

PROVINCIAL CIRCULAR

Salesian Province of Mary Help of Christians, Guwahati, Assam, India

JS – 57/2021

1 December 2021

My Dear Confreres,

Greetings from Provincial House, Guwahati!

THE FEAST OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION AND THE BIRTH OF DON BOSCO'S MISSION FOR THE MOST NEGLECTED

The Salesian history records that on 8th December 1841, Don Bosco who always gave the highest attention to every Holy Eucharist that he celebrated was ready to celebrate one on that day. When he was about to begin the Mass, he heard a commotion inside the sacristy wherein he heard the voice of an adult in an angry tone and the feeble voice of the young, speaking very submissively. He whose heart was already given largely to the young in distress interrupted the agitated sacristan and to his utter surprise told him that the boy who did not know how to serve the Mass was his friend. He then continued to celebrate the Mass, teaching the young boy all along how to assist the priest at Mass. At the completion of the Eucharist, he listened to the boy, established an initial rapport and catechized him on the HAIL MARY.

As article 34 of our *Constitutions* says, "This Society had its beginning in a simple catechism lesson." On the day when in 1854, the Church proclaimed the feast of the Immaculate Conception of Mary, Don Bosco would state, "All of our great initiatives began on the day of the Immaculate" (BM XVII). Don Bosco's meeting Bartholomew Garelli on 8th December 1841 and the feast of the Immaculate became the Birthday of the Oratory.

The proclamation of the dogma of the Immaculate conception reads thus: "**We declare, pronounce, and define that the doctrine which holds that the most Blessed Virgin Mary, in the first instance of her conception, by a singular grace and privilege granted by Almighty God, in view of the merits of Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the human race, was**



preserved free from all stain of original sin, is a doctrine revealed by God and therefore to be believed firmly and constantly by all the faithful.”

Mary was granted the privilege to be immaculate since conception. She was conceived immaculate – no stain of original sin infected her heart, mind and soul; and moreover she cherished it and set an example to others especially the disciples of her Son the liberating force of being immaculate on earth. Sin and impurity today are destroying human beings en masse and I still remember listening during the spiritual reading in Savio Juniorate that Don Bosco asserted after seeing in a vision that most people go to perdition due to the sin of impurity and sin of the flesh in thoughts, words and deeds.

Saying that we are human beings and so are weak and avoid some of the time tested means to avoid sin and temptations may not be correct. While accepting that we can fall at any moment despite being vigilant, we need to avoid all occasions of sin. Control of the senses, frequent confession and devout reception and celebration of the Holy Eucharist, setting a clear limit or boundary in our relationship with people of the opposite sex (even while helping them out in their difficulties), daily prayers in the community, being truly happy in the community, and transparency in finance so that we do not fall into the trap of misusing the congregation’s money, etc., are some of the ways by which we can preserve and strengthen our call to be immaculate like our Mother.

Before the aspirants and hostel boys leave for winter holidays, it is the duty of the Rectors and other superiors to tell them about holidays and how during the holidays they need to be awake and alert regarding the trap that the world-of-pleasure and Satan would set to make them fall during the holidays. Such instruction did help the growing boys and girls. But how well we do it and whether we do it or not are known only to each individual. Whatever the opinions are regarding this suggestion, we learn from our father and founder Don Bosco that he gave lots of importance to purity and keeping his oratory boys away from bad literature, bad companions, pornography and unholy relationships. We need to pray for ourselves and pray for our charges to keep ourselves from all that may make us fall.

Bartholomew Garelli is typical of the type of boys and girls who need intervention. He was orphan, no one had initiated him into religion, catechism and prayer, might not have experienced love, care and acceptance, having no definite future except that of wandering in the streets and many more. Don Bosco befriended him lovingly and making him the protagonist, got into contact with so many other boys who were in similar situations. Thus was born our mission. Celebration of the day of that meeting could invite us to return to the roots or to the beginnings and ask us to remain strong in our option to be the father, friend and teacher of the young especially the poorest and the most marginalized.

THE WAY FORWARD OF THE SYMPOSIUM – FINAL RESOLUTIONS

Looking back at the Symposium on Co-responsibility of the lay and the consecrated people in building the Church, held at DBI in October 2021, I feel extremely grateful to God, the organizers, speakers and participants for the good times that everyone had. The logistics were well arranged, the animators did their work with due expertise and seriousness, the papers that were presented were done by well-read and well-informed people and the organizers planned and worked on it professionally.

I present now to you the “way forward” deliberations or resolutions that are to be implemented by the SDB community. The decision was unanimous in the show of hands. The resolutions were taken from the group discussion that took place before the general assembly. As I present them to you now, I request that every effort is made at the personal and community level to implement them.

In order to elicit responses for the way forward, we had asked only one question which was to be answered from the personal and community perspectives (here it is contextualized for us SDBs): **HOW CAN WE, SDBs, FOSTER GREATER LAY CO-RESPONSIBILITY?**

At the personal level, it was resolved that we:

1. Develop personal integrity and holiness of life.
2. Make ourselves available for the mission and the people.
3. Focus on family guidance and follow up through prayer, counseling and regular visits insisting on prayer, Bible reading and holy family life.
4. Participate in formation and training opportunities
5. Empower and enable the lay people, and
6. Focus on personal commitment and instill the same in others.

At the parish/community level, we resolved to:

7. Make parish associations and structures work professionally and systematically. Make them vibrant.
8. Organise activities for children and youth (like sports, Bible skits, catechism class, etc.)
9. Choose one person from parish/village/institution for ITLR or leadership or other courses every year.
10. Prepare catechism modules in different languages (this project is to be completed by 2022).
11. Care and appreciate the catechists and their contribution; Give training opportunities to them every year.
12. Create corpus fund in each community for catechists by 2023.
13. Conduct compulsory catechism classes in schools/ parishes/institutions. The Mission Delegate of the Province is to ensure that it takes place in every centre.

I request the Rectors and Leaders to draw up separate lines of action relevant to the community and ensure that we train and involve the lay at your disposal towards greater and fuller co-responsibility. I also request you to forward me the plan (lines of action) by the end of January 2022, in which the name of the person to be sent for training is indicated. Quite often, the greater change of mentality needs to come from the priests and religious. There are challenges towards the implementation of what the Church and the congregation are asking from us, but these challenges are not unsurmountable. So let us do it, in keeping with the six year plan of the Congregation.

CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS KNOCKING US AT THE DOOR

During the mid-term review meeting at Valdocco I had met Fr Angel Fernandez Artime, Rector Major personally and I presented to him the itinerary of his forthcoming visit to the Province in October 2022 to celebrate the 100 years of the arrival of Salesians in the North East. After going through it for some time, he was good enough to approve it without any modification. I also briefed him about the preparations for the same. I spoke to him about the common retreats, the symposium, the celebration of milestones such as the decision of Fr Paul Albera to accept the Assam missions, the grand celebration in the shrine of Mary Help of Christians at Valdocco and the Holy Mass of the pioneers in the small room of Don Bosco just before their departure to Assam.

The Centenary year is just round the corner. Thankfully all the preparations, barring a few seem to be in place and we are ready to celebrate it in right spirit – in thanksgiving, in gratitude, in passion, in hope and determination to march into the next centenary renewed and energized.

As informed to you all in many provincial, regional and community meetings, the centenary year will be declared open in our Province on 12th January 2022. We shall conclude the centenary year on 31st January 2023 on the feast of St John Bosco with due solemnity. It was on 12th January that the Salesian pioneers reached Guwahati, from where they proceeded to Shillong, the then capital of Assam and reached there on 13th January 1922.

On 12th January, all the communities outside Guwahati Metro will have a solemn opening ceremony, during which there will be a hoisting of the centenary flag, singing the centenary anthem and a short prayer service. All of them – the flag, the anthem and the prayer service will be sent to you in advance. After the prayer service, there will be a Eucharistic celebration. In Guwahati, the Eucharist will be presided over by Most Rev. John Moolachira, Archbishop of Guwahati, for which all the Salesians and the Salesian Family members will come together.

On 13th January, Most Rev. Victor Lyngdoh, Archbishop of Shillong will celebrate the Holy Mass in the Cathedral of Mary Help of Christians. It was proposed that the

communities from Guwahati Province organize a pilgrimage to Shillong on this historic day. Many communities from the Province have responded positively and the preparations are on. In order to ensure entry to Shillong especially from Assam via Nongpoh, all the pilgrims will need to ensure to receive the two vaccinations with a certificate as a proof. The Holy Mass will be at 11.00 am, after which we shall have the animation programme. The pilgrimage will conclude with the adoration. All the pilgrims are requested to make it a true religious pilgrimage. Therefore it is suggested that we pray the rosary while on travel and maintain the religious decorum all along. Please note that meals will not be supplied by any community of Shillong. We shall however ask the nearby communities to allot places for freshening up and use the wash rooms.

Special supplement on the Centenary to be published in leading newspapers and a press release on the same are being prepared and we shall publish them in the first week of January, a few days before the opening of the Centenary year. A small booklet containing all the centenary programmes, the annual calendar of 2022 and assignment of responsibilities is being readied, and communities and confreres will have copies of the same soon.

Let every confrere feel grateful to get the opportunity to celebrate the centenary. Let us get ourselves involved in the preparations as well as in celebrations wholeheartedly. Let us be grateful to God, the Blessed Mother and the Salesian and the Salesian Family missionaries for the giant step that they have taken in North East India, and let us continue the big legacy handed down to us with great cheerfulness and determination.

ONLINE MEETING OF RECTORS AND LEADERS

I request all the Rectors and Leaders to avail themselves for an online meeting that will be held on **6th December 2021, 3.00 pm to 4.00 pm**. The link for the Meeting will be sent to you on the WhatsApp Group of the Province.

THIRD RETREAT

The third spiritual annual retreat of the Province will be held in the Provincial House, from **8th to 14th December 2021**. This retreat too will be preached by Fr Nirmol Gomes, INC on the theme of Salesian Spirituality. Those who have not yet completed their retreat, kindly join in this retreat. Please send your names to Fr Joseph Teron Langne, Vice Provincial, if you have not sent yet.

BOSCOREE 2022-23

It is my pleasure and honour to convoke the grand event of Boscoree to be held in our Province in the ADBU campus of Tapesia from **29th December 2022 to 2nd January 2023**. Kindly find the convocation letter attached, addressed to all the Major Superiors of Salesian Family in India.

ANIMATION, MEETING AND RECOLLECTION OF CLERICS & SALESIAN BROTHERS

Animation on Young Salesians and Accompaniment, Centenary celebrations, Boscoree and the forthcoming Provincial Chapter took place for the clerics and brothers on 13th and 14th November 2021 in the Provincial House. Besides these animations they were given opportunities to share with one another about the experiences of their community and religious life, and attend the recollection animated by Fr Andreas Panna. While Fr Joseph Teron Langne, Vice Provincial animated them on accompaniment and other aspects of religious life and discipline, Br Joby Mani took sessions on the Provincial Chapter and elicited some responses to the questions related to the Chapter. I briefed them about some of the concerns of the Province, familiarized them with the Centenary celebrations and gave them time to ask questions. In order to familiarize them about the forthcoming Boscoree and its logistics, they were taken to the University campus of Tapesia on Sunday afternoon.

JUNIOR PRIESTS' MEETING

Fr Tomy Augustine, INC animated the Junior Priests of our Province from 23rd to 26th November in the Provincial House. 11 of them attended the programme. The theme of the animation was *Salesian Priests: Pillars and Perils*. The participants were once again invited to understand the preciousness of the call, with lots of emphasis on God taking the first step. Animation was carried out through talks especially on Priests and the Gift of Priesthood, Intellectual Life, Moral Life, Consecrated Life, Pastoral Life, Spiritual Life, the identity and dignity of the Priest, Psycho-Physical life and inspirational movies on Rupert Mayer, the Good Pope John XXIII and Padre Pio. The participants enriched themselves from the group sharing that they did regularly. We thank Fr Tomy for his availability and rejuvenating the participants in their priestly and consecrated life and mission.



ADVANCED COURSE FOR SCOUT MASTERS

In collaboration with the Officials of Bharat Scouts and Guides, the Province organized an Advanced Course for Scouts and Guide mainly for our clerics who are studying their theology at Sacred Heart College Mawlai, Shillong. Altogether 20 participants attended the training programme from 23rd to 29th November. The camp was organized under the

leadership of Fr Joseph Teron Langne, Vice Provincial, Fr Dennis Solomon and Mr Lazar. Earlier such training was held at Boko and all these are in view of the Boscoree that will be held at Tapesia, Assam Don Bosco University from 29th December 2022 to 3rd January 2023.



DECEASED PARENTS OF SALESIANS AND DECEASED SALESIANS REMEMBERED ON THE DEATH ANNIVERSARY OF VEN. MAMMA MARGARET

The Salesian communities of Guwahati metro assembled at Uzan Bazar cemetery on 25th November 2021 to remember and pray for the deceased parents of Salesians while simultaneously praying for the deceased Salesians of the Province. Besides the Salesians from metro communities, the Holy Mass, presided over by me, was attended by the Junior priests, clerics attending the scout camp and a few lay people from Maligaon and Panbazar. Mamma Margaret died of pneumonia on 25th November 1856 at Don Bosco's Oratory in Turin. She was 68. Among her last words to her son were these: "Seek only the glory of God and let the foundation of your work be true poverty. The best way to teach is to practise what one says" ("Article: Mamma Margaret: The First Cooperator" by Fr Steve Whelan, SDB). The Salesian tradition of remembering our deceased parents on the anniversary of Mamma Margaret's death is very much rooted in her influence in the life of Don Bosco as a mother.

When Don Bosco began his ministry and started gathering abandoned and poor boys around him, he realized that they needed a mother's touch to turn these little street kids into meek lambs. And who else to help him realize this but his own mother, Margaret? She was instrumental not only in training John, but in fostering the famous "family spirit" so characteristic of Don Bosco's Oratory and in all Salesian presences. (Whelan)

Mamma Margaret singlehandedly raised up three disparate boys – Anthony, the strong and stubborn one, Joseph the meek and quiet follower, and John, the adventurer and learner. Since the death of Francis Bosco, the family went through hardships and difficulties yet it was Mamma Margaret who was their strength and support. I think it was in the motherly devotion, religious integrity and fidelity of Mama Margaret to his children that John Bosco conceived and formulated the idea of a Family Spirit. Would John Bosco have been "Don Bosco," the father and educator of countless young people,

without his mother's teaching, example, inspiration and support? It doesn't seem likely. (Whelan)

If we look at the Preventive System, the Salesian qualities of joy and optimism, work and temperance, fidelity and piety, all these had its roots in John Bosco's growing years – under Mamma Margaret's maternal guidance.

And so today we are encouraged to look back at our past, on how our parents have influenced us and on how they have molded us into who we are now. And if we have become Salesians, it is because virtues, good examples, piety and "amorevolezza" (loving kindness) have been shown to us by our parents. We have reaped what they have sown. What we are now is because of what has been. And hopefully what will become of us, is what God wants us to be!

SALESIAN COOPERATORS CONGRESS

The Salesian Cooperators from the Province had their Provincial Congress and animation in the Provincial House, 27th and 28th November. The meeting started with the inaugural programme in the Mario hall, chaired by Mr Lucas Basumatary, followed by an animation of the life and holiness of St Francis de Sales by Fr Maria Anthuvan. It was followed by common sharing. Mrs Sonia Gorthop, the Provincial Coordinator, reminded the participants about the Salesian Spirituality Days in January 2022. The day ended with evening prayer and adoration.



On 28th morning, after the morning prayer, Fr Joseph Teron, Vice Provincial animated the Co-operators on the Strenna of 2022, "Do all through love, nothing through

constraint” (St Francis de Sales). Before the breakfast, there was hoisting of the flag and after breakfast, a session on “Charter of the Charismatic Identity of the Salesian family of Don Bosco” was taken by Fr TM Joseph. Before the Holy Eucharist at 11.30 am, the participants had a short recollection and confession. In the post lunch session, I familiarized them on the centenary programme, after which they dispersed into groups from group discussions. It was followed by group reporting and sharing. After tea, Mrs Sonia Gorthop, Provincial Coordinator lowered the flag. The Provincial Council Meeting of the Cooperators took place in the Board Room before the adoration and valedictory programme.

DON BOSCO UNIVERSITY COMPLETES THE NAAC PEER TEAM VISIT

A five-member NAAC Peer team visited our Assam Don Bosco University, 25th to 27th November 2021. From our own interaction with them, the Team Members seemed friendly, well qualified and experienced in different fields of education; and, hence, competent and focused on their assignment.

Under the current scheme of accreditation by NAAC, the University is required to upload a whole lot of information under the seven criteria listed for self-study. This uploaded data on the University gets 70% weightage in the scoring scheme. This report was completed and uploaded by the University early this year. NAAC gets it examined and verified digitally by a third party. The remaining 30% weightage in the scoring scheme comes out of the report of the Peer Team Visit. The mandate of the Peer Team is to study the university from a qualitative perspective on all the seven criteria. Their report is a qualitative assessment of the University as they see it.

The Team was given a calibrated exposure to the quality of infrastructure, the teaching-learning process, the team work and overall atmosphere in the three campuses. The Team was also given a calibrated exposure to the internalization of the vision of the University and its expression at every level of the University conveying the message that Don Bosco University is a good place to work, to study and to live – in meetings with the students, the faculty, the staff, the students, the parents, the alumni, the day-to-day Leadership Team, the IQAC Team, the Governing Body and the Board of Management. The Team has shared with the Vice Chancellor a copy of the report they prepared, took into consideration his observations/corrections, and then submitted the final report to NAAC.

I express my deep sense of gratitude and appreciation to Fr Stephen Mavelly, Vice Chancellor and his loyal and dedicated team for the success of this visit. Over the years, God’s blessings and our own relentless collective work, competency, focus and accompaniment of the young have made this institution of higher education progress in ways beyond imagination, winning awards and accolades.

Everyone who visits the campuses of the University, especially Tapesia Gardens, returns with cherished memories and draws myriads of inspiration from the sprawling beauty of nature and the development of infra-structure, all for the young people of our region. Let us continue to support this unique and proud venture of our Province with our sincere prayers; in particular, that this team visit gives us the desired result.

BODOLAND REGIONAL MEETING



The Regional Meeting of Bodoland took place at Amguri on 29th November 2021. Besides other matters, the Centenary preparations and plans were discussed by the

confreres. Fr Vice Provincial and I attended the Meeting, in which many confreres of the Region participated. After the meeting at 4.00 pm, I blessed and inaugurated the SDB residence at Ramfalbil in the presence of Fr Joseph Teron, Vice Provincial and the confreres of Bongaigaon Region. I thank Fr Edward D'Souza and the confreres for overseeing the construction work.

FORMATION GUIDES COURSE: BANGALORE (by Fr Daniel S Sangma)

“THE FORMATION OF FORMATION GUIDES” course was held at Don Bosco Renewal Centre, Bengaluru, from 1st to 28th November 2021. Twenty six participants, 13 priests and 13 religious Sisters of different congregations participated in it. Out of 26, eleven were Salesian priests and five Salesian Sisters.

The programme was very enriching and a time for renewal for the participants. The topics were appropriately selected which included Human Development and Emotional Issues by Fr Joe Kokandathil SDB; Psycho-sexual Integration and Celibate Maturity, Vocation Discernment and Assessment of Candidates, Enneagram Spirituality by Fr Bosco Ponthokkan SDB; MBTI: A Guide to Formation, Inner Engineering: Mentoring Paradigms, Formation and Present-day Challenges by Fr VM Thomas SDB; Psycho-cultural Aspects of Formation by Fr Edison Fernandes SDB; What the laity expect from Formation by Ms Roushnee; and the Group Process guided by Sr Rosamma ICM, Sr Jessica D'Souza ASC and Sr Bernadine Joseph RNDM. The group process taught the participants how to help individuals to set themselves free from their past wounds.

The participants expressed great satisfaction and benefit from the course. They believed that to be an effective formator, one needs to form oneself in the ways of God and His Gospel. Different resource persons helped the participants to know their strengths and challenges. The course helped to understand the need to integrate, the need to be healed of the past hurts, to be culturally enhanced to understand the other and above all, to know the need to change ourselves spiritually to respond to the mission effectively. I thank Fr Januarius S Sangma, Provincial for giving me the opportunity to attend the course.

CONGRATULATIONS FR ABHILASH

Fr Abhilash Vadakkekara has been awarded the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in English Literature from the North Eastern Hill University yesterday. He defended his dissertation successfully recently. Our hearty congratulations to Fr Abhilash on this great achievement. Wish him a joyful and fruitful future where his study will enhance his ministry!

GENTLE REMINDERS

Kindly desist from investing on individuals or companies who lure you to invest money on promise of huge returns later. No such online businesses have been successful and

they have ruined individuals (including religious and priests), communities and spiritual life. Beware of responding to emails, messages and calls from persons promising easy money!

Kindly desist from community to community transfer of finance without the knowledge and permission of the Provincial. It is not permissible especially without the knowledge of the superiors. It is advisable that we refrain from borrowing money from individuals and communities or lay businessmen. We need to be careful also of taking materials from shop keepers on huge credits. Often the successors had to pay the debts.

The House Council Meeting in every community is to be planned well by the Rector/Leader. It has to be held once a month without fail. The agenda needs to be circulated in advance. All the important events in the life of the community have to be planned and executed after a collective decision in the House Council by way of adequate sharing and discussion. Let me remind you once again that no initiatives or developmental activities will be permitted outside the House Council's decision, which is to be endorsed by the Provincial and his Council.

We still need to be transparent, accountable and systematic in dealing with financial matters. Kindly follow strictly all the directives given by the Provincial Economist and his office which ultimately come from the Generalate.

The regional councillors in the Province have been delegated to organize the Centenary celebrations in their regions. I request everyone to kindly co-operate and make the celebration grand and successful as a sign of our gratitude to God, our Blessed Mother, St John Bosco, the missionaries and benefactors of the Salesian Family down through the decades. Besides each community or groups of communities are requested to celebrate the centenary with the young, the Salesian Family, collaborators, other congregations, the respective dioceses and the neighbourhood on a suitable date during the year.

HEALTH UPDATE

As you may all know Fr Cornelius Panna had undergone a prostate operation. Even before the operation the doctors had suspected prostate cancer. Tests of samples taken before and during operation have confirmed prostate cancer. Additionally the sophisticated PSMA PET CT Scan was done to see if the cancer has spread to surrounding tissues and organs. The test has indeed confirmed that Fr Cornelius has Stage IV cancer, having spread to the spine bone. Accordingly Fr Cornelius will undergo six cycles of chemotherapy, which began on 13th November 2021.

Fr Joseph Almeida too has been undergoing chemotherapy at Chennai. We are grateful to Fr Mackley Gomes and the Provincial and confreres of INM, especially of Citadel Provincial House, Chennai for their help and support.

Fr Thomas Chenginiyaden (CL) is in Kerala for treatment. Though his tuberculosis is cured, he needs attention for his stomach and back.

I request special prayers from all the confreres and communities for the success of the chemotherapy of Fr Cornelius and Fr Almeida; and also the treatment of Fr CL Thomas. I would like to assure our confreres that the whole Province is accompanying them with prayers and wishes for a speedy recovery.

CONDOLENCES

Fr Dominic Veliath, of the Province of Bangalore (INK), passed away on 27th November 2021 in Bangalore. He was 79 years old. He served as professor and in various capacities in Kristu Jyoti College, Bangalore for more that 46 years. In him we have lost an eminent theologian, a committed Salesian priest, and a wonderful human being who had touched the lives of so many Salesians and people with his warmth and expertise. May the good Lord grant eternal rest and peace to His faithful servant! We offer our heartfelt condolences to the Provincial and confreres of INK, and also his dear ones and friends.

CONCLUSION: A VERY HAPPY CHRISTMAS TO EVERYONE AND I MEAN IT FROM THE BOTTOM OF MY HEART

I take this opportunity to wish all the confreres of all the communities a very Merry Christmas. May God's choicest blessings be upon you, the community and your family and friends at Christmas and throughout the new year. At the end of 2021, the year initially filled with trials and uncertainty due to lurking Covid19, let us celebrate His birth joyfully even as we began to experience the gradual return of normal times which certainly are His blessings for humankind. I express my gratitude to all of you for the hard work you have put in during the challenging times. At Christmas, the Messiah enters our world as the new born babe wrapped in simple and humble clothing, born in a manger, surrounded by Mary and Joseph. In him we see greatness wrapped in simplicity. Despite the gloominess of the world affairs and the prowling pandemic, let us celebrate it in real joy and festivity because Light has dawned into the world and this light will drive away darkness, sooner or later.

I pray that we have twin preparations—internal as well as external. Outwardly, we need to clean and decorate our churches and buildings, put on decorative lights, build cribs as did St Francis of Assisi to catechize the faithful, prepare the liturgy and singing, conduct the novenas well and participate in the community/village meals. All these indicate our preparedness to receive Him who means everything to us.

Together with all these external celebrations, internally let us prepare our hearts and minds to make Him truly born in us, not only in ourselves but also in our people who look up to us for such spiritual accompaniment and assistance. Even as we animate the faithful, let us not forget to prepare ourselves to celebrate His coming in a worthy manner. Let us seek the peace that the angels sang. Let us open the doors of our hearts for HIM so that there is a place for him there and that he be born in us. We need to recognize the star, be wise, follow it and reach the manger to worship him. Let us join the angels in singing the song which spontaneously come out of our hearts due to sheer joy, "Glory to God in the highest and peace on earth to people of good will." Let us promote peace among ourselves and the people with whom we work. Finally let the centre of celebration and festivity be Jesus, Mary and Joseph.



May God bless you!

Yours affectionately in the Lord,

Fr Januarius S Sangma, SDB
Provincial



MONTHLY CALENDAR – PROVINCIAL DECEMBER 2021

Date	Day	Event
01	Wed	Guwahati: Jubilee of Fr Anthuvan
02	Thu	Mumbai
03	Fri	Mumbai
04	Sat	Mumbai
05	Sun	Guwahati
06	Mon	Guwahati: Meeting the Archbishop Online meeting with Rectors and Leaders (3.00 pm to 4.00 pm)
07	Tue	Guwahati
08	Wed	Guwahati: Holy Mass, SMI Provincial House – 6.30 am Vestition of novices at Dhajea. Retreat starts in the evening
09	Thu	Retreat
10	Fri	Retreat
11	Sat	Retreat
12	Sun	Retreat – Chapel Blessing under Dotma parish
13	Mon	Retreat – Meeting the Mother General of the Handmaids of Mary
14	Tue	Retreat ends with the Assembly of Confreres.
15	Wed	Guwahati
16	Thu	Guwahati
17	Fri	Guwahati
18	Sat	Guwahati: Sonaighuli Parish Holy Mass >> Dimapur
19	Sun	Dimapur: Salesian College
20	Mon	Zubza: Novitiate
21	Tue	Dimapur >> Guwahati
22	Wed	Guwahati
23	Thu	Guwahati
24	Fri	Guwahati >> Boko
25	Sat	Guwahati: Holy Mass in the Co-Cathedral
26	Sun	Guwahati
27	Mon	Guwahati
28	Tue	Guwahati
29	Wed	Guwahati
30	Thu	Guwahati
31	Fri	Guwahati