

PROVINCIAL CIRCULAR

JANUARY 2023

DEAR CONFRERES,

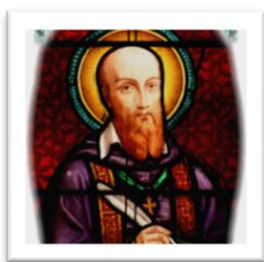
Cordial Greetings...

We greet the **New Year 2023** with hope and optimism, being grateful for all the blessings we have received from God through the intercession of Our Blessed Mother and our founder, St. John Bosco. Every new thing is a creative providence of God, and we should welcome it with open arms. God has gifted us all another year to strengthen our bonds with one another through spirituality, fraternity, and ministry. I wish you all a Happy New Year 2023 filled with God's choicest blessings.



Feast of our Patron and Founder

The month of January is special for us Salesians as we celebrate the feast of the Patron of our Congregation, **St. Francis de Sales, on 24 January**, and the feast of our Founder, **St. John Bosco, on 31 January**. Don Bosco was greatly influenced by Francis de Sales, from whom he derived his spirituality. Don Bosco wanted his disciples to be known as Salesians in his commemoration. The enduring faith of the two saints in Jesus enabled them to stand their ground and persist through the stifling winds of tribulation and crisis. The sincerity of their faith brought them to the glory of God and the salvation of souls despite the pain they had to persevere amidst all kinds of hardships. May they motivate and move us in carrying out our mission. Dear Confreres and members of the Salesian Family, I wish you all a very happy feast of St. Francis de Sales, our patron and St. John Bosco, our father and founder.



Pongal – A Feast of Gratitude

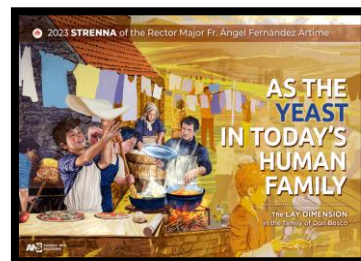


Pongal is a festival of thanksgiving for all the blessings received from the Mother Nature, which promotes the growth of a bountiful harvest that meets the basic needs of all people. The feast is widely celebrated by Tamil people all over the world, including our neighbours and friends who live around us, to spread and share the joy of gratitude. It is satisfying to see that the scenario is changing today, and everyone is being conscientized to eat organic food to save the

environment and enhance nature. Let us also encourage organic farming in our own presences and among the people for whom we work. This way, the celebration will be more meaningful.

Dissemination of Strenna 2023

The Strenna of our Rector Major for 2023 is "**As the Yeast in Today's Human Family - The Lay Dimension in the Family of Don Bosco.**" The dissemination of Strenna will be held for all leaders of our community on **Thursday, January 5, 2023**, after the 40th day anniversary mass for Fr. Joseph Puthenkalam at Don Bosco, Amsam. Later, the Leaders will organise a day of animation on the Strenna in their respective Salesian presences, inviting all the Salesian Family members and young people from the neighbourhood before February 15th. Communities nearby can decide to have the Strenna presentation together in order to experience more fraternity and sharing.



Provincial Community Day

The Provincial Community Day for this year will be held on **21 January 2023 at Don Bosco Sayalkudi**. On this day, we gather as a province to thank the Lord for the gifts and graces He has bestowed upon us, as well as for His ongoing assistance and accompaniment in our mission to save young souls. On this day, we will honour the following jubilarians:

Silver Jubilee of Ordination - Fr. Sebastian Jacob, Fr. Susai Savariannan, Fr. Thomas Louis, Fr. Arul Maran

Silver Jubilee of Religious Profession - Bro. Chinnapparaj Antony, Fr. Charles Joseph, Fr. Arulkumar Sebastian, Fr. Albert Lourdusamy, Fr. Peter Singarayar.

We will also felicitate the **new priests** who were ordained in July and December 2022.

I invite you, dear confreres, Salesian Family members, and Lay mission partners, to join us in this celebration to cherish our unity, express our deep sense of belonging to the Province, articulate our appreciation for each of us, and renew our fidelity to the young. The programme will begin with the Holy Eucharist at 09.30 am.

The details of the program will be informed to the communities by the Vice Provincial. I encourage all the communities to ensure loving participation in this Salesian family event with young Salesians, Salesian Family members, and young people.

Consultation for Provincial Economer, Council Members and Rectors

I am making consultation for the appointment of the Provincial Economer and four Council Members who are completing the term of office on 24 May 2023. Fr. Xavier Michael has been appointed as Vice Provincial and Fr. Arul Maran has been appointed as Council

Member last year. I am also making consultation for the Rectors of the communities where the rectors are completing their term. The list is given below:

S. No.	Name	Period	Place	Completing
1.	P Doss Kennedy	2017 – 2023	LS Madurai	Two Terms
2.	P George Fernandes	2017 – 2023	DB Pallithammam	Two Terms
3.	P Dominic Bernatsha	2020 – 2023	DB Dindigul	One Term
4.	P Albert Johnson	2020 – 2023	Kuthenkuly	One Term
5.	P Casimir Raj	2020 – 2023	DBAI Salem	One Term
6.	P Arockiam Vedomuthu	2020 – 2023	Sayalkudi	One Term
7.	P Susai Savariyannan	2020 – 2023	Amsam - Tiruchy	One Term
8.	P Lawrence David	2020 – 2023	DB Tiruppur	One Term

Since it is a matter of importance for our Province, I request the sincere and responsible cooperation of all our confreres so that suitable confreres are chosen for the respective roles. Kindly suggest names after prayer and due reflection. You are recommended to **send the forms to me directly by email on or before 20 January 2023**. Those who do not have access to email can send in sealed envelopes. Kindly send the form after saving the file in your name so that it is easy for consolidation.

Together with this circular, I am attaching the documents, (forms and list of confreres) for the consultation process.

14th National BOSCOREE

The 14th South Asian national Boscoree has been held from December **29 to January 3, 2023** at Assam Don Bosco University, Tapesia Gardens, Guwahati, with the theme "Save Our Planet Home." I wish the Salesian Province of Mary Help of Christians, Guwahati all the best in hosting this major event on behalf of the Province. I also want to congratulate the Scouts and Guides, as well as the Scout Masters, from our Province who are participating in Boscoree.



Congrats to Fr. Don Bosco Lourdusamy - Provincial Elect of INM

Our Rector Major Rev. Fr. Angel Fernandes Arttime has nominated Fr. Don Bosco Lourdusamy as the new Provincial of the Salesian Province of St. Thomas the Apostle (INM) for the six year period from 2013 – 2029. He has been serving the province as the vice provincial for the last six years. He will be installed as Provincial on **04 February 2023**. On behalf of the province, I extend my hearty congratulations and prayerful support to Fr. Don Bosco Lourdusamy, the new provincial of Chennai Province. He has been a close friend and a great collaborator in the past and I am sure this relationship will continue with more intensity in the coming years. God bless you dear father and our fervent prayers will support you every day of your life.



Annual Retreat

The annual retreats of the province are being planned. The Province will host five retreats this year: three general patronages, one for perpetuals and the other for Province leaders. The Vice Provincial has already sent the retreat details to the Rectors and Community Leaders. I urge the Rectors and Leaders to ensure that all members of the community participate in this annual spiritual moment without fail.

Welcome to Fr. John Davis Maniparamben

Fr. John Davis, Provincial of the Salesian Province of New Delhi, will visit our Province from December 31 to January 6, specifically to attend the Priestly ordination of Dn. Arul Anandam (INN) on January 2, 2023 at Kosavapatti, Dindigul. He will also pay a visit to Don Bosco - Lalgudi to meet Cl. John Felix (INN) and to some of our communities as well. I extend a warm welcome to Fr. John Davis on behalf of the Province and wish him a happy stay for a week.

Salesian Co-operators - The New Council

The new provincial council members for the Salesian Co-operators of INT have been elected. Congratulations to the newly elected provincial council members, and best wishes to joyfully carry out their ministry in the spirit of Don Bosco. The office bearers and members are as follows: Co-ordinator - Mr. Jothi Prakasam (Coimbatore SDB), Secretary - Mr. Prabakar (Vilathikulam SDB), Treasurer - Mr. Abraham (V.Pet SDB), Formation in charge - Mr. Peter Arockiasamy (Sirudur, Madurai FMA), Council members - Mr. Dolour Selvaraj (Madurai SDB), Mrs. Stella (Puthenthurai FMA). We also want to thank the previous council members for their contribution and participation in all the province level programmes and ministries.

INT Silver Jubilee Preparation

In view of preparation for the silver jubilee of the province, we have targeted to plant one lakh trees. Continuous efforts have been taken to reach the target and so far we have planted **51,098 saplings**. I encourage everyone to get involved in planting trees and update the statistics with the project office, Cauveri.

PROGRAMME OF THE MONTH

05	Thu	Amsam: 40 th day Mass in memory for Fr. Puthenkalam in the forenoon/ Strenna Presentation for Leaders in the afternoon
07, 08	Sat, Sun	Keeranur: Leadership Training and Annual General Body Meeting - II
08-13	Sun – Fri	Yercaud: I Retreat- General Patronage
21	Sat	Sayalkudi: Provincial Community Day/Provincial council
28	Sat	Amsam: Diamond Jubilee of Bro. George Joseph

RECALLING EVENTS

The ordination of seven of our deacons along with a diocesan was held on 29 December 2022 at Mary Help of Christians Shrine, Amsam, Trichy. I extend my sincere thanks to Most

Rev. Arokiaraj Savarimuthu, the bishop of Tiruchy, who conferred the ordination. I express my heartfelt appreciation to Fr. Xavier Michael, the vice provincial, Fr. Amaladoss, the economer, Fr. Jeyan Joseph, the director of Christodayam and Fr. Susai Savariannan the Rector and all the confreres of Amsam community for looking into details of the entire programme. I must place on record the feedback given by some of the participants, that the entire event was very spiritual and inspiring.

All the Commissions and Departments of Youth Ministry, as well as the Formation Commission, gathered for the mid-year evaluation in Don Bosco Provincial House, Tiruchy On December 7, 2022. I thank all the heads and members of Commissions and Departments for your valuable participation. It is also felt by many that the meeting could be conducted for one day so that we could spend more time together. We will do it in the future as recommended.

Mini Boscoree was held in Don Bosco, Thanjavur, on December 03 - 04, 2022. Totally 274 Scouts and Guides of our institutions participated in it. It was a well organized programme for the students. I thank Fr. James Benjamine, the delegate of Scouts and Guides for coordinating the whole programme. I also extend my thanks to the Rector and the confreres of Don Bosco Thanjavur community for hosting the event in the campus. My sincere thanks also to all the scout masters especially those from INM for their animation.

CONDOLENCES...

On behalf of the province, I offer my sincere condolences to

- To the **Provincial and confreres of INS Province** at the demise of **Cl. Pynshngain Hahshah** on 18 December 2022.
- To the **Provincial and confreres of INM Province** at the demise of **Rev. Fr. Amalraj Thomas** (78) on 20 December 2022.
- To **Fr. Albert Johnson** at the sudden demise of his eldest brother **Mr. Thomas Chandra Sekaran** (68) on 27 December 2022.

May the souls rest in peace!

COMMUNITY REFLECTION

Towards Silver Jubilee: Mission to the young -3

CONSECRATED LIFE IS OUR FIRST MISSION

My dear confreres and members of the Salesian Family, I feel that we are specially chosen by God through our Salesian vocation, and it is our bounden duty to live up to the call God has given to us. As we are entering into a new year, I just want to remind ourselves about the basics of our religious life that by living out our life of consecration to its letter and spirit, we fulfil our mission. Our Rector Major has given us the strenna 2023, "As the Yeast

in Today's Human Family - The Lay Dimension in the Family of Don Bosco." Though this is a call given to the Salesian Family members primarily, I consider it is more applicable to us Salesians.

There are some Salesians who are involved in the mission so much that they do not have time for their consecrated life and the practices of piety. Hence, I want to dwell on this topic, "Consecrated life is our first mission or Consecration itself is our mission." If we are not living well our consecrated life, I am sure our mission to the young will create no waves or vibrations. On the contrary if we enjoy living our consecrated life, there is no need to worry about our mission, because our exemplary life will speak for itself and there will be so many youngsters who will take on our mission and do it to the best. Hence, the basic question is, Do we enjoy living our consecrated life?

01. One confrere narrated his life and all his activities for about few hours during the visitation, finally giving it a punch, "I joined the Salesian congregation primarily to do social work and I am passionate about it." I was taken up by his words and much more by his emotional outburst. It is also true that he was working hard and greatly involving himself into many activities of various kinds for the empowerment of the poor and those at peripheries. But he was not regular for the practices of piety or showed any liking for the celebration of sacraments including the Holy Eucharist. I also realised that though the confrere was spending many hours in active ministry, the expected results were not achieved. There were problems of relationship among the members of the community. The issues related to the portfolios and the ego problems absorbed more time and there were no solutions to them at all. Professionalism took an upper hand over ministry and service-oriented approach. Hence, the results were not very positive.
02. In another community, I come to know that the members rarely come together for prayer, or the community had not seen all the members present in the mornings for prayer even for a few months. But the works go on and there are confreres who work day and night trying to do their best. Many initiatives are introduced, and several programmes are organized. Problems are solved and challenges are met. Many efforts are taken, and number of projects are executed. But the results are negative, and the confreres get discouraged. I don't need to describe the root cause. The community that is not united in prayer cannot move mountains. It is better that a confrere fulfils his prayer and religious duties first even without involving in any kind of mission than he gets involved in the mission so much forgetting his practices of piety and religious discipline.
03. It is not uncommon to see some of the confreres more worried about their portfolios and roles in administration than their vocation to religious life. Promotion seems to be their yardstick of measuring their growth in religious life. Becoming Rector or Headmaster is their goal and purpose of priestly life. These are expressions of

unhappiness in consecrated life or living the consecrated life to the minimum, fulfilling the rules and guidelines of religious life only. In such situations how can the mission flourish or our apostolate among the young see good results? A person who enjoys his vocation to religious life will go beyond the human considerations and rise above the problems of ordinary life. "Let nothing upset you," the maxim of Don Bosco will be his living rule. Doing the ordinary in an extra ordinary way will be his style of life.

04. Our constitutions are very clear in saying "the mission is entrusted to the community." Though our province is very good in carrying out the mission in communities and presences, there are a few confreres wanting to have their own way in accomplishing the mission. With the developments in media and novelty in ministries, they forget the basics of religious and consecrated life that they belong to the community and depend on the community for everything. I have heard of the statement that "the religious are individually poor but collectively rich and the diocesans are individually rich and collectively poor." But looking at the current scenario, I must conclude that there are some diocesans among the Salesians. I do not want to explain more details about this. I am sure all of you will be able to understand what I am referring to. Persons who enjoy their consecrated life will not be individualistic, but they will find happiness in community life and much more in the community moments of prayer and togetherness.

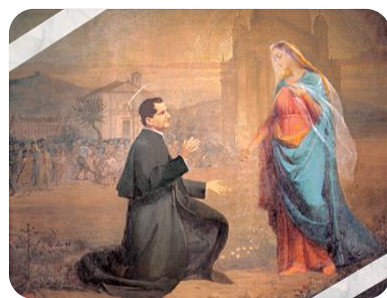
I have just referred to some of the aspects that we need to give importance in our consecrated and religious life. God has given us another year of life and I am sure there are more opportunities in store for all of us to enjoy our consecrated life. Let us begin to live our religious life with passion and enthusiasm. Let us relish every moment of our life making good memories that will linger on for ever. Let us positively proceed forward with faith and hope that God will lead us all the time. Let us become the yeast as our Rector Major invites us. Let us not forget that our Consecration is our first mission from which all other activities flow. I assure you my daily prayers for you all for your happiness and fulfilment in the consecrated life.

Prayerful best wishes to all in the Family,

Yours Affectionately in Don Bosco



Fr. Agilan Sarprasadam SDB
Provincial – Salesian Province of Tiruchy, INT.



**Happy New Year
2023**