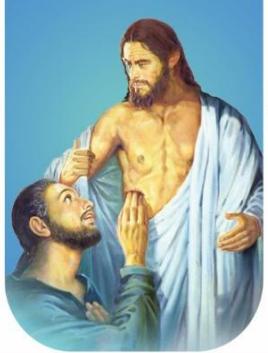




# Provincial Circular

SALESIAN PROVINCE OF CHENNAI (INM)



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## REALISATION, REPENTANCE AND RENEWAL: A LENTEN JOURNEY UNDERTAKEN AS BAPTISED CHRISTIANS AND CONSECRATED SALESIANS

Dear Confreres,

As we prepare to enter the season of Lent after a fortnight, the Word of God confronts us with a searching question, one that disturbs us yet carries the promise of grace: *“Where are you?”* (Gen 3:9). This question is not first answered by arguments or external conformity, but by the interior assent of the heart, that place where faith is either living or silently fading. Pope Francis sharpens this challenge with an exhortation saying: *“spiritual worldliness hides behind the appearance of piety and love for the Church.”* For Pope Francis, “spiritual worldliness” means using religious language, practices, or concern for the Church as a cover for seeking personal comfort, power, prestige, or self-promotion. It looks devout on the outside, but its focus is on the ego rather than on God and humble service to others. In this way, it is more dangerous than an open sin because it disguises self-interest as holiness. In our case as Salesians, spiritual worldliness can hide behind the appearance of love for the congregation, love for the province or love for a particular ministry of the province or love for the poor, marginalised and abandoned youth. I write to you, my dear confreres, not to alarm but to awaken; not to blame but to invite. In the holy season of Lent, Jesus will lead us once more into the desert, not because we are lost, but because we are loved. He is the reason for this journey: He who fasted, prayed, struggled and emerged renewed for the mission entrusted to Him by the Heavenly Father. If Lent does not lead us to a living encounter with Christ, then even our religious fidelity risks becoming *correct in form yet weak in conviction or outwardly proper but lacking inner commitment.*

Realisation, Repentance, and Renewal are essential for us Salesians because they help us reawaken the depth of our baptismal faith, confront the ways in which we have drifted away from God, and restore the vitality of our consecrated commitment. Realisation allows us to see our lives clearly in the light of God’s presence. Repentance calls us to turn back to Him with sincerity and humility, and Renewal gives us the grace and courage to live our vocation with renewed fervour and authenticity. These three pillars form the heart of the journey we are invited to undertake in Lent, and this circular will be concentrating on them as guiding themes for personal and communal conversion.

### Realisation: Reading the Signs of the Times in the Light of Faith

*Test everything; hold fast to what is good” – 1 Thes 5:21*

The world before our eyes is changing at a pace never before experienced. Gen Z, Gen Alpha, and the emerging Gen Beta are not merely younger versions of previous generations; they are shaped by digital immediacy, fractured attention, emotional vulnerability, and deep existential loneliness. Global wars stream live into our rooms; on the one hand, we can remain undisturbed by the reality of suffering, and on the other, we risk losing the capacity for wonder. Modern

humanity thus risks becoming inhumane, spiritually numb and slowly losing the ability to stand in awe before God. Yet the season of Lent gently calls us to a moment of realization: we, as religious, are not mere observers of this shift but participants in it. Today, even believers may live as though God were no longer existentially necessary. This phenomenon can be seen in traditional religious institutions gradually losing their monopoly on religion. The closed and empty churches or churches with dwindling number of faithful, that we may encounter stand before us as a prophetic warning sign.

In other words, empty churches or few practicing catholics are not simply a sociological statistic; they are a prophetic sign pointing to what could become the default condition of the Church if it does not undergo a deeper spiritual renewal and reform rooted in lived faith, existential meaning, and openness to the signs of the times. This is not a call to despair, but an invitation to spiritual maturity, described metaphorically as “the afternoon of Christianity”: a stage in which the Church is called not merely to preserve structures but to rediscover its identity in relation to God and to the world, moving beyond institutional dominance toward authentic evangelization and deeper faithfulness.

That is why our Constitutions remind us that our vocation as Salesians demands a unity of life rooted in God (C. 12) and predilection for the young (C. 14). As religious, whether we like it or not, we are constantly proclaiming something to the world through our lives, but what do we proclaim, and how do we proclaim it? We need to remind ourselves that our credibility lies in the change we ourselves have experienced through what we proclaim. During the season of Lent, let us gently become aware of ourselves and prayerfully ask whether we have truly experienced this change in our own lives and within our Salesian communities.

### **Repentance: Returning to the Heart of the Gospel and the Heart of Our Vocation**

*“Return to me with all your heart” – Joel 2:12*

Repentance is not a moral repair but a relational return that addresses every form of diluted discipleship in our religious life. When faith in the God who we believe in weakens, deviations follow, quietly and persistently: activism without contemplation, fraternity without vulnerability, obedience without inner freedom etc. What can save us from this situation? Each of us allowing the Gospel and the Constitutions of our congregation which are also written based on God’s Word to *interrupt the false images of ourselves*. This interruption is painful, yet salvific.

Don Bosco understood repentance as fidelity to love. His frequent confession, Eucharistic devotion, and Marian trust were not devotional excesses but safeguards against vocational erosion. The General Chapters echo his concern, warning that structural reform without spiritual conversion leads only to exhaustion. The authentic reform in the Church is always rooted in holiness, patience, and obedience to the Spirit. The fruitfulness of the reform and the future vibrancy of the Church depend on a reconnection with the deep spiritual and existential dimension of faith. The Salesian Constitutions speak very clearly saying that the consecrated life is a permanent call to conversion (C. 90), and the Church does not renew herself by adaptation alone, but by conversion to Christ.

## **Renewal: Rediscovering Our Baptismal and Salesian Identity in Christ**

*“Be transformed by the renewal of your mind” – Rom 12:2*

Renewal is never cosmetic; it is Paschal. When we say that renewal is never cosmetic, we mean that true transformation in religious life or faith life is not about superficial changes or appearances, or checking off spiritual routines. It is not enough to act busier, speak holier, or adopt new methods if the heart and interior life of a religious remain unchanged. Cosmetic changes the appearance and it may impress the one who looks at or even convince ourselves for a moment, but they do not touch the core of our baptismal faith or our consecrated commitment.

By contrast, renewal is Paschal, rooted in the mystery of Christ’s Passion, Death, and Resurrection. Like the Paschal event, authentic renewal is interior, transformative, and often uncomfortable, because it requires letting go of old habits, attachments, and fears, so that the new life of Christ can emerge within us. Let us try to understand the notion of renewal with three analogies: Firstly, the Tree analogy: A gardener cannot make a dying tree appear healthy just by painting its trunk or trimming a few branches. True renewal comes when the roots are nourished, the soil refreshed, and the tree is pruned in ways that allow it to grow strong again. Similarly, Paschal renewal works from the “roots” of our hearts, prayer, humility, love, not just on the surface behaviours. Secondly, the Caterpillar analogy: A caterpillar turning into a butterfly does not just repaint its wings or change its colour; it goes through a radical process inside the chrysalis. Its old form is transformed into something entirely new. Paschal renewal in our lives is like this: the Holy Spirit works deeply within us, reshaping our desires, our priorities, and our very way of being in Christ. Thirdly, the Gold Refining analogy: Gold is refined not by polishing its surface but by intense fire that melts away impurities. Similarly, true renewal is a Paschal fire: it burns away what is not life-giving, so that what emerges is authentic, radiant, and enduring. In short, renewal is not about looking better or being more efficient in ministry; it is about dying to what is weak, selfish, or routine in us, and rising with Christ into deeper faithfulness, love, and freedom.

This is why Lent, a season of fasting, penance, prayer, and reflection, is the perfect time for us Salesians to embrace renewal in its Paschal depth. Renewal is rooted in our baptismal death and resurrection with Christ. Renewal requires that we become mystics when faith risks becoming an inherited habit rather than a lived encounter. Today, the young are not rejecting God as much as they are rejecting the unreality. It is in this context that Pope Francis insisted: *“We are called to be evangelizers who speak of a God whom we ourselves know and love.”* Without this lived knowledge, our witness becomes shallow and hollow. Our Patron St. Francis de Sales teaches us that holiness grows quietly through fidelity, gentleness, and perseverance and St. John Bosco’s renewal was never nostalgic; but a creative fidelity. Pope Francis, St. Francis de Sales and St. John Bosco are only emphasizing that religious life exists to witness that God alone is enough. So, my dear confreres, we are invited to rediscover a faith capable of dialogue and depth. Our Constitutions remind us that the Salesian community is where this renewal is lived and tested (C. 50), however, not within the four walls alone but also where its mission is carried out.

## **Realisation, Repentance and Renewal: The Witness of Our Saints and Deceased Confreres**

*“Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life.” – Rev 2:10*

As we journey through Lent, the Salesian calendar of February itself becomes a silent but powerful commentary on the theme of this circular. On the first day of the month, as we commemorate all our deceased confreres, we are confronted with the truth that vocations are ultimately measured not by activity or visibility, but by fidelity. Their lives, hidden or celebrated, strong or fragile, remind us that religious life is a pilgrimage toward God, marked by daily realisation of our dependence on grace, continual repentance for our limitations, and patient renewal through perseverance. They now stand before God not as functionaries of a mission, but as sons who trusted Him enough to give their lives. Their memory asks us quietly but insistently: *What remains eternal in the way I am living my vocation today?*

In Blessed Pius IX, whose memory we recall on February 7, we see a shepherd who had the courage to read the signs of his turbulent times and to trust the Spirit at work in new charisms. His support of Don Bosco was born of discernment and humility, a recognition that God was renewing the Church through unexpected paths. His life speaks to us of realisation: the ability to recognise God’s action beyond familiar frameworks; repentance: the willingness to let go of fear in order to accompany new beginnings; and renewal: the courage to bless what the Spirit is bringing to birth. In a time when authority is questioned and institutions are fragile, his witness reminds us that authentic authority flows from faith and trust in God’s work.

Blessed Eusebia Palomino, commemorated on February 9, brings the Gospel even closer to the ground of our daily lives. She lived no extraordinary public ministry, yet her life was a continuous Lent, shaped by humility, prayer, hidden sacrifice, and fidelity to small duties. In her we see repentance lived as simplicity of heart, renewal lived as quiet perseverance, and realisation lived as awareness that holiness is formed in ordinary faithfulness. At a time when visibility and impact are easily confused with fruitfulness, her life gently but firmly calls us back to the truth that God looks first at the heart.

Finally, the feast of St. Luigi Versiglia and St. Callistus Caravario on February 25 confronts us with the ultimate horizon of consecrated life. Their martyrdom in China was not an accident of history, but the fruit of a vocation lived seriously, prayerfully, and courageously. Their blood seals a life of continual conversion, realisation of the cost of discipleship, repentance expressed in total self-gift, and renewal that passes through the Cross into resurrection. They remind us that the Salesian vocation, at its core, is not about survival, comfort, or success, but about radical availability to Christ and to the young, even when that fidelity demands everything. Together, our deceased confreres, our saints, and our blesseds proclaim to us that realisation, repentance, and renewal are not abstract ideals but lived paths. They call us, in this Lenten season, to rediscover the seriousness and beauty of our vocation, to allow Jesus once again to be the reason for our journey, and to walk forward with humble courage, so that when our own day of remembrance comes, our lives too may speak of a love that endured.

## **Walking Together Through Lent with Mary and St. John Bosco**

*“If today you hear His voice, harden not your hearts” – Heb 3:15*

So, my dear confreres, Lent is a prophetic interruption. Prophets of Biblical times disturbed the complacency of those responsible for the people, because they felt God’s pain for the world. The season of Lent, if lived well, will certainly disturb us so that we become mystics, prophets and

servants in our identity as Salesians. The Salesian identity unfolds as a journey of realisation, repentance, and renewal in fidelity to Don Bosco's charism. In realisation, we as Salesians rediscover ourselves as mystics, rooted in a living relationship with God that gives meaning and unity to our mission among the young. In repentance, we are called to prophetic conversion, courageously confronting personal and communal complacency, while recommitting to the dignity and hopes of the young, especially the poor. In renewal, we become servants once more, revitalising the preventive system through humble, creative, and loving service that renews both our vocation and the lives of the young entrusted to us. The world does not need efficient religious; it needs witnesses who have been seized by God, that is, men whose lives testify that Jesus is not an idea, but a living presence.

As we bring this reflection to a close, the Strenna of our Congregation for 2026 offers us a concrete path for living this Lenten journey of realisation, repentance, and renewal through four simple but demanding movements: look, listen, choose, and act. Lent invites us first to look honestly at our lives, our communities, and the world of the young, allowing reality to question us without fear or defensiveness. It then calls us to listen to the Word of God, to the silent cries and hopes of the young, and to the gentle yet persistent voice of the Spirit speaking within our hearts. From this attentive looking and listening, we are urged to choose anew: to choose God over self, the Gospel over comfort, and a renewed fidelity to our Salesian vocation over routine and mediocrity. Finally, we are sent forth to act, transforming conversion into concrete gestures of presence, service, and loving-kindness, so that our lives may become credible signs of hope and salvation. In this way, Lent does not end with us, but continues through us, for the good of the young and the renewal of the Church.

So, Let us walk together through this Lent with courage. Let us allow the Word who became flesh and dwelt amongst us to disturb us, the Eucharist to re-centre us, and fraternity to convert us. May Mary Help of Christians, who welcomed God's disruptive grace, lead us anew to her Son Jesus. May St. John Bosco intercede for us, that we may never lose the fire of realizing and renewing our authentic faith. May this Lent restore us, through authentic repentance, to commit ourselves totally for the good of the young and the salvation of our own souls.

## **A Cheerful Son of Don Bosco: Rev. Fr. Rajanna Kondaveethi, SDB**

The Salesian Province of Chennai (INM) deeply mourns the demise of Rev. Fr. Rajanna Kondaveethi, SDB, a priest of exceptional kindness and a tireless educator who embodied the Salesian spirit of "holy joy" throughout his 75 years of life and over four decades of priestly ministry.

### **Early Life and Formation**

Born on May 2, 1951, in Ottanthagal village, Chengalpattu district, Tamil Nadu, Fr. Rajanna was baptized eight days later at St. Antony's Church. He was the son of Mr. K. Joseph, a teacher at Don Bosco, Pannur, and Mrs. Sujanamma. He grew up in a loving home with one younger brother and three sisters.

His Salesian journey began when he joined Don Bosco, Pannur, in 7th standard. After six months, Rev. Fr. Ittyachan recognized his unique potential and sent him to Sacred Heart College in Tirupattur, where he was an aspirant from 1964 to 1968. He made his First Profession on May 24, 1970, at The Retreat, Yercaud, and completed his Philosophate there from 1970 to 1972.

He was a man of significant intellectual caliber, Fr. Rajanna earned B.Sc., M.A., B.Ed., and M.Ed. degrees. After practical training at Don Bosco, Katpadi (1975-1977) and teaching in Tirupattur (1977-1978), he made his Final Profession on May 26, 1978. He completed theological studies at Kristu Jyoti College, Bangalore, and was ordained a priest on December 20, 1981, at Kilachery by Archbishop Arulappa of Madras-Mylapore.



### **Ministry and Leadership**

Fr. Rajanna's ministerial life demonstrated tireless commitment to education and service to the marginalized. He served as Dean in Kadappa before taking charge of the Gypsy Mission in Ravulapalam. As a dedicated educator, he served two terms as Headmaster in Mangalagiri and led R.C.M. School, Pezzonipet, for thirteen years. His leadership was further recognized during his tenure as Vice Provincial of the Hyderabad Province (2004-2007).

After 33 years serving the Salesian mission in Hyderabad, including roles as Dean in Sri Lanka, Administrator in P.T. Parru, and ministry at Navajeevan, Guntur, he returned to Chennai Province to care for his ailing mother. In this final chapter, he served at Sagayathottam as Liturgical Animator, Warden, and Spiritual Director, as Administrator in Pannur, and as Councillor and Vice Rector at DBAI, Park Town. He spent his final days as a Confessor in Pannur, maintaining a profound heart for the poor.

### **A Heart for the Poor**

Fr. Rajanna truly embodied poverty of spirit, living with profound simplicity. He possessed no expensive belongings, wore simple clothes, and avoided accumulating possessions. His detachment from material goods enabled radical generosity, he immediately shared anything he received with the poor. Much of his charity was done in quiet humility, helping numerous people without seeking recognition. He lived by the conviction: **"By helping others, I build a mansion in heaven."**

### **The Salesian Spirit of Joy**

In the true spirit of Don Bosco's maxim, "Serve the Lord with holy joy," Fr. Rajanna was a beacon of positivity and cheerfulness. He described himself as an "open book," living without masks and sharing his thoughts with refreshing honesty. His presence brought happiness to others, rooted in his spiritual perspective on life's brevity. He frequently asked, "What are we going to take back after death?" a question that guided his actions toward the eternal rather than temporal.

### **The Gift of Personal Connection**

Fr. Rajanna had a remarkable gift for making everyone feel valued. Whether meeting strangers, children, or those society deemed insignificant, he learned their names and asked about their lives, believing that calling someone by name was a vital gesture of respect. Like Don Bosco, he was a father, brother and friend to young people, constantly advising them to "be happy, enjoy life and remain cheerful." He was also deeply grateful, never failing to thank those who showed him kindness.

### **Dedication to Education and Duty**

As Headmaster, he took personal effort to secure government placements for teachers, ensuring their stability, and sponsored countless poor students' education. Even as his health failed, he exercised his priestly duties with utmost care, remaining ready for any pastoral need. He viewed his final years as sacred preparation, leaning heavily on devotion to the Blessed Mother.

### **Final Days**

In his final years, Fr. Rajanna carried the cross of declining kidney function, high creatinine levels and severe diabetes with remarkable fortitude. He was moved to The Citadel, the Provincial House, for medical supervision. On January 20, 2026, he suffered a brain stroke. He peacefully passed away at 3:45 a.m. on January 23, 2026, at Guest Hospital, Kilpauk, Chennai, at the age of 75.

Fr. Rajanna lived as an "open book" of God's mercy, leaving a legacy of cheerfulness, deep love for the poor, and a Salesian heart that beat for the young until the end. May he rest in eternal peace of Christ.

## News from the Province

### A Big Thank You

With deep gratitude, we extend our heartfelt thanks to all the Rectors, Leaders and confreres of each community who have so generously contributed to the Provincial Community Day contribution for the welfare and development of Pope John's Garden, Madhavaram. Your collective generosity, amounting to ₹18,81,000, stands as a sincere expression of solidarity, responsibility and commitment towards the growth and well-being of this important initiative. May God bless you all!

### Praying for our Deceased Confreres

Prayer for our deceased confreres is a duty of gratitude and fraternity. The memory of those whom we have known and with whom we may have shared many years of the same vocation and mission offers an eloquent and effective encouragement to preserve, within the Salesian Family, a steadfast commitment to holiness. In commemorating our deceased confreres, the Congregation celebrates the love the Lord has revealed in the lives of His children and recognises the fulfilment of the promise of continuity given to St. John Bosco. Let us therefore remember, on the 1st of February, our confreres who have gone before us.

### Consecration Day

The consecration day will be observed on the 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2026. On this day, as consecrated people, let us renew our commitment to the evangelical counsels of poverty, chastity, and obedience. Let us be grateful for the gift of vocation and pray for faithful perseverance in religious life.

### Participation and Shared Responsibility in the Consultation Process

In accordance with Article 123, all confreres are required to actively participate in this consultation process. Shared responsibility involves the meaningful engagement of confreres in proposing those entrusted with leadership at all levels and in shaping important decisions. I kindly request that all consultation forms be submitted to me by **7th February 2026** through one of the following methods: Email/Post/ Google form/ personally delivered in sealed envelope. Rectors and Leaders are requested to ensure that all confreres in their respective communities complete and submit their consultation forms to the Provincial within the specified date.

### A Grace-Filled Visit from Our Rector Major!

Our province is truly blessed to welcome our esteemed Rector Major, Fr. Fabio Attard sdb, who will be visiting our Province from **13th to 17th February**. We also extend a warm and joyful welcome to Fr. Biju Michael sdb, Regional Councillor of South Asia, and Fr. Thatti Reddy sdb, Secretary to the Rector Major. The detailed itinerary for this significant visit is enclosed with this circular. As we prepare to receive the Successor of Don Bosco among us, may this grace-filled occasion inspire us to renew our commitment and reinvigorate our shared mission with fresh enthusiasm and dedication. The Rectors, Leaders and Youth Service Coordinators of various communities are earnestly requested to invest their best efforts in meticulous preparation and to facilitate the fullest possible participation from our communities.

We warmly invite all Salesians, members of the Salesian Family, young people and parishioners to engage actively and wholeheartedly in these meaningful events. Let us come together to make this apostolic visit a memorable and transformative experience for our entire province. Fr. John

Alexander, the Vice Provincial and chief organiser, will coordinate further communication with you, together with the core team.

### **Platinum Jubilee Celebration of Sacred Heart College, Tirupattur**

Sacred Heart College, Tirupattur, joyfully celebrates its Platinum Jubilee, marking 75 years of distinguished service in higher education. The Rector Major will grace and preside over the celebrations on **16th February 2026**. We give thanks to God for all the Salesians; past and present, who have dedicated themselves to educating generations of young people, especially those from economically disadvantaged and rural communities. May this institution continue to flourish under the patronage of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, bringing light and hope to countless more lives in the years to come.

### **Centenary Celebration of Kolkata Province and Congratulations to Fr. Sunil Kerketta SDB**

The Kolkata Province joyfully celebrates its centenary on **8th February 2026**, commemorating one hundred years of faithful Salesian presence and service. This historic milestone will be marked in the presence of our Rector Major.

On this momentous occasion, **Fr. Sunil Kerketta SDB**, the new provincial elect, will formally assume office as the new Provincial of Kolkata, inaugurating a new chapter of leadership and renewed commitment to the Salesian mission in the Kolkata Province. We extend our warmest congratulations to Fr. Sunil Kerketta and assure him of our prayers and fraternal support as he takes up this significant responsibility. May God bless all the confreres of Kolkata province abundantly and guide them in their service to the young.

### **Strengthening Our Mission through Mutual Support**

Our province is blessed with numerous services and institutions that serve our shared mission. As brothers belonging to the same province, it is our collective responsibility to support and sustain each other's initiatives rather than outsourcing to external parties, which would deprive our own institutions and communities of vital resources and opportunities.

Therefore, as recommended and deliberated in various Provincial Chapters, we strongly encourage allocating **100% of orders** for uniforms, notebooks, carpentry, welding, printing materials, videography, and photography to our own provincial services and institutions.

This approach ensures that:

- All related services and materials are sourced internally
- Financial resources circulate within our province
- We directly support and strengthen our common mission
- Our institutions grow and flourish through mutual collaboration

By working together as one family and prioritizing our own services, we build a sustainable system that benefits everyone and advances our educational and formative mission more effectively.

### **Support and Preparation for Public Examinations**

The province is serving thousands of students across various locations. During the month of March, many of them will be appearing for their government and common examinations. In this context, I would like to recommend the Correspondents, Headmasters, Principals, teachers, Dean of studies, Practical trainees to make extra effort in supporting students facing academic difficulties, ensuring they receive the guidance and encouragement needed to succeed. Let us

accompany our young people with dedication and pastoral concern as they navigate these important examinations.

### **Work, Bread, and Heaven: Our Salesian Educational Mission**

Don Bosco's foremost principle was to work wholeheartedly for young people and the Kingdom of God. As our aided schools directly serve the most vulnerable and needy, it is essential that all Salesian educators, embrace teaching with willingness and joy, just like any other teacher, without exception and without delegating their responsibilities to substitutes. This spirit is exemplified at Sacred Heart College, Tirupattur.

In this regard, Headmasters and Principals should fulfil the minimum required teaching hours, while all Salesian teachers remain actively engaged in both classroom instruction and the pastoral care of students. This includes personal involvement in religious instruction and value education classes. Let us embody Don Bosco's commitment by being present among our young people not merely as administrators, but as educators and formators who accompany them in their journey toward holistic growth.

### **Praise God: Inspiring Faith Through Media**

We extend our heartfelt appreciation to the Salesians who participated in the Praise and Worship sessions which was broadcasted on Madha TV recently. These spirit-filled moments of prayer have deeply inspired countless viewers, and many young people are eagerly anticipating similar initiatives.

In response to this enthusiasm, I sincerely encourage the **Youth Ministry Department of the Province, DBICA, DEEPAGAM, DBYAC Ennore, NIRAIVAGAM, Vazhikatti and DBSARC** to develop regular programs specifically designed to reach out to youth and families. Such consistent spiritual outreach will nurture faith, strengthen communities, and bring the message of hope and renewal to those who seek it. Let us harness the power of media to accompany young people and families in their spiritual journey, making God's presence felt in their daily lives.

### **Working together**

The deliberations of the various Provincial and General chapters call for a renewed emphasis on strengthening our unity with our neighbours. Greater collaboration and mutual support in our shared mission are essential for effective apostolic work. Active involvement in the apostolate should be encouraged across all communities. All confreres are to take turns participating, ensuring shared responsibility and inclusiveness. Such participation nurtures fraternity, commitment, and collective ownership of the mission.

### **Spreading the devotion of MHC**

We have a special devotion to Mary, Help of Christians, who held a central place in the life and mission of Don Bosco. From the beginning of his vocation, Don Bosco experienced her guidance, protection, and maternal care. He entrusted all his works, especially the education and formation of the young, to her loving intercession. Inspired by his example, our Salesian mission continues to flourish under her powerful patronage. Mary, Help of Christians, remains a source of strength in times of difficulty and uncertainty. She leads the faithful closer to Christ and nurtures a spirit of hope and trust. In this Salesian tradition, devotion to her is both a spiritual and apostolic commitment. Therefore, I request the Salesian communities to pray the novena to Mary Help of Christians and also have the commemoration mass of Mary Help of Christians along with lay people working in the institutions and the Catholic faithful of our neighborhood. Kindly exhort

the faithful to deepen their devotion also by visiting the Mary Help of Christians Shrine, Broadway. As we have taken the initiative toward a major renovation, you may request our well-wishers to contribute generously.

### **Budget Review and Commitment to Healthy Living**

The three-year budget review reveals significant increases in expenses related to health, food, and travel among our Salesian communities. I earnestly request each community to carefully examine these areas and reimagine our lifestyle with renewed emphasis on simplicity, prudence, and healthier living practices.

It is crucial that we adopt responsible measures to safeguard our physical well-being. We need our Salesians to enjoy longer, healthier lives so they can continue serving effectively and fruitfully in their mission. I ask that you give this matter your serious attention and collaborative care. Those who have not undergone the master check-up may do so with the knowledge of the Province Sick-in-Charge, Fr. Mark, and Fr. Provincial.

Additionally, communities have experienced a notable rise in mobile phone usage and monthly recharge costs. I request that this issue be discussed openly within your communities, with the aim of reviewing current practices and adopting more responsible and economical means of communication.

### **A Gentle Reminder: Community Presence and Celebrations**

Certain practices require careful reconsideration in light of our Chapter deliberations. These include:

**Community Absences and Travel** The practice of being absent from community for three consecutive days, traveling to other provinces, or organizing community picnics outside the state needs thoughtful review.

**Jubilee Celebrations** Similarly, the manner in which various jubilees are celebrated also requires discernment within local communities. These celebrations should witness to our values of simplicity and fraternal life. I invite Rectors/Leaders and community members to reflect on these matters together, ensuring that our practices genuinely express our identity and commitment as religious and Salesians, as deliberated in the chapters.

### **Disseminating the Strenna 2026**

The Salesian Family of our province began its journey in the **new year** with the Strenna, "*Do Whatever He Tells You – Believers, Free to Serve*," through four well-structured Strenna dissemination programmes and creativity held across the Province. These initiatives brought together members of the Salesian Family in all its expressions—Salesians of Don Bosco, Daughters of Mary Help of Christians, Sisters of Maria Auxiliatrix, Salesian Cooperators, Past Pupils, Volunteers of Don Bosco, Con Don Bosco, and lay collaborators—strengthening communion and shared responsibility in the Salesian mission. We thank Fr. John Alexander, Vice Provincial, Fr. Jesusdoss, Fr. Britto, Fr. John Christopher, Fr. John Crhisty and Fr. C M Vargese, who collaborated and the rectors of the community who hosted the event.

### **Strengthening Vocation Promotion in Local Communities**

I earnestly request all confreres to actively intensify vocation promotion efforts across our boarding houses, schools, hostels, colleges, and technical institutions. We must be attentive in identifying young people who show signs of a Salesian religious vocation.

Once identified, these candidates should receive:

- **Personal and consistent accompaniment** tailored to their individual journey
- **Regular follow-up** to nurture their discernment process
- **Ongoing contact with the Vocation Promoter** to ensure proper guidance and support

Vocation promotion is a shared responsibility that requires our collective commitment and pastoral sensitivity. Let us be present and proactive in recognizing and accompanying those whom God may be calling to serve in our Salesian mission.

#### **Rest in Peace!**

**Fr. Anthony Goyal SDB**, belonging to the Province of Bombay, left for his heavenly home on the 10<sup>th</sup> of January 2025. We offer our prayers and condolences to the Provincial and confreres of the Bombay province.

**Fr. Mathew Orathel SDB**, belonging to the Province of Trichy, passed away on the 14<sup>th</sup> of January 2026. We express our heartfelt condolences to the Provincial and confreres of Trichy Province.

**Mr V. Yonas (68)**, the youngest brother of Fr. Mark Vellangany (Province Sick In Charge - The Citadel), passed away on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of January 2026.

We continue to remember the deceased and pray for the bereaved family members!

#### **Important dates and events in February 2026**

Date	Events
01	Offering Mass for the Deceased Salesians
01 - 02	PV: Sacred Heart Church, Thennangudi / Monthly Recollection
03	PV: Don Bosco College, Karaikal / Monthly Recollection
04	PV: Don Bosco, Gedilam
06	PV: DBAI, Kavaraipettai
10 - 12	PV: DBTC, Kavaraipettai
13	Provincial Council / Visit of the Rector Major
14 – 17	Visit of the Rector Major
18	Ash Wednesday
21	PV: Don Bosco Mission, Jawadhi Hills
22	PV: Vinnarasi Mission, Maranodai
23 - 25	PV: Sacred Heart College, Tirupattur
26 - 27	PV: Don Bosco, Yelagiri
28	PV: Don Bosco Tech Campus, Basin Bridge

Yours affectionately,



**Fr. Don Bosco SDB**  
INM Provincial

Date: 01.02.2026

Place: Chennai

