

PROVINCIAL CIRCULAR



SALESIAN PROVINCE OF HYDERABAD

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SUPERFICIALITY TO RADICALITY

The unexamined life is not worth living - Socrates.

As human beings we are marked with a distinct capacity to transcend our instincts and desires. We are capable of making choices -choices which are reflected upon and discerned. We have the power to reflect on our being and on our actions. This power of self-awareness, of introspection and of making choices distinguishes us from all the other forms of life.

Another academic year has passed. Some of us are already planning for summer camps and summer activities for young people opening the doors of our institutions to the young of our neighbourhoods. While we continue to extend our services and ourselves, we cannot neglect the importance of well-deserved holidays, community and personal reflection and evaluation of the past year, and updating of oneself for greater efficacy in our mission.

One of the challenges that we need to address as a province is superficiality: superficiality of our lives, relationships and services. I recall the interview that I had with Fr John Lens of happy memory. I present here a short extract from this interview that I had:

Do you have any particular happy moments which you remember fondly?

Fr Lens: *No, no particular moments, because if you are too satisfied you don't do anything. You don't move forward.*

Do you have a message for the Salesians of our Province?

Fr Lens: *Take special care, not to be superficial. Superficiality is not good. It is great obstacle for growth.*

Superficiality leads to mediocrity, ease and comforts. This is something that we need to be on our guard. There is a general tendency to be satisfied with the minimum and the desire to maintain the *status quo*, somehow, rather than a total commitment towards transformation. Don Bosco warned us in his Spiritual Testament, “when the desire for ease and comfort grows up amongst us, our pious Society will have run its course.” This happens when our lives are not rooted enough on what is essential. GC 27, has called us to be ‘*witnesses to the radical approach of the gospel.*’ I have been asking myself this question time and again: *Why are we invited as a congregation, as a province and as individual Salesians to this living of the radical approach of the Gospel?*

Etymologically *radicality* means getting to the root of things or getting to the heart of the matter. We are invited to have a deeper understanding of our vocation and a greater commitment to our mission. It is getting engaged and involved intensely in our vocation, identity and mission. When we are not deeply rooted, the external takes over. We run after fleeting things. Habitual superficial life leads to normalization of it. Normalization refers to the process where ideas and actions come to be seen as normal or taken for granted, when repeatedly performed over a period of time by a number of people. Neglect of prayer life, lack of spiritual thirst, shallow relationships with confreres in communities, prevalent ‘room culture’, desire for gadgets, search for more comfortable life, do not disturb our conscience any more.

The key to overcome this is to look at Jesus, who did not follow the crowd, the generally mediocre way of living but lived according to the will of the Father, and lived as a witness to Father’s love. We need to find the absolute primacy of God in our lives. It is only in the light of this deep faith, that our ministry and service will find relevance and meaning. Christ, His life and mission should become the standard for our living and acting.

Fr Gopu Anand, a great son of Don Bosco and a valiant pioneer is no more

We are filled with shock and sorrow at the demise of our dear confrere Fr Gopu Anand. He had been suffering from Idiopathic Pulmonary Fibrosis an Interstitial Lung Disease (ILD) for the past nine months. At 2:27 a.m. on 7 April, 2017, he breathed his last at Don Bosco Academy, Nalgonda. He was laid to rest on 8 April 2017 at Don Bosco Philosophate, Karunapuram.

He was a man of undaunted faith, where most see problems, he saw possibilities, where most see difficulties he saw the Divine Plan. Fr Anand always put Christ Jesus as the centre of his life and it is from this unwavering and unflinching trust in Him, that his optimism arose. The love that Fr Anand nurtured for Don Bosco and the Salesian Spirit was singular. He also imparted and communicated this same love to all those who came into contact with him. He spoke of Don Bosco at every occasion that arose and never missed a chance to make him known.

During his 20 years of Salesian Priestly life, he demonstrated time and again, his intuitive sense of having a vision for the mission that was entrusted to him. His dynamic personality, his hardworking nature and his optimism in times of adversity and challenge have left an indelible mark wherever he worked. He pioneered two major works in our province, Don Bosco Navajeevan, Ramanthapur and Don Bosco Academy, Nalgonda, that stand as testimonies of his total trust in Divine Providence and of his love for the poor.

The Ordination Motto of Fr Anand was: 'My soul proclaims the greatness of God, my spirit rejoices in God, my savior' (Lk 1, 46) We strongly believe that the spirit of Fr Anand now truly rejoices in God, our savior. His life was a proclamation of the greatness of God. We thank God for the gift of Fr Anand to our Province. Let us continue to pray for his eternal repose.

Information

Appointment of Rectors

Our Province is blessed with three new Rectors. Fr Angel Fernandez Arttime has appointed the following confreres to the service of Authority.

- 1) Fr Ramedini Balaraju - **Rector I Term - Don Bosco Junior College, Chandur.**
- 2) Fr Kollamparambil Joseph - **Rector I Term - Don Bosco , Sanathnagar.**
- 3) Fr Barigala Arockia Nathan - **Rector I Term - Don Bosco, Guntupalli.**

As we wish these confreres the grace of God and the constant protection of our Divine Mother, I would also like to place on record our gratitude to Fr Kollamparambil Joseph, Fr Kudiyrippil James and Fr Thathireddy Michael who served the province as Rectors at Chandur, Motinagar and Guntupalli respectively. May God bless them for their tireless efforts in bringing His Kingdom to the poor and abandoned.

I am also sending along the consultation form for the rector of Don Bosco Academy, Nalgonda.

Meeting of the Commission Heads and Commission Members

There will be a meeting of the heads of commissions, centres and sectors in the provincial house on 16 May 2017. We will review the SEPP of the year 2016-2017 and plan the SEPP for 2017-2018. The meeting will commence at 9.00 am and will conclude by 5.00 pm.

Conclusion of the Silver Jubilee of the Province

On 24 April, we will conclude the Silver Jubilee year of the birth of our Province. It is an occasion to once again thank the Almighty for enabling us to serve and make a difference in the lives thousands of young people in our Province. I take this opportunity to thank and congratulate each one of you for your share in building up our province. Let us make every effort to stay focused to reach out to the poorest of the poor youth. I request you to have a special thanksgiving prayer service in all of our communities. The prayer service is in the annexure.

Vocation Camps

There are three province level Annual Vocation Camps organized by Fr Mattukoyya Mariadas and his team. The dates are as follows:

20 - 25 April at Don Bosco Academy, Nalgonda.

4 - 8 May at St. Anthony's Industrial Institute, Kadapa.

15 - 20 May at Don Bosco, Gunadala.

Kindly identify and send possible candidates for these camps. I request you also to extend your full cooperation in conducting these camps. Please pray that we may have many generous young people joining our society.

Lenten Contribution

As mentioned in the March circular, all the leaders of the communities are requested to send their Lenten Contribution to the Provincial Economer by 20 April 2017. The Lenten contribution is the amount that you as a community saved during the season of lent, through penances and sacrifices. This will be collected together and sent to the Rector Major.

The Annual Meeting of the Perpetually Professed Confreres and Leaders 2017-18

The annual meeting of the perpetually professed confreres will be held on 3 June 2017 from 9.30 a.m. to 8.00 p.m. The Newly Ordained priests will be felicitated on this day. We will also have the Leaders' Meet on 5 and 6 June 2017. This will be also an occasion to thank God as a Province for the 25 years of graces that we have received.

Condolences

We extend our deepest condolences to Fr Peyyala Ignatius and his family members at the demise of his aunt Sr. Peyyala Santhosamma who left for her eternal home on 23 March, 2017. May God grant her eternal rest.

We extend our condolences to Fr Madanu Rayappa, his family members and the Arch Diocese of Hyderabad at the demise of Fr Madanu Pradeep on 4 April 2017. He is the nephew of Fr Madanu Rayappa. May his soul rest in peace.

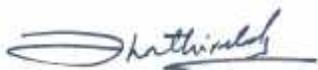
We also convey our condolences to the Provincial Superior and the Salesian Sisters of the Province of Chennai at the demise of Sr Philomena Anthoni who died on 29 March 2017. May the good Lord grant her eternal rest.

Conclusion

Resurrection is not a wishful thinking, but a REALITY that brought hope to the disheartened disciples and to the world steeped in sin. Jesus is the resurrection and every encounter with him should lead us to a transformed life. Jesus invites us to share this experience with others, '*You will be my witnesses*' (Acts 1,8). We are called to be the living witnesses of Jesus Christ. Let us re-live, rejoice and share the message of Jesus' resurrection in our life and work for the young. Let us become a living proof of Christ's resurrection each day.

Assuring you of my prayers and wishing you the blessings of the Risen Lord,

Yours in Don Bosco,



Fr Thathireddy Bhaskar
Provincial

