



PROVINCIAL Circular

Salesian Province of Chennai (INM)



INM-KMJ-CIR 66/08-2022

Community Mission and Capacity Building

AUGUST 2022

Dear Confreres,

As we are in the month of August, during which we will also celebrate the 75th year of our country's independence, I thought of reflecting with you on the link between "**Community Mission and Capacity Building**" from a religious perspective, keeping in mind our consecration and our mission, as well as our charism and our community life. Capacity building and development in a secular world would mean to advance in acquiring both mental and physical skills, without which, we would stagger behind in this fast-paced society. For us religious, I would like to see this as a dynamic process of "Ongoing or Continuing Formation" at all levels of our religious life, which continues even after our Perpetual Profession, Ordination, and after our Silver or Golden Jubilees!



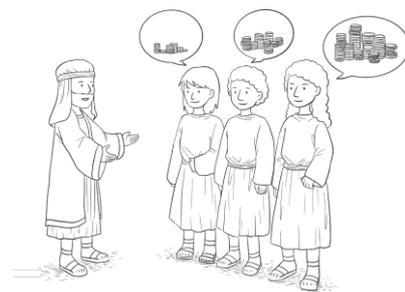
Capacity-building is defined as the process of developing and strengthening the skills, instincts, abilities, processes and resources that organizations and communities need to survive, adapt, and thrive in a fast-changing world. Capacity building enables individuals to develop competencies and skills that can make them more effective and sustainable, thus increasing the potential to enrich lives and solve society's

most intractable problems. While 'capacity-building' suggests building something new from the ground up, according to a pre-imposed design, '**capacity development**' is believed to better express an approach that builds on existing skills and knowledge, driving a dynamic and flexible process of change, undertaken by the individuals themselves.

Capacity building and the Biblical connection

*To one he gave five talents of money, to another two talents, and to another one talent, **each according to his ability.** (Matthew 25:15)*

Capacity is the ability Christ gives each one of us to carry out His commands. And capacity varies from person to person. It becomes a problem when I compare my capacity with someone of greater capacity. Indeed, **capacity is meant to provide guardrails, not guilt.** So how can we use capacity to our advantage instead of our disadvantage? How can we understand our limitations and trust the Lord with the results? It starts by being honest about how God has made us. If we can only execute one project with excellence, then we limit ourselves to only that one. **Personal honesty about our capacity is what gives us the ability to do more.** Therefore, monitor your capacity in prayer before Jesus. Ask Him for courage to say no to something new so you can say yes to current obligations. Thus, you can increase your intellectual, emotional, and relational capacity, notwithstanding the fact that this will certainly take time, focus, and discipline.



Capacity building is also important at work, in the community and in relationships. Yes, indeed! As you remain faithful with small responsibilities, the Lord and others can trust you with additional tasks. When you manage a small amount of money on a budget, you can be trusted with more resources to steward well. When you treat one individual with a full complement of grace and truth, you build relational capacity for more quality friendships.

The Lord has unlimited capacity for empathy, wisdom, and character. So go to Him for your capacity building. Does your heart have the same capacity for humility as your mind does for truth? So, build capacity around Christ's gifts to you. *"We do not dare to classify or compare ourselves with some who commend themselves. When they measure themselves by themselves and compare themselves with themselves, they are not wise. We, however, will not boast beyond proper limits, but will confine our boasting to the field God has assigned to us, a field that reaches even to you"* (2 Corinthians 10:12–13).

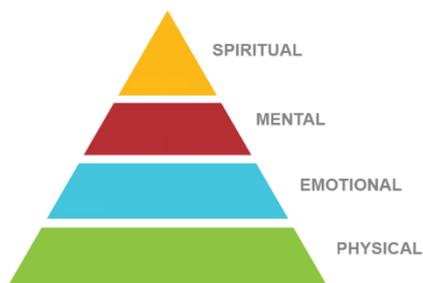
Jesus and His Team



It is not enough that one or two individuals in the community are talented or entrusted with the mission while the others do only the minimum. Each one must be able to give their utmost in whatever sector is entrusted to them. Capacity building is successful only if there is team work and Jesus knew the importance of teamwork. In building a team of twelve Apostles, he made working together to build the Kingdom of God an essential element of the Christian faith, and a delicate but fundamental task of every consecrated religious.

So too must we foster a sense of belonging, community, and purpose. In order to empower his apostles, Jesus spent three years educating them so that they could utilize the knowledge resources that he had provided to them. In doing so, Jesus nurtured them for their mission of enlightenment. If Jesus had sent them out too early the disciples would have been doomed to failure.

What does the Bible say about building a team? We read in **1 Corinthians 12:14** that the Body of Christ, or the people that are the whole of humanity, are a team. The body is not supported by one person, but by all of us. We are one, we are strongest working together in unity. Teamwork is the key to living life in harmony, so that we can do God's will. **1 Corinthians 14:33** tells us that our God is a God of peace and not of disorder. Being organized will bring calmness and peace into our families. **Luke 14:28-30** discusses the process for taking on a project, showing that we must first know what we have and what we need to complete a project.



Our Spiritual Capacity

The term "spiritual capacity" describes the degree to which you understand who you are and what you want most. **Building your spiritual capacity is a journey of self-discovery;** it means taking time to understand your motivations and what makes you happy. It's daunting work, but it's extremely important. **Spirituality improves inner working capacity.** Individuals who

are spiritual are often at peace with themselves. Some who struggle internally may have a more difficult time concentrating on work, engaging with others and handling stressful situations. Spirituality can enhance performance by helping individuals feel a sense of calm and stability in their lives.

Don Bosco and Capacity Building

We are all aware of Don Bosco's humble beginnings. Working in borrowed premises, he provided boys with education, religious instruction, and recreation; eventually he headed a large establishment containing a grammar school, a technical school, and a church, all built through his efforts. He also achieved a local reputation as a popular preacher. Don Bosco taught that educators should act like caring parents; always be gentle and prudent; allow for the thoughtlessness of youth; be alert for hidden motives; speak kindly; give timely advice; and 'correct often'. Alongside love, Don Bosco stressed the importance of reason and religion. **St. John Bosco was an exceptional educator.** His acute intelligence, common sense and profound spirituality led him to create a system of education that develops the whole person - body, heart, mind and spirit. It enhances growth and freedom while putting the child at the centre of the whole educational enterprise. Of course, all this was not as easy as we read here! He did have to face numerous challenges. Many poor families lived in the slums of the city and had come from the countryside in search of a better life. In visiting the prisons, Don Bosco was disturbed to see so many boys from 12 to 18 years of age. He was determined to find a means to prevent them from ending up here. This is how the Salesian mission commenced.



The Salesian's mission is making the Salesian school/college/hostel/boarding/oratory/youth centre/formation house, a home where young people are welcome, a school where they learn important life lessons, a parish where they gather to grow in faith, and a playground where friendships are built. Hence, **the Salesian community's mission is a congenial, friendly and holistic approach to education.** It creates a climate that 'draws forth' the best in the child, that encourages the child's complete

and fullest self-expression, that assists young people in acquiring habits that will lead them to opt in favour of what is good, healthy, joyful and life-enhancing.

Our Personal Capacity-Building mindset

We all have, during the long yet memorable years of our Salesian formation, received in abundance, a lot of spiritual as well as pastoral resources. All of this will unfortunately go untapped unless we develop a **capacity building mindset**. A mindset is our way of thinking, a mental attitude or frame of mind. A mindset is our collection of thoughts and beliefs that shape our thought-habits. And your thought-habits affect how we think, what we feel, and what we do. Our mindset impacts how we make sense of the world, our religious vocation and how we make sense of ourselves.

Practical Hints of Capacity Development for the Community Mission

When our capacity to give is expanded so is our capacity to receive. However, our capacity to receive will again depend on our capacity to give! The more we give, the more we will be able to receive! In relating with our staff members, lay collaborators and even with our beneficiaries, let us make conscious effort to develop the capacity for:

- 1. Showing Tolerance and Acceptance**
- 2. Showing Appreciation and Gratitude**
- 3. Showing Forgiveness and Reconciliation**
- 4. Sharing Hospitality**
- 5. Practicing Humility**

Since the 'lay' factor is quite sturdy in all our institutions, be it in the school or college, parish or non-formal setting, we are also responsible for the capacity building of our lay collaborators. Therefore, the Salesian community or the Management must ensure that sufficient opportunity is offered to

them not only for upgradation in their respective fields but also to enhance their understanding and more creative participation in the mission. May I suggest that regular seminars, conferences, workshops, and personal follow up will achieve these goals:

1. **Methodological quality assessment of the individual's participation in the given responsibility.**
2. **Promoting personal as well as inter-personal well-being through pedagogy.**
3. **Collaborative and Network mentality in the workplace.**
4. **Digital competence in this fast-changing academic and social scenario.**
5. **Understanding role clarity.**
6. **Capacity building is not just about ability or capability, but also about responsibility.**



It is also good to remember that firstly, the actual strategies for building capacity need to be specified and implemented accordingly. As capacity building is a process, the outcome results may vary in intensity and also in duration. Secondly, because capacity building tends to be an evolving process, different measures may be required at different stages of the capacity building process. And finally, capacity may develop in areas

other than that which was originally anticipated! Thus, additional measures of capacity building may need to be developed as the process evolves.

Finally, for us religious, capacity development for the community mission also means:

- a) **To come out of our comfort zone in order to make others more comfortable.**
- b) **To broaden our capacity by believing something you previously thought impossible.**
- c) **To believe in God like Abraham who left what was familiar and held onto the promises of God.**
- d) **To trust in God like Noah who had never seen the rain but obeyed and built the ark.**
- e) **To hope in God like the Centurion who knew one word from Jesus would bring life.**

Negative conversations will adversely affect our capacity for increase. We can never be motivated by those who aren't motivated. We can never share dreams with those who aren't dreamers. We can't talk about achieving our goals with those who don't have any. Notwithstanding all this, since the mission is entrusted to the community, if we desire to increase our capacity, we need to make sure that our community members are also with us.

Conclusion

When community members are aware of the needs, beliefs, and emotions of others; when they take predilection in their interactions with them; when they are disposed to seek out and value connections with others; when they feel common bonds with them and are motivated to maintain them – those personal qualities – call them spiritual assets – are likely to facilitate capacity building for the community mission.

However, it is good to remember that while Jesus encouraged the disciples to do the right thing, in the end, he had to do the right thing alone! Eventually, of course, except one, all the others followed him faithfully till the end. **Jesus did not allow the disappointment of the situation to keep him from what he needed to do.** Sometimes, we must move beyond our hurt feelings and push through to take the higher ground. He asked us to be imitators of his grace, love and wisdom, and he never asks us to do something that he isn't going to give us the power to fulfil through his grace.

NEWS FROM THE PROVINCE

INM Ordinations on 06th August 2022 at Don Bosco, Ayanavaram, 5.30 p.m.

The Province of Chennai is extremely blessed to celebrate with joyful hearts the Priestly Ordinations of Deacon **Sathish Paul SDB** and Deacon **Amal Franklin SDB**. We are grateful to their parents for

offering them so generously to the Lord and to all their formators who have helped them grow in their Salesian vocation. A special word of gratitude to Provincial of ICP (Italy) and MOR (Jerusalem) and to the Salesians of UPS and Ratisbonne where they did their theological studies.

Fr. Sathish Paul will be posted in SIGA/Rinaldi after his ordination while Fr. Amal Franklin will return to UPS for his Licentiate. We assure them of our prayers as they continue to serve the Lord joyfully in His vineyard as true sons of Don Bosco.

Thank You...

The Rectors & Leaders Retreat was held in Kotagiri from July 12th to 17th 2022. Special thanks to the preacher Rev. Fr. Gnana Selvam SDB and to the community of Mount Don Bosco, Kotagiri, for all the arrangements.

The Administrators Meet was held on 29th July 2022 in Citadel. I thank all the administrators from our communities who attended the meeting with fervour. My sincere thanks to Fr. Edwin Vasanthan, the Economist and his team for organizing the meeting.

Young Salesians (Quinquennium) Meet was held on 24th and 25th July 2022 and the **College Students Meet** was held 28th and 29th July 2022 in DBYAC Ennore. **The Senior Salesians Meet** was held in Citadel on the 30th and 31st of July 2022. I thank the Vice Provincial for organizing these meetings and the communities that hosted them.

Upcoming Events in August 2022

06	Sat	Provincial Council / INM Ordinations
09	Tue	Spiritual Direction Course for Rectors & Leaders - Kanyakumari
10	Wed	Spiritual Direction Course for Rectors & Leaders - Kanyakumari
15	Mon	Silver Jubilee: Anbu Illam Kavarapettai
16	Tue	INT & INM Curatorium & Joint Formation Commission - Yercaud
17	Wed	Provincial Visitation - DBTC Kavarapettai
18	Thu	Provincial Visitation - DBTC Kavarapettai
19	Fri	Provincial Visitation - DBTC Kavarapettai
20	Sat	INM & INT Lay Brothers Meet in Tiruchy
22	Mon	Provincial Visitation – DB Pannur
23	Tue	Provincial Visitation – DB Pannur
25	Thu	1 st Death Anniversary of Bro. Joseph Das

27	Sat	Silver Jubilee: DBICA
29	Mon	Provincial Visitation – DBAI Kavarapettai
30	Tue	Provincial Visitation – DB Egmore
31	Wed	Provincial Visitation – DB Egmore

Congratulations to Mother Yvonne FMA



In the 150th year of the Founding of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians, on 13th July 2022, the Holy Father appointed three women, as well as eleven Cardinals and Monsignors, as members of the Dicastery of Bishops. **Mother Yvonne Reungoat, Superior Emeritus of the Institute of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians was one of them.** The Dicastery for Bishops provides for everything that pertains to the appointment of diocesan

and titular Bishops and Apostolic Administrators. This process also involves members of the people of God from the dioceses concerned. Together with all the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians we too rejoice at this appointment and offer our wishes and prayers to Mother Yvonne FMA. Our prayers and wishes to all the Salesian Sisters on this 150th year of their Founding.

Episcopal Ordination of Fr. Nirmol Vincent Gomes SDB

In the presence of some 4000 faithful, priests, and religious, **Rev. Fr. Nirmol Vincent Gomes SDB, was ordained as the eighth Bishop of Krishnagar Diocese on 23rd July 2022** by Bishop Emeritus Theotonius Gomes of Dhaka, in the Cathedral of the Holy Redeemer, Krishnagar. The dignitaries present were the Apostolic Nuncio to India and Nepal Archbishop Leopoldo Girelli, Salesian Cardinal Charles Maung Bo of Yangon and President of the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences, Archbishop Bejoy Nicephorus D'Cruze of Dhaka, Archbishop Thomas D'Souza of Kolkata and many other Indian bishops. We congratulate and wish Bishop Nirmol Vincent Gomes SDB a fruitful ministry in leading and guiding the flock entrusted to his care.

Past Pupils

We are happy that **Mr. J. SATISH**, past pupil (St. Gabriel's Unit), who was heading our Province Past Pupil Association as President and who also served at the Unit, Provincial and National level has now been appointed into the World Presidency with portfolio as Councillor for Communications. It is a joyful moment for the National and Chennai Provincial Federation. We wish Mr. Satish all the Best in his new responsibility.

Joint Provincial Council meeting of INT and INM

It was a long-time dream that came to reality when the Joint Provincial Councils Meeting of INM & INT was held on 1st July 2022 at the Citadel. The meeting was a wonderful gathering of the Salesians and had very positive effect on all of us. All were open to collaboration and joint ventures of various kinds. Some of the important deliberations were, **to have a common house of PHS formation, organise common ongoing formation for the quinquennium batches, common retreats for confreres during the summer, coming together for the batch meeting once in a way**, etc. We are grateful to the Provincial and Council members of INT for their openness for collaboration.

REST IN PEACE

Mr. S. Antony (83), elder brother of Fr. Lourdusamy Susai SDB, passed away on 08.07.2022.
Mrs. J. Gloria (77), mother of Fr. Dominic Sagayaraj SDB, left this world for eternity on 11.07.2022.
Mr. Maccarias Fernando (84), brother of Fr. Joseph Berchmans SDB went to his eternal abode on 16.07.2022.
Mr. Yesudas (54), brother-in-law of Fr. Arokia Anbu SDB, died on 25.07.2022.
Mr. A.T. Joseph (93), brother of Fr. A.T. James SDB, passed away on 28.07.2022.
Mrs. Philominal (81), mother of Fr. Arokiasamy Arputharaj SDB went to her eternal abode on 05.08.2022.

FEAST OF THE ASSUMPTION OF OUR LADY



Like the dogma of Mary's Immaculate Conception, the dogma of the Assumption is not explicitly stated in the Bible. The teaching that 'at the end of her earthly course, Mary was assumed into heavenly glory, body and soul' was dogmatically defined by Pius XII in 1950 in *Munificentissimus Deus*. The equivalent belief (but not held as dogma) in the Eastern Orthodox Church is the Dormition of the Mother of God or the "Falling Asleep of the Mother of God". As Salesians, we do know very well the importance Don Bosco gave to Mother Mary in his life and mission. We too are invited to imitate him in this devotion and to make her known and loved by all our beneficiaries as well. Don't just relish freedom, remember its sacrifices too! Many Indians lost their lives for this freedom, and we are fortunate for we only have to preserve it.

The reason why these events are related is because they are both about Freedom. Independence is celebrated as freedom from foreign rule and domination to self-rule and governance and the Assumption may be seen as a freedom from this limited and incomplete life to the bliss of eternal and perpetual life. Even after nearly 75 years of Independence, still the progress we are supposed to make has not been achieved. We still continue to battle against poverty, hunger, disease, unemployment and in equality in almost all spheres of life. The disparity between the rich and the poor has only widened instead of getting reduced. Let us pray for our Motherland, and for each one of us, that we may endure patience, experiential wisdom, active faith, firm trust, genuine love, absolute purity, constant prayer and silent contemplation of Mary, Mother of God, Assumed into Heaven, to guide and protect her children.



Happy Feast! Happy Independence Day!

Yours truly in Don Bosco,

Fr. K.M. Jose SDB
INM Provincial



Date: 05.08.2022
Place: Chennai – 600010.