

PROVINCIAL CIRCULAR



Salesian Province of Hyderabad

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My Dear Confreres,

Warm greetings and good wishes from Don Bosco Provincial House, Hyderabad.

"Isn't the Eucharist *always* a miracle?"

A time of grace is passing by. The Year of the Eucharist (October 2004-October 2005) is a period of *Kairos*, a divinely ordained singular time of blessings and transformation. The contemplation and reflection on the Eucharistic mystery will certainly help us to master this mystery and become a Eucharist for the young people.

On a solemn feast day, probably the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin, there were nearly 600 boys participating in the Eucharistic celebration with Don Bosco at the oratory in 1848. Due to the last moment hustle and bustle, Joseph Buzzetti, the sexton had left the ciborium in the sacristy itself. At the time of the Communion rite, Don Bosco opened the ciborium from the tabernacle and a pall of gloom descended on his face. The altar boys observed his distressing look, and raising of the eyes above with whisper of a prayer. The rows and rows of boys advanced and received the communion! At the end of it all, there were as many Sacred Hosts left over as when he had started the distribution. The news of the multiplication of the Sacred Hosts was flashed. The boys mobbed him, voicing "Miracle! Miracle! Don Bosco is a Saint! Don Bosco probed "Are you Sure? When you think of it, boys, isn't the Eucharist always a miracle?" In fact among the numerous types of miracles recorded in the gospel, the Eucharist is the greatest of the nature-miracles of Jesus. Hence Our zealous Pastor and Patron St. Francis de Sales adds, "Why shall He who made all things out of nothing, not make the body of Christ out of bread?" (BM. 3, 312).

In the eyes of Don Bosco the Breaking of Bread is a means to achieve holiness of life. The sanctification offered by the Eucharist should have us lined up at every dawn for the Food that can transform us *from the inside* so that we can go forth *to the outside*, doing the will of God, and bringing sanctification to the spectrum of the youth world. Hence the celebration of the Paschal Mystery that can build us in Christ into a fraternal communion and renew our apostolic commitment (Const. 88) is at the heart of the Salesian holiness, proposed by our father and founder St. John Bosco.

For Don Bosco a boy was all-set for the First Communion if he understood the difference between the bread with a little "b" and the Bread with a big "B". The Good Shepherd of Don Bosco is present with us not as a supernova in the evening sky or a

king in the palace, but as a poor Carpenter disguised, to paraphrase Mother Teresa, in the distressing disguise of a Bread.

Moreover, the Eucharist provides a launching pad for fraternal fellowship among us. Communion feeds community. For there to be a true community, true fraternity, there must be a common blood. The Christian pedigree commences with baptism, the indelible attribute of our family tree. Subsequently the Eucharistic celebration sustains that kinship and fellowship. In the Eucharist we truly become blood brothers. It is a brotherhood sealed by the common blood of our Brother, Christ. In the biological world, it is known that we are what we eat and drink. And Christ confirms this biological and theological meeting in the Eucharist when He says, "Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them" (Jn. 6:56). This is communion *par excellence* towards which we ought to strive.

The New Leaders of Communities

We have three new Leaders of communities at Chandur, Ravulapalem and Sultanbagh. I congratulate the new Leaders Fr. Garlapati Kishore, Fr. Pandicherry Joseph and Fr. K.K. Joseph for their generosity in shouldering the responsibility of animation, and offer them my prayers and constant support in making effective the mission of Don Bosco in our local settings.

Marian Month

The month of July brings to our mind the figure of Don Bosco's Madonna, "the model of prayer and pastoral love, and the teacher of wisdom and guide of our family". A month-long, devotional practices begin on the Feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel on Saturday 16 July 2005. During this month let us consciously strengthen our devotion to Mary Help of Christians in each one of us and in our wards. I invite the Leaders of Communities to make necessary arrangements to honour Mother Mary in a very tender and filial way in all our Communities, encouraging "a more convinced and personal imitation" (Const. 92).

Programme of Animation for Life of Communion

In accordance with the recommendation made by Rev. Fr. Joaquim D'souza at the conclusion of the Extraordinary visitation, a programme of animation is organised on the theme of fraternal communion in the province. Fr. Godfrey D'Sa, Director of Profulta, Mumbai, will be the animator of the programme. It will be held in the month of July as indicated in the annual Calendar. Fr. Vice Provincial has already sent a circular with regard to this programme and list of participants. There is a change in the list of participants due the requirement expressed by the animator to reduce the number of participants in each group to fifteen. I am enclosing the changed list of participants. All are expected to participate in this animation programme. Kindly inform me personally if for some unavoidable reason you are unable to attend this programme of animation. A similar programme will be organised at a later occasion for those who have no opportunity to participate this time.

Meeting of Administrators and Discussion on Minimum Wages

During the meeting of the Administrators of the Province on 7-8 July, it was noticed that the wages in the province are still below the minimum wages payable to an employee in Andhra Pradesh. Hence it was proposed that the increase in wages be staggered so that by 2008 the wages in our communities will be within the minimum wage limits. It was proposed also that the Communities of the Province be grouped under three zones and wages to be calculated accordingly. May I request the Leaders of the communities to dialogue with the administrators and the House Council and start implementing these proposals at the earliest. When the Leaders of the Communities and Administrators meet in November, we can further clarify this issue. I am enclosing a detailed sheet on this.

English Medium School at Punganur

The Provincial Council, in response to the local challenges at Marlapalli and Punganur, has decided to expand the scope of Don Bosco Nav Jeevan, Punganur by initiating an English medium section in the school besides the regular activities of the Parish, Telugu medium school and hostel. It was officially inaugurated on Saturday 24, June 2005 with over hundred students. The initiative is being spearheaded by Fr. Vettathukandathil Philip, the Principal.

The Mission animation Retreat

The first retreat, as part of the centenary celebrations of the Salesian presence in India, was held at Don Bosco Provincial house from June 27 to July 2, 2005. The retreat was animated by Fr. P.V. Joseph and Fr. C.M. Paul. Along with all the participants of the retreat, we are grateful to them for their valuable efforts and invoke God's blessings on all their endeavours.

Good Wishes

Fr. Mallavarapu Rayanna will be leaving to Rome on the 20th August to join the course of *Pedagogy of Formation Coruse* at Salesian Pontifical University. We wish him a happy stay and a enriching time of study. Bro. Benny Joseph and Bro. Yandava Kalyan Kumar will be leaving in the third week of August to Italy to extend our service in the youth ministry of the Ligure - Toscana province. Let us accompany these confreres with our prayerful wishes.

Welcome back

My hearty welcome to Fr. Jose Therampil who has returned to the province after participating in a counselling programme at Bangalore. I am thankful to him for accepting to be a staff member of the novitiate community. He personally expressed his sentiments of gratitude to all in the province for the prayers and support.

Condolences

We deeply regret at the sudden passing away of Mr. Valiyakattel Mathew (78), and offer our condolences and prayers to Fr. Benny Mathew and to his dear and near ones at this moment of sorrow and pain.

Conclusion

Once again at the conclusion of this letter I would like to focus on the year of the Eucharist. As we approach the final phase of the Eucharistic year, let us intensify our efforts to become incarnations of the Eucharistic Lord to promote a daily festive Eucharistic celebration in a living liturgy and frequent encounters with Christ. Let us draw from the Eucharist energy and endurance for our work with the young (Const. 88). Let us reinforce the vital role of the Eucharist in our life following our founder, Don Bosco, with special programme during these last months of the year of the Eucharist.

Fraternally in Christ Jesus,

Fr. Maddhichetty Noel SDB
Provincial