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12th October 2021

Dear Confreres, members of the Salesian Family and friends,

The month of October is packed with many significant events to celebrate, among them is the Feast of St. John Paul II, the patron of our Province on **22nd October 2021**. In line with the preparation for the centenary celebration we have a special commemoration on **23rd October 2021** which marked the solemn ceremony of the departure of the missionaries on **23rd October 1921**. It took place in the Basilica of Mary Help of Christians, Turin. It was during that ceremony that Fr. Mathias described the new mission land – the Assam Missions, as the “New Promised Land”. He stated that the Salesians will speak the language of the Lord and will repeat the prodigy of the first Pentecost. Below is a short narrative of the great event.

A JOURNEY TO THE NEW PROMISED LAND

Recruitment of personnel for the New Mission was stepped up. The General Council brought out a report on “The Apostolic Prefecture of Assam entrusted to the Salesian Congregation” (ASC 2/1921, 7, 285-90). It was really difficult to find suitable Salesians available for a missionary work. Only after repeated petitioning by the Provincials could a group of six priests be mustered for the work. None of them spoke any English only French. Their names are as follows:



No.	Names	Age	Native land
1.	Fr. Louis Mathias	34	French
2.	Fr. John Deponti	34	Italian
3.	Fr. Emmanuel Bars	32	Spanish
4.	Fr. Joseph Gil	36	Spanish
5.	Fr. Joseph Hauber	43	Alsace
6.	Fr. Paul Bonardi	32	Italian

Another thing that struck Fr. Mathias was that not a single Salesian Brother was included in the group and from what he had heard from Mgr. Becker, brothers were essential in India. He went to the major Superior in charge of the missions, Fr. Ricaldone, and was permitted to speak in one of the meetings of the Council. He spoke with clarity and force, Fr. Ricaldone whispered to him: “Well done! That was a good speech. Don’t worry, we shall help you and for a start I’ll get you five Brothers.” They are: Br. Peter Aprile (Italian), Br. Mario Calzi (Italian), Br. Augustine Conti (Italian), Br. Laurianus Santana (Spanish) and Br. Cumerind Cid (Spanish). These are the five Salesian missionary brothers. So now altogether Eleven of them Six Priests and Five Salesian Brothers came to the New Promised Land.

BASILICA OF MARY HELP OF CHRISTIANS ON 23RD OCTOBER 1921

The departure ceremony was held in the Church of Mary Help of Christians on 23rd October 1921. This moving and solemn event has been a custom from the days of the first missionary groups to leave their home lands and head for the Lord’s vineyards wherever they were. Archbishop Castrale presided and handed a ‘missionary cross’ to each of those who had chosen to bring the Gospel to the New Promised Land. Along with Fr. Mathias and his



companions, there were other Salesians leaving for the South American missions. The Rector Major, Fr. Paul Albera, was not too well that day, but he managed to get to the Church for the ceremony, and even then, he was so overcome with emotion that he retired to the sacristy and only emerged in order to give the farewell embrace to each missionary and a word of encouragement.

The valedictory address was, by consent of the Superiors, given by Fr. Louis Mathias and for almost an hour he held the audience spellbound by his descriptions of India and the New Promised Land. Referring to the multiplicity of languages in that country, he enthusiastically exclaimed: "We Salesians speak the language of Christ and we shall repeat the wonders of the first Pentecost. Just as in those days the language of the Apostles comprised the tongues of the peoples they preached to, so the various peoples of North East India will understand the Sons of Don Bosco!"

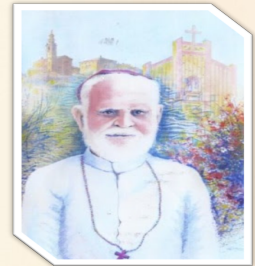
ENCOUNTER WITH ORESTES MARENGO

He spoke as though he were perfectly acquainted already with the region, he was going to work in. Among that vast congregation, there was a young man, Orestes Marengo, who listened enthralled. He could never guess that in the future he too would go as a missionary to North East India: he would never have dreamt that he would one day become Bishop of Tezpur and Tura.

"Where can I get a grammar of the Lord's language?" someone asked Fr. Mathias facetiously. But the latter, on another occasion, remarked: - "We shall speak the language of love: it is one that everybody understands." They were lovely words but language difficulties kept creeping up to plague the missionaries, but with lion-hearted courage, Fr. Mathias and his companions plodded doggedly on. Their successes are part of history.

Trouble loomed also from the Government side: no entry visa would be given to anyone from a country that had remained neutral during the war: no entry visa for any member of a Congregation not officially recognized, also Salesians! Fr. Mathias was at his wits' end, but he went to London to talk the matter over with Cardinal Bourne who had been nominated by the British government as an intermediary in such problems. The Salesians got the necessary authorizations.

On his way to Turin where he arrived on 12th December 1921, he passed through Germany to speak to Mgr. Becker and paid a visit to his relatives in Alsace. In Turin the Rector of the Salesian Mother house drew him to one side saying he had a little secret to tell him.



THE DREAM OF DON BOSCO IN BARCELONA

"This is strictly between you and me," said Fr. Savare, the Rector, "Last year I read the 'dreams' of Don Bosco while they were being secretly printed in preparation for our Founder's Cause for Beatification. Although the whole operation is hush-hushed and all printed copies must be 'kept under wraps'. I managed to hold back some of the proofs. I'd like you to read the 'dream' Don Bosco had in Barcelona, for I think you will get great encouragement from it."

The 'dream' referred to occurred in Barcelona in 1886 and is well known throughout the Salesian world. In it our Founder saw a prophetic band going from Valparaiso in Chile across the world to Peking in China. A majestic-looking lady appeared in that dream and told him of the wonderful development of the missionary work of the Salesian Family. Don Bosco



was astonished for he saw that his Congregation would eventually bring the Gospel message to every corner of the world!

“My heart leaped for joy,” remarked Archbishop Louis Mathias, “when I read the words: ‘Now, take this other side where you can see another ten centres between mid-Africa and Peking... here you see Hongkong, Calcutta...!’ That means that Don Bosco had already seen his Salesians entering mysterious India. Here is something that fills us with confidence to face the future, for now we know that the powerful Mary Help of Christians will be nearby to help and protect us.”

The impression this dream made on Archbishop Louis Mathias had a lasting effect. He was eternally grateful to God for having been chosen to bring the dream to reality: also, he built up an unshakable faith in the success of the mission, since God wished it how else would it be! He had taken it as a good sign.



IMPORTANT EVENTS – SALESIANS IN NORTH EAST INDIA

The centenary of the following historical events is being celebrated this year:

- ✚ **23rd October 1921:** A solemn ceremony of the departure of the missionaries was held in the Basilica of Mary Help of Christians, Turin in which Fr. Louis Mathias, described the new mission land of Assam as the “New Promised Land”. He stated that the Salesians will speak the language of the Lord and will “repeat the prodigy of the first Pentecost.”
- ✚ **20th December 1921:** The day when the pioneers of the Assam mission celebrated the Holy Eucharist in the little room of Don Bosco at Valdocco and started their long journey to Shillong.
- ✚ **12th January 1922:** The arrival of the missionaries in Guwahati.
- ✚ **13th January 1922:** The arrival of 11 Salesian missionaries in Shillong.

JUNIOR PRIESTS’ MEET 2021

We would also like to congratulate and thank Fr. VM Thomas SDB who animated our junior priests at Pastoral Centre - Shillong. We would like to thank Fr. John Zosiamia for organizing and assisting our young priests. May the Lord bless them especially the young priests in their different mission centres.

MEETING OF THE INS LEADERS OF COMMUNITIES

I would like to place on record my gratitude to the Provincial Council Members, the Rectors, Parish Priests and Incharges for a fruitful sharing, discussion and deliberation. Many important issues were discussed and await their implementation. I would like to thank the community of Don Bosco Provincial house for the accommodation and hospitality.

INS JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS

We would like to praise, thank, and rejoice with the jubilarians of our Province. The province level Jubilee celebration was praiseworthy. We would like to thank Fr. Vice Provincial, the community of Salesian Training Centre, all their close collaborators, and other communities in the province that made this day great and memorable. May the Lord bless them abundantly!



CONGRATULATIONS TO BOSCO INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT SOCIETY (BIDS)

I would like to extend my appreciation and congratulations to Bosco Integrated Development Society (BIDS) of the province under the able direction and guidance of Fr. Genesius Wanniang. They have inaugurated a new project “**Child Friendly Shillong**” by Miss. Isawanda Laloo IAS, the Deputy Commissioner of East Khasi Hills on 30th September 2021. This is one of the major projects by YaR Ministry of SPCSA from New Delhi. This initiative is to oversee the provisions of children pertaining to fun, recreation, health and nutrition. This is the hard work, dedication and commitment of Fr. Genesius and the staff of BIDS. Now the children will have space in the society through BIDS. Let us continue to support Don Bosco Social Development Services of Shillong Province. May God continue to bless them.

CONGRATULATIONS TO SR. CHIARA CAZZUOLA FMA

On behalf of the confreres of Shillong Province, I would like to congratulate Sr. Chiara Cazzuola FMA at her being elected as the 11th Mother General of the Institute of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians at the GC XXIV of the institute. We assure her of our prayers as she shoulders the responsibility of animating the Institute in the years to come. We are grateful to Sr. Yvonne Reungoat FMA for her dedication and hard work. May God continue to bless her with graces and blessings she stands in need of.

PROVINCIAL VISITATION 2021 - 2022

I would like to inform you my dear Rectors, Parish Priests, Principals, Administrators, Incharges and the house council of every Community that I would begin the visitation to the communities in the days to come. The Provincial Visitation will be focused on Administration, Documentation and Financial Management.

I would request all of you to prepare the **Yearly Plan 2022 - 2023** of the community and the Community Budget. Fr. Vice Provincial and Fr. Economist will assist me in this process. Let us all pray, support and work together that the Provincial Visitation may bear fruit for the welfare of the Church and the Congregation especially the young people who are being entrusted to us.

- 18th – 20th October** : Provincial Visitation at Don Bosco Aspirantate, Nonglakhiat.
- 20th – 22nd October** : Provincial Visitation at Savio Juniorate.
- 24th – 25th October** : Provincial Visitation at Rangblang.
- 25th – 26th October** : Provincial Visitation at Rambrai.
- 26th – 27th October** : Provincial Visitation at Pyndengrei.
- 27th – 28th October** : Provincial Visitation at Pyndenglawar.

UPCOMING EVENTS: NOVEMBER & DECEMBER 2021

Dates	Programmes/events	Places	Animators
04th Nov	Requiem Mass: Deceased Salesians @ 3.00 pm	Cemetery	Rectors: DBTS/SHTC
14th Nov	Salesian Brothers' Day	Provincial House	Br. Quirinus W
19th – 22nd Nov	Practical Trainees' Meeting	Provincial House	Fr. Vice Provincial
08th – 15th Dec	03 rd Annual Retreat for Confreres	Siloam	Fr. VM Thomas



BIRTHDAY WISHES

My prayerful wishes to all the confreres who celebrate their birthday this month. May God bless you and keep you.

Dates	Names	Dates	Names
02	Fr. Kennedy K Kharkongor	22	Br. Albert Longley
07	Fr. Philip Barjo	24	Fr. Leeborki Dhar
08	Fr. Manoj Churuliyl	25	Cl. Samson Dkhar
11	Fr. Nicholas Sun	26	Cl. Octopaul Marbañiang
12	Fr. Joseph Puthenpurackal (PV)	27	Cl. Arnes Kurbah
13	Fr. Anthony Kharkongor	28	Fr. Robert Makri
16	Fr. Christopher Warlarpih		Cl. James G Marbañiang
17	Br. Carmel Muscat	29	Fr. Jose Kavalakadan (KK)
20	Fr. James DOUNGEL		Cl. Mark C Donald Suchiang
	Cl. Hubert Riahtam	"For we live by faith, not by sight" 2 Cor. 5:7	

INS REQUIEM MASS

As we do in the past years, we shall celebrate the Requiem Mass in remembrance of our deceased confreres on **04th November** (Thursday) at 3.00 pm in the Cemetery Chapel at Laitumkhrah. Please do come and also remind the community members.

PRAYER FOR THE SYNOD OF BISHOPS 2021 - 2023

ADSUMUS, SANCTE SPIRITUS

We stand before You, Holy Spirit,
as we gather together in Your name.

With You alone to guide us,
make Yourself at home in our hearts;

Teach us the way we must go
and how we are to pursue it.

We are weak and sinful;
do not let us promote disorder.
Do not let ignorance lead us down the wrong
path nor partiality influence our actions.

Let us find in You our unity
so that we may journey together to
eternal life and not stray from the
way of truth and what is right.

All this we ask of You,
who are at work in every place and time,
in the communion of the Father and the Son,
forever and ever. Amen.



IN LOVING MEMORY

We express our heartfelt condolences to the Provincials, confreres and family members who lost their beloved ones. Let us pray for the repose of the departed souls:

- ✠ **RIP Fr. Nicholas R.K. Guangdiat SDB**, of Dimapur Province.
- ✠ **RIP Mr. Heribert Riahtam**, the younger brother of Cl. Hubert Riahtam.
- ✠ **RIP Mr. Hilmes Mawrie**, the eldest brother of Fr. Barnes Mawrie.
- ✠ **RIP Mrs. PV Poulina**, beloved mother of Fr. KJ Antony.
- ✠ **RIP Mr. PM Joseph**, the elder brother of Fr. PM Mathew.

CONCLUSION

As we are in the month of the holy rosary, let us keep in mind that the Rosary is an invitation to experience the grace of mother Mary's spiritual motherhood as she leads us to her Son, Jesus. Devotion to the holy rosary was especially promoted in the 13th century by St. Dominic and in the 16th century by St. Peter Canisius. It was Pope Leo XIII who dedicated October as the month of the holy rosary and who, in 1895, wrote an encyclical, *Ad iutricem*, on the rosary. An invocation known as the Fatima Prayer was commonly added in the early 20th century. In 2002, St. Pope John Paul II, who called the rosary his favorite prayer, added a new set of five reflections called the Luminous mysteries. They join the joyful, sorrowful, and glorious mysteries, in providing opportunities to reflect on the lives of Jesus and His Blessed Mother. In Fatima, mother Mary urged the Children: "Pray the Rosary every day to obtain peace for the world." I also encourage the parishes, communities and all of you to personally pray with great devotion the Holy Rosary during this month October and beyond, that is, every day.

**"Pray the holy rosary everyday
In order to obtain peace for the world.
There is no problem,
No matter how difficult it is.
That we cannot resolve
by the power of the holy rosary." Sr. Lucia of Fatima**

Yours in Don Bosco,



Fr. Paul Olphindro Lyngkot SDB
Provincial

