



PROVINCIAL CIRCULAR

DECEMBER 2025

DEAR CONFRERES, SALESIAN FAMILY AND BELOVED YOUNG PEOPLE

Cordial greetings of peace and joy to you all ...

As we approach the joyful solemnity of the [Nativity of our Lord](#), I write to you with a heart full of gratitude and fraternity. Amid our busy academic schedules, youth-based activities, and parish ministries, Christmas arrives as a gentle but powerful invitation to pause and gaze upon the humility of God.

The mystery of Christmas is not merely a sentimental memory of the past; it is the radical affirmation that God loves the "little things." St. Paul reminds us that *"though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor"* (2 Cor 8:9). In the vast history of humanity, God chose a peripheral village, a borrowed stable, and a feeding trough to reveal His glory. When we look at the face of the Christ Child, we must recognize the faces of the young people entrusted to us: the student struggling to pay fees, the dropout seeking direction and the orphan longing for a sense of family.



Don Bosco taught us that holiness consists of being very happy. However, the joy of Christmas is not found in expensive decorations or lavish banquets. It is found in 'Presence'. Just as the ["Word became flesh and pitched his tent among us,"](#) we are called to pitch our tents among the young. Let our houses be homes. Let us heal any fractures in our fraternal life with the balm of forgiveness. If God could bridge the gap between Heaven and Earth, surely, we can bridge the gaps between confreres. In a world marked by consumerism, let our witness be one of simplicity. The Manger was, in a sense, the first Oratory, a place where the poor shepherds were welcomed, and God was present.

As we kneel before the crib this year, let us ask for the grace to renew our *"Da Mihi Animas."* The vulnerable child in the manger is the same God who calls us to be fathers, teachers, and friends for the young people. May the light that shone over Bethlehem illuminate every Salesian house and all the young people of our Province. May Mary, the mother of the Word Incarnate and the Help of Christians, wrap us all in her mantle of peace.

I wish you all a holy, joyful, and grace-filled Christmas!

Salesian Brothers Day

On [December 5](#), we remember Bl. Philip Rinaldi, a man who lived Don Bosco's charism to the full and instilled the same in the entire congregation, as the third successor of Don Bosco. We also celebrate the Salesian Brothers Day on the same day. In a world that often separates the "sacred" from the "secular," the Salesian Brother stands as a bridge. He reminds us that holiness is not confined to the sanctuary but is found in the classroom, the technical workshop, the playground, and the administration office. By consecrating his life while remaining a lay person, the Salesian Brother brings Christ directly into the structures of the world. St. Artemides Zatti, the holy nurse of Patagonia, stands as a shining model. He did not need a pulpit to preach; his bicycle, his medicine bag, and his smile were his tools of evangelization. I extend my gratitude to our dear Brothers in the Province (Br. Arockiadoss, Br. Sagayaraj, Br. Chinnapparaj, and Br. Edwin): Thank you for your professional competence, your closeness to the young, and your witness of radical fraternity. Let us also courageously propose this specific vocation to our young people—not as a "second choice," but as a complete, joyful, and challenging path to holiness. We wish all the four Salesian Brothers of our province a joyous feast. May God grant them all good health and happiness.

Priestly Ordination of Dn. Leo Nepolian

We joyfully announce the forthcoming priestly ordination of our dear Dn. Leo Nepolian SDB. The sacred ceremony will take place on Saturday, [December 27, 2025, at 10:30 a.m., at the Parish Church of Alangara Annai, Varadarajanpet](#). He will be ordained by Most Rev. Jeevanandam, the Bishop of Kumbakonam. On behalf of our Province, I extend heartfelt congratulations and assure Dn. Leo Nepolian of our special prayers as he intensely prepares for this important phase of his life. May God bless him with good health and happiness as he commits to the service of the young in the spirit of Don Bosco.

We offer our sincere thanks to the Salesian Province of Belgium North and the Netherlands (BEN), especially Fr. Bart Decancq, the Provincial, the provincial council members, all the rectors and the confreres of the various communities, who have accompanied Dn. Nepolian during the time formation with great care and helped him make a firm decision to serve the Lord as an ordained minister.

On behalf of our province, it is with immense joy and profound Salesian fraternity, we extend our most sincere and heartfelt welcome to Fr. Bart Decancq, the provincial and the other confreres of BEN province who come to take part in the ordination ceremony. They will spend some days in our province visiting some of our communities and mission. May they feel the warmth and family spirit of our province throughout their visit.

I take this occasion to inform the province that Dn. Leo Nepolian has been transferred to the BEN province permanently on 27 November 2025. He had been in dialogue with me and the provincial of BEN for the past few years and submitted a request recently. After the

positive opinion of both the provincials, the permanent transfer has taken place. On behalf of the entire province of INT, I wish to congratulate Dn. Leo Nepolian for his missionary zeal and exemplary commitment he has shown in his religious life all these years. May God bless him and accompany him all through his life.

PROGRAMME OF THE MONTH

05	Fri	Salesian Brothers Day
07	Sun	ASC Pilgrimage to Velankanni
20	Sat	Provincial Council
25	Thu	Christmas

RECALLING EVENTS

All Commissions and Departments of the province gathered for the mid-year evaluation in Don Bosco Provincial House, Tiruchy on 15 November 2025. I thank all the heads and members of Commissions and Departments for your valuable participation and the presentation of the report with proper details and methodology. I thank Fr. Charles Joseph, the youth ministry delegate of the province for coordinating the programme.

The South Asia Forum of Economers (SAFE) held its annual gathering from November 21–24, 2025, in Kathmandu. Provincial Economers, the Bosconet Director, and the SPCSA Secretary participated in three days of reflection and strategic planning. Fr. Gabriel Stawowy, Economist General, celebrated the Eucharist and animated on economic administration. Dr. Janko Jochimsen from Rome led sessions on congregation-level administration. Fr. Biju Michael, Regional Councillor, delivered an online message. Fr. Amaladoss Sanjone (INT) presented on FCRA and Income Tax amendments. The forum included province sharing of best practices for synergy and stewardship, fellowship, and cultural visits to Patan Square, Kathmandu, and Chandanagiri.

The 7th National Education Conference of Don Bosco Schools (NECDBS 2025) was successfully held at St. Anthony's Higher Secondary School in Shillong from November 6-8, 2025, hosted by the Salesian Province of Shillong. The event brought together approximately 240 principals and delegates from all 11 Salesian Provinces across India under the guiding theme of "Educational Excellence in the Spirit of Don Bosco." The conference, inaugurated by the Governor of Meghalaya, featured insightful sessions and two panel discussions covering crucial areas such as transformative leadership, digital education, ecological responsibility, and educator well-being, all aimed at strengthening Salesian value-based education in the contemporary context.

CONDOLENCES...

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

- To the [Provincial and confreres of INP Province](#) at the demise of [Rev. Br. Frederick D'Souza](#) (88) on 02 November 2025.

- To Fr. Danistan at the demise of his father Mr. Irudayadhasan (76) on 03 November 2025.
- To the Provincial and confreres of INS Province at the demise of Rev. Fr. Mathew Parackatte (73) on 07 November 2025.
- To the Provincial and confreres of INB Province at the demise of Rev. Fr. Mathew Thalanany (96) on 22 November 2025.

May the soul rest in peace!

COMMUNITY REFLECTION

SILVER JUBILEE OF THE PROVINCE OF TIRUCHY – WAY FORWARD

10. The Art of Loving

This is the theme that I have been dealing with during the provincial visit this year. And I want to end with this theme, the whole series of my provincial circulars for the past 6 years. As I share with many of you, I do not know how much I have been helpful in motivating you and inspiring you all these years, but I have grown so much because of the rich and varied experiences of Salesian life in the past. Many of the confreres, especially the young Salesians, have shared with me positively how they have seen Salesian life with a different perspective after going through the different topics dealt with in the circulars. Many others outside our Salesian circles have greatly wondered at the frank sharing of life situations, which they feel are more helpful than quoting several documents and books. Anyway, I am grateful to God for giving me an opportunity to think and reflect about my life and more so in sharing the same with others. Let us continue in the journey of life, loving and helping one another to grow.

“And now these three things remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of them is love.” 1 Cor 13:13. Faith and hope are enduring, but love is the supreme, essential and most important quality, lasting beyond temporary spiritual gifts. One of the books that impressed me much is “The Art of Loving”, by Eric Fromm. It is an old book, but the reality explained is relevant even today. Eric Fromm is a product of the post-World War world, and he had lived through it painfully. Looking at the victims of war, he must have thought to himself, “If only people loved life and loved people a little more, how much better the world would be?” He adds further that love is not merely a feeling or a vibration that suddenly appears in our body; rather, it is an art to be learnt, to be practised and to be mastered in life. Hence, they named the book ‘The Art of Loving’.

Let me take the introduction to the book for our reflection this month and compare our own context today. Eric Fromm considers that people have a false notion of love, and that is what is most prevalent in the world. He narrows it down to three aspects.

1. The faculty to give love is more than the faculty to receive love

All of us want to receive love. We want to be accepted by everyone. No one wants to be left out in a group; rather, he/she wants to be recognised and appreciated. In fact, we want to take the first seat, and that too at the earliest opportunity given. There is no end to the craving for love. So many have become depressed and mad because of lack of love and attention. From our birth till death, we always want to receive, and there is no limit to this. We become like the rich fool in the Bible who was not satisfied with what he had. But he wanted to accumulate more. Lk 12:16-21. Some years back I received a letter from one of the priests describing his qualities, experience and qualifications and concluding with these words, "Hence, I could be made a Bishop, and kindly refer my name if you are asked to propose names." While so many leaders are struggling and suffering with challenges and problems, there are many waiting in queue to become bishops and superiors. Our confreres are also in this list. When there was consultation for the Rector of Yercaud, I remember one of our beloved confreres writing in the consultation form his own name, mentioning his qualities, experience and qualifications. I could not control my laughter reading through it. There are also a few who demanded to be appointed as leaders, quoting their age and experience. This is the reality today.

Eric Fromm says that we have so much to give rather than all that we receive. Going through our life from our birth, if we make a list of all that we have received from our home, parents, school, friends and relatives, the Salesian congregation, our province, communities, confreres and friends, young people and others in the mission areas, I am sure we will never complete it. I remember a popular maxim at school, "Ask not what the country has done to you, but what have you done to the country?" The pertinent question is, "How much have I given in my life?"

The good news is that we have many good examples of people who have given much.

- During the time of Boscoree, there was an appeal sent to all the families of confreres requesting for donation and contribution. There was a lot of apprehension and hesitation regarding this idea. But I guess we received more than 10 lakhs from this initiative.
- I was greatly inspired by Fr. Joe Mannath SDB, who, on the occasion of his Silver Jubilee, printed in his invitation three proposals of charitable works, requesting money instead of gifts and shawls. One of the proposals was to educate the children of Savariarpalayam. I received a good sum from Fr. Joe in 2003. I wanted to follow his good example and so did the same for my Silver Jubilee, and with the generosity of good friends and relatives, I was able to gather a few lakhs and give to the Namakkal community for the HIV-affected children.
- After many years of battle, we have succeeded in giving 5 per cent of our turnover from the individual communities to the province. Though some of the confreres are

intelligent enough to spot the account that has very little money and give 5 per cent of it, still the generosity is good, and we appreciate it very much.

- It was a great act of charity of Fr. Thomas Santiagu, the provincial of Hyderabad, who gave part of his liver to another confrere who had been suffering from illness for a long time.
- Mrs. Hemalatha, a CSI woman, fulfilling the last wish of her husband, Mr. Arulmani, donated to our province a property with buildings worth 3 crore which is situated in Cholapuram, near Rajapalayam. She had to give away other properties to the relatives of her husband in order to carry out her husband's desire.
- Mrs. Anushya Daisy Ernest, a retired ADSP and a survivor of the bomb blast of Rajiv Gandhi's assassination, has come forward to donate a large sum of money to the Varadarajanpettai Don Bosco society to initiate a de-addiction ministry in the region and has donated 12 acres of land to the FIHM sisters in her native place, Kattumannarkoil.

The list is long, and there are so many generous souls who surprise us with their benevolence and generosity. These are all examples of giving money and property, and there are many others who have given their time, talents and even their lives for the gospel and the charism of our father and founder. We are eternally grateful to all of them.

As Salesians, we do not lack for anything in our lives. We get more than we need. Yet, there are so many complaints and disappointments openly expressed by a few, and a few others give vent to their feelings by their gossip and grumbling. There is nothing permanent. Life is a cycle, and everyone keeps moving in this cycle of life. Even if there is a superior who is bad, he is not going to be there forever, and so the important question is, "How do I live my life, and how much do I contribute to the community, province and the congregation?" For this we don't need to look at anyone or evaluate them with our own standards. Everyone knows about everyone else. Let us be the first to work hard and contribute our best for the welfare of the poor. Let us be the first to collaborate with the community to take the mission to the next level, especially accompanying young people entrusted to our care. Let us not count the cost in offering ourselves, our time and talents for the apostolate. "If anyone, then, knows the good they ought to do and doesn't do it, it is sin for them." James 4:17.

2. Love is not just a feeling or a vibration. It is a series of actions and commitments. Love includes the aspects of care, respect, knowledge and responsibility

Eric Fromm considers people who are prejudiced and full of themselves incapable of loving. Rather, they should be open-minded and ready to learn to love. That is the reason he named the book 'The Art of Loving'. Strangely, today's generation lives the opposite. The "I know everything" attitude is dominant. 'There is nothing more to learn in love,' seems to be the reigning echo. All of us know those who stop learning begin to stagnate. Pride rules their mind, and they become narcissistic. These people cannot love others, and

they will be selfish and evil personified. Charity is far from their mind. Humility is out of their dictionary.

There are a few confreres who belong to this category, and it is very difficult to reason with them or make them accept the reality. We may belong to the digital generation, but there are so many who have lived the values to the best of their ability in the past. They cannot be bypassed and rejected. When a confrere says, "I cannot accept a superior who is younger than me and feel insulted," I do not know how to understand him. Is he religious? How does he value religious life? What has he learnt in the formative years? There are many false notions like these prevailing in religious life today.

But love is an art, and it must be learnt day after day. God gives us many opportunities to love our brothers and sisters every moment of our lives. Rectors should love the confreres and learn to show the intensity of love at various moments of community living. The administrator must respect every worker and get work out of them with love and compassion. The principal must show sincere love and understanding towards the staff and the students and encourage them to shine in their lives. The parish priest should have the smell of the sheep, visit the families, welcome them to the office and accompany them in their joys and sorrows. The clerics must love the boys to the extent that every boy should know that they are being loved. All these acts of love demand huge responsibility and discipline.

Only in films do we come across a young boy who gets attracted to a cute girl, and the moment he has the first glance, there is a vibration like lightning that passes through the entire body, and he flies like a butterfly in a dream world. There is no love like that in real life. Love has to be learnt day by day, at every moment of our life, struggling through the ups and downs of life. Let us come to grips with our real life and better ourselves, growing in maturity year by year.

3. There is only falling in love at the initial stage. But a permanent state of being in love is standing strong in love and enduring in love

Everyone falls in love with something in life. Many young boys fall in love with beautiful girls. There are people who fall in love with objects like a laptop, a violin, a painting or a piece of furniture. Some others fall in love with pet animals and bikes. A few people get attached to places and portfolios, and others are obsessed with money and power. Most people are attracted and fall prey to all these. Eric Fromm points out to us that the permanent state of being in love is not falling in love with something but standing strong in love. Perseverance in love is the essence of life. Enduring in love till the end is not simply a passing emotion but a strong act of will. Not everyone succeeds in this effort, but all of us must strive towards this style of life.

A boy and a girl who are in love for years before marriage have lots of moments to cherish and make memories. In fact, every moment becomes memorable. But this stage does not last long. Once they get married, life becomes very different. They get busy with responsibilities and commitments to work and family. There is no time to sit back and converse freely. No song, no drama, no running around the trees and no more feelings of surprise and wonder are there in life. Reality becomes ordinary, routine and boring. At this juncture, if the couple do not make an act of will and commit themselves to one another for life, I am sure there will be a breakup, or there will be great challenges to remain faithful to one another.

Similarly, in our religious life, the beginnings of religious life are very interesting, and we fly high in building up our expectations and dreams. Later we realise that life is difficult with so many problems and challenges of community living and community building. Life becomes very different. Those friends who were very dear to us early in life are no longer with us in times of need. Those who were dancing around us in our joyous moments have disappeared once and for all, leaving us alone to face the odds of life. Even those who have benefited from us all the time are no longer to be seen, and we are left with no one to care for. It is at this time that we need to make an act of will. 'This too will pass away' and 'Never give up' should become our watchwords. The Lord who has called us and accompanied us all through life will not abandon us now and in the future. "Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you: he will never leave you nor forsake you." Deut 31:6.

Prayerful best wishes to all in the Family,

Yours Affectionately in Don Bosco



Fr. Agilan Sarprasadam SDB

Provincial – Salesian Province of Tiruchy, INT.



Merry Christmas!