

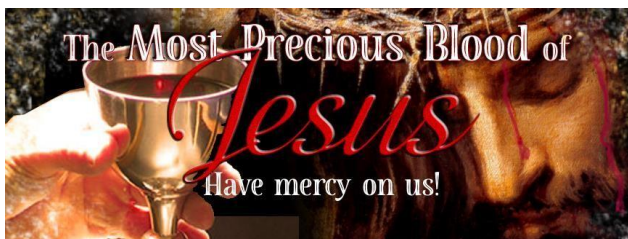


XXXII/02

03 July 2024

My dearest Sisters,

Prayerful and affectionate Greetings from the Provincial House Bangalore!



The month of July is dedicated to the Most Precious Blood of the Redeemer, to which supreme homage is given. Devotion to the Precious Blood goes back to the very foundations of the Church, whereas “*The Feast of the Precious Blood*” was instituted in 1849 by Pope Pius IX. Later, Pope Pius X assigned July 1st as the fixed date to

celebrate the Precious Blood of Jesus Christ. Just as we adore the Sacred Heart because it is the Heart of Jesus, who is God, we likewise venerate the Most Precious Blood. The Blood of Jesus is the fountain of salvation; each drop that flowed from His wounds is a pledge of humanity’s eternal redemption. All races have been ransomed, and individuals who embrace the saving power of the Sacred Blood become heirs of heaven. St. John Chrysostom aptly calls the Precious Blood “the saviour of souls.”

The sins of mankind, immense in number and offence, are no match for the Precious Blood of Jesus, which has the power to appease an angered God and heal wounded souls. Unlike any other blood, which stains, the Blood of Jesus washes clean and white. According to St. John in the Apocalypse, the angels wonder, “These that are clothed in white robes, who are they?” The Lord responds, “These are they that have washed their robes and have made them white in the Blood of the Lamb.” The Precious Blood flowed solely to restore and preserve the innocence of souls throughout life and into eternity.

The Blood of the Saviour is also a wellspring of consolation for troubled hearts. Gazing upon the Sacred Blood trickling from the Cross instills courage to persevere despite life’s difficulties. One look at the Cross drives away fear and inspires trust in Him, who spared not even the last drop of His Blood. He who sacrificed so much must be willing to overlook our frailties, assist us in our distress, defend us in temptation, and comfort us in affliction. The Blood of Jesus must be for Christians what the North Star is to sailors. If humanity honoured the Precious Blood as fervently as the heavenly hosts, who proclaim it their source of glory, we would recognize its power. We owe our earthly blessings and eternal joy to the Sacred Blood of Jesus.

As we reflect on the Most Precious Blood of Jesus, let us be filled with trust and gratitude. Each drop of His Sacred Blood, a pledge of our eternal salvation, calls us to honour and venerate it with deep devotion. It has the power to cleanse, heal, and console us, offering strength and courage amidst life’s challenges. Let us give due honour to the Sacred Blood of Jesus, acknowledging its profound impact on our lives and our eternal destiny. In doing so, we follow the example of the heavenly hosts, who eternally praise the redeeming power of the Precious Blood. Through the Precious Blood of Christ, let us fervently implore God for heavenly aid to end violence worldwide, especially in Sudan and Ukraine and Gaza, and to bring lasting peace. Each day, let us spend a few moments before the Crucifix reflecting on the immense suffering of our beloved Jesus and the priceless gift of His Sacred Blood.

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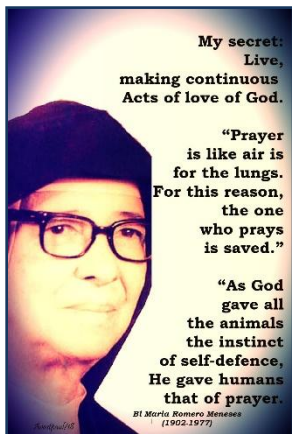
ST. THOMAS, THE APOSTLE OF INDIA

In the Gospels, Jesus is explicitly acknowledged as God solely by St. Thomas, who proclaimed with profound reverence, "My Lord and my God!" (John 20:28). As we commemorate the feast of St. Thomas, the Apostle of India, on July 3rd, may his steadfast faith and unyielding courage serve as a beacon of inspiration for us all. In celebrating this venerable saint, let us fervently invoke his intercession to fortify our Christian faith within our homeland and to nurture unity among all who profess their faith in Christ. St. Thomas' dedication to spreading the Gospel and his ultimate sacrifice for faith remind us of the vital importance of unity and strength in our spiritual journey. Let us honour his legacy by striving to embody the same fervent devotion and unwavering faith in our daily lives. May St Thomas intercede for the Church in our land that division among its members may cease and restore unity.

On July 6th, the church honours **the feast of St. Maria Goretti**, a young saint who chose to shed her blood to preserve her purity rather than commit sin. Her heroic example is a powerful testament to the priceless value of virtue. As we celebrate her feast, let us take the opportunity to remind our young girls of the immense worth of purity and the strength it embodies. St. Maria Goretti's unwavering commitment to her faith and principles serves as an inspiration to all. Let us also pray fervently for our youth, asking for the grace to uphold and cherish the virtue of purity in their lives.

Among the many saints we commemorate this month, two exemplary women stand out as paragons for our lives as consecrated Religious and Salesian missionaries.

BLESSED MARIA ROMERO



Sr. Maria Romero, born on January 13, 1902, in Granada, Nicaragua, grew up in a well-off family due to her father's high government position. Her father's generosity towards the poor profoundly influenced her. Despite her family's hopes for her success and prosperity, Maria felt called to a religious life. She joined the Salesian Sisters, inspired by Don Bosco's charism of working with the young and the poor.

Assigned to teach in San José, Costa Rica, Sr. Maria sought out poor and abandoned youth, forming outstanding students into "little missionaries." Even after leaving formal teaching, she continued catechizing young and old. Her tireless efforts led to the creation of a village for the poorest families and a church dedicated to Mary Help of Christians in San José. Her remarkable social works earned government recognition, and she became an honorary citizen of Costa Rica.

She walked in intimate communion with the Blessed Virgin, whom she lovingly revered as her Mother and Queen. Sr. Maria Romero possessed unwavering faith in Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament and in Mary Most Holy, whom she affectionately called 'my Queen'. She felt Mary's guiding hand constantly near, offering powerful protection. Mary Help of Christians was always at the forefront of her endeavours. "Place your hand, My Mother, place it before mine," she would fervently pray. Every decision and action was preceded by seeking Mary's counsel.

One day, a woman in tears came to the convent who did not know how to feed her children. Those tears pierced Sr. Maria's heart. The sister prepared a bag of biscuits for her and told her to come back the next day after four. She then ran to the superior to ask for permission (Sr. Maria asked permission from her superiors for everything) to donate at least one bag of beans weekly to that poor woman and to those in the same sad condition.

"But where will you get the beans?" the sister asked her, almost smiling at Sr. Maria's naivety. "If Our Lady wants this, she will certainly give it to me!" Sr. Maria replied. And then, while she was standing in the church to ask Our Lady to make her first sack of beans rain from the sky, a sister touched her shoulder to tell her she was wanted on the phone. It was a lady who wanted to give her a sack of beans for a promise made and for a grace received. At

four o'clock the following day, Sr. Maria had two tons of beans. After a few years, the 'margarites' (Margarita was the woman who had given Sr. Maria the first impulse, the idea for her social works) with Our Lady's beans daily served forty-four" (MARTIRANI G. *Maria Romero*, Ed. Paoline, Milan 2002, 28–29, 33–34).

Sr. Maria Romero, a mystic deeply united with God, died on July 7, 1977. Beatified by St. John Paul II on April 14, 2002, she is the first "Blessed" from Central America, with her remains resting in the "House of the Virgin" and "Social Work" she established. May Sr. Maria Romero's profound devotion inspire us to embrace the Marian month with fervour in the Salesian tradition, alongside our young people.

ST. ALPHONSA

The Feast of St. Alphonsa beckons us, consecrated religious, to embrace our lives with unwavering commitment and joyful fidelity, undeterred by the trials and adversities that beset our path. The act of a grain of wheat falling into the earth and yielding its life for the sake of a greater harvest stands as a poignant metaphor for nobility and purpose. Likewise, the earthly journey of St. Alphonsa mirrors this sacrificial descent, a life embraced and lived to enrich Christian existence through profound reflections. As the first saint of the Church in our Mother Land, India, she stands revered, exemplifying the path of embracing daily crosses and following Jesus Christ with unwavering closeness.

St. Alphonsa's life unfolds as a profound classroom of spiritual lessons, unveiling mysteries hidden through the ages but now revealed to the saints. As in letter to the Colossians (1:27) illuminates, "Christ in you, the hope of glory," resonates deeply within her journey. Like the seed of the Word of God taking root, she recognized and nurtured the divine seed within herself, allowing the purity and grace of Christ to flourish through her life. Guided by the Spirit, she embraced the narrow path articulated by John the Baptist, where Christ alone grew within her, diminishing her own self.

Each individual carries within them the seed of Christ, yet not all allow this divine potential to bloom. St. Alphonsa's life underscores the urgency of nurturing this seed, lest it wither from neglect—a call to prayer and grace, seeking her intercession to cultivate the divine bestowed at birth. Through moments of suffering and trial, St. Alphonsa's steadfast acceptance of life's offerings without complaint or rebellion stands testament to her saintly virtue. Her unwavering 'Yes' to the Lord echoes through her acceptance of the Creator's design, revealing God's guiding hand in every experience.

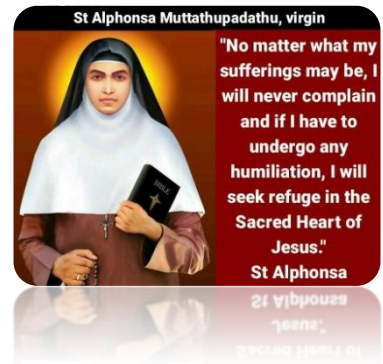
In the face of suffering, a perennial mystery, St. Alphonsa illuminates the truth that God holds sovereignty over our lives, each experience woven into His greater plan. As in letter to the Romans (8:28) assures that "God works for the good with those who love him," affirming His purpose and reward in all circumstances. Her life imparts a profound lesson on discipleship, emphasizing the price of fidelity to Jesus Christ—a journey marked by sacrifice, struggle, and discipline. For her, embracing Christ meant embracing the cost, akin to shedding blood in steadfast devotion.

St. Alphonsa's legacy endures as a beacon of faith and resilience, guiding believers through life's narrow passages and tribulations. Her example challenges all to embrace the trials and joys of life with unwavering trust in God's providence. Thus, her life serves not merely as a historical narrative but as a timeless testament to the transformative power of faith, illustrating that the path of discipleship, though laden with challenges, ultimately leads to the eternal harvest of divine grace and glory.

MARIAN MONTH

We observe the Marian month spanning from July 15th to August 15th, culminating in the Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. This sacred period calls us, especially within our Communities, to fervently embrace a deepening of our reverence and affection for Mother Mary, particularly among our youth. Our Saintly Founders, Don Bosco and Mother Mazzarello, seized every opportunity to foster devotion to the Blessed Mother. Let us emulate their spirit by creatively initiating endeavours that inspire our young people and their families.

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Foremost among these initiatives is the cherished tradition of family recitation of the Holy Rosary—an act most pleasing to God. As twilight descends, the Christian home resonates with the melodious cadence of repeated praises in honour of the Queen of Heaven. Gathered before her image, the community or family, in harmonious unity of spirit, connects with absent loved ones and those departed. This sacred bond, forged through the Rosary, binds hearts closer in a tender embrace of love, drawing down upon them abundant blessings of concord and familial tranquilly from the tender-hearted Virgin Mother.

Let's celebrate!

| | |
|---------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 03 | ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE |
| 06 | ST. MARIA GORETTI |
| 07 | BL. MARIA ROMERO |
| 15 July – 15 August | MARIAN MONTH |
| 16 | OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL |
| 22 | ST MARY MAGDALENE |
| 25 | ST JAMES, THE APOSTLE |
| 26 | STS. JOACHIM & ANNA |
| 28 | ST. ALPHONSA MUTTATHUPADATHU |
| 29 | MARTHA, MARY & LAZARUS |
| 31 | ST. IGNATIUS OF LOYOLA |



MEETING OF THE ANIMATORS

Two days of meetings for Community Animators are scheduled for August 2nd and 3rd, 2024. On the morning of August 4th, we will commemorate the Diamond and Golden Jubilee Celebrations with a Holy Eucharist. The presence of the Animators during these festivities is greatly appreciated, as it allows us to collectively express gratitude to God and Mary Help of Christians. Together, we acknowledge the invaluable contributions of our sisters, who have wholeheartedly served the Church and our Institute, steadfast in the exemplary paths of Don Bosco and Mother Mazzarello.

DIAMOND & GOLDEN JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS

We raise our hearts and minds in thanksgiving to God for the 60 years of committed life of our dear Sr. Anna Chacko and the 50 loving and dedicated years of dear Srs. Aliamma Pallipurathukunnel, Annakutty Theakkunkatil, Mariam Vailapadiyanical, and Rosy Malayatty, as we will be celebrating their Diamond and Golden Jubilee of profession on August 4, 2024, at Sacred Heart Convent Bangalore.

BENTORNATA!

A warm and heartfelt welcome to dear Sr. Diana Rodrigues, who will arrive on July 4th to assume her new role as animator of Maradiyur. We rejoice in Sr. Diana's return to us following her enriching tenure at our Institute's Centre during her studies. May her journey be safe and filled with blessings as she embarks on this new endeavour.

BUON VOYAGE

Sr. Sophy Joseph, Sr. Carmel Arogya Mary, and Sr. Sumathi Bulla are set to embark on a journey to Rome on July 14th, 2024, for the Courses in Salesian Spirituality and Religious Sciences. As we extend our heartfelt wishes for Buon voyage, let us also beseech that their time at the heart of the Church and our Institute's centre will be profoundly enriching. May they garner profound insights and spiritual growth, contributing significantly to their mission and service upon their return.

COURSES

- Sr. Geetha Mathew, Sr. Balarani Gorantla, and Sr. Kamalabhai Karre participated in the Holistic Empowerment Course: A 5-day Journey towards Personal and Social Transformation for Religious Sisters, held at Jeevan Jyothi Institute in Hyderabad, Telangana, from June 17 to 21 organised by CRWI, the course proved to be an enriching and beneficial experience for the sisters.
- Sr. Sheela Jacob, Sr. Veneetha Williams and Sr. Udaya Kumari took partake in the Intense Course for Women Religious Financial Administrators organised by Conference of Catholic Bishops of India (CCBI) at Shanti Sadan, Benaulim – Goa from June 25– 29 2024.
- An intensive 3-day training program on Tally, combined with a local Administrators' meeting, is scheduled from July 2nd to 4th, 2024, at Sacred Heart Provincial House in Bangalore. All local community Administrators are expected to attend the program.
- We extend our best wishes to Sr. Elsa Devassy, Sr. Saly Abraham, Sr. Celine Maria Selvam, and Sr. Nirmala Joseph as they attend a Counselling Course for Superiors and Formators at NBCLC Bangalore from July 20 to 27. May their experience be both fruitful and enriching!

INITIATION OF POSTULANTS

Our Candidates at Sacred Heart Home, Karunapuram, will begin their retreat led by Fr. Salibindla Praveen, SDB of Hyderabad Province, from July 20th to 23rd, 2024. Sr. Shiny Karakkat and the Community will provide attentive guidance, nurturing their formative journey. On July 24th, I will officially initiate our four Aspirants as Postulants. Heartfelt congratulations to these dear Postulants!

- Pauly Anu
- Makri Julia
- Rayappa Keerthana
- Kalukolla Rupa

Let us uphold all Candidates in initial formation in our prayers, and maintain a keen focus on fostering vocations and providing steadfast support to young women discerning their calling.

REQUEST FOR PRAYERS

- 📖 Let us not forget our sick Sisters and parents and relatives of all our Sisters.

SINCERE CONDOLENCES & ASSURANCE OF PRAYERS

- ✚ To Sr. Rosa E.J. at the demise of her maternal aunt Mrs. Mary (85) on 9th June 2024.
- ✚ To the family members of fond memories Sr. Rose Kallidukkil, at the loss of her beloved brother Br. Mathew Kallidukkil on 10th June 2024.
- ✚ To Sr. Lilly Chinnappan at the sudden demise of her nephew Mr. Denny (35) on 12th June 2024.
- ✚ To Sr. Mary Joseph at the loss of her paternal aunt Mrs. Thresiamma Thoppil on 12th June 2024.
- ✚ To Sr. Rosily Theckanath at the loss of her niece Mrs. Seena Robin (36) on 15th June 2024.
- ✚ To Sr. Saritha Joseph at the loss of her beloved sister, Mrs. Geetha Dass (62), on 23rd June 2024.
- ✚ To Sr. Rosely Devassy at the sudden demise of Mrs. Lilly Joseph Maliyekkal (69), the mother of her sister-in-law Mrs. Smitha on 24th June 2024.
- ✚ To Sr. Mary Chandy and Sr. Jissy Chandy at the demise of their maternal uncle Mr. Mathew Pulikkal on 29th June 2024.

CONCLUSION

Pope Francis officially declared 2025 a Year of Jubilee with a papal bull, titled “**Spes Non Confundit,**” meaning “**Hope Does Not Disappoint.**” The Jubilee Year will begin with the opening of the Holy Door of St. Peter’s Basilica on Christmas Eve 2024. During the coming months, let us take time to reflect on the Jubilee Year and on its theme. The theme of the jubilee is “**pilgrims of hope**” as the Pope is calling on all Catholics to renew in the hope of Christ, using St. Paul the Apostle as a guide for this special year.

The Year of Jubilee follows the Year of Prayer in 2024 which was **declared by the pope on Jan. 21.** Since then, Pope Francis has urged the faithful to pray for peace, especially amidst the wars in Ukraine, Israel, and Palestine. The Dicastery for Evangelization released a free “**Teach Us to pray**” guidebook for the Catholic faithful.

“Everyone knows what it is to hope,” said Pope Francis. “In the heart of each person, hope dwells **as the desire and expectation of good things to come,** despite our not knowing what the future may bring. Even so, uncertainty about the future may at times give rise to conflicting feelings, ranging from confident trust to apprehensiveness, from serenity to anxiety, from firm conviction to hesitation and doubt. Often, we come across people who are discouraged, pessimistic and cynical about the future, as if nothing could possibly bring them happiness. During the Holy Year, may the light of Christian hope illumine every man and woman, as a message of God’s love addressed to all! “And may the Church bear faithful witness to this message in every part of the world!”

Let us make this year of prayer fruitful for us and for our world. Let us be aware of our duty to prepare ourselves and the people entrusted to us to celebrate the Jubilee Year as true *pilgrims of hope.*

Good wishes and prayerful greetings to all in the Family.

Affectionately,



Sr. Lucy Rose Ozhukayil
Provincial