



My dear Confreres,

Loving greetings from Don Bosco Provincial House, Shillong and a very Happy Feast of Teachers' Day to all of you.

The commemoration of the teachers' day on 5<sup>th</sup> September every year reminds us that we, the Salesians, are educators of the young following our father and founder St. John Bosco the educator *par excellence* of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In our province we have around 38,000 students under our care and so as we engage in this field of education; a great responsibility is placed on our shoulders for the holistic formation of these young people.

We continue to cherish the legacy of Don Bosco's educational method as we celebrate the bicentenary of his dream at the age of nine. Don Bosco's system of education is deeply rooted in the vision he received at the age of nine, and is encapsulated by the message, "*Not with blows but with loving kindness.*" This transformative and preventive approach is at the heart of our educational method and remains relevant in the pedagogical practices even today.

The dream at nine was a divine mandate and a clear directive that guided Don Bosco's approach to education and pastoral care of the youth. It revealed to Don Bosco the nature of the challenges of youth and the importance of addressing them with empathy rather than aggression. The dream also conveyed a vision of transformation where troubled youths would develop into responsible and good human persons. This transformation was to be achieved through preventive and nurturing methods rather than through punitive measures. It emphasizes a compassionate approach to education and discipline, distinguishing Don Bosco's method from traditional and authoritarian educational practices.

The educational method inspired by Don Bosco's dream has some important practical implications. Let me share with you four points which I consider important for the effectiveness of our ministry in our educational institutions:

- 1. Creating a Supportive Learning Environment:** By focusing on the principle of loving-kindness, we the educators can create a supportive and inclusive learning environment. In our institutions we need to create a family environment where each one feels at home and happy because of our loving presence. "*It is not enough that young people are loved, they themselves must know that they are loved*" Don Bosco said. He not only loved his boys but let them know that he loved them and he told his Salesians and teachers that the success of true educator is to be loved by the young in return. Our schools and institutions should be a place where young people experience joy, feel valued and cared for, which will enhance their motivation and engagement. This positive atmosphere will have a great impact on the students enhancing effective learning and their personal growth.
- 2. Addressing Behavior Problems and Issues Constructively:** The preventive system, where students are guided by reason, religion, and loving-kindness, invites us to address behavior problems and issues constructively and positively. Instead of

resorting to punishment, teachers have to use dialogue and guidance to help students understand and correct their behaviour. Implementing this principle requires educators to cultivate empathy and understanding. By engaging with students on a personal level and addressing their individual needs and concerns, we the educators can build a trusting and respectful relationship with them. This empathetic approach will help us to guide our students more effectively, and be able to address their emotional issues with compassion and offer them guidance and support in times of difficulty.

3. **Encouraging Moral and Spiritual Growth:** Don Bosco's method focuses on the holistic development of students, integrating academic learning with moral and spiritual formation. This holistic approach supports the all-round development of individuals who are prepared to contribute positively to society. This integration of moral and spiritual growth is indispensable in our educational ministry. We need to provide guidance that helps students develop a strong sense of spirituality and moral values, contributing to their overall personal development. Don Bosco truly believed that education is a matter of the heart. Aristotle also said, "*Educating the mind without educating the heart is no education at all*". Hence, it is important to keep in mind that the aim of our education is not merely achieving excellent results and imparting knowledge, but moral transformation and spiritual growth of the young people, "*transforming wolves into lambs*." Let us remember that the primary aim of Preventive System of Education is to form the young people to become good Christians/believers and honest citizens. For this reason, education to faith and imparting moral values are integral dimensions of our youth ministry and they are important components of our educational system.
4. **Building Positive Rapport:** As John Morrison would say in his book *Educational Philosophy of St. John Bosco*, 'rapport is the basis of Salesian education and the educator has to make himself available to his students.' By his loving presence, he gains the confidence and respect of the young people. According to Don Bosco, an educator must enter into actual meeting with the young; relate empathetically with them; stress the interiorization of values; educate to responsibility in daily life and seek ever new ways of being present. When teachers engage with students on a personal level, they build trust and rapport, which enhances the learning experience. These relationships are not just about academic support but also about understanding students' unique backgrounds, challenges, and aspirations. By fostering strong, supportive relationships, teachers can better address the diverse needs of their students and create a sense of trust and security, which further facilitates effective teaching and learning.

The dream at the age of nine is central to us as it encapsulates the divine origin, guiding principles, and educational mission of Don Bosco's work. His educational method, inspired by the dream at nine with the principle of loving kindness, represents a compassionate and transformative approach to education. His vision emphasizes the importance of empathy, loving presence, holistic development and building good rapport, which continue to influence educational practices today. Let this dream continue to resonate deeply within us, shaping our mission and identity as educators of the young.

## **NEWS AND INFORMATION**

### **Adieu Dear Fr. Muct (RIP)**

As we stepped into the month of August, we were all shocked and saddened by the sudden passing away of our dear Fr. Muct Kumar Tirkey on 4<sup>th</sup> August 2024 due to cardiac arrest. As I landed in Chennai at about 11:30 am for the Silver Jubilee Celebration of Turichy Province and the subsequent SPCSA Meeting, the news came to me like thunderbolt. I just spoke to him over the phone the previous day from Kolkata. I decided to return to Shillong immediately.

The Funeral Mass on 5<sup>th</sup> August 2024 presided over by His Grace, Most Rev. Victor Lyngdoh DD, Archbishop of Shillong, witnessed a large number of priests, religious and people from near and far. All who came in contact with Fr. Muct, whether in parishes or institutions, loved the way he interacted and related. Among the outstanding qualities of Fr. Muct were his availability, simplicity and his missionary spirit. We had just commemorated the Month's Mind on 4<sup>th</sup> September 2024 remembering and praying for him with love. He will be in our thoughts and our prayers for many years to come.

On behalf of all the confreres of our province, I once again express our heartfelt condolences to Fr. Cyril Tirkey and all the members of the bereaved family. I am deeply grateful to the Community of Savio Juniorate, Mawlai, for looking into all the necessary arrangements with love and dedication.

May the good Lord grant Fr. Muct Kumar Tirkey eternal rest in his heavenly abode.

### **Migrant Ministry Meeting**

There was a meeting of the provinces' coordinators on Migrant Ministry on 16<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup> August 2024 in Mumbai organized by Fr. Francis Bosco SDB on behalf of SPCSA. Besides the Salesians, the large gathering included the representatives of CBCI, the Jesuits, the SVDs, Diocesan Priests, Sisters, members of civil organizations and some prominent lay people. Fr. Junas Minj represented our province.

The meeting focused specifically on Distressed Migration in India. People move from one place to another with high hopes for better job opportunities or for better education. However the real situation in a new place often brings multiple challenges especially those looking for jobs. They often face discrimination, manipulation, violence, loss of purpose and identity; finding difficult to cope with the new situation. We are called to identify and reach out to these distressed migrants in whatever way possible. I hope we will be able to make a study and some interventions here in our province.

### **Trimonthly Recollection for Brothers**

On 24<sup>th</sup> August 2024 Trimonthly Recollection for Practical Trainees and Student Brothers who are in Meghalaya was held in Provincial House, Mawlai, Shillong. Fr. VT Jose gave the animation talk followed by Confession and Adoration. We thank Fr. Jeewan Lakra, the Vice Provincial, for organizing this Trimonthly Recollection for our young confreres.

## Principals' Meeting

The Principals' Meeting was held in Provincial House from 28<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> August 2024 under the leadership of Fr. Babu Stephen, the coordinator for Education and Culture under Youth Ministry. Fr. John Zosiama, the Provincial, inaugurated the meeting and animated the 1<sup>st</sup> Session. All the principals/vice principals of the province were present.

Besides discussing common concerns and challenges, there were input sessions which helped the principals and headmasters to keep focusing on things which are important and relevant for today's students and institutions. There were also sessions which were in line with the Salesian methods and principles of managing the institutions. Towards the end of the meeting specific plans and decisions were made for the general good of all the schools and the province. The following are some of the decisions:

- All the schools should adhere to the Centralization Policy of the Province (order for complete Uniforms and Note Books from the Province only);
- All the payments due for Zatti Production need to be cleared by all before the end of September 2024;
- Child Protection Policy to be implemented in all our schools;
- The pending dues of DB Tech India needs to be cleared by all schools before the end of September 2024.
- The Province annual contribution to be done at the earliest;
- Mini Boscoree at Pathaliaghat will be held in December 2024. All the Schools should take part in it;
- Note Book order should be completed by the end of September;
- Proper EPF of the teachers and other employees should be followed;
- All the schools are to follow proper Pay Scale for the staff;
- Personnel Policy of school education should be made known to teachers;
- Appointment of teachers should be done with proper procedures.

## North East Regional CRI Assembly

The 43<sup>rd</sup> North East Regional CRI Assembly was held from 24<sup>th</sup> - 26<sup>th</sup> August 2024 in North East Diocesan Social Service Society (NEDSSS) in Kharguli, Guwahati with the theme "Formation and mission of the religious in North East India: Challenges and Concerns." Around 80 major superiors, provincials and heads of different religious congregations in the North East participated for this three day assembly. Fr. KJ Abraham CSC and Sr. Esther Kaini SCCG presented insightful and informative papers, which was followed by dynamic and fruitful discussions on various concerns like vocational recruitment and discernment of religious vocation, formation of young religious and spiritual accompaniment. On the last day the assembly elected the new executive members of NE regional CRI, and Sr. Mabel Gothorp FMA Provincial of Guwahati was unanimously elected as the new President.

## North East India Regional Pastoral Conference

North East India Regional Pastoral Conference was held from 26<sup>th</sup> - 29<sup>th</sup> August 2024 in North East Diocesan Social Service Society in Kharguli, Guwahati with the theme "Evangelization in North East by Revisiting Ecclesia in Asia." All the bishops of North

East India, major superiors, vicar generals, provincials, rectors of major seminaries, and secretaries of various commissions of North East Bishops' Council were present for the conference. Fr. Kuriakose, professor of Theology, Oriens Theological College gave the keynote address on the theme of Evangelization in NE by revisiting Ecclesia in Asia, the Exhortation of Pope John Paul-II which marks its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year. Other resource persons were Fr. Stanislaus, Rector of Oriens Theological College and Mr. Manoj, from Jesus Youth group who gave an inspiring talk on the evangelization in view of the year 2033. Panel discussions were held as some lay people and priests from different dioceses shared their pastoral experiences. At the end, the conference made some deliberations on the need to train and involve more lay people in the field of evangelization, a systematic faith formation (catechism) of our faithful, promotion of ecumenical and inter-religious dialogue, reaching out to more people in different regions through our works of evangelization etc.

### **Project for Reduction of Multidimensional Poverty in South Asia**

The project "With the Youth, to Eradicate Poverty" - Reduction of Multidimensional Poverty in South Asia was launched by Fr Martoglio Stefano, the Vicar of Rector Major, on 05<sup>th</sup> August 2024, at Tanjavur (INT) in the presence of the Regional and the Provincials of South Asia Region. It is designed as a comprehensive animation and formation initiative for the SDBs of the South Asia Region, in all sectors of their work, inspiring a shift in the approach to serving the poor. This shift involves acceptance and enthusiasm among SDBs of the region to let established standards and benchmarks to verify their institutions and interventions and evaluate the outcomes of their endeavours. Adequate systems and processes, sufficient capacity, and sustained enthusiasm among SDBs of the Region to evaluate their work through objectively verified outcomes would be a significant measure of success. This change of approach and the evaluation criteria are together expected to stimulate further creativity among the SDBs in addressing the needs of the poor.

In our province Fr. James Thyрниang, the Executive Director of BIDS and PDO will be the Director of this project. He will animate the confreres on the implementation of this project from this year. I exhort all the confreres to collaborate with him for this commendable project for the poor.

### **South Asian Formation Commission Meeting**

The South Asia Formation Commission (SAFC) held its annual meeting at Don Bosco Provincial House in Kolkata from 31<sup>st</sup> July to 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2024. 18 formation delegates from 12 provinces came together to discuss formidable challenges and processes of formation, striving to strengthen the Salesian foundation.

The meeting commenced with a Eucharistic celebration by Fr. John Parankimalil, the SPCSA Secretary. The event saw the presence of Fr. Jose Kuttianimattathil and Raymond Callo from the formation department in Rome, along with Fr. John Zosiama, Provincial delegate for SA Formation and Fr. Banzelao Teixeira, the South Asia Formation Delegate.



This annual meeting served as a vital platform for the Salesians of South Asia to engage in meaningful dialogue, fostering growth and addressing the challenges within their formation processes. It was concluded on 3rd August with the deliberations and action plans for Formation in South Asia with the emphasis on spiritual accompaniment of young confreres, psycho-sexual integration for celibate life, ongoing formation programmes for quinquennium, new Rectors, senior Confreres, Deacons course, etc. Our province was represented by Fr Jeewan Lakra, the Vice Provincial and Formation Delegate.

## Upcoming Events

**South Asia Missionary Course** will be held from 7<sup>th</sup> Sept. to 8<sup>th</sup> Oct 2024 in Provincial House, Shillong. There will be 29 participants from different provinces of South Asia and from members of the Salesian Family. We warmly welcome them to our province and we wish them all the best especially to Fr. Joseph Palamthattel (Sunny) SA Delegate for Missionary Animation and the coordinator of this course.

Let me also remind you about the important **upcoming events** of our province. I would request those concerned to schedule their programme accordingly and plan their travel in advance. Fr. Jeewan Lakra, the Vice Provincial, will send you reminders with detailed information of the meetings/events.

**15<sup>th</sup> -18<sup>th</sup> September 2024 - Junior Priests' Meet in Don Bosco, Silchar**

**2<sup>nd</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> October 2024 - Brothers' Retreat in Khetri Retreat Centre**

**3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> October 2024 - PDO Meeting in Don Bosco, Silchar**

**14<sup>th</sup> - 16<sup>th</sup> October 2024 - Rectors' & Parish Priests' Meeting in Provincial House**

**16<sup>th</sup> October 2024 - Confreres' Jubilee & Provincial Com. Day in Nongthymmai**

## Birthdays of Confreres

We express our prayerful wishes to all our confreres who celebrate their birthday this month. We assure them of our prayers; may God bless them and their ministry.

Dates	Names	Dates	Names
03	Fr. James Thyрниang	17	Cl. Soniverius Sad
	Cl. Silbanus Sohtun		Cl. Albert Swer
05	Fr. Davis Aricatt	19	Fr. John Kenny Nongrum
	Fr. John Mathew	20	Cl. David Thongnibah
06	Fr. Saji Stephen	21	Cl. Pyntngenglang Tynsong
	Fr. Sylvanus Lyngdoh	22	Fr. Joseph Nelson
07	Fr. James Mani	23	Cl. Firstbornson Jyrwa
	Fr. Donborlang Kurbah	26	Fr. Jose Vettath (VT)
	Cl. Littlestar ĩawphñiaw		Fr. Suman Kiro
09	Fr. Jose Varickasseril	28	Fr. Thomas Edamattathu (Kanala)
	Br. Bosco Ekka	30	Fr. Joby Manjakattil
10	Cl. Samuel Salahe		Cl. Sñiawshngaiñ Papang
14	Fr. James Perunneparambil		Cl. Gaisuakpou Titus Gonmei

## Salesian Feasts

On 22<sup>nd</sup> September, we commemorate the memorial of Bl. Joseph and Henry Saiz Aparicio, priests and companions, who were among the 498 Spanish martyrs beatified on 28<sup>th</sup> October 2007.

## Death Anniversary of INS Confreres

17<sup>th</sup> September is the sixth death anniversary of Fr. Thomas Thekkekandom (TT). Let us remember him in our prayers especially during the holy Eucharist. May the Lord grant him eternal rest.

## Condolences

We express our heartfelt condolences to:

- Fr. Savio Silveira, the Provincial of Mumbai and all the confreres at the passing away of **Rev. Fr. John Samala (86)** on 12<sup>th</sup> August 2024.
- Fr. Davis Maniparamben, the Provincial of New Delhi and all the confreres at the passing away of **Rev. Fr. Joseph Kezhakkekara (87)** on 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2024.
- Fr. George Palamattathil at the demise of his beloved elder brother, **Mr. Joseph Palamattathil (81)** on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2024.
- Fr. Don Bosco Lourdusamy, the Provincial of Chennai and all the confreres at the passing away of **Rev. Fr. Raphael Appadan (84)** on 4<sup>th</sup> September 2024.

## Conclusion

In the dream at the age of nine, the mysterious Person entrusted Johnny Bosco to Mother Mary to be his *Teacher* in his mission for the young. She guided, taught, protected and interceded for Don Bosco all through his life and mission. Likewise she is still and will always remain our Mother and Teacher in our life and mission as Salesians.

Let us celebrate her birthday on 8<sup>th</sup> September with filial affection and gratitude. May she continue to be our mother, teacher, guide and role model.

May God bless you all.

Yours affectionately in Don Bosco,



Fr. John Zosiama SDB  
INS Provincial

