



*Give us this day  
our daily bread  
Matthew 6:11*

My dear confreres,



I wish you a very happy feast of our Patron St. Thomas, the Apostle! Poor Thomas! He made one remark and has been branded as “Doubting Thomas” ever since. But if he doubted, he also believed! He made what is certainly the most explicit statement of faith in the New Testament: **“My Lord and My God!”** and, in so expressing his faith, gave Christians a prayer that will be said till the end of time. He also occasioned a compliment from Jesus to all later Christians: “Have you come to believe because you have seen me? **Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed**” (John 20:29).

Thomas’s character is outlined in The Gospel According to John. His devotion to Jesus is clearly expressed in John 11:5–16: when Jesus planned to return to Judaea, the disciples warned him of the Jews’ animosity (“now seeking to stone you”), to which Thomas soon replied, “Let us also go, that we may die with him.” At the Last Supper (John 14:1–7) Thomas could not comprehend what Jesus meant when he said, “I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also. And you know the way where I am going.” Thomas’s question “How can we know the way?” caused Jesus to answer, **“I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life.”**



As we begin the new month of July, I thought of reflecting with you on our “Trust in Divine Providence” quoting from the Lord’s prayer, **“Give us today our daily bread”**. All of us belong to the category of being blessed because we have not seen Jesus in the flesh, but still we believe. This belief is not just at an intellectual or emotional level, but ought to be very much at a practical level, on a day-to-day basis and the words **“Give us today our daily bread”** which we pray regularly during the day, should be our constant reminder that we are God’s children and that He will take care of us.

What does this request mean for those of us who don't worry much about putting food on the table? What truths are we missing as we slide over these words? Why do believers in a land of plenty need to ask for daily bread? The Greek word for bread, *arton*, used in this prayer represents that which is essential to sustain life. **When Jesus taught us to pray for "our daily bread," He was teaching us that God wants us to depend on Him for our everyday needs.**



### Dependence on the Community

"Daily Bread" refers not just to food but also to that which we need for basic comfort and well-being: clothing, shelter and other things necessary to support and continue our lives. God is active in every area of our daily activities—a lesson some of us forget because we don't have to struggle to survive. We need to remember that the money utilised in all our institutions varies significantly. Some communities think that if more money is collected, then we automatically have the right to spend more on ourselves and for our comfort. This kind of attitude must be shunned. "Give us today our daily bread" reminds us to reevaluate what is essential. When we pray this prayer authentically, we're asking God to allow us to reflect moderation and simplicity as we enjoy and acquire material things.



**We're praying for the basics, not the "extras."** Many people struggle for daily survival as opposed to our society's priority on long-term security. We, Salesians, tend to take our daily bread for granted and can at times become numb or indifferent to the reality of the less-fortunate living around our community! Only in the Lord's Prayer does this word for daily—*epiousion*—occur. It can be interpreted to mean **"sufficient for each day."** **Jesus is asking us to trust God for today's needs while we let go of tomorrow's anxieties.**

Throughout Scripture, God urges us to pray about our individual needs. Yet here, Jesus says to ask for "our daily bread"—not "my daily bread." What's the lesson here? **Jesus is calling us to identify with all people.** In the community of humanity, we are inextricably dependent on others. When we

pray this prayer, we are reminded to think about and pray for them, to love them as ourselves. **Our focus should not remain exclusively on our own needs and wants.**

This petition of the Lord's Prayer, then, teaches us to come to God in a spirit of humble dependence, asking Him to provide what we need and to sustain us from day to day. We are not given license to ask for great riches, but we are encouraged to make our needs known to Him, trusting that He will provide. Our Father has invited us to go to Him and ask Him for our daily bread. He will not fail to provide it.

### TRUSTING IN DIVINE PROVIDENCE



We ought then to conform to God's will in poverty and all the inconveniences poverty brings in its train. It is not too hard to do so if we fully realize that God watches over us as a father over his children and puts us in that condition because it is of most value to us. Poverty then takes on a different aspect in our eyes, for by looking on the privations it imposes as salutary remedies we even cease to think of ourselves as poor.

**If a rich man has a son in bad health and prescribes a strict diet for him, does the son think he has to eat small amounts of plain or tasteless food because his father cannot afford better?** Does he begin to worry about how he will exist in the future? Will other people think that because of his diet he has become poor? Everybody knows how well off his father is and that he shares in his father's wealth and he will again have what is now forbidden him as soon as his health is restored.

Are we not the children of the God of riches, the co-heirs of Christ? Being so, is there anything we can lack? Let it be said boldly: whoever responds to his divine adoption with the feelings of love and trust that the position of being children of God demands has a right, here and now, to all that God Himself possesses. Everything then is ours. **But it is not expedient we should enjoy everything. It is often necessary we should be deprived of many things.** Let us be careful not to conclude from the privations imposed on us only as remedies that we may ever be in want of anything that is to our advantage. **Let us firmly believe that if anything is necessary or really useful for us, our all-powerful Father will give it to us without fail.** To those gathered round to hear Him our Saviour said: *If you evil as you are, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father...?* (Luke 11:13)



This is an unquestionable truth of our holy faith, and any doubt about it, through lack of confidence on our part, can only be blameworthy and an insult to Christ who again and again made the most definite promises about the matter. ***Do not be anxious for your life, what you shall eat*** He tells us, ***nor yet for your body, what you shall put on.*** Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or gather into barns, yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are not you of much more value than they?... And as for clothing, why are you anxious? Consider how the lilies of the field grow; they neither toil nor spin, yet I say to you that not even Solomon in all his glory was arrayed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which flourishes today but tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more you, O you of little faith! Therefore, do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What are we to put on?', for after all these things the Gentiles seek; but your Father knows that you need all these things. **(Mt 6:25-32).** He has given His word and there is only one condition attached -- that we seek first the kingdom of God and his justice, that we make this search the one great aim of our lives by bringing everything else into relation with it to make it successful and fulfill our every duty with this end in view. In return for this He will unburden us of all anxiety, He will take upon Himself all our needs and the needs of those who belong to us or for whom we have to provide, and His care will be all the greater in proportion to the degree of confidence and surrender to His will we strive to attain.

Do we then for love of Him give up the desire to possess the perishable goods of this world? By virtue of another of Christ's promises these goods *a hundredfold*, as well as *eternal life*, are assured us in this life, and as a result we shall be rich while we are judged to be poor. Freed from the thirst for wealth, from the possession of it and the burden that accompanies it, we shall enjoy a peace and contentment unknown to those who, appearing to possess riches, are in reality possessed by them and cannot escape the cares they bring with them. In this way we shall experience the truth of St. Paul's words that *godliness has the promise of the present life as well as of that which is to come.* (1 Tim 4:8)

## SOME PRACTICAL WAYS TO MAKE OUR TRUST IN DIVINE PROVIDENCE MORE DISCERNABLE

Having reflected sufficiently on the Spiritual benefits of Divine Providence, we now need to give a solid foundation to the same at a very practical level. Given below are some ways by which every one of us can put into practice our personal trust in Divine Providence in our day to day lives. In doing so, we will be able to witness to each other and strengthen our own faith-lives as well as that of those with whom we come into contact with every day.

1. **Be simple and unpretentious in clothing.**
2. **Use public transport whenever and as often as possible.**
3. **Make our offices functional and simple so that the poor can feel comfortable to approach us.**
4. **Avoid the personal use of gold and costly gadgets.**
5. **Be content with the food served in our community, avoiding extravaganza and wastage.**
6. **Ensure that the young entrusted to our care get good and healthy food.**
7. **Simplify all our institutional and community festive celebrations and focus on improving the educative process.**
8. **Find concrete ways and means to let our beneficiaries know that the money we receive is used for the mission and not merely on ourselves.**
9. **Perceive the needs of people around us and look for ways to address their urgent problems.**
10. **An honest management of money will make us transparent and accountable.**

## NEWS FROM THE PROVINCE

<b>INM MEETINGS IN JULY 2019</b>		
<b>1</b>	<b>Mon</b>	<i>Quinquennium</i> Priests Meet – Starts at 9 a.m.
<b>2</b>	<b>Tue</b>	<i>Quinquennium</i> Priests Meet – Ends at 12.30 p.m.
<b>3</b>	<b>Wed</b>	<b>Feast of St. Thomas: Province Feast &amp; Jubilee Celebrations @ DB Centre, Yellagiri Hills / PROVINCIAL COUNCIL</b>
<b>12</b>	<b>Fri</b>	<b>RIP Remembrance Mass @ 11.15 a.m. for Fr. M.M. Anthony SDB in Don Bosco Tirupattur</b>
<b>13</b>	<b>Sat</b>	<b>1950-1970: First Profession Batch Meet</b>
<b>14</b>	<b>Sun</b>	<b>1950-1970: First Profession Batch Meet</b>
<b>20</b>	<b>Sat</b>	<b>1971-1980: First Profession Batch Meet</b>
<b>21</b>	<b>Sun</b>	<b>1971-1980: First Profession Batch Meet</b>
<b>27</b>	<b>Sat</b>	<b>1981-1989: First Profession Batch Meet</b>
<b>28</b>	<b>Sun</b>	<b>1981-1989: First Profession Batch Meet</b>
<b>29</b>	<b>Mon</b>	<b>GC Delegates Meet @ Chennai</b>
<b>30</b>	<b>Tue</b>	<b>GC Delegates Meet @ Chennai</b>
<b>31</b>	<b>Wed</b>	<b>SPCSA Council Meet</b>

## RETREAT FOR RECTORS/LEADERS/COUNCIL MEMBERS

The **Annual Retreat** for all our INM Rectors/Leaders and Provincial Council Members will be held at **The Retreat, Yercaud** from **August 5<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup>**. Kindly make arrangements to reach Yercaud yourself and to be present on the **4<sup>th</sup> evening by 7 p.m.** The Retreat will be preached by **Rev. Fr. Maria Arokiam Kanaga SDB**, our Regional.

## **INM EXTRAORDINARY VISITATION**

The Second Phase of the INM Extraordinary Visitation begins immediately after the conclusion of the Annual Retreat. The Time Table has already been sent to you and is also attached with this Circular. **Rectors/Leaders kindly make sure that all the required documents are ready and up-to-date.** Kindly contact the **Provincial Secretary, Fr. Anbu Francis (+919385201346)** for any information or assistance.

## **SALESIAN COOPERATORS INM & FMA ASC DELEGATES' MEETING**

Keeping in line with the forthcoming GC 28 and our own PC 2019 Deliberations, we have to enhance our Salesian mission with the lay participation and active involvement. Our INM province has already taken giant strides towards this goal. One such visible enterprise is our own Salesian Cooperators, who were very close to the heart and mind of Don Bosco himself. There are 18 SDB Units and 8 FMA Units who are active and are very contributive towards our Salesian mission. In order to revitalize the existing Cooperators Units, there will be a JOINT meeting of all the SDB & FMA DELEGATES of both INM Provinces. This meeting will be held on **JULY 13th 2019 (Saturday), from 9.00 a.m. to 1 p.m., at The Citadel**, Don Bosco Provincial House, Chennai-10. I request all the SDB Delegates of our Province to attend the meeting with enthusiasm. The details of the meeting will be communicated to you by the INM Province Coordinator Mr. Aseervatham through email soon. The list of the DELEGATES is attached with this Circular.

## **Fr. SAVIO SILVEIRA SDB is the NEW PROVINCIAL of INB**

Rev. Fr. Angel Fernandez Artime, our Rector Major has appointed **Fr. Savio Silveira SDB** as the Eleventh Provincial of the Province of Mumbai (INB) for the period of six years 2019 – 2025. Fr. Silveira was born on 8 December 1966 in Panjim, State of Goa, India. After attending the Salesian Novitiate in Nashik, he made his first vows on 31 May 1985 and perpetual vows on 25 May 1992, in Mumbai. He was ordained a Priest on 21 December 1995. We extend our hearty wishes to Fr. Silveira, the Provincial-Elect and wish him God's blessings and accompaniment as he takes up this great task of leading the Mumbai Province. Fr. Savio Silveira will assume office on **12 September 2019** at the Shrine of Don Bosco's Madonna, Matunga in Mumbai.

## **REST IN PEACE – REV. FR. M.M. ANTHONY SDB**

It was indeed a shock for all of us when we received the sad news of the sudden demise of Fr. M.M. Anthony. He had gone home for a few days and passed away in the early hours of 20<sup>th</sup> June 2019 due to a massive cardiac arrest. The body was brought straight to Don Bosco Tirupattur for the funeral mass and burial on 21<sup>st</sup> June 2019. I quote here from the sermon that Fr. K.P. Paul delivered at the funeral mass:



Fr. M.M., as he was fondly known as, was a very practical man. **He had even put down clearly on paper how the celebration of his funeral should take place!** He wanted the altar should be decorated with white flowers and the pascal candle should be lit, indicating that the celebration should take place revealing the reality of resurrection. He had also selected the hymns which were to be sung for his funeral and they carry a theme of healing surrender and freedom, to say that for a Christian death is the final freedom. He had also chosen the readings to be used for his funeral mass. We all know Fr. M.M. as an evangelizer who worked with zest and enthusiasm to bring the good news of Christ through his preaching ministry and through the print media by publishing innumerable books. By suggesting the readings of the mass, he is telling us that even his death and funeral should be a moment of evangelization, bringing the message of Christ to all.

Fr. M.M. had held many responsible positions in the Province during his life time, bringing the mercy and love of God to so many especially the poor and abandoned young people through the touch of the Salesian loving kindness. He saw the preciousness and goodness in them as Don Bosco taught us. **His remarkable sense hospitality and readiness to help, at times to the point of recklessness, was the reflection of the love of the Good Shepherd. As a dedicated Salesian priest and religious Fr. M.M. worked with passion for the good of souls. One of the qualities that, his friends, appreciated in him was his sense of self-sacrificing hard work. He has carried it through into his priestly and Salesian mission.**

The Gospel reading that Fr. M.M. chose for his funeral mass was, “I am the vine you are the branches and my father is the gardener.” The reading takes us to an agricultural setting of the vineyard, the vine dresser, the pruning, the fruits etc. Through this agricultural symbolism Fr. M.M. wants to remind us of his own close connection with nature. We all know he had great taste for gardening. During his novitiate, Philosophate and Theologate, he was in charge of the garden and under his care the garden produced lovely flowers. He has now returned to the embrace of Mother Earth inviting us to love and to take care of our common home. The reading also signifies the deep intimacy and connectedness that every Christian enjoys with Christ. “I am the vine you are the branches. Remain in my love.” As Fr. M.M. has completed his return trip home, **we also appreciate his sense of deep rootedness in the Lord. Though a man of vibrant activity and zeal, he was also deeply spiritual. His passionate love and devotion to Mary help of Christians guided him through his pilgrimage in this world.** As we continue to pray for the repose of the soul of his departed soul, let us ask the Lord that his life may be an inspiration for us to witness to the Risen Lord in our own daily life with enthusiasm and joy.

I thank the Vice Provincial, the Rector and community of Don Bosco, Tirupattur, and all the Salesians, Salesian Family Members, Friends and well-wishers of Fr. M.M. who rendered their services in bidding a solemn farewell to this faithful son of Don Bosco.

#### **Eternal Rest Grant Unto Them O Lord...**

**Rev. Fr. Jose Thiruthanathy SDB (ING)** passed away on June 7<sup>th</sup> 2019. Our prayers and condolences to the Provincial and confreres of Guwahati Province.

**Mrs. Annamary (94)**, mother of Fr. Solomon Kulandaisamy went to her eternal reward on June 12<sup>th</sup> 2019. Our heartfelt sympathies and prayers to the bereaved family members.

**Mrs. Thilagavathy (87)**, mother of Fr. Samson David died on June 15<sup>th</sup> 2019. Our heartfelt sympathies and prayers to the bereaved family members.

**Rev. Fr. Bernard Luciano Fernando SDB (LKC)** passed away on June 18<sup>th</sup> 2019. Our prayers and condolences to the Provincial and confreres of Sri Lanka Province.

**Mr. Rayappan (60)**, father of Bro. Melvin Roy died on 20<sup>th</sup> June 2019. Our heartfelt sympathies and prayers to the bereaved family members.

**Mrs. Natchatiram Mary (82)**, mother of Fr. John Bernard, passed away early today, 1<sup>st</sup> July 2019. Our heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family members and prayers for the dear departed.

#### **Conclusion**

Life may not often be easy, but God is always good! His love for us is both unfailing and unconditional. He is infinitely compassionate and benevolent. God cares for us so much that he has obligated himself to help us endure our afflictions, to produce goodness from them, and to resolve them as He deems best. God’s commitment is summarized in a promise He first made centuries ago. The promise—God will surely come to your aid—applies to every person who earnestly seeks Him. In surrendering ourselves to be like “a little pencil in the hand of a writing God,” as Mother Teresa said, and not worrying about human measures of success, we can follow the example of our Father Don Bosco who

effected great change in both society and the individual lives of those whom he served. **The saints never worked for their own sake, but simply did the work they were guided to do by Providence.** To echo the words of Don Bosco, "I have done nothing by myself. It is the Virgin Mary who has done everything.

If certain situations seem to us incomprehensible, if we cannot see the reason why particular circumstances and creatures make us suffer, it is because we do not see the place, they occupy in the plan of divine Providence in which everything is ordered for our ultimate good. Yes, even suffering itself is ordered for our good, and God, who is infinite goodness, neither wills nor permits it except for this purpose. **We believe all this in theory but we easily forget it in practice, so much so, that when we find ourselves in obscure, painful situations which upset or interfere with our plans and wishes, we are disturbed and our lips formulate the anguished question: "Why does God permit this?"** However, the answer, as universal and infallible as divine Providence itself, is always the same: God permits it solely for our good. We need to be firmly convinced of this so that we may not be scandalized by the trials of life. **"All the ways of the Lord are mercy and truth, to them that seek after His covenant and His testimonies"** (Psalm 25:10); we can mistrust ourselves, our goodness and our faithfulness, but we cannot mistrust God who is infinite goodness and faithfulness.

Yours truly in Don Bosco,

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

Date: 01.07.2019  
Place: Chennai - 600010