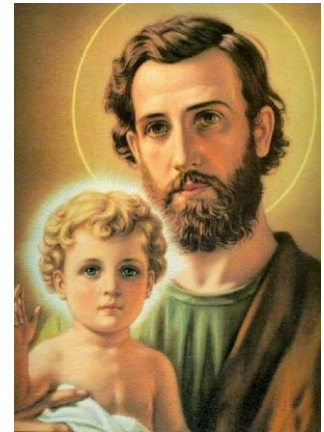


DEAR CONFRERES,

Cordial Greetings...

On **March 19th**, Christians around the world celebrate the Feast of St. Joseph. Though the Bible tells us little about his spoken words, St. Joseph stands out as a man of faith, obedience, and courage. He readily accepted his calling to care for Mary and Jesus, even in the face of uncertainty and hardship. His actions speak volumes, demonstrating his dedication to his family and his unwavering faith in the plan of God. St. Joseph is revered as a patron saint of fathers, families, and workers. He inspires us through his commitment to family, his dedication to hard work, and his quiet strength in the face of challenges. The Feast of St. Joseph is a time for reflection, prayer, and celebration. Through prayer and reflection, the Feast of St. Joseph offers an opportunity to appreciate the virtues he embodied and seek his intercession in our own lives.



Holy Week, the week leading up to Easter Sunday, is a pivotal period in the Christian calendar. It is a time of remembrance, reflection, and ultimately, celebration. Palm Sunday marks the triumphant entry of Jesus into Jerusalem, where crowds welcomed him with palm branches. Maundy Thursday commemorates the Last Supper, where Jesus shared a final meal with his disciples and established the sacrament of communion. Good Friday remembers the crucifixion and death of Jesus on the cross. Holy Saturday is a day of quiet contemplation as Jesus lies in the tomb. Easter Sunday is the Culmination which explodes with joy the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. This event signifies the triumph over sin and death, offering hope and new life.



Wishing you all a happy feast of St. Joseph and a meaningful celebration of the Holy week with the triumphant victory of Easter.

All Commissions and Departments Meet

All commissions and departments meeting will be held on **March 09, 2024**, at **Don Bosco Provincial House**. I express my sincere gratitude to all of you, especially the heads of the commissions and departments, for carrying out all the programmes of the current academic

year as they were scheduled in the annual plan with lots of involvement and enthusiasm. During this meeting, we will prepare the youth ministry plan for the coming academic year. I request all the members of the various Commissions and Departments to attend this meeting without fail. Kindly come prepared with your tentative annual plan for the respective commissions and departments together with your suggestions.

Diaconate Ordination

Clerics Arul Sebastian Amaladoss, Ajilash Dhas Joseph and John Paul Mariaraj of Kristu Jyoti College, Bangalore, will be ordained deacons on [March 18, 2024](#). Clerics Sabinson Babiyans, Selvaraj Palraj, Sesu Raj Anthonisamy and Vimal Joseph of Don Bosco Theological College, Kavarapettai will be ordained on [March 19, 2024](#). We congratulate them and wish them all a relevant and fruitful diaconate ministry. We thank Fr. Don Bosco Lourdusamy, the Provincial of Chennai, the Rector and staff of DBTC, Chennai, and Fr. Jose Thomas Koyickal, the Provincial of Bangalore, the Rector and staff of KJC, Bangalore, who have accompanied our clerics in the past three years and helped them make a firm decision to serve the Lord as ordained ministers. They are assigned to the following places for their diaconate ministry:

Arul Sebastian Amaladoss	-	Nettur
Ajilash Dhas Joseph	-	Vilathikulam
John Paul Mariaraj	-	Savariyarpalayam
Sabinson Babiyans	-	Keela Eral
Selvaraj Palraj	-	K. Pudur
Sesu Raj Anthonisamy	-	Therespuram
Vimal Joseph	-	Pallithammam

May I request the rectors and parish priests to accompany them in their pastoral experience. They will be engaged in preaching, administering sacraments, animating basic Christian communities, and organising Easter blessings.

We also congratulate the students of theology who will be receiving their ministries as acolytes and lectors.

Summer Apostolate

The students of theology except the second years from Kavarapettai will be available in our communities for summer ministry from [March 20, 2024](#). The second years from Kavarapettai will be available from [April 20, 2024](#). After the summer apostolate, they will come back to the provincial house for two days of animation and evaluation of the summer ministry before going to the theologate. The second-year students of Philosophy will be available for the summer ministry from [April 16 to May 22, 2024](#) and the first years from [April 28 to May 22, 2024](#).

The communities have a vital role to play in accompanying the young Salesians who come into our communities for a formative experience. I exhort the entire community to guide and support the brothers during their stay and get involved as a community in all the activities. The leaders must ensure the regular rhythm of the community during these days, especially the prayer moments. May I request the Rectors to send their assessments of the clerics involved in the summer ministry in the beginning of June to the Provincial office.

Meeting For Those Due for Perpetuals

For those clerics due for perpetuals, a meeting will be held on [Saturday, March 02, 2024](#), at Don Bosco Provincial House, Kallukuzhy. Fr. Xavier Michael, the vice provincial, has already communicated to you the details of the meeting. Let us pray for these young Salesians as they step into an important phase of religious commitment.

Applications for Perpetual and Renewal

The clerics who are due for Perpetual Profession and Renewal of Vows will submit the application on [March 19, 2024](#), to the Rectors of the Communities during the Holy Eucharist. I request the rectors to send the documents on or before [March 25, 2024](#), with the opinion of the house council in the prescribed form, to the Provincial office. Kindly send two admission forms and the applications of those applying for the perpetual profession. I recommend all community members to accompany our young Salesians during their journey of discernment. *The province secretary has already sent the details of the list of those due for renewals and perpetual professions and the related documents to the Rectors. I exhort the leaders to ensure prompt response and cooperation in this regard.*

INT PC09 – Zonal Meeting and Pre-Chapter Meeting

We have intensified our preparation for the ninth provincial chapter of our province. In this month we have two levels of meeting, one zonal meeting in three zones and a pre-chapter meeting. The zonal meetings have been scheduled on [07, 08 and 09 March 2024](#) in DB Keela Eral, DBAI Salem and DBPH Kallukuzhy respectively. The pre-chapter meeting will be held on [21 March 2024 at DB Manikandam](#). These are the important moments to reflect and share our life and mission and therefore, I ask all the confreres to attend these meetings without fail.

PROGRAMME OF THE MONTH

- | | | |
|----|-----|---|
| 02 | Sat | Meeting for those due for Perpetual Profession @ DBPH |
| 07 | Thu | INT PC09 Zonal Meeting @ Keela Eral |
| 08 | Fri | INT PC09 Zonal Meeting @ DBAI Salem |
| 09 | Sat | All Commissions and Departments meet (Forenoon) @ DBPH
Youth Ministry Core Team Meet (Afternoon) @ DBPH
INT PC09 Zonal Meeting @ DBPH |
| 16 | Sat | Zonal Meeting for Clerics @ Keela Eral |
| 16 | Sat | Domestic Staff Retreat (Elakuruchi and Idaikattur) |

20	Wed	Provincial Council
21	Thu	INT PC09 Pre-chapter Meeting @ Manikandam
29	Fri	Good Friday
31	Sun	Easter

RECALLING EVENTS

Anniversary of Fr. Marcel Lincoln

The first death anniversary mass for Fr. Marcel Lincoln was held on 02 February 2024 at Mary Help of Christians Shrine, Amsam. All the rectors and leaders of our communities were present along with some of the family members and relatives of Fr. Marcel. I thank the Rectors and confreres of Amsam and Namakkal communities for looking into all the details of the anniversary remembrance.

Silver Jubilee Symposium

The symposium in view of the Silver Jubilee of our province was well planned and organized on 23 and 24 February 2024 at Don Bosco, Manikandam. There was a good number of participants from all our communities, Salesian family and from INM. All the speakers shared their profound knowledge about the various sectors of our mission evaluating the past twenty-five years and sharing some suggestions for the future. I express my sincere appreciation to all the speakers for their valuable knowledge. I thank Fr. Victor and all the members of the silver jubilee committee for the successful execution of the symposium. I also thank the Rectors and confreres of Manikandam and Amsam community for taking extra efforts in making the place beautiful and offering a comfortable stay. I express my thanks to FMA and OCD Manikandam communities for accommodating the participants.

Provincial Community Day

The Provincial Community Day was held on 24 February 2024 at Don Bosco, Manikandam. All the silver jubilarians of profession and ordination and the new priests were felicitated. It was a moment of sharing our joy and memories about the work and dedication of the confreres. I appreciate all the participants for their valuable presence and all who presented the various programmes.

Leaders Meeting

All the leaders of our communities had two days of meetings on 02, 03 February 2024 at DBPH, Kallukuzhy. Fr. Stanislaus Swamikannu INM animated the first day on formation and mission. The second day was on silver jubilee, symposium, and PC 09. I extend my gratitude all our leaders for their enthusiastic presence.

Clerics Zonal Meeting

Two zonal-level meetings were organized in Kallukuzhy and DBAI Salem on 10 and 17 February respectively. The clerics were animated on their personal plan of life in the

forenoon and in the afternoon, they were taken for a pilgrimage. I thank the vice provincial and the rectors and confreres of Kallukuzhy and DBAI Salem for hosting the event.

ADMA Annual Meeting

A day of meeting and animation at the province level was held for all the members of ADMA from all the units of our presences on February 25, 2024, at Velankanni. Seventy-two participants from our presence attended the meeting. I thank Fr. John Bosco Lourdusamy, the ADMA delegate of the province for organizing the meeting.

Anniversary of the Deceased Salesians

02.03.2015 – Fr. Xavier Rodriguez died at Tiruchy at the age of 84.

CONDOLENCES...

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

- To the Provincial and confreres of INK Province at the demise of Rev. Fr. George Cheruvalli (59) on 07 February 2024.
- To Fr. Mohan Christuraj, at the demise of his mother Mrs. Adaikalamary (85) on 23 February 2024.

May the soul rest in peace!

COMMUNITY REFLECTION

TOWARDS SILVER JUBILEE - YEAR 3: SPIRITUALITY OF WITNESS

Realizing the Value of Our Vocation and Formation will Make Us Witnesses

My personal experience of Salesian life in the past many years is certainly memorable. I feel that the Salesian Formation is the best. I do not want to compare with others because each one is unique in nature and individuals may be taken up with their own formation. But from my experience and from many others who have been in the Salesian congregation for some time of their lives, they seem to agree with me as well. During this year, I have been sharing this aspect in the conference of the visitation of the houses. I want to put it in writing as well, so that it may not be forgotten. Why do I say that our Salesian formation is the best?

1. The number of years that we go through in our formation is not exactly the number of years in calculation, but the number of years given to us to get in touch with the divine, to get enlightened, and to have a feel of the supernatural at some point, like the Sadhus and Gurus of our Indian tradition. Merely going through years learning different things for our priestly life does not make us real priests, but pursuing holiness should be the purpose of our entire life. That is the reason we are not professionals in the career of priesthood; on the contrary, we are disciples of the Lord, going through an experience of the Lord all the time. Formation houses need

formators and not simply teachers and scholars, because only the former could give an experience of formation, while the latter could only give knowledge and intelligence.

2. Last year, when I went abroad, I had the opportunity to meet a few of the Salesians who were in the congregation for a few years in the past but now are living their Salesian charism in the world. Each of them acknowledged that it was the Salesian formation that helped them form their careers and lives. How wonderful it is to hear from those who have gone away from us physically but keep the Salesian charism close to their hearts! One of them remembered the good nights given by various Salesians and what an impact they had on his life. I was pleasantly surprised and shared with a few, "No wonder he is doing so well in the corporate world today." At the same time, he did not fail to share the other side of the story: "If only those who are in the congregation remembered the good nights and practiced them in their lives, there would be a few more saints in the congregation today."
3. Going through the candidates who joined our province in the past years, I have come to know that more than 50 percent of the candidates are from non-Salesian contexts, all referred by diocesan priests or other religious priests and nuns. A few of the clerics who are in the initial formation shared with me their experience. They wanted to join some other congregation because their relative priests were there, but those priests seemed to have told the candidates, "Do not join us but join the Salesians because their charism is very relevant today, their community life is good, and you can develop your potential and talents well and make a meaningful life in the future." The whole world appreciates us and admires our formation, but what about us, who are the permanent members of the congregation? Do we really relish and feel joyful about our own formation?
4. The benefactors and donors at times put us to shame with their trust and confidence in us. I am sure it is not because all the Salesians are wonderful and perfect; they carry out the mission in the best way possible, and they continue to help us. In fact, because they like our charism and see a few Salesians who are exemplary and working hard, they offer their continued support. We must all keep in mind that these benefactors are not very rich in money and property, but they are filthy rich in their faith in Don Bosco and his charism. Hence, each of us needs to appreciate and admire the life of the Salesian vocation God has given to each of us and needless to say about the great responsibility we should cultivate in our religious life.

Let us begin to appreciate our Salesian formation every day of our lives. I somehow feel that only those who have abundance can also give generously to others. Only those who are happy and joyful in their lives can pass on the same happiness to others. Those who are unhappy in their Salesian life not only cannot contribute to the community, but they will also become failures in the mission. How wonderful to see many Salesians going about their

lives bubbling with energy and enthusiasm! These are the people who will make a difference in the Salesian youth ministry. And we need many of them today in our province. I wish and pray that all of us become like that, enjoying our everyday life. May the Risen Jesus give us that joy and happiness.

Prayerful best wishes to all in the Family,

Yours Affectionately in Don Bosco



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



**St. Joseph,
Pray for us!**