



**INM-KMJ-CIR 23/01-2019**

**JANUARY 2019**

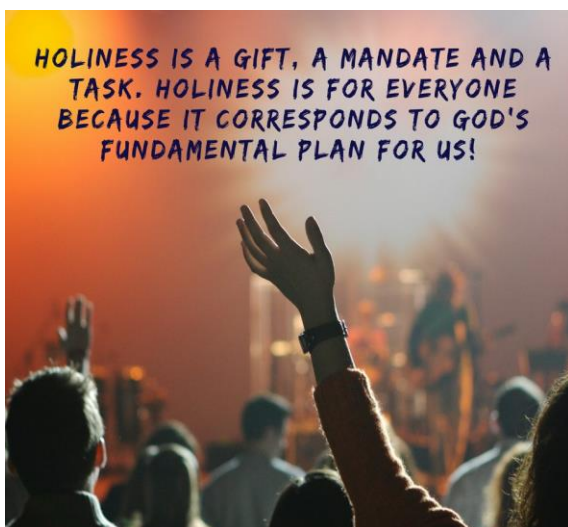
Dear Confreres,

As I wish you a very happy New Year 2019, I implore God's choicest blessings on all of us and on all our beneficiaries during this year of Grace that he has given all of us. This year is significant for INM because we have our **Provincial Chapter from the 11<sup>th</sup> till the 16<sup>th</sup> of January 2019**. This year is also important because we have the **Extraordinary Visitation due to begin from July 2019**. And this year is also momentous because we will have our dear **Rector Major visiting our beloved Province in September 2019**. Apart from the above-mentioned noteworthy events we also have the **General Elections in our country**. And am sure, many more eventful occasions are also in store for us as we journey along this New Year 2019!

In this Circular, I would like to dwell in depth on the **Strenna 2019** which our Rector Major has given for our reflection and life and seeing how the **Strenna and the theme of our Chapter** can go hand in hand to enable us to live our Salesian vocation more meaningfully and joyfully, with and for the young.

### **STRENNA 2019**

**So that my Joy may be in you (Jn 15: 11)  
Holiness for you, too!**



**Daily sanctity has become a reality** in the lives lived to the full in the Salesian charism. We are thus invited not to forget that in the course of history Salesian holiness has become visible, embodied, with proper names. Don Bosco was a great teacher in this sense, with the ability to inspire and accompany his children on the paths of daily holiness." "**What is important is to be holy, not to be declared as such,**" emphasizes the Rector Major. "The canonised saints are like the portico of a church; but the church contains many precious treasures inside, which however remain invisible."

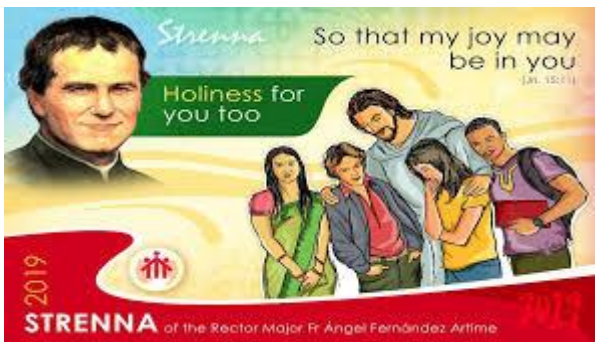


**From the Strenna Commentary of the Rector Major**

**Holiness is a gift, a mandate and a task. Holiness is for everyone because it corresponds to God’s fundamental plan for us.** To become saints is not to become alienated from oneself or to move away from one’s own brothers and sisters, but to live one’s life to the full in an intense (and sometimes difficult) experience of communion.

**Holiness is not a theory of moral perfection, but a life that conforms to that of Jesus.** Some characteristics of the life of Jesus, which are close-by, concrete, beautiful, exciting for everyone, about which people may never think or think very little. **Holiness is a duty (that is, a vocation, a responsibility, a commitment), but above all it is a gift.** Holiness is participation in the life of God, not a perfection that is moralistically understood and presumed to be achieved only with one’s own strength. On the other hand, it is not a goal that is accessible only to the “best”, in the sense of the “best prepared”, either. It is above all welcoming God, drawing on the instruments of the Church, including a solid sacramental life and piety. **Together, it is easier.** Holiness and walking together and an experience of communion. This is beautiful and at the same time demanding.

**Holiness is a close-by thing, real, concrete, possible.** Indeed, it is everyone’s fundamental vocation. **Being holy is not difficult;** indeed, it is easy, and God awaits us in heaven after our journey of holiness. “Far from being timid, morose, acerbic or melancholy, or putting on a dreary face, the saints are joyful and full of good humour”. (Gaudete et Exsultate, 122). **The path of holiness cannot bypass the dimension of the cross, but it is also full of joy:** “Here we make holiness consist in being very happy”. **Sanctity does not distance us from our duties, interests, affections, but it integrates them in charity.** Holiness is the perfection of charity and it therefore responds to the fundamental human need: to be loved and to love. **The more human, the holier because, “life does not have a mission, but is a mission”** (Gaudete et Exsultate, 27). Holiness is not an “extra”, an optional and a goal only for some. It is life to the full, according to God’s plan and gift. It is therefore a path of humanisation. **True spiritual life is the flowering of whatever is human.**



**EVERYDAY HOLINESS**

“Inspired common sense” is how Elisabeth Stopp, a fellow of the Royal Society of Literature, once characterized the broad appeal of ST. FRANCIS DE SALES (1567-1622). **Salesian spirituality has thus been characterized as an “everyday holiness.”** In addition to its “commonness,” in the sense of

being able to be practiced by anyone, its chief feature is its “ordinariness,” in the sense of not requiring heroic feats of sanctity. Rather, Francis de Sales counsels the cultivation of “little virtues,” of which he writes in the Introduction (III:1): **Occasions do not often present themselves for the exercise of fortitude, magnanimity, and great generosity, but meekness, temperance, integrity, and humility are virtues that must mark all our actions in life.** In

practicing the virtues, we should prefer the one most conformable to our duties rather than the one more agreeable to our tastes. You should choose the best virtues, not the most popular, the noblest, not the most obvious, those that are actually the best, not the most spectacular. This living charism embodies another sense of the “everyday holiness” that characterizes Salesian spirituality. **Beyond a focus on doing the ordinary extraordinarily well, the Salesian spirit considers the pursuit of holiness an “every day” phenomenon;** that is, Salesian spirituality is contained or contextualized in the period of just one day! For St. Francis de Sales, the “present moment” of the current day is the only time over which we have any control; by focusing our energies there, and only there, we are more likely to remain at peace, neither disturbed about the past nor anxious about the future. As he writes in another letter, “Let us be firmly resolved to serve God with our whole heart and life. Beyond that, let us have no care about tomorrow. **Let us think only of living today well, and when tomorrow comes, it also will be today, and we can think about it then.**” In this “every day” context, we grow in holiness to the extent that we become consciously aware and intentional about doing what we routinely do for the love of God. Upon arising, we can recall the Resurrection and greet God with gratitude for having another day at our disposal. We can then prayerfully prepare the day by considering what lies ahead and resolving to practice virtue and avoid vice in the situations that present themselves. We can take our meals in a spirit of thanksgiving for God’s bounty, approach our work as sharing in the Creator’s activity, and take our leisure as a God’s welcome gift of peace. At the end of the day we can examine our consciences to acknowledge humbly both how we have grown and where we have failed, gently committing both into God’s merciful care. And when we retire at night, we can prayerfully envision that one day we will rest eternally with God.

**Blessed Luigi Variara** (15 January), an example of a humble, brave Salesian missionary who was determined to give a genuinely Salesian approach to nursing the most marginalized sick people; **Blessed Laura Vicuña** (22 January), a shining example of Salesian education who rigorously defended her dignity as a 12-year-old girl, as an offering for the conversion of those dear to her; **St. Francis de Sales** (24 January), the Patron Saint of Salesians who inspired Salesian virtues such as the gentleness and docility of Jesus, the Good Shepherd; **St. John Bosco** (31 January), our founder, teacher and father, and above all, our unexcelled model of holiness.



### YOUTH AND HOLINESS

Don Bosco was a true spiritual master and companion for the young. He used to say that education is a “matter of the heart” and that one must “open away for God in the youth’s heart not only in church but also in the classroom and workshop”.

**Don Bosco believed that it is not so much ‘what we do’ for young people that is important, but rather ‘who we are’ for them.** Don Bosco was able to create that youthful environment in which processes of spiritual growth for the young were made possible. He then managed to

be that “someone” who could offer direction to each and every young person. Are young people born Spiritual? Do young people have a capacity for holiness? How can we best facilitate young people’s search for meaning? **Don Bosco touched the heart of so many people and managed to offer such spiritual guidance because he believed they had a capacity for holiness.**

While today's teenagers might be highly sceptical of the Church, they are insatiably hungry when it comes to spiritual matters. They want that. They need the Church to demonstrate that. **This generation of youth intuitively understands that a completely surrendered—sanctified—life in Christ will not just result in great worship music on Sunday mornings, but also worship of God in our actions throughout the week.** However, this intuition will remain only a thought unless they experience it happening. A sanctified body of believers will draw their teenagers toward sanctified lifestyles if they choose to demonstrate the grace of God to the community. In addition, they must **involve their youth in ministry to the community instead of just letting them be bystanders.** Only after seeing and encountering the results of a life fully surrendered to Christ will today's young people transfer their intuitive ideology into truth, real truth.



The Hebrew word ‘holy’ (*qadosh*) probably originally meant ‘separate’ or ‘set apart’. It came to be used to describe the ‘otherness’ of God, and how his character and nature are so much greater and more wonderful than any other person or thing. For something else to be ‘holy’ simply means for it to be dedicated to God. **You are holy to the extent that your life is devoted to him**

**and your actions reflect his character. Holiness and wholeness are closely related, and God wants the whole of your life.** The measure of holiness is how much we allow Christ to enter our hearts, our thoughts, and how much we model our whole life on His. ‘**God cannot fit into our plans, we must fit into his,**’ writes Eugene Peterson. ‘We can’t use God – God is not a tool or appliance or credit card. Holy is the word that sets God apart and above our attempts to enlist him in our wish-fulfilment fantasies or our utopian schemes for making our mark in the world. Holy means that God is alive on God’s terms, alive in a way that exceeds our experience and imagination. **Holy refers to life burning with an intense purity that transforms everything it touches into itself.**’

### **SCRIPTURAL CALL TO HOLINESS**

1. Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness (Psalm 27:1-6)
2. Serve the Lord in a life of holiness (Mark 9:33-10:12)
3. Be holy as the Lord is holy (Leviticus 1:1-3:17)
4. Holiness fosters intimacy with God and builds spiritual strength and stability (Psalm 15:1-6)
5. Holiness makes us useful and effective for God’s purposes (2 Timothy 2:20-26)
6. Holiness in your life causes people around you to glorify God (1 Peter 2:9-12)
7. Holiness builds peace with God (2 Peter 3:10-18)
8. Holiness pleases God and produces “fruit” (Ephesians 5:1-17)

## The Popes on our call to Holiness

**Pope John Paul II spoke frequently to young people about the call to holiness and the vocation to be saints.** Who can forget his message for World Youth Day 2000 in Rome? He wrote to his dear young friends throughout the world unforgettable words that became the rallying cry for the Jubilee's greatest celebration: *Young people of every continent, **do not be afraid to be the saints of the new millennium!** Be contemplative, love prayer; be coherent with your faith and generous in the service of your brothers and sisters, be active members of the Church and builders of peace. To succeed in this demanding project of life, continue to listen to His Word, draw strength from the Sacraments, especially the Eucharist and Penance. The Lord wants you to be intrepid apostles of his Gospel and builders of a new humanity.*

In announcing the 2005 World Youth Day in Cologne - an event he would not live to see, Pope John Paul II sent a letter to the young people of the world:

*Dear young people, the Church needs genuine witnesses for the new evangelization: men and women whose lives have been transformed by meeting with Jesus, men and women who are capable of communicating this experience to others. The Church needs saints. **All are called to holiness, and holy people alone can renew humanity.** Many have gone before us along this path of Gospel heroism, and I urge you to turn often to them to pray for their intercession.*



In his constant teachings, **Pope Francis says that God calls all Christians to be saints** — not plastic statues of saints, but real people who make time for prayer and who show loving care for others in the simplest gestures, Pope Francis said in his new document on holiness. **“Do not be afraid of holiness. It will take away none of your energy, vitality or joy,”** the pope wrote in

“Gaudete et Exsultate” (“Rejoice and Be Glad”), his apostolic exhortation on “the call to holiness in today’s world.” Saying he was not writing a theological treatise on holiness, Pope Francis focused mainly on how the call to holiness is a personal call, something God asks of each Christian and which requires a personal response given one’s state in life, talents and circumstances. *“We are frequently tempted to think that holiness is only for those who can withdraw from ordinary affairs to spend much time in prayer,”* he wrote. But “that is not the case.” **“We are all called to be holy by living our lives with love and by bearing witness in everything we do, wherever we find ourselves,”** he said. He wrote about **“the saints next door”** and said he likes *“to contemplate the holiness present in the patience of God’s people: in those parents who raise their children with immense love, in those men and women who work hard to support their families, in the sick, in elderly religious who never lose their smile.”* Pope Francis also included a list of cautions. For example, he said **holiness involves finding balance in prayer time, time spent enjoying others’ company and time dedicated to serving others**

in ways large or small. And, “needless to say, anything done out of anxiety, pride or the need to impress others will not lead to holiness.”



### THE LINK BETWEEN THE CHAPTER THEME AND THE STRENNA 2019 (From the Moderator’s Desk)

The Provincial Chapter is the **fraternal gathering** in which the local communities strengthen their **sense of belonging** to the Provincial community, through their **common concern** for its general problems. It is also the **representative assembly** of all the confreres and local communities. The tasks of INM PC 2019 are: 1. To decide on what pertains to the good running of the Province. 2. To inquire into suitable means for promoting the religious and pastoral life of the provincial community. 3. To study the themes proposed by the Rector Major for the General Chapter and in the Chapter held after the General Chapter and how to implement its deliberations. 4. To formulate and revise the Provincial Directory in matters left to be decided at the Provincial level. 5. To elect one or two delegates to the General Chapter and their substitutes. The primary aim of all discussions in the Chapter is to stimulate the thinking of all participants on an issue for the benefit of their own life first and then of others - their community, their mission and thus facilitate a gradual transmission.

The theme chosen is the result of an extensive and profound reflection undertaken by the General Council, which has considered the current indications of the Church and of Pope Francis, especially the celebration of the two Synods of Bishops on the Family and on Young people, the faith and Vocational discernment. There is just the one theme which is divided into three points:

- Profile of the Salesian for the youth of today.**
- Priority of the Salesian mission among today’s young people.**
- Together with lay people in the mission and in formation.**



As Salesians, we look up always to Don Bosco as our model (AGC 427, 2.2). **Don Bosco, for us, is not just a memory of the past, but a charismatic living presence, active and stretching out to the future** (GC 21). In trying to become another Don Bosco for the present-day youth, every Salesian should respond daily to his call and consecration; the formation given with a high-quality formation team should help him to live together in communities in order to carry out the mission. For a Salesian, **every community is a formation community and every confrere is a person in formation and**

**a formator at the same time; the mission of the community is a sure means of becoming holy and growing in the Salesian vocation** (C 49 & 50). The need of the hour is to focus our attention on **the individual Salesian who, as a man of God, a consecrated person and an apostle, needs to be capable of being fully in tune with today’s young people and their world, and to be able to educate, evangelize, prepare for life and accompany them in their**

**encounter with the Lord.** Pope Francis says that our target group is the outcasts, the leftovers. Heeding his call, the GC 28 is an opportunity to courageously undertake a discernment process to see whether our houses, our works and our activities are at the service of the poorest young people; whether they find a place in our hearts; whether they are the centre of our concerns and interests; whether we are concentrating our energy and our efforts on them. **Our reaching to the young must be first and foremost characterized by a conscious accompaniment of them in union with their families.**

**The outcome of this Chapter should be a renewed and refreshed Salesian who is faithful to the Charism of the Founder but enabled to offer efficient and effective service to youth of our times.** We shall have a spiritually motivated or inspired and humane Salesian working untiringly for the welfare of youth, especially those who are poor and marginalized in various ways.' We need to also free ourselves from mere administrative roles and to become available for the accompaniment of the young that gives greater visibility to the consecrated life as Salesians. **The Chapter should make every Salesian committed to a life of deep communion with the Lord** imbued with all soft skills needed to help all, especially the poor and the marginalized to a holistic life lived in a way that he becomes useful to himself, his family and the community at large or as Don Bosco put it 'To live as good child of God and an honest citizen'. Am sure we will thus be able to eventually become joyful and holy Salesians and radiate this joy and sanctity to all those who encounter us in the mission.

## **NEWS FROM THE PROVINCE**

### **PRE-CHAPTER MEET & INM PC 2019**

As you are already aware, **the INM Pre-Chapter Meeting will be held on 5<sup>th</sup> January 2019 at The Citadel.** The time-table has been sent to you already. All the Chapter Members are expected to be present. **The Provincial Chapter Recollection will be on the 11<sup>th</sup> of January 2019 followed by the Chapter days which will end with lunch on 16<sup>th</sup> January 2019.** I extend my warm wishes to the Moderator, Rev. Fr. Don Bosco Lourdusamy, as we all pray for the successful conduct and completion of this significant moment in the history of our Province.

### **INM PROVINCIAL COMMUNITY DAY**

**The INM Provincial Community Day will be held in the evening of 16<sup>th</sup> January 2019 in SIGA/Rinaldi at 4.00 p.m.** The program will be sent to you soon. During this time, the newly-ordained priests and the Silver Jubilarians (Ordination & Religious Profession) will be felicitated. **This year, your generous contribution for the Provincial Community Day will be towards the Youth Pastoral Ministry.** May your presence and participation on this fraternal occasion help build up our fraternity and salesianity, thus helping us to live and work together for the young in a more concerted spirit.

## PROVINCE RETREATS

The first guided retreat of the Province will be from the **21<sup>st</sup> to the 26<sup>th</sup> January 2019** in Don Bosco, Yellagiri. Rev. Fr. Dominic Matthews will be the Preacher. This retreat is open for the first five years of Priesthood. Those who are interested in joining this retreat can send your name to the Vice Provincial by the **10<sup>th</sup> of January 2019**.

V REGIONAL CONGRESS  
OF SALESIAN COOPERATORS



## REGIONAL CONGRESS OF THE SALESIAN COOPERATORS

The Salesian Co-operators will have their South Asia Regional Congress on **January 25 and 26, 2019**, in Citadel. All the Provinces of the Region of South Asia will be participating in the Congress. **Nearly 90 members including Salesians, Salesian Sisters, Cooperators-Delegates from all Indian provinces, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Bhutan and Nepal will attend.** We wish Rev. Fr. Edwin George, SDB, the INM Provincial

Delegate of the Salesian Cooperators, the INM Organizing Committee and all the participants a very meaningful and fruitful experience of the Congress. **We would also like to congratulate the team of new councillors of Salesian Co-operators of Chennai Province** namely, Mr. T. Aseervatham - Coordinator, Mr. A. John Alexander - Secretary, Mr. K. Maria John Bosco – Administrator, Mr. M. Moses – Formation In charge, and the Councillors are Ms. Maria Gnana Pushpam, Ms. Mary D'Monte and Mr. S. Marshall. We assure them of our collaboration and prayerful support.

## NATIONAL BOSCOREE 2018-19



**The five-day National Boscoree being held at Nashik from December 30, 2018 to January 3, 2019 had a glittering start with 4535 people participating.** The 13th National Boscoree began with great pomp and fanfare at 2.00 pm on 30th December with 4058 scouts-guides and 477 officials and dignitaries gathered at Father Sean McFerran Parade Ground, Divyadaan. The participants include 143 Scout and Guides Units consisting of 2057 Scouts and 1549 Guides, 165 Scout Masters and 137 Guide Captains, 107 Salesian Fathers and Brothers, 43 Salesian Sisters and 477 guests, dignitaries and event organisers. The

opening ceremony struck a solemn note as the dignitaries were escorted to the stage for the inaugural function followed by march past by 17 groups representing the scouts and guides from the different Don Bosco and Auxilium provinces in India and Nepal. The Chief Guest, Ms Ann Choi, the Deputy District Commissioner of the Scout Association of Hong Kong took the salute.





### WITH GRATEFUL HEARTS TO THE ALMIGHTY FOR OUR NEW PRIESTS

The Province is immensely grateful to the Almighty for the gift of our eight new priests who were ordained on the 27<sup>th</sup> of December 2018, at Lourdes Shrine, Perambur. I sincerely thank our dear Archbishop for his presence. Special thanks to Rev. Fr. Deva Joe, the Rector & Parish Priest and the Salesian community of Lourdes Shrine Perambur for all the arrangements. Our sentiments of

gratitude also to Fr. Don Bosco Lourdusamy, the Vice Provincial and to Frs. Parthibanraj & Antony Sebastian, who together with the assistance of other Salesians planned and animated the event. The newly-ordained priests will continue in their respective places of ministry until further notice.



### SALESIAN BROTHERS CONGRESS

The 8th SALESIAN BROTHERS CONGRESS of SOUTH ASIA was held in DBSM, Bangalore began in the evening of Sunday, 30th December 2018 and scheduled till next Thursday, 3 January 2019. **Bishop George Rajendra SDB** was the Chief Guest and presided over the Eucharistic Celebration. The key note address was given by **Bro. Jean-Paul Muller** the

Economer General. The second session was by Bro. Abraham on Salesians being faithful witnesses. The third session of the day was by Fr. Ivo Coelho, the Councillor in charge of Formation. He touched on Post-novitiate formation and on being Holy Salesian Brothers.

### DIAMOND JUBILEE OF DON BOSCO, PANNUR

It is indeed a momentous year for our Province as we celebrate the Diamond Jubilee (1958-1968) of DB Pannur this year. On this auspicious occasion, we cannot but raise our minds and hearts to God the Almighty for the numerous blessings that have been showered upon this institution. The external celebrations of the Diamond Jubilee celebrations will be on **Saturday, 26th January 2019 from 2.00 p.m. to 7.00 p.m.** We congratulate the Rector & community on this momentous occasion and accompany them with our prayers and presence.

**Our heartfelt condolences and sincere prayers for the dear departed...**

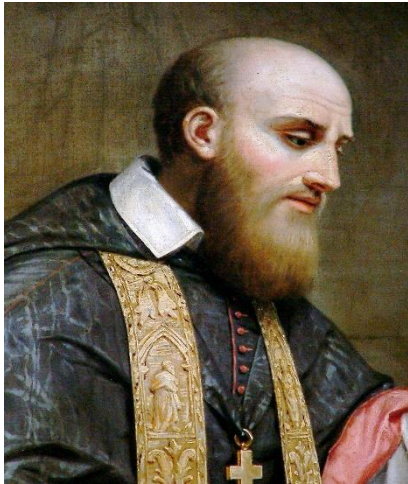
Rev. Fr. Joseph Cilia SDB of Shillong Province passed away on December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2018.

Mrs. Soosaiammal Chinnappan grandmother of Fr. Praveen Antony (Austria) died on December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2018.

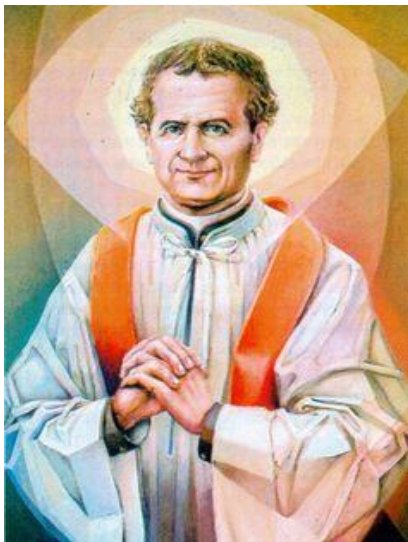
Most Rev. Thomas Thennat SAC, Bishop of Gwalior, died on 15<sup>th</sup> December 2018.

Rev. Fr. A.U. Jose Alapurackal SDB of Kolkata Province passed away on 27<sup>th</sup> December 2018.

**FEAST OF ST. FRANCIS DE SALES**



On the 24<sup>th</sup> of January, we will be celebrating the feast of our Patron, St. Francis De Sales. Don Bosco saw in him someone to imitate, someone to model himself on for his life's work. In fact, when he was ordained priest, he made this resolution: **'The love and gentleness of St Francis de Sales will guide me in everything'**. He would say: **Daily life is the ordinary place to find God**. For Francis the 'present moment' was like an eighth sacrament, a sacred meeting-place with God. Nothing was surer than his presence to us. 'As sure as the sun will rise tomorrow, so surely will he be there with me as he is today'. 'If I have some heavy cross to bear', wrote Francis, 'he will either take it from me or give me the strength to carry it'. There is no need for any fear. Let us learn to imbibe some of his saintly and humane virtues in our imitation of his holy spiritual life.



**Conclusion - FEAST OF DON BOSCO**

My dear confreres, as we prepare ourselves for the solemnity of our Founder's Feast, I wish with all my heart that it may be a Joyful celebration for you: **that you may be capable to praise and thank Jesus for the precious gift of our Salesian vocation and that you will be able to witness this blessing in your life**. The Salesian tradition of celebrating the Novena in preparation for this solemnity is still a norm in many of our communities. **I exhort all our communities to make this Novena prayerfully together with the young, wherever possible**. In doing so, you will never lack HIS presence through the Spirit and it will be a certain guarantee for our human journey of happiness and towards holiness.

I greet you with sincere affection and wish you a happy feast of Don Bosco and the ever-maternal protection of our Blessed Mother Mary, Help of Christians!

Yours affectionately in Don Bosco,

**Fr. K.M. Jose SDB**  
Provincial

Date: 01.01.2019

Place: Chennai – 600010.