

PROVINCIAL CIRCULAR

Salesian Province of Mary Help of Christians, Guwahati, Assam, India

SM -03 / 2024

1 August 2024

Dear Confreres,

Greetings from Don Bosco Provincial House, Guwahati!

We celebrate a twin feasts on 15 August, namely the Assumption of our Blessed mother and the Independence of our nation.

The Feast of the Assumption celebrated on 15 August, is a day of profound joy for the Catholic Church. It commemorates the belief that Mary, the mother of Jesus, was taken up body and soul into heavenly glory at the end of her earthly life.

The Assumption affirms the dignity of the human body, demonstrating that there is a place for our physical selves in the spiritual realm. It also presents Mary as a maternal figure in heaven, offering comfort and hope to believers. The Church sees the Assumption as a natural extension of Mary's unique role in salvation history, beginning with her Immaculate Conception and continuing through her life as the Mother of God.

Mary's Magnificat, her song of praise recorded in St Luke, is seen as a portrait of her soul and personality. It highlights two key aspects of her character: her desire for God to be magnified in the world and her life and her deep connection to God's word. These qualities make Mary a model of faith and humility for all believers.

The dogma of the Assumption, while not explicitly mentioned in Scripture, is supported by a long tradition of belief and practice in the Church. Early references to this belief date back to the second and third centuries, and a rich tradition of iconography depicts Mary entering Heaven bodily. The Church sees scriptural support for the Assumption in passages that emphasize Mary's perfect union with Jesus' destiny as the Saviour.

The timing of the dogma's formal definition in 1950 by Pope Pius XII, coming in the wake of World War II and at the onset of the Cold War, can be seen as a spiritual affirmation of hope and the ultimate triumph of good over evil. It offers a powerful counter-narrative to the materialistic and often hopeless worldviews that gained prominence in the 20th century.

15 August also marks India's Independence Day, commemorating the nation's liberation from British colonial rule in 1947. This event was the culmination of a long and often difficult struggle for freedom, led by figures such as Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru.

The path to independence was complex, involving strategies of non-violent resistance, civil disobedience, and negotiations with the British government. While independence brought joy and pride to millions, it was also accompanied by the painful partition of the subcontinent into India and Pakistan, leading to one of the largest mass migrations in human history and tragic communal violence.

In the decades since independence, India has emerged as a significant player on the world stage. The country has produced leaders who have made their mark in global politics and whose vision encompasses every sphere of citizens' lives. The nation takes pride in its rich diversity - cultural, geographical, and natural - from the Himalayas to its rivers, flora and fauna, agricultural lands, and mineral resources.

However, modern India also faces numerous challenges. These include threats to its unity in diversity, concerns about media independence, economic pressures on the poor, ongoing border issues, disparities in education access, high unemployment rates, environmental degradation, and social issues such as human trafficking and corruption.

As we reflect on India's journey since independence, we are called to be active participants in addressing these challenges. In the spirit of nation-builders like Dr Ambedkar, who gave India its Constitution, we must work towards building a society that upholds the ideals of freedom, justice, and equality for all.

Both these events represent significant moments of transformation and hope. They remind us of the diverse ways in which human history unfolds, encompassing both spiritual and political dimensions. Both events speak to the human quest for dignity, freedom, and transcendence.

As we commemorate these events, we are invited to reflect on our role in building a better world. Whether through spiritual devotion inspired by Mary's example or through active citizenship in the tradition of India's freedom fighters, we are called to contribute to the ongoing story of human progress and liberation.

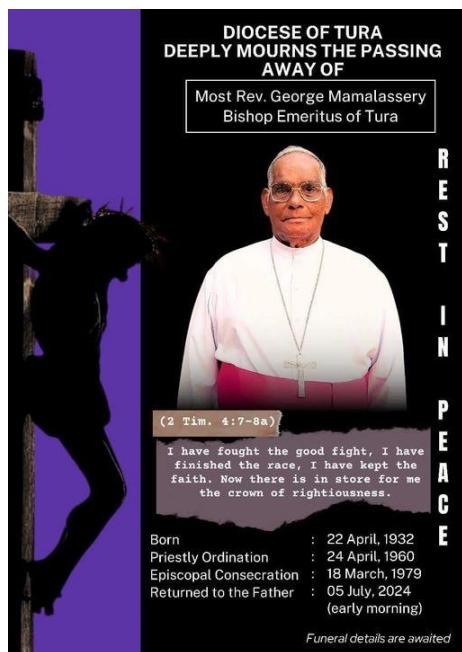
In the words of Rabindranath Tagore, we pray, "Into that heaven of freedom, my father, let my country awake." This sentiment echoes both the spiritual elevation celebrated in the Assumption and the aspirations of a free India, uniting our earthly struggles with our highest ideals.

REMEMBERING THE LEGACY OF BISHOP GEORGE MAMALASSERY

As the Church in Garo Hills and Northeast India mourn the death of Bishop George Mamalassery, I wish to pay homage to his memory on behalf of all our confreres and institutions. He has left behind a legacy of dedicated service to the people of Garo Hills as a visionary leader, committed pastor, a priest and bishop. Sixty-four years of his life spent for the people of Garo Hills is unparalleled and has left an indelible imprint on the church and society.



Bishop Mamalassery took forward the seed of faith planted in Garo Hills by the two great Salesian pioneers, Fr A. Pianazzi and L.Rocca in 1933. As a priest and later as the first bishop of Tura, Bishop Mamalassery showed great appreciation for the pioneering work of the Salesian missionaries.



He fostered a spirit of communion and friendship, provided support and encouragement for our confreres—young and old, our centres and communities. As a good shepherd of his flock, Bishop Mamalassery encouraged every good pastoral initiative and provided unstinted support. The remarkable growth of the Church in Garo Hills is the fruit of such a vision rooted in a pastoral leadership characterised by simplicity, hard work, zeal and pastoral charity.

As we join the pastors and faithful of Garo Hills who mourn the death of their beloved ‘Bishop Mama’ we shall continue to pray that the Gracious Lord reward him for his labours and fidelity. Bishop George

Mamalassery’s episcopal motto was “Thy Kingdom Come.” (Mt. 6:10). As we thank the Lord for the gift of this great Pastor to the Church in Northeast India, we pray that his legacy and his motto may inspire and strengthen us to devote ourselves wholeheartedly for Christ and his kingdom.



NEWS FROM THE PROVINCE

SEVEN ING PROVINCE DEACONS ORDAINED AT SACRED HEART THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE, MAWLAI

In a solemn and joyous ceremony, seven deacons from the Salesian Province of Guwahati (ING) were ordained on July 1, 2024, at the Sacred Heart Theological College, Mawlai. The ordination was part of a larger ceremony in which Bishop Joseph Aind, SDB, Bishop Emeritus of Dibrugarh, conferred the ministry upon a total of twenty deacons during the Holy Mass held at the Shrine



of the Sacred Heart in Mawlai.

SCOUT CAMP AT DON BOSCO SCHOOL, PANBAZAR



A Scout Camp was held at Don Bosco School, Panbazar from 01-06 July 2024. Fr Solomon Denis and Fr Saju Kariyil and others successfully organized the Scout Camp for the Don Bosco Scout District.

A JOURNEY OF FAITH AND SERVICE: EMBRACING THE CALL TO DIACONATE

On the evening of July 1, 2024, an enriching program titled “A Journey of Faith and Service: Embracing the Call to Diaconate” was held in the Mario Hall of Don Bosco Provincial House to inspire and prepare deacons and brothers before their Diaconate Ministry and Community Experiences.

The event commenced at 6:00 PM with a prayer and reading from the Holy Bible, setting a solemn tone for the evening. Fr. Charles Deepen Lakra, SDB, Rector, warmly welcomed the attendees, emphasizing the importance of this significant stage in their spiritual journey.



The animation session led by Fr. Bivan Rodrigues Mukhim, SDB, Vice Provincial, provided a dynamic and engaging experience for the deacons and brothers. His insightful presentation offered practical guidance and spiritual insights, equipping them for their upcoming ministries. The program concluded with a heartfelt prayer, followed by adoration in the chapel, allowing participants to reflect and seek divine strength for their forthcoming endeavors.

MEETING OF COMMISSIONS, DIMENSIONS, SECTOR HEADS, AND COORDINATORS HELD AT MARIO HALL.

The Commissions, Dimensions, Sector Heads, and Coordinators Meeting took place on July 5, 2024, at Mario Hall, commencing at 10:30 AM. The gathering began with a solemn prayer led by Fr. Joy Kachappilly, Rector of Assam Don Bosco University (ADB), Azara. Following the prayer, members observed a minute of silence in respect and remembrance of the Late Bishop George Mamalasserry, Bishop Emeritus of Tura, who passed away earlier that morning.



Rev. Fr. Sebastian Mathew, Provincial, warmly welcomed the commission heads and coordinators, emphasizing the importance of making the commissions and various sectors functional at the Province Level. In his address, he underscored the need to advance the different sectors, aligning with the requirements set by the Don Bosco Youth Animation South Asia (DBYA-SA).

FIRST ANNUAL SPIRITUAL RETREAT 2024

On the evening of July 8, 2024, the first ING retreat of the year commenced, drawing together 36 confreres, comprising 28 priests, 2 brothers, and 6 clerics for a period of spiritual reflection and renewal. The retreat was animated by Rev. Fr. George Palamattathil SDB, Director of Siloam, and Rev. Fr. Devasia Vazhayil SDB at Siloam, Umiam.



HAFLONG PARISH RETREAT BRINGS SPIRITUAL RENEWAL



provided a wonderful opportunity for attendees to deepen their faith, reflect on their spiritual journeys, and renew their commitments to their faith and community. Through prayer, reflection, and communal activities, participants left feeling spiritually revitalized and more connected to their parish community.

Haflong Parish hosted a transformative three-day retreat from Friday, July 12 to Sunday, July 14 2024 in Parish Hall. The event saw a significant turnout, with many parishioners participating in the retreat and renewal program. The retreat

TALLY PROGRAM FOR PRIESTS & RELIGIOUS CONCLUDES WITH SOLEMN GRADUATION.

A Tally Training Course for priests and religious concluded successfully on July 15, 2024, at Don Bosco Institute, Kharghuli. This one-week program provided valuable training and skills development for the participants was inaugurated on 08 July 2024. The event culminated with a solemn graduation ceremony, marking the successful completion of the program. Various tribal dances were performed by the students of Don Bosco Institute, Kharghuli.



SALESIAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION CELEBRATES SILVER JUBILEE WITH TRAINING PROGRAMME

As part of its Silver Jubilee Celebrations, the Salesian Psychological Association (SPA), South Asia, has launched a series of multi-city seminars and workshops across the country.

Among these initiatives, SPA organized a specialized Training Programme titled “Walking joyfully with the Lord: A 4-day Training Programme in Psychosexual Integration for Celibate Maturity” at Don Bosco Institute, Kharghuli, scheduled from July 16 to 19, 2024. From Province Fr George William, Fr Silverius Amsong, Fr Anmol Soreng, Dn. Francis Xavier Ming and Dn. Cherak Sangma attend the programme.



FAITH FEST 2024: “HELLO... JESUS!!!” AT DBI, GUWAHATI



The Faith Fest 2024, with the theme “Hello... Jesus!!!”, was organized by SYM-GHY in collaboration with NERYC. It began on a high note on 18 July morning. The festival of faith and catechesis ended with a solemn Holy Mass July 21. The inaugural Holy Mass on 18 July was presided over by His Grace John Moolachira DD, the Archbishop of Guwahati.

The opening ceremony saw the presence of several distinguished guests, including Fr. John Barman MSFS, Director of NERYC, and Fr. Cletus Pattamkulam SDB, Director of DBI. Numerous priests, sisters, and lay leaders also attended the event, adding to its significance.

The Faith Fest 2024 attracted 430 young participants, who attend the five-day program. The event was a transformative experience for all involved, offering a variety of spiritual activities, workshops, and community-building exercises aimed at deepening their faith and connection with Jesus.



REV FR. SEBASTIAN KURICHEAL MEETS MAJOR RECTOR OF SALESIANS

On July 17, Rev Fr Sebastian Kuricheal, Provincial ING, had a significant meeting with Cardinal Ángel Fernández Artíme, the Major Rector of the Salesians of Don Bosco.

The special meeting took place with the presence of notable Salesian figures, including Fr John Zosiama, Provincial of Shillong, and Fr. Sunil Barla, the newly appointed Rector of Sacred Heart Theological College, Shillong.



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The meeting was further enriched by the attendance of Fr Ivo Coelho, General Counselor for Formation, and Fr Biju Michael, Counselor for the South Asia Region.

PROVINCE SOCIAL COMMUNICATION COMMISSION MEETING HELD

A meeting of the Social Communication Commission of the Province was convened on the morning of July 20, 2024 in the Board, to deliberate on various responsibilities, including the management of the province's website, the NEWSLINE newsletter, and the training of young confreres in social media usage.



The meeting was animated by Rev. Fr. Joy Kachapilly, the coordinator of the Social Communication Commission. All members of the commission were in attendance, ensuring a comprehensive discussion on enhancing the province's communication channels and digital presence.

SECOND ANNUAL SPIRITUAL RETREAT

The second annual spiritual retreat began on the evening of 21 July 2024, with a turnout of 50



confreres, including 47 priests and 3 brothers. This retreat was preached by Fr. Devasia Vazhayil SDB, assisted by Bro. Sebastian E.A., a lay preacher. The retreat concluded on the morning of 27th July 2024 with the Holy Mass presided over by Rev Fr Sebastian Kuricheal, Provincial.

SUMMER CAMP FOR SNEHALAYA CHILDREN

With the theme Embracing Abundance of Life, a Special Summer Camp was held for the children of Snehalaya Homes from 21st to 25th July 2024 at Umswai.



THE SALESIAN RECTOR MEET AT DBRC, BANGALORE

Fr Pojat Marak and Fr Jeremias Tirkey are attending the ongoing formation course starting from 23 July and end on 07 August 2024 at DBRC, Bangalore. This course entitled "The Salesian Rector" is meant for those who are going to take up or recently taken up leadership as Rectors/Leaders in our Salesian communities.



HOLIDAY PACKAGE PROGRAM AT DBSTI TEZPUR CONCLUDES

A month long holiday package program at Don Bosco School of Technical Institute (DBSTI), Tezpur, Assam concluded with solemn graduation ceremony on 30 July 2024. The program was so designed to provided an opportunity for educational and recreational activities for 35 boys and girls. Activities included guitar lessons, computer courses in hardware and Desktop Publishing (DTP), spoken English, teacher training, Tally, and a Scout and Guide activities, Personality Development Programmes, march past, first aid, and disaster management etc. Nearly 10 teachers and C1 John Ngouni contributed to its success. The program concluded with a ceremony attended by Fr. Nirgen Rabha, youth director of Tezpur Diocese, who praised the participants and encouraged their future efforts. Fr. Paul Rabha gave the welcome address, and participants shared positive memories, highlighting cultural programs and increased confidence. The holiday package was a resounding success, thanks to the enthusiasm and contributions of all involved.



APPOINTMENTS

- Fr Siby John Vattappara is appointed as the Parish Priest of Garobadha.

- Fr Benny Mushhary, Bro Sunil Kerketta and Fr Vinod Lugun will reside at Agricultural Training centre, Jorapara and will be part of Bosco Reach Out Community.

INFORMATION ON IMPORTANT UPCOMING EVENTS

- Installation of the New Provincial of Dimapur Province on 3 August 2024.
- Principal's Meeting on 10 August 2024 at Don Bosco Provincial House, Guwahati.
- Administrators' Meeting on 17 August 2024 at Don Bosco Provincial House, Guwahati.
- Installation of the New Provincial of FMA Guwahati Province on 10 August 2024.

HEALTH UPDATE OF FR BENNY ALEX

Fr Benny is at present undergoing dialysis twice in a week in his hometown hospital, Kerala. Meanwhile procedures for his kidney transplant is being done in Lisie Hospital, Ernakulam. His younger brother Sabu (51 years old) is ready to donate one his kidneys for him. Sabu is a married man with two children. Most of the medical tests on him are over. So far everything is matching with Fr Benny. Now, they have to prepare some legal compliance (& consent papers) documents through a Notary and submit to the Medical Council for their approval. It will take at least a month's time for the transplant operation to take place. Let us continue for the successful operation and for the swift recovery of both of them.

CONDOLENCES

Our sincere condolences and assurance of prayers to;

- Fr Benny Mushahary and his dear ones who lost his elder brother Cleophas Mushahary on 18 July 2024.
- Fr Santiagu Thomas and to all the confreres of Hyderabad Province on the passing away of Rev Fr James Kudiyirippil SDB on 5 July 2024 at Karunapuram, Warangal.
- Fr Don Bosco Lourdusamy and to all the confreres of Chennai at the sad demise of Rev John Joseph Kuruvachira on 30 July 2024 at SIGA, Chennai.
- Sr Alphonsa Kurisingal FMA and to all the FMA sisters of Guwahati Province at the sad demise of Rev Sr Jiranda Maria Barreto FMA at Auxilium Provincial House, Christian Basti, Guwahati on 20 July 2024.
- Sr Lisa Chetri MSMHC and to all the sisters of MSMHC Guwahati Province at the passing away of Sr Grace Sebastian MSMHC on Apollo Excel Care Hospital, Guwahati on 24 July 2024.
- Sr Asha Paul MSMHC and to all the MSMHC sisters of Tezpur Province at the loss of Sr Virginia Kujur at Jyoti Bhavan, Tezpur on 24 July 2024.

May our blessed Mother Mary, whom we honour everyday continue to assist us in our journey of faith and help us to be faithful to our commitment,

Yours sincerely in Don Bosco,



Fr. Sebastian Mathew SDB
Provincial



AUGUST 2024

Date	Day	Birthday
1	Thursday	Cl. Junas Bara
2	Friday	Cl. Arpan Tigga
4	Sunday	Fr. Jose Perunneparambil (PJ)
8	Thursday	Fr. Jose Palely (IND)
8	Thursday	Cl. Santrius Ekka
10	Saturday	Br. Benjamin Rosant Indwar
13	Tuesday	Fr. Francis Basumatary
13	Tuesday	Fr. Hopna Tudu
13	Tuesday	Cl. Jeevan Chandra Kerketta
13	Tuesday	Cl. Rohit Kujur
13	Tuesday	Cl. Marshilong Shembalang Lyngdoh
14	Wednesday	Fr. Vincent Xalxo
15	Thursday	Fr. Peter Pazhayamkottil (PA)
15	Thursday	Cl. Sunit Soren
17	Saturday	Fr. Sachin Kujur
17	Saturday	Fr. Bromio Ch. Marak
18	Sunday	Cl. Albinush Induar
21	Wednesday	Cl. Champramary Profil
21	Wednesday	Fr. Thomas Kunnappillil (KJ)
21	Wednesday	Card. Ángel Fernández Artíme
21	Wednesday	Fr. Francis Xavier Kujur
23	Friday	Br. Sanjit Topno
25	Sunday	Fr. Louis Martin Bhengra
26	Monday	Dn. Jerbasius Xalxo
28	Wednesday	Fr. Charles Sangma
28	Wednesday	Br. Nirmal Ekka

AUGUST – 2024

DATE	DAY	PROVINCIAL'S PROGRAMME
1	Thursday	Jorapara > Mendal
2	Friday	Dimapur
3	Saturday	Installation of New Provincial, Dimapur > Guwahati
4	Sunday	Trichy
5	Monday	SPCSA Meeting - Trichy
6	Tuesday	SPCSA Meeting - Trichy
7	Wednesday	SPCSA Meeting - Trichy
8	Thursday	Guwahati
9	Friday	GB Meeting B.ed College, Tura
10	Saturday	Principals' Meetings, DBPH, FMA New Provincial Installation, Ghy
11	Sunday	Bhooteachang
12	Monday	Dimapur
13	Tuesday	Curatorium Meeting, Salesian College, Dimapur
14	Wednesday	Zubza, Novitiate
15	Thursday	Tezpur
16	Friday	Sirajuli > Guwahati
17	Saturday	Administrators' Meeting, DBPH
18	Sunday	Haflong
19	Monday	Haflong
20	Tuesday	Harangajao
21	Wednesday	Diphu
22	Thursday	Sojong
23	Friday	Guwahati
24	Saturday	CRI – Meeting
25	Sunday	CRI – Meeting
26	Monday	Pastoral Council
27	Tuesday	Pastoral Council
28	Wednesday	Pastoral Council
29	Thursday	Guwahati
30	Friday	Guwahati
31	Saturday	Provincial Council Meeting

AUGUST – 2024

DATE	DAY	VICE PROVINCIAL'S PROGRAMME	ECONOMER'S PROGRAMME
1	Thursday	SAFC Meeting, Kolkata	Jorapara & Mendal
2	Friday	SAFC Meeting, Kolkata	Guwahati
3	Saturday	SAFC Meeting, Kolkata	Guwahati
4	Sunday	Guwahati	Guwahati
5	Monday	Damra	Guwahati
6	Tuesday	St. Ann's College, Balagaon>Dotma	Guwahati
7	Wednesday	St. Ann's College, Balagaon>Ghy	Shallang
8	Thursday	Guwahati	Rongjeng
9	Friday	Guwahati	Damra
10	Saturday	Shillong	Guwahati
11	Sunday	Guwahati>Bosco Mount	Bhooteachang
12	Monday	DBCL, Tura> Guwahati	Guwahati
13	Tuesday	Guwahati	Bengtol
14	Wednesday	Guwahati	Dotma & Ramphabil
15	Thursday	Barpeta Road > Doomni	Guwahati
16	Friday	Guwahati	Guwahati
17	Saturday	Guwahati – SYM Meeting	Administrators' Meeting, DBPH
18	Sunday	Guwahati	Halflong
19	Monday	Guwahati	Halflong
20	Tuesday	Guwahati	Harangajao
21	Wednesday	Guwahati	Diphu
22	Thursday	Guwahati	Sojong
23	Friday	Diphu	Guwahati
24	Saturday	Satgaon > Sojong	Guwahati
25	Sunday	Amkachi > Umswai	Guwahati
26	Monday	Guwahati	Rongkhon Parish & Bosco Mount
27	Tuesday	Guwahati	Mendal
28	Wednesday	Guwahati	Gojapara
29	Thursday	Guwahati	Boko
30	Friday	Guwahati	Guwahati
31	Saturday	Guwahati – Council Meeting	Provincial Council Meeting