



PROVINCIAL *Circular*

Salesian Province of Chennai (INM)

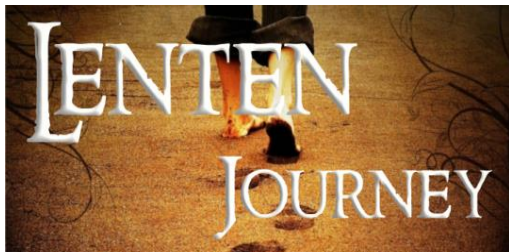


INM-KMJ-CIR 25/03-2019

MARCH 2019

LENT

A Season of Renewal



My dear confreres,

In this Circular I would like to reflect with you on the Lenten Season which we are about to begin on the 6th of March 2019. **Lent is a time of preparation** to celebrate the Resurrection, the new life of Jesus, but also to celebrate our immersion into that new life through our Baptism. We ought to renew our own

understanding of what our call is and to commit ourselves now to the time of Lent, these six weeks of prayer, penance, almsgiving, and good works, to renew ourselves in that Spirit-life of Jesus and to begin, by our own lives, a witness to the way of Jesus. Over the six weeks duration, **we can think of some practical ways** to renew ourselves and our consecration and mission. In doing so, Lent can become for us a Season of Renewal.



IS LENT BASED ON THE BIBLE? Lent is a time of preparation for the new life that will arise from the darkness of night. It is a solemn 40-day period in the Church's liturgical year in which we prepare ourselves spiritually for the great celebration of Easter. The name itself is derived from a Germanic word for springtime and came to be used in English-speaking countries in place of the Latin term *quadagesima* ("forty days"). Though Lent has no basis in the Bible, it is a tradition that originated in the Christian church. The Bible does include stories of 40-days (for example, Jesus' temptations in the wilderness) and even 40-year (for example, the Hebrews' time in the

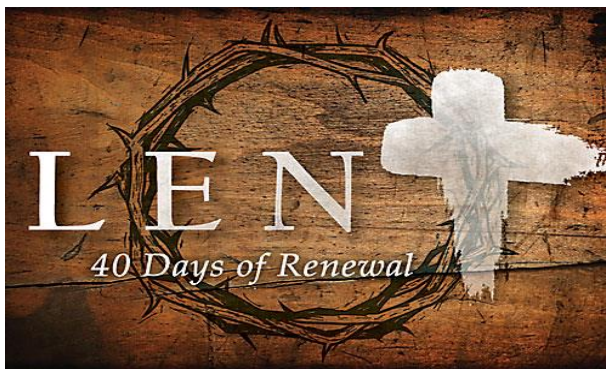
wilderness after leaving Egypt) "times of preparation," but nothing in the Bible is directly related to the season of Lent. **One interesting fact is that, the number 40 is a special number in the Bible.** It signifies preparation for something special: The rain lasted for 40 days in the mighty flood during the days of Noah (Gen 7:17). Moses stayed on Mount Sinai 40 days (Ex 24:18). Jonah gave the people of Nineveh 40 days to repent (Jon 3:4). Jesus, before starting his ministry, spent 40 days in the desert in prayer and fasting (Matt 4:2). **Lent is meant to be a time of spiritual renewal** in which we take stock of our relationship with God and neighbour, undertake penance for the sins we have committed, and **seek to make positive changes in our daily lives.**

Lent: Preparation for the Renewal of our Baptismal Promises: Lent means "springtime." It is the springtime of our life in the Spirit. **Lent is a special gift of God to His people.** It is an opportunity to imitate Jesus as He fasted forty days in the desert. **The renewal of our baptismal promises is the goal of Lent.** All our Lenten activities should move us toward this goal. When we go to Confession during Lent, it has an added significance. Our Lenten Confessions should prepare us to reject Satan, all his works, and all his empty promises and to make a deep act of faith in the Father, Son, and Spirit. If the Lord has His way, **the renewal of our Baptismal Promises on Easter Sunday will be the greatest act of faith of our lives.** Even if we previously have totally committed our lives to the Father, Son, and Spirit, this Easter's renewal of our Baptismal Promises should not be a re-run. The love which God has poured out on our lives since last Easter should bear fruit in the deepest expression of faith in God that we have ever made.

Lenten Devotions: When we **give alms, pray, and fast** during Lent, we should do so secretly and sacrificially (see Mt 6:1-18). **We should let the Lord put us in a position where we need help, when no one but our heavenly Father knows our need.** Then, when our Father provides, we will know that He did it, for He was the only One Who knew our need. Thus, we will have a greater faith in our Father. This will encourage us to **simplify our life-style**, which will **give God the Father more opportunities to father us.** We will then be in a **life-style of ever-increasing faith.** This kind of life-style is the best context for renewing our baptismal promises. When we **read, pray, and study God's Word** during Lent, we are not merely reading for information or inspiration. We are reading to grow in faith, for faith comes through hearing and hearing through the word of God (Rm 10:17). With our faith growing deeper, we are preparing to make the greatest act of faith: the renewal of our Baptismal Promises.



LENT A TIME OF SPIRITUAL RENEWAL



In his Lenten Message this year, Pope Francis says: Creation urgently needs the revelation of the children of God, who have been made "a new creation". For "if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away; behold, the new has come" (2 Cor 5:17). Indeed, by virtue of their being revealed, creation itself can celebrate a Pasch, opening itself to a new heaven and a new earth (cf. Rev 21:1).

The path to Easter demands that we renew our faces and hearts as Christians through repentance, conversion and forgiveness, so as to live fully the abundant grace of the paschal mystery.

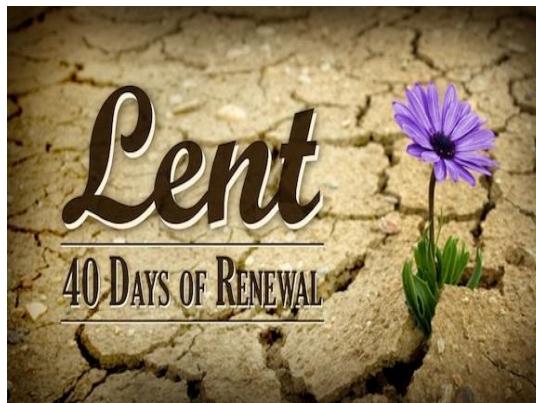
Many Catholics tend to concentrate on the negative dimension of Lent – giving something up, abstaining from meat, fasting, etc. To be sure, these penitential practices are extremely valuable as a means of self-discipline. Nevertheless, **a genuine Lenten spirituality should also focus on the positive: doing something extra for God and other people. For us Salesians, Lent offers wonderful opportunities to grow in our relationship with God, by giving extra time for daily personal prayer or Scripture reading. Some practical elements for spiritual growth during Lent includes celebrating or participating meaningfully in daily Mass, praying the rosary personally and with the community, making the Stations of the Cross, spending quiet time in prayer before Jesus in Eucharistic adoration and frequent visits to the Blessed Sacrament during the day. Taking part in the sacrament of Reconciliation is an especially valuable practice during this season of penance and self-reflection. The season of Lent also summons us to be more loving and caring towards our confreres in the community, making a conscious effort to visit the elderly and sick and to spend quality time with them.**

As we enter into the Lenten season, embracing a more disciplined personal and communitarian lifestyle and seeking God's help in rooting out our sinful behaviour, it is important that we keep the end goal in mind. **Lent is not a means unto itself, but rather a time to prepare ourselves** for the celebration of Jesus Christ's triumph over death in his glorious resurrection. **Easter Sunday** – not Ash Wednesday or even Good Friday – **is the high point of the Church's liturgical year, because the resurrection of Jesus is what gives us hope for our own resurrection on the last day. We adopt a more penitential way of life during Lent** as a reminder that our present existence, where joy intermingles with struggle and sorrow, is but a pale foreshadowing of the glory that awaits us when we share in Christ's risen life in the new creation that he will bring about when he returns in glory.

St. Augustine captured this notion beautifully **in an ancient homily contrasting Lent and Easter: "Because there are these two periods of time – the one that now is, beset with the trials and troubles of this life, and the other yet to come, a life of everlasting serenity and joy** – we are given two liturgical seasons, one before Easter and the other after. The season before Easter signifies the troubles in which we live here and now, while the time after Easter which we are celebrating at present signifies the happiness that will be ours in the future. What we commemorate before Easter is what we experience in this life; what we celebrate after Easter points to something we do not yet possess. This is why we keep the first season with fasting and prayer. Both these periods are represented and demonstrated for us in Christ. **The Lord's passion depicts for us our present life of trial** – shows how we must suffer and be afflicted and finally die. **The Lord's resurrection and glorification show us the life that will be given to us in the future."**

Some recommendations to GIVE UP for a fruitful Lenten Renewal

1. Our Comfort Zone
2. Self-sufficiency
3. Mediocrity
4. Self-pity
5. Hatred & Envy
6. Resistance to Change
7. People-pleasing
8. Negative Speech
9. Selfish Ambition
10. Lack of enthusiasm for the Mission



Some everyday recommendations to GIVE INTO for a fruitful Lenten Renewal



1. We must build profound relationships with our own confreres.
2. We should pray! Personal Prayer changes us inside, allowing us to cooperate with God and hear His voice.
3. We need to be friendly and willing to share in the faith to which God calls all of us, in ways that are dignified, organized and appropriate. Let us have more formal and informal discussion

4. We ought to be grateful to God for all He has done for us and be willing to share the abundance of those gifts with those who ask for our help.
5. Something all of us can do is committing ourselves to being more reflective during Lent. We can simply make a point of being more observant, more aware of what we're experiencing, more cognizant of our automatic behaviour. And synergize our reflections with more altruistic positive actions!

NEWS FROM THE PROVINCE

1. PROVINCE LEVEL MEETINGS/ANIMATIONS IN MARCH 2019

| DATE | EVENT |
|------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 08.03.2019 | Meeting of Rectors |
| 09.03.2019 | Meeting of Rectors, Principals, HMs, Heads of Commissions, Departments & Animation Centres, Youth Directors |
| 10.03.2019 | Due for Perpetual Meet |
| 14.03.2019 | PROVINCIAL COUNCIL MEETING in Don Bosco, YELLAGIRI |
| 15.03.2019 | PROVINCIAL COUNCIL MEETING in Don Bosco, YELLAGIRI |
| 16.03.2019 | Administrators, Accountants & School Clerks Meet at CITADEL |
| 17.03.2019 | Due for Pre-Perpetual Meet |
| 18.03.2019 | Diaconate at Kavrapettai |
| 19.03.2019 | Diaconate at KJC, Bangalore |
| 20.03.2019 | Perpetual Professed Brothers Meet |
| 21.03.2019 | Temporary Professed Brothers Meet |
| 21.03.2019 | First Retreat Begins at Kavrapettai |
| 27.03.2019 | Second Retreat Begins at Ennore |

2. The Episcopal Silver Jubilee of Bishop A.M. Chinnappa SDB which was scheduled to be held in Citadel on Monday, March 4, 2019 at 5.30 p.m. is now being postponed due to the sudden demise of Rev. Bro. Meril Rodrigo SDB.

3. Diaconate Ordinations

At Kavrapettai -

We are grateful to the Almighty for the gift of 12 Deacons from DBTC Kavrapettai this year. They will be ordained on **18th March (Monday) 2019** in Sacred Heart Church, Gummidipoondi, at 10 a.m. by Most Rev. Bishop George Rajendran SDB.

INM

1. Kishore Antony
2. Chinnappan Sekar
3. Ferk Simolin
4. Gnana Xavier
5. Jerome Philominsamy

INT

1. Antro Belevendran
2. Arockiadoss Antonysamy
3. Stephen Ashley
4. Vijayan Sebastian
5. Stanislaus Josephraj

INK

1. Udayakumar
2. Sagayaraj John Paul

At KJC

I am happy to inform you that Fr. Joyce Thonikuzhyil SDB, Salesian Provincial of Bengaluru, has admitted our INM Brothers ANTONYRAJ Albert and SANTHANA ARUL Nicholas for ordination to Diaconate in the INK Provincial Council meeting held in February 2019. They will be ordained on **19th March (Tuesday) 2019** by Most Rev. Peter Machado DD., the Archbishop of Bengaluru, along with 28 other students of KJC. The concelebrated Eucharistic celebration, for which Rev. Fr. BASANES Guillermo sdb, who is currently doing the Extraordinary Visitation of INK, will also be present, will begin at 7.00 a.m.

We thank the formators and all the Salesians who have moulded and inspired these young men in their Salesian Religious vocation. Let us pray for all these deacons that they may be faithful in serving the Lord joyfully.

4. SPCSA Meeting

The SPCSA meeting began on 25th February 2019 with the 12 Salesian Provincials of South Asia and the General Councillor for Youth Ministry Rev. Fr. Fabio Attard, General Councillor for Salesian Missions Rev. Fr. Guillermo Basañes, Regional Councillor for South Asia Rev. Fr. Maria Arokiam Kanaga and SPCSA Secretary Rev. Fr. Albert Johnson, at DBIDL, Dimapur. Rev. Fr. Pier Fausto Frisoli, the Procurator General of the Congregation addressed the Provincials, Vice Provincials and Province Secretaries on 1st and 2nd of March 2019 on various Religious Discipline issues.



5. Province Retreats

INM ANNUAL RETREATS 2019

| Retreat | Date | Venue | Preacher |
|---------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------|
| I | March 21 st – 26 th | Becchi, Kavarapettai | Fr. Charles Panackel SDB |
| II | March 27 th – April 1 st | DBYAC, Ennore | Fr. Amirtharaj Arokiam SDB |
| III | April 3 rd – 8 th | Mount DB, Kotagiri | Fr. Antonyraj Chinnappan SDB |
| IV | April 24 th – 29 th (for HMs/Principals and Conferees working in Schools) | Mount DB, Kotagiri | Fr. Sundararaj Francis SDB |
| V | May 1 st – 6 th (Retreat for Temp. Prof.) | Mount DB, Kotagiri | Fr. John Rosario SDB |
| VI | May 7 th – 12 th | Mount DB, Kotagiri | Fr. John Alexander SDB |

| | | | |
|------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------|
| VII | May 14th – 19th | DB Centre, Yellagiri | Fr. Arul Valan SDB |
| VIII | August – 4th – 9th (for Provincial Councillors, Rectors & Leaders) | Yercaud | Fr. Maria Arokiam Kanaga SDB |

6. YOUTH PASCH – CELEBRATING THE MYSTERIES WITH THE YOUNG

For us Salesians, Youth are our breath and they are the locus of living out our vocation to Sanctity. Maturation of faith of the young is one of our prominent commitments within our ministry. The Spirituality that animates us, that which we wish to share with the young, is the spirituality of Resurrection! Hence the place of Pasch in a Salesian's life and ministry is crucial. Celebrating this Pasch with the young is an ideal Salesian model of Youth Ministry.

In the Province of Chennai, though we have had in the recent past a few programmes of this nature, the regular feature of YOUTH PASCH was started in the year 2008 by Deepagam, the Province Catechetical Centre. After two years of this experiment, the then newly formed Province Youth Services joined hands with Deepagam in the organisation of this programme. Since then the programme has grown from strength to strength. The years 2016 and 2017 should be specially mentioned as the event was held in those years combining with the Province of Tiruchy.

A PRIVILEGED FORM OF YOUTH CATECHESIS

The experience of Youth Pasch has some salient features:

1. It has directly to do with the celebration of the liturgical season of Lent, specifically the Holy Week. "The season of Lent has a twofold character: primarily by recalling or preparing for baptism and by penance, it disposes the faithful, who more diligently hear the word of God and devote themselves to prayer, to celebrate the paschal mystery. This twofold character is to be brought into greater prominence both in the liturgy and by liturgical catechesis" directs the Conciliar Constitution. (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 109)
2. The event is a real time celebration of the liturgical triduum, as a live-in experience of young people chosen from the various places of the Salesian Ministry the Province or Provinces.
3. The result of the event every year has been an overwhelming feeling of having helped the youngsters understand a little deeper, the sense of the Paschal Mystery which lies at the heart of our faith.

The Theme of the event is finalized every year in keeping with the Strenna of the Rector Major for the year and the whole catechesis surrounds that theme. The Youth Pasch 2019 is around Jn 15:11, where Jesus says "So that my joy be in you." The Participants are Catholics between the age of 18 years and 30 years, willing to participate chosen with the written consent of the Parish Priest or a Salesian in-charge. The Scope of the programme is to deepen the sense of discipleship within the young.

The Objectives can be enumerated as follows:

To bring home to the young the centrality of the Paschal Mystery in the life and faith of a Christian.

To make the young participate with fervour in the Liturgy of the Holy Week, and understand the depth of significance it has to their lives.

To help the young realize the close relationship between Liturgy and life.

To enkindle in the young a taste for a Spiritual closeness to Christ and His mysteries.

To form Faith-leaders among the young who can be Witness of Christ's love to their peers.

To enable the young to arouse within them a conviction to live animated by a Spirituality of Resurrection, in their daily life.

The INM Province Youth Ministry Team and Deepagam, in collaboration with the Province of Tiruchy, will organize the Youth Pasch 2019 at Don Bosco, Keeranur, Trichy. It will begin on 17th April 2019 (Wednesday evening) and the participants are expected to be present by 6 p.m. The event will end on 21st April (Sunday) by 6.00 a.m. We expect every Salesian community, especially our parishes to send at least 2 youngsters to participate in it. The Regional Youth Directors will coordinate the whole event and contact you with further details. Let us use this opportunity to strengthen the faith experience of our youngsters.

7. REST IN PEACE - Rev. Fr. Enchyil Kuriakose SDB

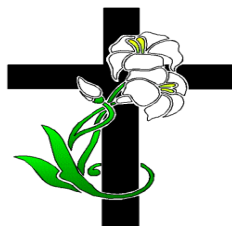


It was a shocking news for all of us on 20th February 2019 to hear the passing away of Fr. Kuriakose. It was so sudden that we are unable to digest his absence. His mortal remains were taken to Basin Bridge for the people to show their respects. It was consoling to see besides the large number of Salesians so many of the parish people were present for the Eucharist to pay homage to him. The next day morning his body was brought to Sacred Heart College,

Tirupattur. The Salesian community received his body and placed it in the Church. From 8.00 a.m. to 2.30 p.m. a continuous flow of Salesians, students, staff and workers came to pay their homage to Fr. Kuriakose. He was very much remembered for his simplicity, graceful acceptance of his old age, his friendly talks with workers, staff and students in the campus and his prayerful presence. The Bishop of Vellore Rt. Rev. Dr. Soundararaju sdb was the chief celebrant for the funeral mass. It was well attended by Salesians, Salesian family members, the relatives of Fr. Kuriakose, staff and students. After the mass the body was taken to the Salesian Cemetery in Don Bosco, Tirupattur, blessed and laid to rest.

Fr. Kuriakose as he was called was a very simple and lovable person. Most of his priesthood life was in the pastoral ministry as Parish Priest in many of our rural and city parishes. He was a very soft-spoken person and loved to be with the poor people. His primary aim was to speak the Good News and to bring people closer to God. He strived his best to always give a decent place of worship for the people whom he served. He would never hurt any person knowingly and during the last years of his life suffered silently due to his medical condition. But he never considered himself as a sick person! He was always willing to be of help as a Confessor and Spiritual Guide to those who came to him. From the life of Fr. Kuriakose and seeing the places where he rendered his pastoral ministry, we learn that he was always a Salesian with immense love for Don Bosco and the Holy Eucharist. He also sought to spread devotion to Mary Help of Christians by propagating various Marian practices in all the parishes he worked. We are sure that though his death was sudden, he was prepared, because he daily external exemplary life was a witness to his internal disposition. The Salesian Congregation has gained yet another intercessor in heaven! May he rest in eternal peace and joy.

Those of you who have lived with Fr. Kuriakose in our various apostolic institutions can write your personal experiences with him and send it to Fr. Antonyraj Chinnappan SDB, the Rector of Sacred Heart College, Tirupattur. This will be of immense help in the preparation of the Mortuary Letter.



Rest in Peace

Our heartfelt condolences to the Provincial and confreres of Kolkata Province at the passing of Rev. Bro. Mathew Thaiparambil SDB on 1st February 2019. He was 78 years old.

We express our deepest sympathies to the Salesian FMA (INM) Provincial and sisters at the death of Rev. Sr. Clara Jaganathan FMA (69) who passed away on 3rd February 2019.

Our prayerful condolences to the SMA Mother General and Sisters who lost their beloved Sr. M.G. Mercy SMA on 3rd February 2019.

Our deepest sympathies to Fr. Lourdusamy Antony SDB and his family members who lost their beloved mother Mrs. Antonymary (65) on the 6th of February 2019.

Our prayerful condolences to Fr. Regan Jude and his family members at the loss of his dear father Mr. Maria Susai (70) on 8th February 2019.

Conclusion



Lent is a gift of the Church to us for renewal. We can't reduce it to fasting and personal benefits. Lent is an opportunity to build the Church up, and a stronger community will result in stronger Mission and a stronger Society. Lent will be a wonderful season of grace for us if we give ourselves to it. And we will give ourselves to it if we want it badly enough. We need to prepare our hearts. We can do so by realizing how much we want to grow in freedom, how much we need to lighten our spirits and experience real joy, and how much some parts of our lives really need changing. Preparing our hearts is a process of preparing our desires. This means practicing a sense of anticipation. **If I imagine Lent as an "ordeal" or a time I dread in some way, then I've already predisposed myself to not get very much out of it.** Lent is a time to anticipate something wonderful that is about to happen.

Fr. K.M. Jose SDB
Provincial

Date: 02.03.2019

Place: Chennai - 600010