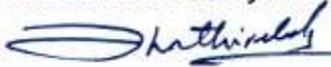
Dear confreres, as we constantly strive towards greater depth and perfection of our Salesian charism, let us not lose sight of our priorities as consecrated religious. God has blessed us with an abundance of graces, individually and as a Province. He will continue to do so even in the future... and we are bound in conscience and word (our profession) to render an honest account of it all.

The Silver Jubilee of the birth of our Province also reminds us that our mission has taken root and is spreading across the three states of Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Odisha, not only because of the hard work of our brother Salesians whom we honour but also due to the generous contributions of our benevolent benefactors. Every institution that we have is the result of the numerous sacrifices, sweat and labour of our benefactors. Our gratitude is readily and truly expressed in the way we take responsibility as faithful stewards of our institutions and transparently administer everything that is entrusted to us.

We are called during this silver jubilee to have a moment of personal introspection to question ourselves: “What is my contribution towards the growth of this legacy?” May we become more and more transparent, by giving ourselves entirely to Christ, without reserve and allow His presence to enlighten us and radiate through us.

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

Yours Affectionately in Don Bosco,



Fr. Thathireddy Bhaskar
Provincial

