



Salesian Province of **Tiruchy** *Annai Velankanni*



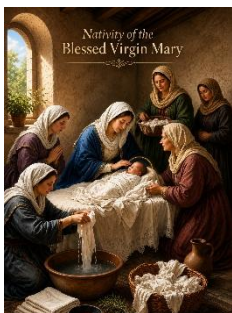
Don Bosco Provincial House, 65, Illupur Road, Kallukuzhy, Tiruchy - 620 020 Tel: 0431 - 2316324 / +91 94437 48693 www.donboscotiruchy.org

PROVINCIAL CIRCULAR

SEPTEMBER 2026

MY DEAR CONFRERES,

Cordial greetings from Don Bosco Provincial House, Tiruchy!



The month of September brings a special joy to the Salesian Province of Tiruchy as we celebrate on 08 September the feast of our beloved Patroness, Annai Velankanni, Our Lady of Good Health, coinciding with the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The birth of Mary invites us to contemplate with gratitude the woman chosen by God to become the Mother of our Savior. Her birth marks the dawn of a new era in salvation history – the first light announcing the coming of Christ. The Genealogy of Jesus reminds us that God works faithfully through the beauty and brokenness of human history as Pope Benedict XVI reflected, “God can write straight even on the crooked lines of our history.” Mary’s life is a beautiful witness to this faithfulness. With an expectant and trusting heart, she welcomed God’s plan and allowed Him to work through her. Her openness teaches us to journey towards Christ with hope, trust and fidelity, even amid the uncertainties of life.

As we celebrate Annai Velankanni, we are reminded of the countless pilgrims who approach her with faith, gratitude and hope, seeking her maternal care and intercession. As a Province, we too entrust our confreres, communities, young people, beneficiaries and apostolic endeavours to her loving protection. May Mary, our Mother and Patroness, teach us to trust in God’s providence, welcome His plans with generous hearts and remain faithful to our Salesian vocation and mission.



May the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Feast of Annai Velankanni fill our hearts with joy, hope and renewed faith. Wishing you all a happy and grace-filled feast!

Preparation for Extraordinary Visitation

A Preparatory Meeting for the Extraordinary Visitation will be held on 01 September 2026 at Don Bosco Provincial House, Tiruchy. The details of the meeting have already been shared in the INT News WhatsApp group. I kindly request all Rectors, Leaders and Administrators to

give this meeting priority and ensure your presence. Your active participation will contribute greatly to a well-prepared, coordinated and fruitful Extraordinary Visitation, carried out in a spirit of Salesian Communion and Synodality.

SPCSA Council and Former Provincials Meet

The former Salesian Provincials of South Asia will gather with our Rector Major on 07 September 2026 at Don Bosco Provincial House, New Delhi for a fraternal meeting of sharing, reflection, and dialogue on the present and future of the Salesian mission. The gathering will also be an opportunity to acknowledge their dedicated service and to strengthen their continued contribution to the Congregation and its mission among young people.

Representing our Province, our former Provincials, Rev. Fr. Amalraj Susai, Rev. Fr. Albert Johnson and Rev. Fr. Agilan Sarprasadam will participate in this meaningful gathering. I will also be attending the SPCSA Council Meeting with the Rector Major from 07 to 10 September 2026 at Don Bosco Provincial House, New Delhi.

I wish the former Provincials a fruitful and grace-filled meeting and pray that these moments of encounter and dialogue may renew our commitment to Don Bosco's mission and inspire us to serve the young with greater dedication and hope.

Quinquennium Meeting

As part of our ongoing formation, the Quinquennium Meeting for confreres ordained between 2021 and 2026 will be held on 14,15 September 2026 at Mount DB, Kotagiri. I warmly invite all our young priests of quinquennium period, to participate in this fraternal gathering, which will provide an opportunity for spiritual renewal, sharing of experiences, ongoing formation and reflection on their priestly and Salesian journey, with a special focus on updating themselves on the New Ratio. The meeting will also include moments of animation, prayer, silence, relaxation and fraternal sharing (cf. Ratio, 646). May this encounter renew their joy in vocation and strengthen their commitment to Christ and Don Bosco's mission among the young.

Clerics meetings

A meeting for clerics preparing for Perpetual Profession will be held on 20 September 2026 at Don Bosco Provincial House, Tiruchy. The meeting will help them reflect on their journey of Temporary Profession and prepare themselves for their final commitment to the Salesian vocation. All concerned clerics are requested to arrive on the previous evening for supper.

A Zonal Level Meeting for clerics in Initial Formation will be held on 25 September 2026 at Don Bosco, Thanjavur, specifically for the clerics belonging to the Thanjavur Zone. It will provide an opportunity to deepen their experience of Salesian educative and pastoral action,

along with fraternity and sharing. The Vice Provincial will provide further details regarding the meetings.

Golden Jubilee of Religious Profession

The Golden Jubilee of Religious Profession of Rev. Fr. Amalraj Susai and Rev. Fr. Vincent Sebastian will be held on 23 September 2026 at Don Bosco Media, Manikandam. I warmly invite all of you, dear Salesians, to join in thanking God for their 50 years of faithful consecrated religious life, generous service to the church and commitment to the Salesian mission to the young. Let our coming together, as one Salesian family, in gratitude and appreciation, may be a moment of recalling our own commitment and wishing them many more years of fruitful service in the vineyard of the Lord, as dedicated Salesians.

PROGRAMME OF THE MONTH

01	Tue	Rectors, Leaders & Administrators meeting @DBPH, Tiruchy
04	Fri	Technical Sector Staff Animation @ AMSAM
04, 05	Fri, Sat	DBHEI Staff Animation @ Manikandam
14,15	Mon, Tue	Quinquennium Meeting @ Mount DB, Kotagiri
20	Sun	Meeting for those due for Perpetual Profession @ DBPH, Tiruchy
23	Wed	Golden Jubilee Celebration of Religious Profession @ Manikandam
24	Thu	Provincial Council @ DBPH, Tiruchy
25	Fri	Zonal Level Meeting for those in Initial Formation @ DB, Thanjavur

RECALLING EVENTS

Young Salesians Meet



The INT Young Salesians (PT & CS) Meeting was held on 01, 02 August 2026 at Don Bosco Provincial House, Trichy, bringing together young Salesians for prayer, formation, fraternity and renewal. The sessions focused on the Preventive System, emotional regulation, personal planning and spiritual direction, strengthening their commitment to the Salesian way of life. The gathering also included recreation, batch-wise sharing and moments of fraternity, fostering a deeper spirit of brotherhood among the young Salesians.

I sincerely thank Fr. Victor Antonyraj, Vice-Provincial for organising this meaningful gathering and Fr. Ashok Lawrence, Rector and the DBPH Tiruchy community for their warm hospitality and for hosting the event.

Province Foundation Day

The Province Foundation Day celebration at Don Bosco Alaihal Media, Manikandam, was a joyful expression of Salesian communion and fraternity, made even more special by the felicitation of our Silver Jubilarians of Religious Profession and Priestly Ordination, along with a newly ordained priest. I



sincerely thank Fr. Barnabas, the Rector and the entire Manikandam community for their warm hospitality and dedicated efforts. I extend my special appreciation to Fr. Victor Antonyraj, Vice Provincial and Fr. Ricopar Royan, Economer for their excellent planning and coordination. I thank all who contributed in making this celebration a meaningful moment of thanksgiving, honour and fraternity.

Social Experience Dimension Coordinators' Meeting

The Social Experience Dimension Coordinators' Meeting was held on 07 & 08 August 2026 at Don Bosco Provincial House, Hyderabad to strengthen the Social Experience Dimension in Salesian Youth Ministry and identifying common priorities and strategies for this academic year. Fr. Casimir Raj, Provincial delegate for Social Experience Dimension participated in the meeting. I thank Fr. Casimir Raj for his participation and wish him continued success in strengthening Youth Ministry in our Province.

Ratio Dissemination-cum-Training Programme

A Ratio Dissemination-Cum-Training Programme for the South Asia Region was held from 09 to 11 August 2026 at DBPH, Shillong. The programme focused on deepening the understanding of the *Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis et Studiorum* and to promote a common vision for Salesian formation, pastoral accompaniment, discernment process and lifelong formation. Fr. Victor Antonyraj, Fr. James Sundar and Fr. Dominic Bernatsha represented our Province. I thank them for their contribution towards strengthening Salesian Formation in our Province and the South Asia Region.

South Asia Formation Commission Meeting

The South Asia Formation Commission (SAFC) meeting was held on 12,13 August 2026 at Don Bosco Provincial House, Shillong. The meeting focused on the implementation of the SAFC Action Plan 2025–2026, emerging challenges in formation, ecological consciousness, dissemination of the



Ratio, the Regional Formation Plan and the priorities for Formation and Youth Ministry. Fr. Victor Antonyraj, Vice Provincial & Provincial Delegate for Formation, represented the

province. I sincerely thank Fr. Victor Antonyraj for his availability, valuable contribution and commitment to Salesian formation.

Curatorium Meeting

The Curatorium Meeting of the Jnanodaya Institute of Philosophy, Yercaud, was held on 19 August 2026 to review the progress of the formation of the young Salesians. The meeting focused on their holistic growth, with emphasis on spiritual guidance, community life, personal accompaniment, discipline and pastoral commitment. I thank Rev.Fr. Arul Maran, Rector of The Retreat, Yercaud, and the formation team for their commitment in forming our young Salesian.



On the same day, Rev.Fr. James Sundar Raj Chidambaram, Principal and Dean, released his first book, Brahmanubhava: Philosophical-Religious Ways of Experiencing God in Ramanuja's Visistadvaita. We congratulate Fr. James Sundar on this significant academic achievement and wish him continued success in his scholarly endeavours.

New Ratio Dissemination for all Formators of INT

A dissemination programme on the New Ratio Fundamentalis was held on 20 August 2026 at DBPH, Tiruchy. Formators from all the formation houses of our province participated and gained a clear understanding of General Aspects of our Formation, the formation process and Criteria and Norms for Discernment and Admissions. The Sessions were led by Fr. Victor Antonyraj, Fr. James Sundar and Fr. Dominic Bernatsha. I express my gratitude to the three resource persons and Fr. Ashok Lawrence, Rector and DBPH community for hosting the programme. A special word of appreciation goes to Fr. Victor Antonyraj, Vice Provincial and Provincial Delegate for formation for his dedicated work.

Leaders & Animators' Formation – LAF 2026

The Leaders and Animators' Formation (LAF) 2026 was held on 22 & 23 August 2026 at Don Bosco Youth Animation Centre, Ennore, focusing on youth leadership, human dignity and accompaniment in the AI age. I thank Fr. Casimir Raj, our Youth Director, for coordinating and bringing together the leaders and animators of our youth groups and I appreciate everyone who participated in this formation programme. May this formation strengthen and inspire our leaders and animators to serve with greater commitment, accompany our young people effectively and guide them in the spirit of Don Bosco.

Priest & Salesian Brothers Meet (2005-2014)

The Salesian Priests & Brothers Meet for the ordination batches 2005–2014 was held on 28,29 August 2026 at Mount Don Bosco, Kotagiri, fostering fraternity, spiritual renewal and reflection on our common vocation and mission.

The programme included Ratio presentations, Holy Eucharist, batch-wise meetings, an outing to Kodanadu and sharing with the Provincial. The Ratio sessions were animated by Fr. Victor Antonyraj, Fr. James Sundar and Fr. Dominic Bernadsha, enriching the confreres' understanding of Salesian formation.

We sincerely thank the Vice-Provincial for organising this meaningful gathering, which strengthened our Salesian bond and renewed our commitment to be “one heart and one soul” in serving God and the young.

Assistant Parish Priest Meet

The Assistant Parish Priests Meet of our Province was held on 25 August 2026 at Madhakottai, Thanjavur. Fr. John Peter, Director of Our Lady's Hospital, Thanjavur Diocese, led the reflection on Christ-centred priestly life and ministry, emphasising the need to respect and accompany the simple faith of the people. The participants reflected and shared on three questions: Do I imitate Christ? Do I give Christ? What do I receive from my ministry? The gathering offered a meaningful moment of reflection and pastoral renewal.

I sincerely thanks Fr. Susai Savariyannan, Rector and the Madhakottai community for hosting the meeting and Fr. Gerard Britto, Parish Sector Commission Head, for his effective coordination and organization.

Anniversary of the Deceased Salesians

10.09.2014 – [Fr. Francis Kaidathara](#) died at Tiruchy at the age of 67

11.09.2019 – [Fr. Antony Joseph](#) died at Tiruchy at the age of 55

CONDOLENCES...

On behalf of the province, I extend my heartfelt condolences,

- To the [Provincial and confreres of INN Province](#) at the demise of [Rev. Bro. Anthony Tigga](#) (80) on 19 August 2026
- To the [Provincial and confreres of INS Province](#) at the demise of [Rev. Bro. Carmel Muscat](#) (88) on 29 August 2026

May their souls rest in peace!

COMMUNITY REFLECTION

Complementarity and Decentralization in Salesian Mission

One of the important aspects of the Salesian Mission to the Young is to carry-out the mission in collaboration with every member of the community, young and old. Article 44 of our constitutions says that 'Mission is given to the community'. The members have complementary functions and each one of their tasks is important. They are aware that pastoral objectives are achieved through unity and joint brotherly responsibility (C.44). Hence, each one is responsible for the common mission, and participates in it with the richness of his own personal gifts.... (C.45)

Our common vocation requires the responsible and effective participation of all the members in the life and action (mission) of the local, provincial and world communities, not only in terms of implementation but also of planning, organizing and evaluating, according to their respective roles and competence. This shared responsibility calls for the participation of the confreres, in the most suitable way.... (C.123)

However, there are some obstacles to this collaboration among members in the Salesian community. One important obstacle is 'Individualism'. When an individual confrere considers his project far above the community mission, and works strenuously for its success, individualism creeps in. Phrases such as: I and my mission – leave me free – don't touch me – don't interfere with my plan – leave me alone – I know what to do – don't tell me what to do...etc are the expressions of such individualistic inclinations.

Individualism Vs Communitarian Complementarity:

Individualism, that is prevalent in the secular world, is creeping into the mission of the Church, consequently demotivating the religious and priest in the religious congregations and the dioceses. Consecrated members want to do the mission of the church in their own way and expect everyone to accept their proposal without discussion and avoid all sorts of criticism and questioning against their way of doing the mission. Each one likes to build his or her own kingdom; while thinking, their project is the best way of carrying out the mission of Church, the mission of Christ. Some are even stubborn in their thought, and don't allow any other thought to penetrate into or change their thought process.

Many such persons don't fit into the mission entrusted to the community. They make use of the institutional infra-structure of the religious congregation or the diocese for their own personal project, mistaking it to be the mission of the Church. Pope Francis calls this syndrome as 'selfishness and spiritual sloth' of the religious and priests. For them, he says, their personal project is more important than the project of the community; Personal interest can replace the Church's Mission.

In *Evangelii Gaudium* EG 78, Pope Francis speaks specifically about pastoral workers, including consecrated men and women. He criticizes an excessive concern for personal freedom and relaxation, when ministry becomes merely an “appendage” to one's private life rather than part of one's identity and vocation. He connects this with individualism, crisis of identity and cooling of missionary zeal. In EG 80, he goes further: practical relativism occurs when people make decisions “as if others did not exist” and pursue financial security, power or human glory rather than giving their lives to others in mission.

In his 06 June 2013 address to the Pontifical Ecclesiastical Academy, he told those preparing for priestly ministry that they must be “free from personal projects” and warned against ambitions and personal aims that can harm the Church. He said that the priority must be the Gospel and the mission entrusted to them, not personal fulfilment or recognition.

Pope Francis calls spiritual worldliness a situation in which a person appears religious but is actually seeking human glory, personal well-being and self-interest rather than the glory of God. In EG 95, he describes such people as those who become preoccupied with: their own programmes and projects, prestige and recognition, management and statistics, institutional success, social position and appearances, while losing sight of the concrete needs of God's people and the missionary purpose of the Church.

Each one of us, religious and priests, should examine and see if in any way I have this individualistic tendency in me.

Synodality and Decentralization

Synodality and decentralization are closely related ideas.

Synodality comes from the Greek idea of walking together. In the Church, it means that bishops, priests, religious and lay faithful journey together, listening to one another and discerning what the Holy Spirit is saying to the Church. It emphasizes three important attitudes: Communion – recognizing that we belong to one Church; Participation – enabling everyone to contribute according to their vocation and gifts; and Mission – working together to proclaim the Gospel and serve people. Synodality does not mean that every decision is made by majority vote. Rather, it involves listening, dialogue, discernment and shared responsibility.

Decentralization means giving appropriate responsibility and decision-making authority to local Churches and communities, rather than having everything decided at the central level. For example, the universal Church may establish broad principles, while dioceses, parishes and local communities can make decisions appropriate to their own depending on their: culture and traditions; pastoral needs; social circumstances; local mission; particular challenges. Decentralization therefore recognizes that one pastoral approach may not work equally well everywhere.

How are they connected? Synodality creates a culture of participation, while decentralization provides structures through which that participation can become effective. In other words: Synodality asks: “How can we walk and discern together?” Decentralization asks: “Who should have the responsibility to decide and act?” For example, instead of a decision concerning a parish being made entirely at a higher level, a synodal and decentralized approach would involve listening to the parish community and entrusting appropriate responsibility to those closest to the situation, while remaining in communion with the bishop and the universal Church.

However, the balance is important. Decentralization does not mean that every diocese, parish or community becomes independent. The Catholic Church remains a communion. The challenge is to hold together: Unity + Diversity; Authority + Participation; Universal Church + Local Church; Leadership + Shared Responsibility. In short, synodality is about walking together; decentralization is about empowering those who walk together at the appropriate level. Pope Francis says in *Evangelii Gaudium*: “It is not advisable for the Pope to take the place of local bishops in the discernment of every issue which arises in their territory. In this sense, I am conscious of the need to promote a sound ‘decentralization’”.

Decentralization and Subsidiarity

When we speak about decentralization, the principle of subsidiarity has to be followed in decision making. Authority of any kind and at every level, leaves to the initiative of lower bodies and individuals whatever can be decided and done by them, according to their respective competence. In this way the worth of individuals and communities is recognized, and more real involvement is encouraged. The principle of subsidiarity implies decentralization which, while safeguarding unity, recognizes a proper autonomy and consequently a right distribution of powers between the different organs of government (C.124).

Way Forward

As loyal servants of God and trusted members of the church and the congregation, we must practise these basic principles of life in common and shared mission. Are our communities engaged in dialogue whenever there is a need for discernment regarding life and mission? Do I keep my mind and heart open to received thoughts and practical guidance other than what I think is correct? Have I personally welcomed the synodal proposal of the church and feel comfortable about it? or am I frightened of dialogue with the members of my community and feel uncomfortable to engage in collaborative ministry? If we don't address some of the evil tendencies that will destroy these basic principles of life in common and shared mission proposed by the church and the religious congregations, we will be heading for a secluded secular living and heightened individualism.

Don Bosco warns us about the selfish individualistic tendencies, in his writing to the Salesian Confreres: the second fault among the five faults to be avoided: "We renounce our own self-interest. Let us not seek our own personal good, but rather let us work with zeal for the common good of the Congregation. We have to love one another, help one another by counsel and prayer; we have to advance the honour of our confreres not as if it concerned just one alone, but as a noble and essential heritage in which we all share"- Don Bosco to the Salesian Confreres. May Don Bosco help us to fight against individualism and build synodal communities.

Refer: *Evangelii Gaudium* 78–80 and 93–97 and Salesian Constitutions Article 44,45,123

Wish you all a very happy feast of Our Lady of Velankanni.

Yours Affectionately in Don Bosco,



Fr. Doss Kennedy SDB
Provincial – Salesian Province of Tiruchy, INT.