

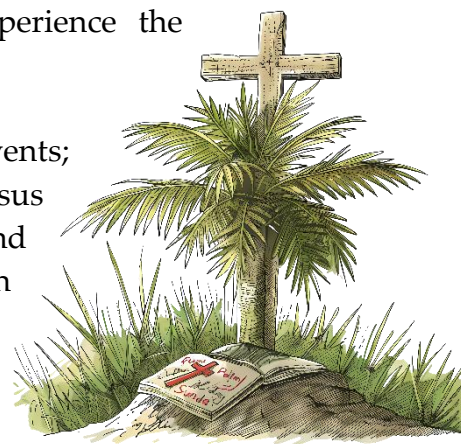


### DEAR CONFRERES, SALESIAN FAMILY AND BELOVED YOUNG PEOPLE

Cordial Greetings...

As we journey through the sacred season of Lent, our hearts turn towards the culminating events of our salvation: Holy Week and the glorious celebration of Easter. This period, rich in symbolism and profound spiritual significance, invites us to delve deeper into the mystery of the Paschal sacrifice of Christ and to experience the transformative power of His resurrection.

Holy Week is not merely a commemoration of historical events; it is a profound pilgrimage of the heart. We walk with Jesus through His final days, witnessing His unwavering love and ultimate act of self-giving. On **Palm Sunday**, we begin with the triumphant entry into Jerusalem, acknowledging Jesus as our King. Yet, this celebration is tempered with the foreshadowing of His impending suffering. We are reminded that true kingship is found in humility and service. On **Maundy Thursday**, we commemorate the institution of the Eucharist, the ultimate expression of the love of Christ. The washing of the feet teaches us the importance of humble service and the call to love one another as Christ loved us. On **Good Friday**, we stand at the foot of the Cross, witnessing the agonizing sacrifice of our Savior. In this moment of profound sorrow, we are confronted with the depth of God's love for humanity. We are reminded that through suffering, we find redemption. On **Holy Saturday**, we enter into a period of silent contemplation, reflecting on the mystery of the descent of Christ into the depths of death. We await with hope the dawn of resurrection, trusting in God's promise of new life.



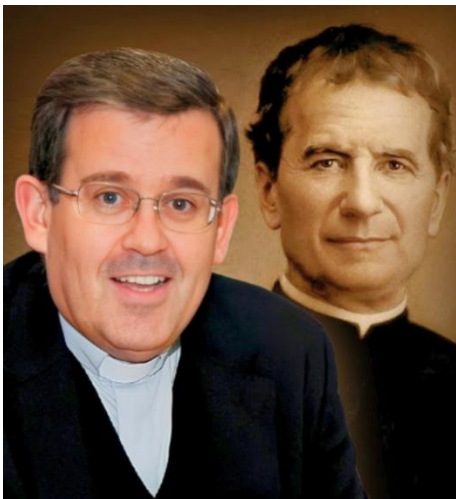
**Easter Sunday** bursts forth with the radiant proclamation: "Christ is risen!" This is the cornerstone of our faith, the ultimate victory of life over death, hope over despair. The resurrection of Jesus is not just a historical event; it is a living reality that transforms our lives. It offers us the assurance of eternal life and the power to overcome the darkness of sin and death. Easter is a call to renewal, a time to shed our old selves and embrace the new life offered to us in Christ. It is a time to rejoice in the boundless love and mercy of God. As Salesians, we are called to bring this message of hope and joy to the young, especially those who are marginalized and suffering. We are to be bearers of the Risen

Christ, radiating His love and light in the world. We can do this: Embracing the spirit of service, following the example of Jesus who washed the feet of His disciples; Fostering a community of love and forgiveness, reflecting the reconciling power of the resurrection; Reaching out to the young, sharing the joy of Easter and inspiring them to live lives of hope and purpose; Renewing our dedication to the Salesian charism, bringing the light of Christ to the young people entrusted to our care.

May the Risen Christ fill our hearts with His peace and joy, and may His light guide us as we continue our journey of faith and service. Wishing you all a Happy Easter!

### **29<sup>th</sup> General Chapter at Turin**

The month of March has been very busy for all the participants of the GC 29. We had serious discussions on the theme of the Chapter namely, "Passionate about Jesus Christ and dedicated to the young." The first core theme was taken up in the first week in the 6 commissions. We had time for personal reading, sharing in the small groups, and listening attentively to the sharing of others. The results of the discussions in groups were further edited by the redaction committee and the rough draft was presented in the general assembly. It was wonderful to see several interventions from our Region in the assembly and many participants appreciated the contribution of our Region. One of the interesting discussions was whether the Salesian brothers could be entrusted with leadership in the community, province and the congregation. This reflection came about because of the Pope opening the avenues for such a discussion. Finally, the assembly voted for the decision of entrusting leadership at the community level 'ad experimentum' for the coming six years.



When the number of brothers is declining year by year, I am sure this decision will not only recognize the expertise of the brothers but will also increase the number of vocations to brotherhood.

The Salesian Congregation has a [new Rector Major](#) in the person of [Fr. Fabio Attard SDB](#). We congratulate him in the name of our province and the Salesian Family. We assure him of our support and fervent prayers. He was not present in the chapter but arrived later the same day of the election. All the members had an opportunity to congratulate him personally and as members of the province as well. It was a moving ceremony, and we could witness joy and happiness on all faces. May God bless him with good health and happiness. The following members were elected to the various sectors as General councillors, and we congratulate and pray for God's choicest blessings on them all.

Fr. Stefano Martoglio – the Vicar  
Fr. Silvio Roggia – Formation

Fr. Rafael Bejarano – Youth Ministry  
Fr. Fidel Maria Orendain – Social Communication  
Fr. Jorge Mario Crisafulli – Missions  
Fr. Gabriel Stawowy – Economy

The General Assembly went on to elect the Regional Councillors and the following members were elected. We congratulate and pray for them all that they may enjoy the blessings of the Lord in abundance.

Fr. Alphonse Owoudou – Central and Western Africa  
Fr. Bizimana Innocent – East and South Africa  
Fr. Romero Hector Gabriel – America South Cone  
Fr. Matthew Williams – East Asia and Oceania  
Fr. Biju Michael – South Asia  
Fr. Roman Jachimowicz – Central and Northern Europe  
Fr. Hugo Orozco Sanchez – Inter America  
Fr. Juan Carlos Godoy – Mediterranean

We have another ten days to go discussing and voting for the different documents based on the theme of the chapter. On April 10 all the members will travel to Rome and spend a day at the Vatican visiting and celebrating a thanksgiving Holy Eucharist. We have the conclusion on the 12th of April with a Solemn Mass and the Chapter will officially end by lunch. Fr. Amaladoss and I will spend two days visiting our confreres and we will be back to the province on Wednesday of Holy Week. I exhort the confreres to pray for the success of the General Chapter, especially for the new General Council, that they may lead the congregation in the footsteps of our father and founder, St. John Bosco.

### **Ordination in INT**

On [April 29, 2025, at 9.30 AM](#), a solemn ordination ceremony will be held at [Don Bosco School, Yagappa Nagar, Thanjavur](#), where seven deacons—six from the INT province and one from the INM province—will be conferred with holy orders. The Most Reverend Sagayaraj Thamburaj, Bishop of Thanjavur, will preside over this sacred rite. On behalf of the province, I extend wishes and offer fervent prayers for these deacons as they diligently prepare for this significant milestone in their lives. They will be at home from 20 April to 20 May 2025. Subsequently, they will assume their apostolic assignments for the coming academic year in the respective Salesian communities from 21 May 2024. The deacons are assigned to the following communities.

Dn. Vimal Joseph – Alangulam  
Dn. Arul Sebastian Amaladoss – Manakkal  
Dn. Ajilash Dhas Joseph – LS Madurai  
Dn. Selvaraj Paulraj – Mathakottai

Dn. Sabinson Babiyans – Therespuram  
Dn. Sesuraj Anthonysamy – Vilathikulam

We express our sincere gratitude to Rev. Fr. Don Bosco, the Provincial of Chennai; the Rector and staff of Don Bosco Theological Centre, Kavaraipettai; Rev. Fr. Jose Koyickal, the Provincial of Bangalore; and the Rector and staff of Kristu Jyoti College. Their collective guidance and accompaniment over the past four years have been instrumental in the life of our deacons to serve the Lord as ordained ministers. May God bestow upon them abundant blessings, good health, and enduring joy.

### **Annual Retreats**

The province has organized the first retreat for the year in January and has scheduled to organize three retreats in the coming months. The second retreat will take place from [07 to 12 April](#), the third from [21 to 26 April](#), and the fourth from [01 to 06 May 2025](#). All retreats will be conducted at The Retreat – Yercaud. We are privileged to welcome Fr. Biju Thomas SDB from the Salesian province of Kolkata, who will serve as the preacher for these three spiritual exercises. The annual retreat offers a valuable opportunity for our confreres to engage in six days of contemplative silence and solitude, fostering profound spiritual renewal. I earnestly encourage all to arrive the day prior to each retreat for supper, thereby ensuring a meaningful and immersive experience. Building upon the positive feedback from last year, these retreats will continue to be conducted in silence, facilitating deeper introspection and communion.

### **60<sup>th</sup> Day Memorial Mass for Br. George Joseph SDB**

The cherished memory of our departed Salesians remains an integral part of our tradition. In profound gratitude for the exemplary life of Br. George Joseph SDB, we will commemorate his 60th day memorial with a Eucharistic celebration on [April 28, 2025, at 11:00 AM at the Shrine of Mary Help of Christians, AMSAM](#). I earnestly encourage the widest possible participation from our communities. This occasion presents a unique opportunity to express our collective solidarity with Br. George and his family. Let us persevere in our prayers for the eternal repose of his soul. May I request the confreres send your good memories to be added to the obituary, which is being prepared by the Rector of Amsam, Fr. John Kennedy.

### **Perpetuals and Renewals**

I extend my sincere gratitude to the Rectors and leaders for their diligent preparation of the young clerics for their next stage of formation. I thank the local council for receiving the applications and for going through the admission procedure, of those due for renewals and perpetual profession, admission to the novitiate and pre-novitiate. The forms are being reached the provincial office. The admission process by the provincial council will be done at the end of this month during the provincial council meeting. Let us continue to offer our

prayers for all the young Salesians, that they may flourish joyfully in their Salesian religious vocation.

### **Summer Ministry**

The summer season invigorates our Salesian communities, fostering a vibrant atmosphere with a diverse array of engaging programs tailored for children and youth. Furthermore, students who have completed their philosophical studies as well as those who are pursuing theological studies join our communities to spend their vacation meaningfully and to joyfully support all the special programmes planned by the communities. I wish you all, dear confreres, a fruitful summer ministry with many children and young people. May they come to know and appreciate the joy of our Salesian communities and mission. Furthermore, I earnestly encourage all Salesians to actively participate in the regular rhythms of community life and collaborate harmoniously to cultivate a truly memorable summer experience.

### **Lenten Contribution**

All the leaders of the communities are requested to send the Lenten Contribution to the Provincial Economist by the [end of April 2025](#). This will be collected and sent to the Rector Major.

### **PROGRAMME OF THE MONTH**

07-12	Mon-Sat	II Retreat – General Patronage @ Yercaud
21-26	Wed	III Retreat – General Patronage @ Yercaud
24	Thu	Vocation Camp Begins @ DB Thanjavur
29	Tue	INT Ordination @ DB Thanjavur
29-30	Tue-Wed	Provincial Council @ DBPH

### **RECALLING EVENTS**

#### **All Commissions and Departments Meet**

A meeting of all commissions and departments convened on March 1, 2025, at the Don Bosco Provincial House, Kallukuzhy. Most of the heads and members of the commissions and departments were in attendance, and I extend my sincere gratitude to each of them. Substantial progress was made in planning and finalizing the programs for youth ministry for the upcoming academic year. I commend the collaborative efforts of all involved and express appreciation to Fr. Charles Joseph, the Provincial Youth Ministry Delegate, for his diligent coordination of the commissions and departments, as well as his skilful facilitation of the meetings.

#### **Diaconate Ordination**

The diaconate ordination of Cleric Antony Gunabalan Iruthayadhason took place on March 19, 2025, at the Votive Shrine in Kilpauk. The ceremony was meticulously organized, and a significant number of priests from our province participated. On behalf of the province, I

extend my congratulations to Dn. Gunabalan and offer our best wishes for his diaconate ministry, may it be a period of profound encounter with God's love and the vibrant faith of the people he serves.

### **Animation on Spiritual direction for Leaders**

The Animation Program on Spiritual Direction for Leaders was successfully conducted from March 11th to 15th, 2025, at Don Bosco, Manikandam. Most leaders participated, and their keen interest and wholehearted availability are deeply appreciated. We were fortunate to have Fr. Wilson from Anugraha serve as the resource person for the entire program. Drawing upon his extensive expertise in this area, he effectively guided the leaders toward a deeper understanding of spiritual direction. On behalf of all the participants, I extend our sincere gratitude to Fr. Wilson for accepting our invitation and for the excellent organization of this enriching course. I also thank the rector and confreres of Manikandam community for hosting the meeting with utmost care seeing through all the details.

### **Zonal Meeting for Clerics**

The zonal meeting for the clerics who are in Thoothukudi zone was held on 08 March 2025 at Don Bosco, Keela Eral. They were animated on Salesian Spirituality and Influence of Media on Young People by Fr. Rajadevan and Fr. Selvakumar respectively. In the afternoon, they made a pilgrimage to Kamanayakanpatti and had Holy Mass. I thank the rector and confreres of Keela Eral community for hosting the meeting and the resource persons for animating the clerics.

### **Meeting For Clerics Due for Perpetuals**

A meeting for clerics due for perpetual vows was held on 22 March 2025, at Don Bosco Farm, Sengipatti. They were animated on final commitment in our vocation by Fr. Daniel Sebastian. In the afternoon, they made a pilgrimage to Poondi and also visited Kallanai. I thank the resource person and Fr. Xavier Michael for animating the clerics.

### **Anniversary of the Deceased Salesians**

10.04.2023 – Fr. Selvadurai Paulraj died at Coimbatore at the age of 46.

15.04.2016 – Fr. Packiaraj Rayan died at Thanjavur at the age of 67.

27.04.2010 – Fr. Sebastian Vayalipara died at Madurai at the age of 80.

### **CONDOLENCES...**

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

- To the [Provincial and confreres of ING Province](#) at the demise of [Rev. Fr. Edasserithottathil Augustine](#) (75) on 05 March 2025.
- To [Fr. Amala Jeya Rayan](#) at the demise of his mother [Mrs. Louis Mary](#) (82) on 27 March 2025.
- To [Fr. Dominic Savio](#) at the demise of his father [Mr. Rayappan](#) (88) on 27 March 2025.

*May the soul rest in peace!*

## COMMUNITY REFLECTION

### SILVER JUBILEE OF THE PROVINCE OF TIRUCHY – WAY FORWARD

#### 5. Effective Leaders are Powerful Motivators

Leaders are not born, but they are formed by the family and the society. ‘Some are born leaders, and others are made’ is another version. Good leadership is often expressed through behaviour rather than personality; it’s a skill that can be learnt. The most effective leaders are highly conscious of their own thoughts and beliefs and show up with integrity as their fully authentic selves. Whatever it may be, unless every leader has the unlimited blessings of the Lord and makes all the efforts to follow him in every way possible, he/she cannot exercise leadership in a meaningful and effective way. “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.” Mt 16:24

According to McKinsey analysis, conducting a survey of nearly 2 lakh people in 81 organizations, there are 4 types of behaviours that account for 89 percent of leadership effectiveness. They are Being supportive, Operating with a strong orientation towards results, Seeking different perspectives and Solving problems effectively. Effective leaders know that what works in one situation will not necessarily work every time. They have to opt for a situational approach that enables them to focus on the leadership behaviours that are most relevant to the organization as it evolves. Most leaders learn to lead over time. It is referred to as leadership development, though the results vary. The crux of it says, Human centric leadership is when leaders “show up as human beings and behave as such when they interact with their coworkers and all stakeholders.” To succeed today, great leaders should be able to carefully balance the following.

- *Certainty about what they know versus new ideas and approaches – and the confidence to adjust their original plans*
- *An obsession with financial performance versus the needs of all the stakeholders*
- *Being a conservative steward of the business versus taking the occasional bold and well-calculated risk*
- *Being a hard-headed professional versus someone who takes a more humane approach*

I was touched when I read the above ideas and feel they are very true in our lives. In today's context understanding leadership involves recognizing it as influence and guidance, not just authority. It's about inspiring and motivating others to achieve a common goal rather than solely relying on position or power. We may think that by authority and power, we refer to those who are in high positions, like the Bishops and the Major Superiors. Here lies the problem. By virtue of our vocation as human beings, each of us is a leader. The Rector to the community, the headmaster to the staff and students, the Administrator to the domestic staff, the assistant to the boarders, the class leader to the rest of the boys in the class, one boy to his peers and the list is endless. A good leader can exercise his influence

and guidance only if he is able to take direction from others greater than him or older than him or more experienced than him or wiser than him. In our religious life, none of the above is applicable because we must simply obey the superiors or take directions from those in responsibility. It does not matter who he is or what his capacities are. If we are unable, we must admit that this life is not suitable and find greener pastures that suit us better. This is the hard reality of our religious life. It's difficult to accept, but this is what we have professed, unless we did not understand well when we made our first profession.

I want to quote my own life and the lessons learnt. I was doing my eighth standard at St. Antony's HSS, Thanjavur. We used to walk up from Don Bosco to St. Antony's every day and Fr. Packiaraj Rayan of good memory was the Asst Headmaster of the school. One day as the school was closing, during the final prayer, two boys were talking, and I made a sign to them to stop talking. Fr. Packiaraj did not see the boys talking but noticed me making some signs. He called me to the office and without any other words, slapped me twice. If I remember well, I was the leader of the group. The agony did not end there. When I came back to the Aspirantate, I was asked to pour water for the plants for a week during the games time. I was in tears the whole week. Later, I was called and got fired again when I tried to explain. "This is not the place for me" I told myself and wanted to go home. Luckily, there was my assistant who supported me and saved my vocation. When I went home for holidays, I wrote a long letter full of emotion to Fr. Packiaraj. After I came back from home, Father called me and asked pardon for what had happened. For a person who expected more scolding, this was never expected. Not only that, but we also became good friends from then on, and when we started the Don Bosco Matriculation School, he made me the first school pupil leader.

Fr. Packiaraj Rayan was a great source of inspiration for me. His influence and guidance were beyond limits. He could follow up each of us personally and bring out the best of our qualities and capabilities. Once he called me and told me to sing a solo song with all the accompanying instruments. I hesitated, but he would not leave me. If I got interested in music, it's because of that moment. Later I was included in the band, and the journey of my life of music started. I am sure each of us will have sweet memories of those who have contributed to our growth in life. In the past years, I have mentioned several Salesians who have been good leaders and wonderful motivators. God bless them all.

I am grateful to God for our province and the many good leaders we have. I am sure there are many in the making, and the future will be bright. This is the reason why we also introduce young leaders every year. Many of them do well, but it's also true that some of them are unable to perform their best because of too much pressure, and leadership development is very slow. We must be patient and accept that leadership is learnt, and the process is long. What is more important is the humility to accept the realities of life and the openness to change for good. I must admit that there have been circumstances when some confreres could have been more humane in their approach. Maybe they have tried their



best; I cannot judge, but we could see that their influence and guidance have not borne fruits. As we have elected a new Rector Major and the General Council, I wish and pray that we become leaders who are great motivators for the young people of today. I exhort your prayers for me as well so that I may truly reflect Don Bosco in the role of my leadership.

Prayerful best wishes to all in the Family,

Yours Affectionately in Don Bosco



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



**Happy Easter!**