



PROVINCIAL Circular

Salesian Province of Chennai (INM)



Circular #09

SEPTEMBER 2017

Dear Confreres,

Affectionate greetings from the Provincial House!

On the 8th of this month the Church celebrates the birthday of our Blessed Mother! And for us in India, and particularly in Tamilnadu, it is the Feast of Our Lady of Good Health, popularly known as Our Lady of Velankanni. Mothers are always concerned about the health of their children. Our Blessed Mother is no exception; she is concerned not only about our physical health but also our spiritual health. While we all pray to be healthy, it is also our duty to live a healthy life by choosing a healthy lifestyle. Therefore, I thought it opportune to share with you some reflections on the theme of "health".

The Bible on 'Health'

Health is wealth! Why should I care about being healthy? Because it's in the Bible! **1 Corinthians 6:19-20**: "*Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore, glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.*" To enjoy a healthy life, we must balance work and rest. **Exodus 20:8-10** tells us "*Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work.*" Our attitude and emotions do affect our health. **Proverbs 17:22**: "*A cheerful heart does good like medicine, but a broken spirit makes one sick.*" Stress on the outside need not mean stress on the inside. **Philippians 4:6-7**: "*Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything; tell God your needs, and don't forget to thank Him for his answers. If you do this, you will experience God's peace, which is far more wonderful than the human mind can understand. His peace will keep your thoughts and your hearts quiet and at rest as you trust in Christ Jesus.*" We should exercise self-control even in our dietary habits because as **1 Corinthians 10:31** tells us: "*It is because you must do everything for the glory of God, even your eating and drinking.*" **Proverbs 20:1** reminds us "*Wine gives false courage...*" **Proverbs 23:29-35** gives us another cue: "*Don't let the sparkle and the smooth taste of strong wine deceive you. For in the end it bites like a poisonous serpent...*"

The Church on 'Health'

God's gift of human life is the foundation for all His other gifts. The most basic right of each person includes the right to preserve his or her life. The Church teaches that human life remains "the first right of the human person" and "the condition for all the others." Therefore, it is our duty to take care of this precious gift of life by being healthy and choosing a healthy lifestyle. We are not free to neglect ourselves; on the contrary, we are obliged to make reasonable efforts to preserve our health and to prevent illness. In time of sickness, we must take sensible steps to restore our health. Such efforts often include appropriate care given by medical professionals. The Catholic Church has developed elaborate systems of mystical theology and spiritual practices, such as retreats and meditation or contemplative prayer practices, as well as spiritual growth counseling. In modern times, these have been made available widely to the laity. These practices are meant to enhance and deepen experience of the liturgy, the sacraments, reading of scripture, and other devotional activities. For many Catholics, the sacrament of the Eucharist provides the most intimate experience of spiritual communion with Christ. Within mystical theology (i.e. theology about the development of spirituality), spiritual health matures through a process dedicated to deeper and deeper cultivation of a relationship with God, immersion in divine love, expressions of this relationship in daily life, and the cultivation of holistic well-being. *"I will never forget your commandments, for you have used them to restore my joy and health."* Psalms 119: 93.

The Gospels speak to us of Jesus' great concern and love for the sick. Throughout His public ministry, Jesus' compassion and love for the sick shine through. We read how Jesus cured the sick and restored them to friendship with His Father. The Church continues Jesus' ministry of caring for the sick with deep compassion and respect for human dignity.

The World's View on 'Health'

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines health as "a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being". There are choices that we make every day, some of which seem completely unrelated to our health and happiness, that dramatically impacts the way we feel mentally and physically. *"A peaceful heart leads to a healthy body; jealousy is like cancer in the bones"* (Proverbs 14:30). Living a healthy life is about much more than just diet and exercise. Many are upset if they suffer from illness since they feel that they have fulfilled all their obligations to obtain a healthy body – they have been training, eating right and sleeping well, etc. It is not unusual that people think that their body has betrayed them.

Generally, it is believed that people with strong social ties were found to be healthier and have a lower risk of death. Additionally, it was found that as age increases, the people with stronger social ties tend to live longer. And it seems that friendships can even help you fight cancer. Being in a profound relationship decreases the risk of depression, suicide, and substance abuse. Connection and belonging are essential for a healthy and happy life. Whether it's friendship, marriage, or family, humans need close connections to be healthy.

Therefore, this brings us to the importance of living our community life well. We need to create healthy friendships with our confreres so that we can be healthy too!

Some Practical Tips on Being Healthy

1. Meditation and mental health: Apart from the spiritual benefits inherent the practice of meditation, if done regularly and if done well, it will reduce stress and anxiety. For us contemplatives in action, meditation improves our quality of life and boosts our immune system; it has also been shown to decrease other negative emotions. Thus, meditation can help us to be healthy human beings!

2. Health and community life: We all need a sense of belonging and **community** in our lives. Community life and healthy friendships are critical for health and happiness. We are fortunate that our Faith helps us to be spiritual persons. Our Salesian settings also provide us with ample opportunity for building relationships and forums for sharing our views about our own lives and our emotions. Thus, a happy community life can help us to be healthy Salesians!

3. Health and creativity: **Creativity** in expression helps to reduce stress and anxiety, increase positive emotions, and reduce the likelihood of depression, along with many other benefits. All of us have numerous opportunities to be creative in the way we carry out our routine responsibilities. In doing so, we will be able to experience novelty and thus make even our beneficiaries happy and contented. Thus, being creative in our mission can help us to be healthy Salesians!

4. Health and contribution: **Contribution** is an essential part of living a life that is happy, healthy, and meaningful. Too often we spend our lives consuming the world around us instead of creating it. Often, we overdose on low quality information rather than creating, contributing, and building on our own ideas. Thus, in contributing as much as we can to the mission, we can be healthy Salesians!

5. Health and balanced rhythm of life: Too much of anything is good for nothing! This is especially true when we over-work or become workaholics. While it is true that our Salesian maxim is “Work, work and work”, we need to remember that even working overtime increases the risk for coronary heart disease, independent of outside factors. Therefore **sufficient sleep, rest and holy relaxation** is desirable for the quality and effectiveness of our work. This will help us to be healthy Salesians!

6. Health and optimism: Basically, anything which makes you feel stressed is bad for your health — unpredictable traffic, tension and disagreement with your confreres, feeling undervalued or unappreciated, etc. Therefore, it is vital to accept your responsibilities with **joy and optimism**. Thus, being joyful and optimistic can help us to be healthy Salesians!

Notwithstanding all that is said above, I must also mention that being too health-conscious is not a virtue. As G.K. Chesterton would say, “The trouble with always trying to preserve the health of the body is that it is so difficult to do so without destroying the health of the mind.” Hence, we need to strike a balance and learn to “suffer a bit of heat and cold, hunger and thirst, weariness

and disdain” (Const. 18). **Work and Temperance** are not just a Salesian maxim, it is a very practical guideline for a healthy living.

To conclude, we need to remember that it’s not necessary to spend a ton of money to stay in shape. Nor do we need to have a gym membership. There’s a spirituality to exercise and eating healthy as well. It helps us to grow in **self-mastery** because when we exercise we are choosing to rise above the pull of our emotions and passions which will inevitably rebel against the good of taking care of our bodies. In other words, it’s easier for us to take a nap than it is to go out for a walk or run! Exercise can also be a time of prayer. As I walk or jog, I can be thinking over the day’s gospel passage or some other texts!

When it comes to diet, saying “no” to ourselves is a way to do penance, mortifying our appetites so that they don’t rule us. We can say “no” to that piece of cake and offer it up for a particular intention. We can then choose to make the healthier choice of a piece of fruit. This small action translates into our daily lives when we must say “no” to other temptations and “yes” to the Lord. Remember **we are temples of the Lord**, so let’s start making sure we take good care of the temple!

PRIORITIES OF INM PROVINCE 2017-2023

By now we are all familiar with the “roadmap” given by the Rector Major, as well as the deliberations and recommendations taken at the Provincial Chapter and the lines of action arrived at the conclusion of the recent TEAM Visit. They are the fruit of a serious discernment process. Keeping all that in mind, the new Provincial Council along with the previous Council went through a sincere search to select the priorities for the Province for the coming six years, and then sought the suggestions of the Rectors at the time of the retreat in Poondi. I am happy to present the result of this search, namely the six priorities chosen by the Province for our Province for the six-year period 2017-2023.

- 1. Interiority and deep spiritual experience.**
- 2. Communion among confreres.**
- 3. Lay formation and participation.**
- 4. Emphasis on mission to the poorest, especially in the rural presences.**
- 5. Youth Focus and volunteerism.**
- 6. Salesian Vocation: Promotion and Perseverance for Brotherhood and Priesthood.**

The above priorities will become alive when we, as individuals, as communities and as a Province, take concrete lines of action. May I therefore ask you to reflect on them and suggest action plans that are challenging, realistic and within your reach. This month, our communities will be making the Tri-monthly recollection. May I request you as a community to decide some very specific lines of action on each of the priorities. If you have some suggestions for the Province, please feel free to suggest. We know that change takes place when we make some decisive lines of action and execute them with passion. If you can send them by the 15th of September, we can

consolidate them and send to all the communities. We shall also take them up at the batch meetings which we have planned in these two months of September and October.

Let us put our heads and hearts together to move forward and build up the Kingdom of Jesus. I would like to thank the Rector Major and the general council for their guidance. During our meeting in Rome, the Rector Major told me that the “roadmap”, in fact, is all drawn from the suggestions given by the confreres themselves. That is why it was easy for the Rectors, Leaders of communities, Commission Heads and finally for the Provincial Councillors to come to the choice of these six priorities. They are now in our hands to help us to take forward the Province. Your concrete plans will help the Province to fulfil the dream of our Father and Founder St. John Bosco.

News from the Provincial Council

- a) The Citadel community: permission has been granted: i) to purchase a two-wheeler for the department of SURABI, and ii) to air-condition the community chapel.
- b) Wisdom Town community: permission has been granted, i) for painting of the Hostel and Residence, and ii) for installing metal grills for the corridors of the second floor.
- c) Pope John’s Garden: permission has been granted to purchase a two-wheeler for the community.
- d) DBAI Kavarapettai: permission to extend the existing DBAI verandah breadth wise (8 x 100 feet) with light roof top for the boys to have their lunch.e) DBTC Kavarapettai: permission to set up the chimney and the blower for the kitchen as the same would help create a hygienic and clean ambient.

News from The Province

1. **Fr. David Mariaselvam** has been appointed as the new Executive Secretary of BOSCOM. We congratulate him and wish him a prolific tenure.
2. **The SPCSA Council** was held for the first time in the new SPCSA House at Dwarka, New Delhi on 29th & 30th August. Fr. Maria Arokiam, our Regional Superior, Secretary Fr. Albert Johnson and all the Provincials of the Region participated in a lively discussion to take forward the mission of Don Bosco. Mr. Conrad and Fr. Adolf helped us in discerning the way forward after the TEAM visit. We also had an opportunity to interact with the members of the SPCSA House who are animating the region in the various dimensions.
3. The 13th **Boscree** will be held at Nashik from the 30th of Dec 2018 to 3rd January 2019. Fr. Godfrey D’Souza, the Provincial of Mumbai, gave a brief introduction to the conduct of the event and invited participants to register soon.
4. The Youth Ministry department of the Congregation is organizing an **International Congress on Youth and Family** from November 27th to December 1st, 2017. From our Province, Fr. Don Bosco, Vice Provincial and Youth Pastoral Delegate, Fr. Edwin Vasanthan, Fr. Paulraj Amalraj, Mr. Bosco from Broadway and Mr. Murali from Basin Bridge will participate.

5. As there are some **urgent works to be completed**, the Provincial Council has requested some confreres to complete the following tasks.

Bro. Joseph Das	-	Archives and Documentation
Fr. Edwin George	-	Mortuary Letters
Fr. K. J. Louis	-	Confreres in particular situation & land clearance.
Fr. Alphonse Arulanandu	-	Minority certificates for our Institutions.

Kindly seek their assistance for the above and cooperate with them when they ask for help. I thank them all for accepting to do these works for the Province.

6. **SAFC Meeting:** The South Asian Formation Commission meeting will be held in Dimapur from 9th–13th September 2017. Fr. Pathiaraj Rayappan, Provincial Delegate for Formation will participate in the same.

7. As part of the preparation to make a preparatory document for **Synod 2018 – Young People, Faith and Vocation Discernment**, Fr. Edwin George will be animating, at various levels, different groups of Salesians and young people. We all hope to be rejuvenated in this process.

8. This year's **Missionary Formation Course (MFC)** is being held at Mathias Institute, Provincial House, Shillong, from 1st September to 4th October 2017. The course includes a trip to the Holy Land, after three weeks of input sessions and reflections. There are 33 participants – 22 SDBs and 11 from other Salesian Family groups. Fr. Pitchaimuthu Antony and Fr. Ratchagadoss Francis are attending this course. We wish them a memorable experience.

9. **Scrutiny of those in initial formation:** The Rectors and Leaders are requested to send to the Provincial Office the Periodic Assessment of Salesians in Formation (PASIF) by 10th September 2017.

10. **148th MISSIONARY EXPEDITION:** On 24th September this year, at the Basilica of Mary Help of Christians in Turin, there will take place the 148th missionary expedition of the Congregation. This expedition team will consist of 21 confreres from across the world. Bro. Raymond Joseph, from our province, assigned to mission *ad gentes*, has already left for Rome. He will eventually be going to Siberia-Yakutia in Eastern Russia which is one of the coldest regions in the world. Our prayers and wishes will accompany Bro. Raymond Joseph in his Salesian missionary venture.

It has been announced that a brother and a priest will go to Malaysia to start a new Salesian presence there which will incidentally take the number of countries in which we Salesians are present to 134.

11. **Fr. Dominic Matthews**, Province Secretary, will be attending the Secretaries' Course in Rome from 12th September and will be back on 2nd October 2017. We wish him a safe journey and a fruitful experience. During his absence, you can contact the Vice Provincial or myself.

INM PROGRAM FOR SEPTEMBER 2017

September – 2017		TRI-MONTHLY RECOLLECTION
01	Fri	Don Bosco, Ayanavaram – Visitation
02	Sat	Provincial Council Meeting
03	Sun	Don Bosco, Ayanavaram – Visitation
04-05	Mon-Tue	Batch Meeting of those Professed between 1951-1970 @ Citadel
06-07	Wed-Thu	DB Egmores – Visitation
08-10	Fri-Sun	Beatitudes, Vyasarpadi – Visitation
11-13	Mon-Wed	St. Bede's – Visitation
14-15	Thu-Fri	Refuge, Broadway – Visitation
16-17	Sat-Sun	FX, Broadway – Visitation
17	Sun	CRB Meeting / Edu. & Culture Commission Meeting
18-19	Mon-Tue	Batch Meeting of those Professed between 1971-1980 @ Citadel
20	Wed	Meeting of Confessors @ Citadel
21	Thu	Pre-Perpetual Meet @ Tagore Nagar, Pondy
22	Fri	Meeting for those due for Perpetual @ Thattanchavady, Pondy
23	Sat	Meeting of Temporary Professed (Brothers & Clerics) @ Tirupattur
25-29	Tue-Sat	DBTC, Kavarapettai – Visitation
30	Sat	Batch Meeting of those Professed between 1981-1986 @ Citadel

The above batch meetings are moments of personal renewal, fraternal sharing as well as a unique forum to participate in the overall formative action of the Province. Therefore, I exhort all the confreres to plan well their program and attend these meetings without fail.

RIP – Fr. Adriano Bregolin SDB



During a hike in the mountains, Fr Adriano Bregolin died of a sudden heart attack on 23rd August 2017. Former Vicar General of the Salesian Congregation, Fr Adriano was currently serving as Director of the Salesian Institute of Florence. Don Bregolin, born at Cona in the Province of Venice on the 16th October 1948, became a Salesian on the 16th August 1966 after having made his novitiate at Albarè. He completed his theological studies at Verona and was ordained deacon at Trento on the

28th May 1977 and priest on the 27th May 1978. The first years of his ministry were given to pastoral and vocational work in the community of Trento and of Verona San Zeno, becoming Rector of both Salesian houses not many years after. Having obtained a Degree in Modern Letters in March 1980 at the University of Padua, Don Bregolin also took on the task of Councillor in the Province of Italia Veneto Ovest (IVO), becoming subsequently vice provincial for the three years 1988–1991. In May 1996, he became Provincial of the Province of Italia Veneto Ovest (IVO) until 2002 when, during the GC25 he was elected Councillor for the Italy Middle-East region. Following the nomination of Don Luc Van Looy as Bishop in the Diocese of Ghent, he was called by the Rector Major to take on the role of Vicar General. Since 20 June 2014, he was Director of the Salesian Institute in Florence. We offer our sincere condolences to the Rector Major and we pray for our dear departed Fr. Adriano, that Don Bosco welcome him to his eternal reward.

TEACHER'S DAY

On Tuesday, 5th September 2017, we celebrate Teacher's Day in our country. Since 1962, the day commemorates the birthday of Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, a great teacher and a staunch believer in the power of education. For us, 5th September marks another memorable day, as it is also the commemoration of Saint Mother Teresa, who was a teacher of the Faith not just by words but by her life as well. Teachers play a very important role in society. They impart knowledge and motivate students in the right direction, enlighten them and create responsible citizens and good human beings. We congratulate and thank the Principals, Headmasters and Teachers in all our Institutions.



Dear confreres, as I conclude this letter, I entrust our province and all of you to the maternal care of Our Lady of Velankanni. May Our Lady of Good Health continue to keep us all safe under her protective mantle so that we may be kept from all physical and moral dangers and healthy in body and soul. I wish you a very happy feast of Our Lady of Velankanni! God Bless You!

Affectionately in Don Bosco,

Fr. K. M. Jose SDB
Provincial