



INM-KMJ-CIR 26/04-2019

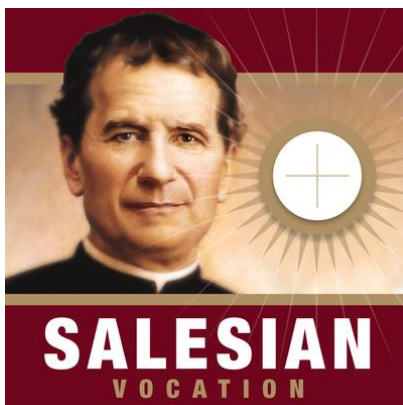
APRIL 2019

FORMATION not **FORMATTING**



My dear confreres,

Affectionate greetings to you from Citadel! As we near the conclusion of the Season of Lent and prepare ourselves for the Glorious Solemnity of Easter, Easter Octave and Eastertide, I thought it would be good to reflect on our Religious and Salesian **FORMATION**. One of the most prominent apparitions of the Risen Lord is the **Walk to Emmaus (Luke 24: 13-35)** where we see the formative accompaniment Jesus gives to the two disciples. This is the kind of Formation I envisage for us Salesians. Often, we think of Formation as only during the stages of **INITIAL** Formation (Aspirantate, Prenovitiate, Novitiate & Post Novitiate). The years of Practical Training and College-going students are also years of initial formation. After Perpetual Profession and Ordination, allowing a few years of ministry to pass by, occasionally, we may think of **ONGOING** Formation when we need to attend some spiritual courses or value-based seminars. In this Circular, basing myself on the *Ratio Fundamentalis*, with my personal interactions and past experience, I intend to deliberate on the fact that **Formation is actually a DAILY process** which motivates and inspires us in our consecration and mission right in the very heart of the community where we live and work with our confreres, our lay collaborators and also our beneficiaries.



WHAT IS SALESIAN FORMATION?

Formation is the joyful acceptance of the gift of one's vocation and its actualization at every moment of one's life and in every situation. Formation is a grace of the Spirit, a personal attitude, an education for life. A Seminary is an institution where young people who are training to be priests/religious live in an atmosphere that is helpful to growth of the total person - in the emotional, social, intellectual, moral and spiritual dimensions. "The first

Salesians,” our Constitutions say, “found their sure guide in Don Bosco. **Living at the very heart of his community in action, they learned to model their own lives on his.**”

Salesian formation means identifying oneself with the vocation which the Spirit has raised up through Don Bosco, possessing his ability to share it with others, and drawing inspiration from his attitude and method of formation. Don Bosco lived this vocation joyfully, aware that the gift he had received was to be communicated to others. He was able at every moment to evoke participation and sharing in responsibility. What was true for Don Bosco is true for every Salesian: **when the living out of one’s vocation is identified with one’s actual journey through life, it becomes the place of encounter between God’s initiative and human endeavour.** And again, for Don Bosco as well as for every Salesian, **one’s personal vocation is closely linked with that of the community, itself the bearer of the charism and responsible for the mission.** Don Bosco the Founder wanted a community of consecrated persons at the centre of his work, persons who would dedicate their lives entirely as educators and missionaries of the young, especially the poorest, living in fraternal and apostolic communities, and following Jesus in his obedience, poverty and chastity.

Conscious of his responsibility for the charism the Lord had entrusted to him, Don Bosco devoted himself to the formation of his first sons as his top priority. **“One cannot think of Don Bosco as a Founder without at the same time thinking of him as Educator.”** Formation was his “constant preoccupation and greatest endeavour, from the time of the Oratory when he chose from among his boys those who gave hope of eventually remaining with him, until the last years of his life when his insistent recommendation to Provincials, Rectors and all Salesians was to work earnestly for vocations and their formation.



JESUS AND HIS FORMATIVE PROCESS

Every believer of Jesus is his disciple and not just the ordained ones! But when Jesus initiated the Mission of establishing the Kingdom of God, and in order to accomplish His Mission, he took upon Himself the task of calling and training his disciples, to conscientiously form these men so that they would continue this mission after him, a task which the Church continues even to this day. Jesus played a vital role in the preparation of these men for the task ahead of them. In all the four Gospels, we see Jesus surrounded constantly by his disciples with whom he had a special relationship. He had great trust in them, although they were of simple and humble origins. He made these simple men his disciples and apostles in spite of their initial failures and frustrations.

Jesus called eleven ordinary fishermen and a tax collector. Let me briefly highlight some of the important features of the process adopted by Jesus in giving formation to his disciples.

Presence with Jesus

The physical presence of a master with his pupils is vital for formation. Their close presence with Jesus enabled them to observe every word and deed and learn from him directly. In this way the disciples became aware of the true identity of Jesus and how they should imitate him in their mission later.

Participation in Jesus's Ministry

In some of his mission initiatives, he involved the disciples too. The miracles of the loaves tell us that they were fully involved in the event.

Experimenting in His Mission

Proclamation of the Good News to people, accompanied with deeds of healing and exorcism were the essential factor such a mission. So, Jesus gave a tentative run for such a mission by sending them out two by two.

Instruction by Jesus

Proclamation of the message of the Kingdom by word of mouth has been an essential feature of the mission of Jesus. Some of his popular instructions have been the sermon on the Mount (Mt 5-7), the Seed parables (Mk 4 and Mt 13), parables of compassion (Lk 15). Although Jesus gave general instructions, he gave some special lessons to his own disciples like the explanation for the parable of the sower.

Discernment needed by disciples

The most important aspect of discipleship is that the disciple should know the Master and all his deeper sentiments and attitudes apart from his external teachings. Eventually, they would learn and even witness to the world that Jesus Christ was the expected Messiah!

Newness in Discipleship

Jesus' disciples should have their normal happy nourishment so long as Jesus was with them. The presence of Jesus with the disciples symbolizes the gratifying presence of a bridegroom with the bride. It is only in his absence they will be expected to go through a life of suffering and want.



THE CHURCH AND RELIGIOUS FORMATION

(Cf. *Ratio Fundamentalis*)

For the Church a formation that is of high quality and relevant to the times is the key to renewal and the vitality of vocations. While proposing it as a strategic priority and a constant commitment, the Church draws attention to the importance of certain elements: a clear identity with regard to vocation and charism, **a formation that is personal and at the same time shared with others,** the rapidly evolving human and cultural

context and an ongoing formation that keeps alive one's enthusiasm and fidelity in regard to one's vocation. Several recent documents offer criteria, guidelines and instructions for formation. Among them are the following: *Vita Consecrata*, *Potissimum institutioni*

(Directives on Formation in Religious Institutes), Inter-Institute Collaboration for Formation, *Pastores Dabo Vobis*, *Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis* (Basic Programme of Priestly Formation), and Directives on the Preparation of Educators for Seminaries.



THE ROLE OF THE COMMUNITY IN FORMATION

Don Bosco was not one to work all alone by himself; he sought the involvement of others and fostered collaboration and the sharing of responsibility. He was clearly aware that his vocation was meant to be shared and passed on to others. **The community aspect is therefore one of the most distinguishing marks of Salesian identity.** The Salesian is called to live with brothers who are consecrated like him in order to work together with them for God's Kingdom among the young. **"To live and work together,"** our Constitutions say, **"is for us Salesians a fundamental requirement and a sure way of fulfilling our vocation."**

In a spirit of faith and with friendly support the Salesian lives the family spirit in his community, contributing day by day to the growth of communion among all the members. **Convinced that the mission is entrusted to the community, he commits himself to work together with his confreres according to an overall plan and a joint strategy. In his community prayer he rejoices in the presence of the Lord and shares his spiritual experience with others.** Thus, **every Salesian in the community is a Formator and a Formee and strives always to fulfil both these functions more efficiently day by day.** Don Bosco's vocation developed in such a way that it became a shared vocation, a joint mission, an experience of holiness in a communion of gifts.

In his letter, with the incipit *Communis Vita*, dated 19 March 2019, Pope Francis notes that **"community life is an essential element of religious life"**, and that religious cannot leave the common life without permission from their superior. According to the revised canons, religious who have been "illegitimately absent" from their religious house for a full twelve months are dismissed *ipso facto* from their Institutes. This new regulation will go into effect on 10 April 2019. Thus, we very clearly see the imperative status of the role of the community in the formation, life and mission of the individual religious.

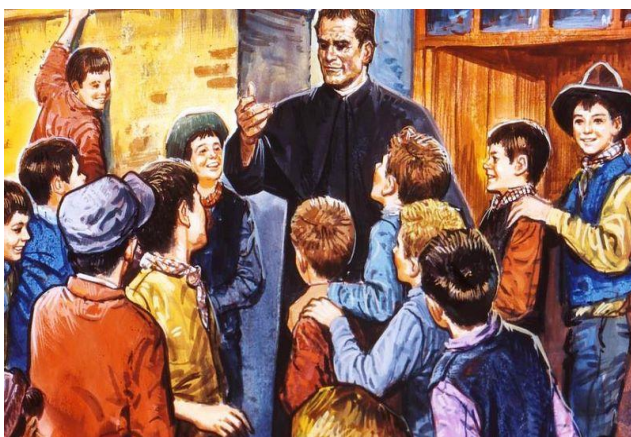
SALESIAN FORMATION AND THE SALESIAN FAMILY

From the beginning of the Oratory there were secular priests and lay people, men and women, taking part in his apostolate in a family environment and having the same spirit and goals. Still others felt they were a part of the Oratory and gave a helping hand in different ways in the work for the young. In this way Don Bosco's apostolic drive became the common undertaking of those who joined in his enterprises. **His zeal for souls, his style of approach to the young, his method of education and his spirituality** became the patrimony of a Family and of a vast Movement.



The Salesian cannot fully think about his vocation in the Church without reference to those who with him share in carrying out the Founder's will. **Through his profession he enters the Salesian Congregation and becomes part of the Salesian Family in which, together with the other members who are called to pursue different vocations,** he shares the spirit and mission proper to Don Bosco's charism, and the striving for fidelity through formation in common. He takes on the responsibility "to preserve unity of spirit and to foster dialogue and fraternal collaboration for mutual enrichment and greater apostolic effectiveness".

In the educative and pastoral community (EPC) the Salesian finds practical ways of expressing Salesian communion every day. That is where he shares the Salesian spirit, experiences the interdependence of vocations and roles, and carries out a programme of joint formation. Together with his Salesian community he fulfils his animating role by helping everyone to collaborate and share responsibility.



FORMATION AT THE SERVICE OF SALESIAN IDENTITY

The process of growth in one's Salesian identity is the determining factor of the whole approach to formation. In other words, what distinguishes our formation - which cannot be generic - is our Salesian identity: it spells out the tasks and fundamental requirements. The Constitutions assert that "**the religious and apostolic nature of the Salesian calling dictates the specific direction our formation must take**". To become a consecrated apostle like Don Bosco is the guiding principle of our process of formation.

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It is through formation, in fact, that we achieve our identity as Salesians and acquire the maturity needed to live and work in conformity with the founding charism. Starting out

from an initial state of enthusiasm for Don Bosco and his mission for youth, we arrive at a true conformity with Christ and a stronger identification with our Founder; **we embrace the Constitutions as our Rule of life and develop a strong sense of belonging to the Congregation, to the provincial community and to the local community.**

As a process of assimilating one's identity therefore, **formation is a lifelong task, a continuing process of being and becoming a Salesian in every phase of one's life and of living every situation in a Salesian way.** It is a response to a vocation that challenges us constantly. It is the responsibility of the Congregation and of each confrere. **In the reality of every day the Salesian turns his identity of apostle of youth into a living experience.**

FORMATION not FORMATTING



The goal of all formation is: learning to put Christ first in all things. This is very vital. Every confrere must cultivate a knowledge of, and a sense of belonging to, both, the Catholic Church and the Salesian Congregation. He must be ready for an ongoing formation that is reciprocal and carried out jointly and prepare himself for his responsibility as a future animator within the Salesian Family. Unlike

the four stages of formation that takes place in different places and at different times, during the Initial Formation, Ongoing Formation actually involves all these stages taking place simultaneously for each one of us every day of our lives, in the community we live.

Spiritual Formation

The Spiritual Formation of a Salesian is really the foundation of our life as a disciple of the Lord who desires to grow in holiness. **All of us have been taught the foundations of the richness of our Catholic Tradition and Spirituality** through the liturgy, the Eucharist, the Liturgy of the Hours (morning and evening prayer). Other popular devotions and traditional practices of piety include the daily Meditation, Rosary, Stations of the Cross, Adoration, Spiritual Reading should also be encouraged in the community. Every Confrere will have a **Spiritual Director and Confessor** thus providing him with affirmation and support while at the same time challenging him and asking him to grow deeper in his own spiritual life as he discerns God's will day after day in his life and work. The Rector will be available for the **'Friendly Chat'** for all the members of the community and also serve as the Spiritual Director for confreres in initial formation.

Human Formation

I would like to think of 'community' as the best place of "Human Formation" for us all. It's important that a consecrated Salesian is able to have good relationships with men and women of their own age, with their family, with their friends from before or work or school relationships and above all with their own confreres in every community they find themselves in with each passing year! **Human Formation also means that we live a healthy life, we get enough rest, we exercise on a regular basis and when necessary other special needs are also taken care of by the community.** Human formation is really concerned with someone's growth as a healthy individual. It even includes the integration of human sexuality so that we

are able to live as joyful, happy, fruitful and celibate Salesians. Obviously, the community helps us to pray and reflect upon how we can support each other in the church and in our ministry.

Intellectual Formation

Most of us have already spent sufficient years in ecclesiastical or secular studies. Those in initial formation will also have to undergo these years of intellectual formation. All the time we spent reading and reflecting on various subjects in the past, really gives us a well-grounded understanding, in the present, of our Church tradition in all of its depth and wisdom. **We need to remember, the habit of serious reading and reflection, needs to continue even today!** All of us need to deepen our understanding of the Salesian spirit and acquire a serious and **updated knowledge** of the history, spirituality and pedagogical and pastoral patrimony proper to our charism. Particular attention must be given to a **personal and community self-examination based on the Constitutions and Regulations**, since they enshrine the spiritual riches of the traditions of the Salesians of Don Bosco and define the apostolic project of our Society.

Pastoral Formation

Pastoral Formation is where someone's being trained to the different ministries of the Church. Throughout our Salesian Formation and Mission, we are given different placements (Obedience) through our annual transfers and appointments. The Salesian Mission is so vast that most of us experience a variety of pastoral works as we journey through our Salesian life. **Called to incarnate himself among the youth of a particular place and culture, the Salesian stands in need of an incultured formation.** Through discernment and dialogue with his own situation, he seeks to imbue his life's principles with evangelical and Salesian values, and to implant the Salesian experience in his own context. **Pastoral Formation is the way we carry out the mission entrusted to us, with docility, sincerity and pastoral charity, in a collaborative and all-inclusive spirit.**

Conclusion

All of us have gone through all four of these areas of the Religious and Salesian Formation, the prayer, the human growth, the intellectual and the pastoral formation. Some of us would have spent even 10-13 years in this formative phase! Let us not forget that **our past gives us a reminder of the growing expectations we place on the formation of the younger generation**, but also of the institutional and political environment in which such innovation is supposed to happen. Based on our own practical experiences, we can now understand the prime importance of the early years of our initial formation that helps us in our present times. Therefore, **we should be very conscious of the fact that every one of us will need to consciously live and create a formative environment even in the present time**, as, especially after our initial formation, all of us become formators and formees at the same time!

Finally, we need to ponder **Mt. 19:11-12** when the Church discerns whether the seminarian actually has a priestly vocation: *Not all can accept this word, but only those to whom that is granted. Some are incapable of marriage because they were born so; some, because they were made so by others; some because they have renounced marriage for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. This third and last category is the only one, true call to celibacy, and to Religious*

Life. Hebrews 5:4 also reminds us that, **“No one takes this honour upon himself but only when called by God, just as Aaron was.”** While Rectors, Leaders and Formators use these scriptures verses as guides in truly discerning if a candidate has a religious vocation, **those of us who have already made our Profession in the Salesian Congregation must not forget that we also were called by God, called to be a follower of Jesus Christ and called to be a faithful son of Don Bosco.** Certainly, it is not always a smooth pathway. Hence, **“LORD, AM I HERE?”** is the question we need to ask ourselves every day, constantly reminding ourselves the words we once expressed: **“HERE I AM LORD!”**

NEWS FROM THE PROVINCE



Bro. Meril Rodrigo Passes Away

Bro. Meril Rodrigo had come for the Provincial Chapter 2019 as Province Delegate. He was participating in it actively, when on the last day he was complaining of severe pain in the right leg and it was swollen badly. He had been having this trouble earlier and was eased out of it through medication. This time Fr. Provincial felt it would be good to consult a doctor and he was taken to Ayesha Hospital, where tests made by the Podiatrist of Hycare Section of the hospital revealed that pus had formed inside his right ankle and tissues also had been affected. Hence a surgery was made to remove the pus and affected tissues. He had to remain in the hospital about ten days and was discharged. Bro. Meril was brought to Citadel and an attendant from the hospital came daily to dress his wounds and was also given oxygen treatment to speed up the healing process. He was put on a strict diet and his wound was recovering gradually. He celebrated his birthday on the 10th of February and was in a very joyful mood.

However, the next day he started developing hallucinations, his speech was blurred, and his actions too were causing concern. So, he had to be readmitted in the hospital and was taken to the ICU. Several specialists attended on him. It was finally diagnosed that he was suffering from Sepsis (popularly known as blood poisoning) due to infection and his liver had been affected badly. His condition was so critical that the doctor advised us to inform the relatives. They came to see him in the ICU. After a few days Brother seemed to get out of the critical condition. He was speaking normally and was brought to the ward. In the meanwhile, he was developing another wound in his foot which had to be operated and cleaned. After he had recovered from his critical condition, he underwent this minor surgery. Meanwhile Brother continued to be treated for Sepsis, while all the previous symptoms of blurred speech and severe hallucinations returned. As a matter of fact, there were very few moments when he was normal. Both Salesian confreres and relatives visited Brother almost continuously. Doctors told us that the condition of Brother was not stable.

On 2nd of March he had eaten normally in the morning and afternoon. Bro. Joseph Das visited him as usual in the morning and found him continually talking, of course without being conscious of what he was talking, but otherwise he was in the usual condition. In the evening, the doctor visited him and tried to talk to him. One of his relatives and the attendant who looked after him was near him when Brother asked for some milk. The attendant just left to bring it, when his relative who was beside him found that Brother suddenly stopped talking and was lying still. She alerted the nurses who rushed to

the bedside. The doctor also rushed to the place and checked and found that Brother had silently passed away. As soon as news reached Citadel, Salesians from both Basin Bridge and Citadel rushed to the hospital. Since his body was still warm, he was anointed, though he had already been anointed when he was in the ICU. His body was taken to Citadel and was kept there. It was taken to Basin Bridge the next morning and mass was celebrated which was attended by a good number of Salesians, his relatives, members of the youth centre, friends and parishioners. Several paid their oral tribute to Brother. He was then taken to the DBYC Hall where special homage was organized by the members of the Youth Centre. Then the body was taken to Don Bosco Tirupattur where the Funeral Mass and burial took place. Here too several Salesians from Chennai, Tiruchy and Bangalore, relatives of Brother and his friends attended the service. Most Rev. Soundararaju Perianayagam, Bishop of Vellore, presided over the Eucharistic celebration and paid rich tribute to Brother who was very close to him during his life.

It is indeed very difficult to accept that Brother Meril is no more with us. The memory of his lively presence everywhere constantly haunts us. His ministry was mostly among the young in the youth centres where he had worked with zeal and won the hearts of the young. His pioneering work in Salem Anbu Illam amidst all the usual difficulties the pioneers faced was really praiseworthy. He had helped many of those rag pickers to rise from utter poverty to good positions in life, some even to affluence. This work will remain a constant tribute to the love and concern Brother had for the marginalized youth. He had also worked zealously at Don Bosco Centre at Sacred Heart College, Tirupattur amidst the drop outs from school. He assisted people in need to get admissions in various educational institutions. He was always cheerful and full of bubbling enthusiasm. He was a good religious faithful and punctual to the moments of prayer. His simplicity was proverbial.

It is a fact that he suffered a lot at the end of his life due to various complications. We are sure that the Lord has told him "You have done enough for me and my people. Now come and rest with me for all eternity." May his soul rest in peace.

INM EXTRAORDINARY VISITATION 2019

The Rector Major has appointed Rev. **Fr. Maria Arokiam Kanaga SDB**, General Councillor in charge of South Asia Region, as the **Extraordinary Visitor of INM for the Extraordinary Canonical Visitation of our Province**. We wholeheartedly welcome Fr. Maria Arokiam Kanaga and assure him of our full collaboration to ensure the success of this Extraordinary Visitation. The official appointment letter from the Rector Major, the letter from the Extraordinary Visitor to the confreres as well as the requirements for the Extraordinary Visitation are attached with this Circular.

SCHEDULE FOR INM EXTRAORDINARY VISITATION 2019 - FIRST PHASE

DATE			COMMUNITY	CONTACT DETAILS
May	18	Sat	REGIONAL ARRIVES IN INM	
May	19	Sun	Jolarpet Parish	Fr. Arulanandam Devasagayam - +919443423344
May	20	Mon	Jolarpet Parish	Fr. Arulanandam Devasagayam - +919443423344
May	21	Tue	Polur ITI	Fr. Paul Mark - +91 9787364004
May	22	Wed	Polur ITI	Fr. Paul Mark - +919486914627

May	23	Thu	SIHARAM, TV Malai	Fr. Michaelraj Lazar - +919445775817
May	24	Fri	SIHARAM, TV Malai	Afternoon to Pondy Parish for Perpetuals
May	25	Sat	Citadel	Provincial Council Meeting
May	26	Sun	SM Nagar Parish	Fr. Clement - +91944498924
May	27	Mon	REGIONAL LEAVES CHENNAI AND ARRIVES IN FUJAIRAH	
May	28	Tue	Fujairah	Fr. P. Sagayaraj - +971503324026
May	29	Wed	Fujairah	Fr. P. Sagayaraj - +971503324026

The schedule for the second and third phases of the Extraordinary Visitation will be made know to you in the next month's Provincial Circular. The Extraordinary Visitation will conclude by the end of November 2019.

In this connection, I would like to inform you that **Fr. Anbu Francis** has been appointed as the **Provincial Secretary** and he will accompany Fr. Maria Arokiam Kanaga SDB, during the Extraordinary Visitation of the Province. Since the Extraordinary Visitation commences from the 18th of May 2019, Fr. Anbu Francis will assume responsibility from **April 24th, 2019**. Therefore, for all information and communication with regard to the Extraordinary Visitation, kindly contact:

Fr. Anbu Francis (**Mobile: +919385201346**) **Email: secretary@donboscochennai.org**).

I thank Fr. Anbu for generously accepting to render this valuable service for the Province and we wish him a fruitful experience.

Fr. Dominic Matthews (Mobile: +918778234384 Email: inmsdb@gmail.com) will continue to assist as the Province Secretary.

PROVINCE EVENTS IN APRIL

03.04.2019 to 08.04.2019	RETREAT	Mount Don Bosco, Kotagiri
15.04.2019	PROVINCIAL COUNCIL	Citadel
24.04.2019 to 29.04.2019	RETREAT	Mount Don Bosco, Kotagiri
30.04.2019 to 05.05.2019	RETREAT FOR CLERICS	Mount Don Bosco, Kotagiri

150th MISSIONARY EXPEDITION

Our Beloved Rector Major invites Salesians to come forward and be generous to opt for the 150th Salesian Missionary Expedition to celebrate and remember the missionary zeal of Don Bosco and the generosity of the missionary Salesians. I wish to encourage confreres who feel that God is calling them to serve as a missionary, to come forward and respond to this invitation of the Rector Major.

VICE PROVINCE IN LUSAKA, ZAMBIA (ZMB)

We have received a request from the ZMB Vice-Province in Lusaka, Zambia, for perpetually professed Salesian personnel to work in different mission stations of the province. The Provincial of ZMB province expresses the need for perpetually professed confreres, Priests or Salesian Brothers who will give a hand in the communities' mission in different fields: – In oratories, schools (primary, secondary, technical, agricultural, and vocational), – with abandoned youth, – In formation (pre-novitiate, novitiate, or as a lecturer in post-novitiate [philosophy]) – In parishes. There is a great advantage of English as the official language. The Province is hopeful for the future as there are sufficient young Salesians in initial formation, but the present situation creates challenges with an inadequate number of perpetually professed confreres to carry out varied responsibilities and mission. Hence this request for confreres on the basis of a temporary contract, ad tempus, for three /two years to work in the province. Those interested can let me know as early as possible.

REQUESTS ALSO FROM SRI LANKA (LKC) AND ISRAEL (MOR)

There are also requests from the Vice Province of Sri Lanka for confreres to work in parishes, mission stations and in formation houses and from the Province of *Medio Oriente* (MOR). I personally request the confreres who are interested to volunteer to go as missionaries or to work on temporary contract for the above-mentioned requests.

DEAL (Don Bosco IAS Programme)

The Don Bosco IAS Programme, an initiative of DEAL is in its initial year of experimentation. The first batch of candidates, 15 in all from 4 Provinces, are earnestly getting ready for their prelim exams on 2nd June 2019 and then on for other consecutive exams depending on the success in each of the stages. Meanwhile the search for appropriate and deserving candidates for the second batch of Don Bosco IAS Programme is set to begin in June 2019. **Unlike the first batch, this time, candidates will be admitted from all the 11 Provinces in India.** The process of selection would involve an application, telephone interview and final selection in person if need be. The link for the application is given below. Anyone interested need to fill in the form and submit it. **The last date for applying is 27th April 2019.** For clarification and further info contact 9042465646 / 9871296791 or dealsdb.in@gmail.com. The link to access the application form is:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeWkVoaeQm971vhBhfryEwxBvPLjJfGD69F1oHGnkw9rfuzfw/viewform>

REST IN PEACE

Our sincere condolences to the Provincial and confreres of Kolkata Province at the passing away of **Rev. Fr. Anthony Thaiparambil SDB**. He pioneered the work with street children in India. Through his inspiring vision and decisive initiatives, he was able to rescue and rehabilitate thousands of children from the street and set them on the path to a purpose driven life, giving them hope and a home. May he rest in eternal peace.

Our heartfelt condolences to the following confreres and their families:

Mr. Alphonse (69), dad of Fr. Franklin Joseph passed away on 20th March 2019.

Mrs. Arokiamary (83), mother of Fr. Sebastian Vanathian died on 25th March 2019.



AN EASTER WISH

The climax of the Passion and Death was an Empty Tomb and a Resurrected Jesus! What message can we derive from the Empty Tomb? Jesus himself is recorded as providing that Easter message! When a lawyer asked him, “Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?” He goes on to narrate the parable of the Good Samaritan. (Luke 10: 25-37). Jesus concluded by asking the lawyer, “Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbour to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?” The lawyer replied, “The one who showed him mercy.” And “Jesus said to him, ‘**Go and do likewise.**’ Faith-based beliefs must also inspire just behaviour. **Consequently, eternal life is also about behaviour and not just only right belief!** During Easter, we give special attention to all that Jesus Christ has done to bless our lives. But what is it that He asks of us? The answer is a simple one—only three words—but it has the power to forever change our lives: ‘Come, follow me.’ Easter is therefore about “Do this, and you will live.”

Easter therefore is a story that didn't end with a closed tomb and a dead body but with an empty tomb and a resurrection. A story that shouldn't leave us unmoved. It should encourage us, as we realise that any struggles, we might have with our faith are no different to those experienced by the early believers. Sometimes we might wonder if it's all worth it. And then, into our moments of doubt walks Jesus and shows us his wounds and touches our hearts. If at that moment we will open our hearts to him then our lives will be empowered, as were those who listened to Peter's words. Easter is a story of release from fear and sin through the Cross and Resurrection, of empowerment, of the possibility of a new and real relationship with God.

I wish you a very Joyful Easter and pray that the peace of the Risen Christ dwell in you and in every community. May we imbibe the Formative Spirit of Jesus himself both in our own personal lives and radiate the same to our confreres and those around us. HAPPY EASTER!

Yours truly in Don Bosco,

Fr. K.M. Jose SDB
Provincial

Date: 01.04.2019

Place: Chennai 600010