

INM-KMJ-CIR 30/08-2019

THE GOLDEN RULE

AUGUST 2019



My dear confreres,

As we begin the month of August, when we recall to mind the **Solemnity of the Assumption of Our Lady (15th)**, the **Birthday of Don Bosco (16th)** and the **Queenship of Mary (22nd)** together with our **Independence Day**, I thought of reflecting with you on **THE GOLDEN RULE** and to see how each one of us, in our own way, can make our own communities a happier place to live and work together, eventually benefitting our Church and our Country.

The Golden Rule is the ethical principle of treating other people as one's self would prefer to be treated. One of Jesus' most famous and impactful teachings, the Golden Rule can be found in the Bible verses **Matthew 7:12** and **Luke 6:31**: "**So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you**, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets." The Golden Rule is short, succinct and powerful and is not explicitly found in Scripture; this became the popular way of referring to the words of Jesus in Matthew 7:12 and Luke 6:31. In summary, the Golden Rule encompasses a simple yet powerful way of saying that we should recognize the respective dignity of everyone. Don't we all respond to genuine concern and compassion? We can show our young people very early on how to be a blessing to others just by smiling and being pleasant. They will learn how exercising empathy brings joy and hope not just to others, but also to ourselves. When we are being our best selves according to God's design and example, we increase our chances of making connections and being a true witness. When young people see us act and react, they are learning valuable lessons, and these tiny, crucial teaching moments have eternal impact. Thus, the *Golden Rule* and or *The Great Commandment* are not cliché, but simple and powerful marks of obedience and love.

RESPECT: THE FOUNDATION OF THE GOLDEN RULE

The human heart is inherently selfish. Even our most seemingly unselfish acts come from a desire to feel good about ourselves and look good before others. While people may appear to be unselfish, the deepest motive of the human heart is not to help others but to help our own image and self-esteem. God sees the heart, and knows its true motives (Matthew 7:11; Jeremiah 17:9), so when Jesus tells people to treat others as they would like to be treated, He is speaking directly to the deepest feelings of the heart and confronting its wickedness.

Something interesting about the Golden Rule is its proactive, positive quality. Other religions, including Confucianism, Buddhism and Hinduism, contain similar commands:

Hinduism: "This is the sum of duty: do not do to others what would cause pain if done to you" (*Mahabharata* 5: 1517).

Confucianism: "Do not do to others what you do not want them to do to you" (*Analects* 15:23).

Buddhism: "Hurt not others in ways that you yourself would find hurtful" (*Udana-Varga* 5:18).

However, what human being has a heart like His? **Do we naturally seek to do good to our fellow men, entirely unselfishly?** We do not. The wonder of God's work in the heart is that He puts His own love for humanity in our hearts for one another. John reminds us that "*No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us*" (**1 John 4:12**). What this means is that when we love each other, we glorify God and His image can be seen in our love, which is ultimately His love. **This command to love makes Christianity unique when compared to every other religious system.** In fact, the Bible is so radical in its command to proactively love that Christians are told to love even their enemies. (Matthew 5:43-44; cf. Exodus 23:4-5).



The most practical and visible fruit of love, is RESPECT. Sometimes, a person who wants respect is simply asking for tolerance! The minimal definition of tolerance is a state where one has the power to punish, restrict, or make something difficult but consciously chooses not to. Thus, I may tolerate the barking of a dog even if I have the ability to stop it. **Respect and tolerance are not synonyms;** tolerance is a very minimalist attitude whereas respect involves something more active and positive. You can think very negatively about something you tolerate, but there is something contradictory about thinking

very negatively about the exact same thing you are also respecting. Thus, at the very least, **respect requires that one have positive thoughts, impressions, or emotions.** Whether between conferees, co-workers, friends, or just acquaintances, if there is a history of mutual respect and sincere gratitude, the people involved are generally happier and more successful.

We live in a world where there are many differences between people, but we, consecrated persons, with an open mind and an appreciation of each one, we can strengthen our relationships and our community. Thus, I strongly believe everyone should make it a habit to look for the unique talents of every person we meet and be respectful of their differences because if there is no mutual respect, no matter how successful we may be, eventually we will fail and the mission will fail.

WHY IS THE GOLDEN RULE IMPERATIVE?

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in Paris in 1948. **Its goal was to grant status worthy of respect to all human beings everywhere.** No human being is exempt. One of the characteristics of a civil society is the showing of respect to fellow citizens. The conviction that other members of a family, a town, a city, a nation, or a region of the world are worthy of respect. Thus, showing respect for human life and human beings is fundamental to a civil society and civil world. **When we respect others, it affirms their right to respect and their worthiness of respect.** On the other hand, when we withhold respect from others, we imply they are unworthy of it. This can trigger a decline that is exceedingly difficult to arrest and end. Once it is generally believed that a certain race or ethnic group or nationality or skin colour or gender or age is unworthy of respect, the flood gates open for abuse. We've seen this many time in the past two centuries in particular. **The natural and logical outcome of the removal of respect from particular classes is first rejection, then discrimination, then abuse, and ultimately genocide.** It starts with a lack of respect. It's another reason why respect should be common among all peoples everywhere, and why respect is so important.





When someone is living in a way that brings them recognition, honour, and respect, it encourages their living that way. Not always, but usually. Behaviour that's rewarded tends to be repeated. Or, put another way, "What's rewarded gets done." Whether we wish that behaviour worthy of respect would be common without encouragement misses the point. It's simply human nature to do what gets rewarded and shy away from what doesn't. **Being respectful provides a solid foundation for relationships.**

There should be serious reluctance to maintain a relationship that does not offer respect. People don't like to be treated badly. People don't like to be demeaned, devalued, dishonoured, and disrespected. If a relationship lacks respect, it is almost certainly an unhealthy one. **Toxic relationships nearly always have a lack of respect as a common element.** Meaningful, healthy, and mutually-beneficial relationships show mutual respect. It's fundamental.

Respect is so basic to human well-being that in its absence, people don't thrive. They don't need to have respect from everyone – but there are certain people from whom respect is virtually mandatory. The father of Modern Psychiatry, William James said, "**The deepest principle in human nature is the craving to be appreciated.**" **Those who are not appreciated do not feel respected.** But before we respect others, we first need to respect ourselves!!!

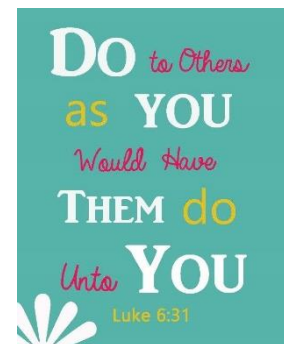
RESPECTING YOURSELF

Each and every one of us should first learn to be honest with ourselves! A vital key to self-respect is knowledge. In order to be your best, you must feel your best. Part of learning self-respect involves respecting the beliefs of others. Knowing and exercising good manners and proper conduct will make you feel good about yourself, and, in return, others will respect you for the same. Learning to accept personal responsibility for your own conduct is part of being a respected person which involves taking responsibility for your own actions. We need to also learn when and how to apologize. Accepting responsibility involves formally apologizing for wrongdoing and striving to make amends. We also need to learning to understand and learn to emulate those who are good influences and ignore those who are bad influences.

The Biblical Perspective of Respect

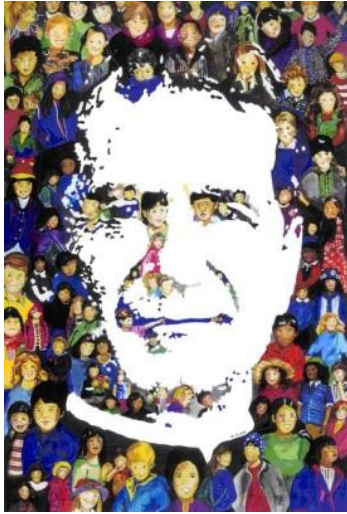
Christians are to be a people of order and discipline, of righteousness and justice. We are to be dynamic examples of love and peace so that others may be won to Christ and be saved for eternity (Matthew 5:14–16). **Part of living as examples of Christ before the watching world is showing respect to others.**

The Apostle Peter summarizes the Bible's teaching on respect in his first Epistle: "**Show proper respect to everyone: Love the brotherhood of believers, fear God, honour the king**" (1 Peter 2:17). This passage encompasses four major areas of our lives, teaching us that, as followers of Christ, we should respect all men, other Christians, God, and governmental authorities. The word respect is a translation of the Greek word *timēsate*, meaning "honour or value." It literally means "to place a great value or high price on something." Interestingly, today we tend to place our values on our personal rights and the equality of man. However, Biblical respect is far different, more about a perceived inequality in that we recognize that some things and some people are more important than we (compare Philippians 2:3).



To respect everyone, believers must be conscious that God has created all people in His image, regardless of whether they believe in Christ. We should show them proper respect and honour because their souls are of more value than all the wealth in the world (Luke 10:33–34; 1 Corinthians 10:33). Loving means to love all, regardless of colour, nationality, opinions, or affiliations. We are to

demonstrate to the world that we love our brothers and sisters in Christ. The Apostle John wrote of this principle a number of times. Quoting Jesus, he writes, *“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another”* (John 13:34–35; cf. 15:12; 1 John 3:23).



The Salesian Perspective of Respect in the Community and Mission

Don Bosco, being a man of Christian faith, saw life and young people from a Christian perspective. He believed in the innate goodness and dignity of every person, made to the image of God, unconditionally chosen and loved by a God who is love. **We strive to build a community that recognises and promotes the rights and dignity of each person both in terms of their humanity and in the Christian understanding of the person.** “Jesus says: ‘I have come that you may have life and have it to the full’ (Jn. 6:14).

We commit ourselves to engaging with the young person in terms of their spiritual needs and meaning / purpose in life. Don Bosco’s own Christian faith and upbringing in life provided him with the strength and motivation to meet and accept each young person with a loving heart and the gift of hope. Like Don Bosco we take every opportunity to open ourselves to the source of inspiration he found in the person of Jesus as we journey with the young person and his life story. We accompany the young people with a love and understanding based on their needs; an acceptance that facilitates the young person’s confidence; a relationship that instills a sense of inward security and supports his growth as a human being and as a faith-filled person. ‘

“Educators should be convinced that young people are intelligent by nature, and can recognise the good that is done to them personally, and at the same time they are gifted with good hearts which are readily open to gratitude” (Don Bosco). **We accept young people as they are. We explain clearly the reasons behind the rules/boundaries, our requests, demands, expectations, motives and plans while respecting the young person and his opinion even when it is different.** There is no place here for harsh rules, harsh punishments or threats, even in the face of the most challenging of behaviours. We believe that open and honest communication is at the heart of the approach taken in our work with the young people and with each other. **We actively seek to involve the young people as much as possible in all aspects of living, through consultation, interdependent responsibility for decision making and helping them to take responsibility for their actions.**

‘Every Salesian should make a point of getting to know the young people in their care, of informing themselves of their previous history and should show themselves to be their friend’ (Don Bosco). We engage with each young person from the moment they enter our care, getting to know them, building on their interests, engaging them in activities and games, inviting them into a relationship of trust while recognising and planning for the challenges this brings. We try to be emotionally available for young people at all times. We give time and energy to tuning into and trying to understand the young people, so that they may understand themselves. We seek to use daily interactions to create and respond to opportunities to engage with them in ways that promote healing and growth. *‘Young people are the most precious yet vulnerable part of society’* (Don Bosco).

We work to make each of our houses a home, a setting which is warm, friendly and respectful, that nurtures a sense of belonging, offers security, builds positive relationships marked by empathy and respect and promotes opportunities for genuine engagement between the young person and those involved in their lives, including their own families as appropriate. Everyone has a basic human need to belong, to be in a place where they matter and feel wanted. We strive to help the young person to

attach himself to the community so that for the first time he may begin to trust and leave behind any sense of alienation. We use community meetings to involve both confreres and young people in decisions about the community and mission. **We believe that healthy respectful relationships are at the core of the work in helping young people achieve emotional and personal growth.**

SOME PRACTICAL WAYS TO SHOW RESPECT FOR OTHERS

One of the best ways to show respect for someone is to truly listen to another's point of view.

Obviously, we'll not always agree with one another on every topic (and you should never adopt a point of view with which you do not agree), but we should allow each other to have and express their own views, regardless of whether we agree with them or not. This is very important during our community discussions, our meetings with the teachers, staff, parish council, etc. Listen! I know it sounds easy, but listening, truly listening, can be one of the hardest skills to master!

Listening to what another person has to say is a basic way to respect them. Everyone wants to have their say. Everyone wants to feel that they're being listened to. Whether they have something profound to say is not the point. People want to be heard. **When you give another person your time and your focus and your ear, you validate them,** which conveys respect. All social change begins with dialogue. Therefore, until you listen to another person's concerns, you will not know who they are and what's important to them. Respect begins with listening.



Affirming the other person is also a very good way of respecting them. When we affirm someone, we're giving evidence that they matter. That they have value. That they're important. And that they're worthy of respect. Simply affirming someone virtually guarantees that you respect them. **To affirm someone, you just have to notice something positive about that person and verbalize this observation.** You may not respect every aspect of who they are and what they do, but you can give them appropriate respect at the level that affirms them. Affirmation is a key way of showing respect to others.

Being of service to others is a very practical way of letting the other person know that we respect him or her. The English-American poet W.H. Auden once said that, "We are all here on earth to help others; what on earth the others are here for I don't know." **Life on earth is about serving others.** In fact, our consecration, our qualifications and our positions should revolve around a desire to serve others. To give back to others. To use our talents and abilities to make life better for others. Serving shows that we care. And caring shows that we respect. **Serving is an important element in showing respect.**

Being Kind to one another is not just an elementary exhortation but a central element in our show of respect for others. Though kindness and service are first cousins, they aren't identical. **We can serve without being kind. But it's very difficult to be kind without serving.** When we're kind to someone, we're giving of ourselves. We're giving something they can use. Maybe something they need. Maybe something they need desperately. **Kindness is an expression of respect.** Respect for the fact that someone else is simply in need. We have all been in need. And what a relief it was when someone showed us kindness. **Kindness is a tangible way of showing respect.**

Being Polite is a fundamental requirement in today's world. It's appalling to witness the decline of politeness in the modern world and perhaps even in our own Salesian communities. Whether it's in the playground, or classroom, or in our community formal and informal meetings, a polite discourse and interaction is rapidly becoming a lost art. Yet, it's so easy to be polite. And it's so inexpensive too. **An act of politeness can literally change a person's day.** It can even change a person's life. It can lift

their spirits instantly. It can help them press on through what may be difficult. **If you want to show respect for someone, start by being polite.**

Being Thankful will not hurt anyone! If William James was right, that human beings crave appreciation, then thankfulness is the way we affirm it. When someone does something for you that's beneficial, or they say something to you that's helpful in some way, or they honestly affirm you in some way that's important to you, you should thank them. Again, thankfulness is becoming increasingly rare in our world. You may help your confreres in many ways that I'm certain was valuable to them. Yet it is possible that you hear nothing in the way of thanks! It's not so much that we need to be thanked. It's that we want to feel that what we've done has made a difference. **When there is no thankfulness for something we've done, or even for who we are, we feel a lack of respect.** Respect doesn't always require thankfulness. But it often does. It's just another way we show respect. It's just another way that we feel respected.

My humble appeal to each of you is to basically respect every human being, our fellow confreres, the teachers, non-teaching staff, the domestic staff, the parents, the government officials, even the people who approach us for some financial help. In short, every person whom we meet must get a positive feeling that this Salesian is full of God's grace for he respects people, loves people, promotes people and is genuinely concerned about the growth of people. Basically, people who are deeply spiritual will be a natural positive energizer. This is the magnetic attraction of Don Bosco. The sons and daughters of Don Bosco are called to pass on this beautiful legacy of respect for every person. In fact, this is the basic right of every person.

NEWS FROM THE PROVINCE

INM ORDINATIONS - 02.08.2019

We congratulate our three newly ordained priests: **Pravin Joseph, Albert Kumar and Pushparaj**. We accompany them with our prayers as they enter the Priestly Ministry with Joy and Gratitude. I thank our Salesian communities in Broadway (F.X. Parish and Refuge) for the arrangements and the Vice Provincial with his team for planning the Ordination ceremony.

RETREAT FOR RECTORS/LEADERS/COUNCILLORS

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

INM EXTRAORDINARY VISITATION 2019

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.

TNPCRI ANNUAL ASSEMBLY OF MAJOR SUPERIORS AT TINDIVANAM

On the 1st & 2nd of August 2019, the TNPCRI met. The main theme these two days was: **Religious Leadership: Towards Progressive Empowerment**. Other sub-themes included: From Exploitation and Alienation to Reconciliation and Relationship with our Mother Earth, Current Challenges for the Educational and Religious Institutions, Celebrating Youth Year 2020 in the Light of *Christus Vivi* and a General discussion on the New Education Policy Draft.

SEMINAR ON NEW EDUCATION POLICY

I thank the Vice Provincial for organizing a seminar on the “New Education Policy” in Citadel on the 27th July 2019. Many experts having gone through the new policy in detail and have suggested a number of modifications in the new draft. Let us pray that the Government will take into consideration the valuable suggestions from the perspective of the poor and marginalized sections of our society, offered by the Christian community who have and continue to make significant contribution for the development of education in India. I thank all our Salesians and lay collaborators from different communities, who took time off their daily routine and participated actively in this dissemination process. As the government has extended the response to the draft, may I request all of you to send your personal response, comments and suggestions to nep.edu@nic.in before the 15th of August.

GC 28 – SOUTH ASIA DELGATES MEET

The South Asian Delegates of the 28th General Chapter gathered in Citadel on the 29th and 30th of July for an intense preparation and animation for GC 28. Rev. Fr. Maria Arokiam Kanaga SDB, the Regional, facilitated the meeting. On the 31st of July the SPCSA council met at Citadel.

GOLDEN JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS

We sincerely thank the Rector and community of Don Bosco Centre, Yellagiri Hills for hosting the Province Jubilee celebrations on 3rd July 2019. I am also grateful to the Vice Provincial and the other Salesians who organized this memorable event.

INT & INM SALESIAN BROTHERS MEETING

On the 23rd and 24th of August 2019, the Salesian Brothers of INT and INM will gather for a two-day animation program at the Citadel. The program will soon be sent to the Brothers.

INM BATCH MEETINGS

This year we have already completed two batch meetings: 1950-1970 and 1971-1980. I thank the Vice Provincial for arranging the resource persons and for animating the discussions. All the confreres felt at home and were happy to participate in this meaningful process of ongoing formation. Kindly see the August month Program for the forthcoming batch meetings and be present.

Meeting of INM PTs & College Brothers

On the 17th and 18th of August 2019, the College-going students and the Practical Trainees will have their Annual Meeting in Citadel. The program will be sent to you soon. Rectors/Leaders kindly make sure that our young confreres attend this animation program.



ANDAMANS: Affiliation to ICSE

Hearty congratulations to the Salesian Community of Andamans for accomplishing the task of getting ICSE affiliation for our Don Bosco School, the first in the Province! The school, which started seven years ago with just four students, today, has 415 students, up to Std. IX. We have witnessed numerous graces and blessings in getting the approvals and permissions, and most of them were obtained on 24th of each month! For the Promulgation of Affiliation to ICSE, the Chief Guest was Mr. Kuldeep Rai Sharma,

Member of Parliament, Fr. Selvaraj, the Diocesan Administrator, Mr. Baskar, Owner of TSG Group of Hotels, priests and sisters from the Diocese, and many Government and local officials. Let us continue to serve the poor and needy of the place.

Rector Major's Visit to INM

Dear Confreres, we are very happy to welcome our dear Rector Major to our Province next month. The time-table is given below. Kindly plan in advance and ensure that all participate in the respective events scheduled during this visit.

06 September 2019 – FRIDAY

- 02.40 a.m.** Arrives in Chennai
- 12.30 p.m.** Holy Eucharist for the Provincial Council & Provincial House Confreres
- 01.15 p.m.** Lunch /Personal work and Rest
- 03.15 p.m.** Meets the Provincial Council – Citadel
- 07.30 p.m.** Dinner
- 09.00 p.m.** Night Rest at Citadel, Chennai

07 September 2019 – SATURDAY

- 07.00 a.m.** Towards Missionary Aspirantate, Perambur
- 07.30 a.m.** Greetings to the Missionary Aspirants
- 08.00 a.m.** Breakfast
- 08.30 a.m.** Towards SMA Generalate
- 09.00 a.m.** Meeting with the SMA Sisters
- 10.00 a.m.** Towards Theologate, Kavaraipettai
- 11.00 a.m.** Meets the Brothers and Fathers in Theologate
- 12.15 p.m.** Holy Eucharist
- 01.15 p.m.** Lunch
- 02.30 p.m.** Towards the Provincial House / Rest and personal work (Provincial House)
- 04.30 p.m.** Meeting the Chennai and Pondy Region Confreres
- 06.00 p.m.** Towards the FMA Provincial House
- 06.30 p.m.** Meeting with the Salesian Family members of Chennai & Pondy Regions in KODAMBAKKAM
- 08.00 p.m.** Dinner
- 09.00 p.m.** Towards Provincial House
- 10.00 p.m.** Personal work and Rest

08 September 2019 – SUNDAY

- 07.00 a.m.** Breakfast
- 07.30 a.m.** Towards Vellore
- 10.00 a.m.** Meeting with the Salesian Family in DON BOSCO, KATPADI
- 11.30 a.m.** Holy Eucharist with Salesian Family & Young People
- 01.00 p.m.** Lunch
- 01.30 p.m.** Personal work and Rest
- 03.30 p.m.** Towards the Aspirantate at Tirupattur
- 04.30 p.m.** Meets the Aspirants/ Pre-Novices/ Novices.
- 05.45 p.m.** Towards College
- 06.30 p.m.** Public Function – “Youth Fest”
- 08.30 p.m.** Dinner
- 09.30 p.m.** Personal work and Rest

09 September 2019 – MONDAY

- 08.00 a.m.** Breakfast
- 09.00 a.m.** Meeting the Salesian Confreres of Tirupattur and Vellore Regions (including the Students of Philosophy)
- 11.00 a.m.** Holy Eucharist with the Salesians
- 12.30 p.m.** Lunch / Personal work and Rest

03.00 p.m. Towards Chennai
07.30 p.m. Dinner at Provincial House
08.30 p.m. Personal work and Rest

10 September 2019 – TUESDAY

03.30 a.m. Departure to the Airport
12.15 p.m. Reaches Dimapur

ETERNAL REST GRANT UNTO THEM

Fr. Thomas Kizakenellikunnel SDB (67) passed away on 7th July 2019 in Thope, Kollam. Our prayers and condolences to the Provincial and confreres of Bangalore Province.

Mrs. Kondaveeti Sujanammal (90) mother of Fr. Rajannah went to her eternal reward on July 12th 2019. Our heartfelt sympathies and prayers to the bereaved family members.

Mrs. Macrina (77) mother of Fr. Gerald Miranda died on July 25th 2019. Our sincere condolences and prayers to the bereaved family members.

Mr. Alphonse (62) brother of Fr. Francis Sebastian died on 31st July 2019. Our heartfelt sympathies and prayers to the bereaved family members.

CONCLUSION



For us baptised Indian Catholics, the two events of Assumption and Independence Day are linked. The reason why these events are related is because they are both about Freedom. Independence is celebrated as freedom from foreign rule and domination to self-rule and governance and the Assumption may be seen as a freedom from this limited and incomplete life to the bliss of eternal and perpetual life. We believe that Mother of Jesus was free from sin and that death is the fruit of sin. She was sinless, Immaculate and therefore rightfully taken into Heaven and it is this that we celebrate on Independence Day. She is already there where we all must go someday!

But are we really free? And are we exercising our freedom responsibly? As we hoist the flag outside Churches and also place the flag on the altar and pray for our country, our motherland, let the celebrations of Independence Day and the Assumption of our Blessed Mother be wake-up calls for us to make our country a better place to live in.

Yours truly in Don Bosco,

Fr. K.M. Jose SDB

Date: 02.08.2019
Place: Chennai 600010

