



# PROVINCIAL CIRCULAR INDIA MUMBAI PROVINCE (INM)



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INM/PC/I88/2023

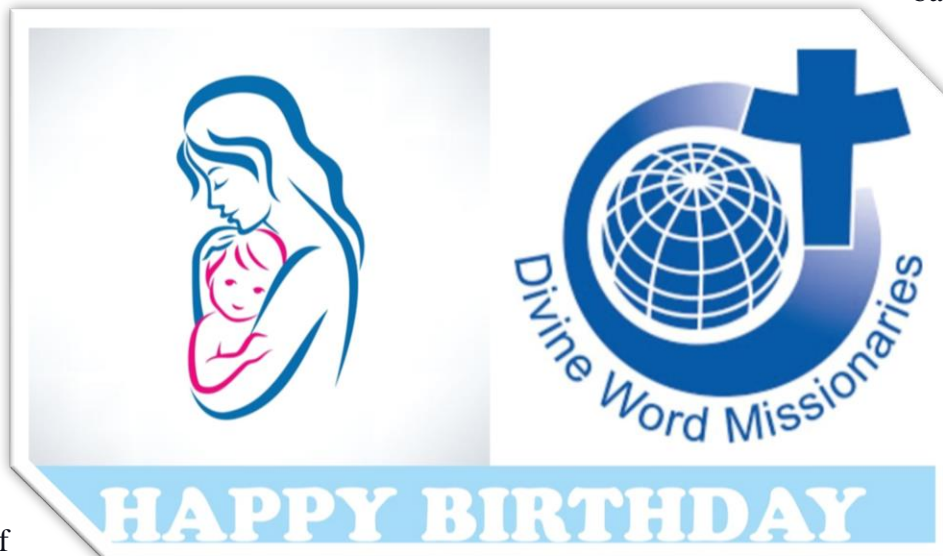
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September 2023

## A CONSEQUENTIAL BIRTHDAY

Birthdays are much more than just a date on the calendar. They are a celebration of us — our growth, our experiences, and our existence. It's New Year's Day in our personal life. It's a time when loved ones express their affection, and we experience the joy and tradition that comes with it. Plus, it's the perfect time to look

back, reflect, and forward. So, birthday rolls let's to enjoy it, our life, and exciting There are a why our are It could be, life's celebrating life, having



way when our around, remember celebrate embrace the year ahead! few reasons birthdays significant. making journey, another year of



time to reflect and loved and valued, ones close, keeping telling personal and joyful pause, blessings, strength and hope, growing up, taking new roles etc. Birthdays are not just markers of age; they are milestones of endurance, resilience, and triumph. They serve as annual reminders of the challenges we've overcome and the strength we've garnered over the years.

We have just celebrated two important birthdays on September 08. One is the birth of Blessed Mother Mary and the second is the birth of our Society of the Divine Word. As in our personal lives, birthday plays a pivotal significance; the birth of Mother Mary too enables us to ponder over her role in the salvation history of mankind. Furthermore, the birth of the Society of the Divine Word on the day of the Nativity of Mother Mary is a privilege for us. Typically, the church has the custom to celebrate a saint's feast day on the day they pass away. The day is commemorated as their entry into happiness forever.

However, Mary made an entry into the world without committing any sin. The church had been celebrating her birth since the sixth century. Here are some of the key reasons why the Nativity of Mary is so significant for Christians viz. The Nativity of Mother Mary is a reason to rejoice as the day is regarded to be the “dawn of our salvation.” In 1974, Pope Paul VI mentioned so in the document *Marialis Cultus*. Secondly, it’s a time of reflection. Every time, we celebrate the Nativity, we are certain of increasing peace and satisfaction in the world in general and in our hearts in particular. Thirdly, the birthday of Mother Mary is special because, without her and her desire to serve God, things would have been so different. The history of salvation would not have been the same without her. So, celebrating Mary’s birthday also means honoring Jesus Christ. September 08 also gives us one of the most consequential birthdays in the history of the Society of the Divine Word! Moved by the inspiring life of Mother Mary, our Founder and Leader, St. Arnold Janssen, chose this day as the ‘Foundation Day’ of our Society. Despite the unconducive and destructive atmosphere St. Arnold, being animated by Mother Mary, leaps into founding the congregation on the day of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary. A true visionary, St. Arnold has left the legacy of being a committed missionary to preach the Word of God. It is the Word that called our Society into being, and moves and inspires us to join the Society. The same Word is the content of our mission. As members of the Society, we dedicate ourselves to proclaim this reconciling and loving Word. Our name is our vocation and our mission.

May These Birthdays Continue to Enliven Us

- INM Leadership Team

## THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE WORLD’S INDIGENOUS PEOPLE



The International Day of the World’s Indigenous People was celebrated on the 6th of August 2023, at St. Theresa School Bandra (W), organized by Maitrisangatan/UCDC. There were 600 participants; 500 adults and 100 children. The event began with a Solemn Mass offered by Fr. Cosmos Ekka, SVD as the main celebrant and Fr. Jerome D’ Souza SVD, Fr. Lawrence Correa SVD, and Fr. Amit Kujur, SJ as concelebrants. Fr. Amit preached the homily on Transfiguration, Feast

of John Mary Vienny, and World Adivasi Day. The second part of the event was held in the St. Theresa school hall. Fr. Cosmos introduced the objectives/purpose of the event, and said that we are celebrating the event based on the following objectives:

- To bring unity among Adivasi/Tribal people
- To raise awareness and protect their rights
- To preserve the culture and art
- To promote dignity, respect, and fullness of life

The Sisters from St. Paul, Sr. Sushma Kullu, and Sr. Manju Tirkey requested all the participants to join in prayer for the suffering people of Manipur, while they led the prayer by using the Word of God. The students danced to appropriate religious hymns. The dignitaries: Dr. Bipin Jojo, Dean TISS, Fr. Lawrence

Correa, the director of UCDC, Fr. Jerome D Souza, Fr. Glasten Gonsalves from Archdiocesan Migrant Commission, Fr. Sunil Tirkey, Fr. Amit Kujur, Sr. Manju Tirkey, Sr. Sushma Kullu, Bro. Jay Solanki, Sr. Diodita, Ms. Goretti Xalxo, and Fr. Cosmos Ekka were called on the stage. The choir sang a meaningful welcome song, while some of the Adivasis/Tribals washed the hands of guests and gave flower bouquets to all the dignitaries on the dais. Ms. Goretti Xalxo introduced all the dignitaries. The chief guest of the day, Dr. Bipin Jojo spoke on the theme: 'Tribal Identity Crisis'. He emphasized that Tribals/Adivasis are closely connected to nature, and *Jal*, *Jangle*, and *Jameen* (water, forest, and land) give identity to the Tribals. It is a challenge for all the members to have a piece of land in their names even if it is a small piece. After the talk, the Tribals from Bandh zone, Bandra station Zone, Bandra Choir, and Mount Mary zone performed beautiful cultural dances. Mr. Anup Kujur proposed a vote of thanks. The program ended with a sumptuous meal and a common Adivasi/Tribal dance.

## ST. THERESA'S PARISH BANDRA HAS TWO NEW GROTTOS



To have a new Marian Grotto was a dream of many parishioners at St. Theresa's, especially those who have a great devotion to our Blessed Mother, and that dream came through on August 15, 2023, when Rt. Rev. Barthol Barretto, the auxiliary bishop of Bombay blessed and inaugurated the newly designed Marian grotto dedicated to our Lady of Lourdes. The entire parish represented by the four zones of the parish as well as the Gujarati community prayed rosary together, after the blessing.

Since then, everyday parishioners come to pray rosary at the grotto either individually or in groups. In the words of many, this has become now a place of positive energy. The Grotto is built in commemoration of the 75 glorious years of St. Theresa's parish in 2021. A Grotto dedicated to St. Arnold Janssen, our founder is another addition to St. Theresa's parish campus. This parish being an SVD missionary parish, we felt it was time; we promoted devotion to our founder, whose sole vision was to spread the love of Christ to all cultures and among all peoples. We had the privilege of having our provincial superior, Fr. Tomy Thomas, bless the grotto in the presence of Bishop Barthol and other SVD priests. Truly, there will be showers of blessings on the parishioners of St. Theresa's, with these two grottos paving the way for more devotion and fellowship.



## INDEPENDENCE DAY AT GYAN ASHRAM



Independence Day was solemnly celebrated in Gyan Ashram with all its patriotic grandeur. The cultural programme was well organized by the Music and Dance Academy with a catchy theme "I LOVE MY INDIA". The

programme started at 5 p.m. and lasted up to 7 p.m. Fr. John Mascarenhas SVD, the Parish Priest of Sacred Heart Church, Andheri, and Sr. Margret Sequeira, the Principal of the Canossa High School, Andheri, graced the occasion as the Chief Guest and Guest of Honour and encouraged all the participants for their lovely performance urging them further to discover their hidden talents. The programme was mainly aimed at rejuvenating patriotic spirit in all by counting the blessings that we have been enjoying as the citizens of this country. Thus, there were several patriotic songs sung melodiously in harmony and a variety of dances based on the patriotic songs by the students filled the audience with vibrations of patriotism. The teachers played a major role in training their students to perform beautifully with lovely costumes and choreography. In short, it was a great evening filled with patriotic spirit. Congratulations to Fr. Salate and his team.

## INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATIONS AT ALKA

The Arnold Lalit Kala Academy (ALKA) under the guidance of Fr. Ciril D'Souza SVD presented a wonderful cultural and patriotic programme called "*Mera Pyara Desh*", celebrating patriotism with music, songs, and dances. The programme was held at Shishyalaya Auditorium. Having begun with a Prayer Song 'Lord, make me an instrument of peace' praying for peace in Manipur, Fr. John Lugun welcomed the Chief the event. Dr. Swetlana known doctor in Vasai Chief Guest and gave an people to focus on the even amidst challenges limitations. She also and spiritual freedom both Independence Day



Guest and all present for Sanjay Coelho, a well-graced the occasion as the inspiring message urging goal always and aim high of poverty and other stressed political freedom from sins as we celebrate and the Feast of the

Assumption of our Lady on the 15th of August. People were taken up by her message as well as the colourful, mesmerizing performances of the participants. The programme consisted of three instrumental performances of patriotic songs and three dances. SVD Shishyalaya Seminarians too sang and danced to the tune of patriotism, expressing their love for the country and its soil. Ms. Stacie Colaco, one of the students of ALKA thanked all those who contributed to the success of this event. As a whole, it was a great celebration for all the music and dance lovers who made it for the evening. The program that began at 5.30 p.m. ended at 6.45 pm with the singing of the National Anthem paying homage to the nation.

## CELEBRATION OF SACRAMENTS REACHING OUT IN INTEGRATION AND FAITH FORMATION



Maitri Sanghatan in collaboration with the Archdiocesan Migrants Commission organized the Rite of Confirmation and Mass-Wedding for our migrant Catholics in Mumbai, on 20th August 2023. Fourteen Candidates were confirmed by Most Rev. Bishop Barthol Barretto, and four Couples received the Sacrament of Matrimony during the Eucharistic Celebration, presided over by Most Rev. Bishop Barthol Barretto, in St. Theresa Church, Bandra. The concelebrants were Fr. Lawrence Correa SVD,

Director of UCDC, Fr. Jerome D'Souza SVD, Maitri Sangatan, Fr. Glasten Gonsalves from Archdiocesan Migrants Commission (AMC) Mumbai, and Fr. Cosmos Ekka SVD, the Coordinator of Maitri Sangatan. There were more than a thousand faithful who participated in the ceremony. The arrangements of the entire Liturgy were taken care of by the faithful of 'Bandh Zone'. It was made more meaningful and grander with a good blend of Piety and Tribal Culture. The Liturgy included an 'entrance dance' by women of Mount Mary and Lalmati Zone, 'Washing of hands of the Bishop and Celebrants', 'Bible Procession dance' by Bandra Choir, and an 'Offertory Procession' by newly wedded couples. A good number of people were actively involved in the whole memorable event. Fr. Cosmos appreciated the hard work of Fr. Jerome and Catechist Vijay Minj in preparing the candidates for almost a year. It was purely because of their hard work and dedication the faithful could receive the sacraments.



After the Solemn Eucharistic Celebration, the Bishop, Priests, and the candidates who received the Sacrament of Confirmation and the newly wedded couples together with their witnesses gathered in the council room for tea and snacks, provided by Fr. Henry D'Souza SVD, the parish priest of St. Theresa Parish. Thereafter, all of them were taken to the school hall while hundreds of faithful sang Adivasi wedding songs and had an Adivasi chain dance. In the hall, the felicitation program began with a small prayer made by Fr. Cosmos. The faithful

sang wedding songs for the newly married couples and the faithful, who received confirmation. Keeping the Adivasi Tradition in mind, the women washed their hands and gave them flower bouquets. Brother Jay Solanki from AMC addressed the gathering by wishing all the best to all the faithful, who received the Sacrament of Confirmation and Marriage. He said that 'as you are smiling this day, continue to smile even if the challenges come in your way by supporting one another'. The 'Wedding Meal' was provided by Fr. Glasten Gonsalves from the Archdiocesan Migrants Commission. Maitri Sangatan acknowledges their generosity. The vote of thanks was given by Mr. Sushil Ekka. The program ended with a common Adivasi dance and a sumptuous meal.

## ONGOING FORMATION PROGRAM



"If you go on giving without receiving how long will it last" – St. Arnold Janssen. A two-day ongoing formation program for the Ordination/Final Vows batches from 2009-2016 was held at SVD Provincial House, Indore from 25-27 August 2023. The day commenced with the Eucharistic celebration presided over by Fr. Rathinam Maria Paulraj SVD, Provincial Superior, INC. Later in his keynote address citing from *The Constitutions of the Society of the Divine Word*, he stressed the importance and purpose of the ongoing formation. With the theme

"Living as Joyful Disciples," Fr. Gregory Pinto SVD, the resource person explained that, coming together as brothers is a time to re-examine our priorities, commitment, and conviction. It's a moment of looking backward objectively at our religious life with an image of the river with its robust flow, feeble flow, and stagnation and moving forward with renewed strength. He touched upon other topics such as Life threatening viruses among us; conflict management and intimacy, which were very relevant to our

community and religious life. Fr. Ronald Pereira SVD, the Mission Secretary, India Sub-Zone, addressed that ongoing formation is an integral formation of the 6C's: commitment, Community, Collaboration, Creativity, Compassion, and Credibility. On the third day, we were taken to Novitiate at Khurda and Catholic Ashram Palda. Visiting these two important stages of our formation was a flashback of our old memories and cherishing those fine days. To say, this program was not only a coming together of different batches, moreover it was a bonding of our brotherly love, sharing of religious life, and a rejuvenating experience. In all, 47 confreres participated in the program from all the Provinces/Regions in India. Kudos to Fr. Gregory Pinto SVD, the Resource Person, and Fr. Luvis Ronald Pereira SVD, Mission Secretary, India Sub-Zone for organizing this ongoing formation program.

## ELEVATOR FACILITY IN ARNOLD NIVAS



After enduring birth pangs for almost 4 years, Arnold Nivas actualized the lift project on the 2nd of September 2023, as it was inaugurated and blessed by our dear Provincial Fr. Tomy Thomas. Our local SVD community members and our neighbors were present on the occasion. On behalf of the Arnold Nivas Senior Citizen's Home, The director, Fr. Melvine expressed their gratitude to all the donors of this project and also the previous and present Provincial administration, who made it possible to have the much-needed facility for the aged. Arnold Nivas gratefully acknowledges the role of Fr. Bernard and his council who planned and initiated the project and Fr. Maxim who untiringly went about getting the permissions, paperwork & materials for

the project, to reach its completion. Special thanks to the Contractor and his team who helped us out in the construction. Presently we have 22 inmates, most of whom are either bedridden or dependent. The lift facility has become a blessing for all of them as it would help them to go up and down to reach out to their companions and to make use of other facilities in the house. As the lift helps our inmates in their physical mobility, we pray that their spirits too remain lifted.

## MAGICAL OCCASIONS



Sticking to the Annual Theme 'Magical Duniya', St. Theresa's High School celebrated another momentous day on September 8th, 2023. The day marked the

celebration of SVD Foundation Day, the blessing of new statues, and the commemoration of Mother Mary's birthday and Girl Child Day. The day began with a special assembly in the Secondary Section,

highlighting and commemorating all three occasions. At Midday the school staff along with Christian students gathered in the school lobby where statues of Sts. Arnold Janssen and Joseph Freinademetz were installed and blessed by Rev. Fr. Tomy Thomas SVD, Provincial Superior (INM). He in his message appreciated all the stakeholders of the school and urged everyone to become true humans in the footsteps of our saints. The solemn Feast Day Holy Eucharist followed at St. Theresa's Church presided over by Fr. Tomy. As usual, the Eucharist had its creativity for the congregation of staff, parents, and students to participate meaningfully. The Primary Section had a creative presentation of the above events which was woven together as a TV News Channel presentation. Fr. Provincial was the Chief Guest, and commenced the program with the 'Quarter Hour Prayer'. Fr. Shinoy gave updates and information on the Society of the Divine Word.

### **INM JUBILARIANS 2023**

We congratulate our Jubilarians and pray for God's abundant blessings upon them. We are grateful to God and each one of them for their commitment and selfless service.

<b>VOWS</b>	<b>ORDINATION</b>
<b>65 YEARS (Blue Sapphire Jubilee)</b> Fr. Salvador Serrao	-
<b>60 YEARS (Diamond Jubilee)</b> Fr. Joseph Puthuparambil	-
<b>50 YEARS (Golden Jubilee)</b> Fr. Bernard Rodrigues Fr. James Uravil Fr. Lawrence Correa Fr. Thomas Malipurathu	<b>50 YEARS (Golden Jubilee)</b> Fr. Chacko Parekatt
<b>40 YEARS (Ruby Jubilee)</b> Fr. Mathew Kavukatt	-
<b>25 YEARS (Silver Jubilee)</b> Fr. Michael Vattumanickal Fr. Titus James Thattamattathil Fr. Victor Sagayam Zackarias	<b>25 YEARS (Silver Jubilee)</b> Fr. John Paschal Lugun Fr. Jossie Fernandes Fr. Johney Joseph Vattamala

## REMINDERS

- 10 October 2023 is the last date for submitting March Distribution Budget proposals. The format for the budget preparation will be sent shortly to each treasurer
- Confreres are requested to register your names for the Province Retreat with our provincial Secretary, Fr. P. David at the earliest. Those wish to attend personal retreat and those joining the other provinces are requested to notify to provincial's office
- Suggestions and Proposals for the Provincial Chapter; the suggestions and proposals reflect our common concerns and plans for the progress of the confreres and the mission. Therefore, it is very important that every confrere sets apart some time for prayerful discernment and sends to the Provincial office suggestions and proposals for the agenda for the Provincial Chapter. In order to make this process a little more effective and to obtain concrete and substantial suggestions, we request the Superiors to convene a meeting and gather the suggestions and proposals from the confreres and forward them to us by 31 October 2023
- Individual confreres are free to send their suggestions and proposals directly to us within the stipulated time

## MY PROGRAMMES

15 – 20 September 2023	Formation Board Meeting, IPF & VIVAT India Board Meeting, Arnold Bhavan, Hyderabad
21-23 September 2023	CRI Western Region AGM , Baroda
28 September 2023	Provincial Council meeting, SVD House, Bandra
02 October 2023	LCF Meeting, Mangaon
03-05 October 2023	St. Francis Xavier's Ashram, Raia, Holy Family Church, Marcela- Goa
07 October 2023	20 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations, DCC, Mulki

## NEXT COUNCIL MEETING

28 September 2023  
SVD House, Bandra

**In the Divine Word**



**Tomy Thomas SVD**  
**Provincial Superior - INM**

*'Rooted in the love of the Father and led by the Holy Spirit into the Mission of Christ'*

**- INM Vision Statement**