



FRANCISCAN CLARIST CONGREGATION
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Peace & Joy



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“Yet even now, says the LORD, return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; rend your hearts and not your clothing.” (Joel 2:12)

Hope you all are keeping well and are happy. We are now in the season of Lent, a season prepared by the Mother Church to recognize the presence of God in our life journey, to turn back and correct ourselves, and to walk in a different path. As we try to identify with the Crucified Lord through fasting, abstaining from favourite food items, mortification of senses and penance with new determinations, on one side we have the pain of losing the ego on the other side we have the new hope of resurrection and the joy of victory of the Risen Lord. In these days of endeavor, we have to cut off certain things from ourselves, add certain things to ourselves, and put certain things straight within us. Dear sisters, in this effort, first we have to be with Him in solitude.

“I will now persuade her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak tenderly to her” (Hosea 2:14). Each Lenten season is a special occasion during which the bridegroom invites his brides to solitary places. The love of the *Nazarene*, who wishes to be with us, yearns for us in the Ciborium and Cross. Let us set aside an **extra time** for Him. He longs for us to gaze upon Him with love, to talk with Him in love, to hear his loving words and to give life to His dreams. Let us be able to sing sincerely with the Psalmist, “As a deer longs for flowing streams, so my soul longs for you, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God” (Ps 42: 1-2). Let us remember that scattered desires and aims will lead to unnecessary wandering. Let us centralize our desires to Jesus only.

We need an **extra effort** to make this Lent fruitful. “From the days of John the Baptist until now, the Kingdom of heaven has suffered violence, and the violent take it by force” (Mt 11:12). The great Lenten season is a time in which we fight with our unholy desires, swim against the currents of the world and sharpen our spiritual weapons to fight against Satan. Yes, it is a time in which we forcefully orient our

body and soul towards Him. It is very pitiful that we who are called to become His people become people of flesh. Our habituated sins and lust are the thorns that destroy the Word of God and Love of God in us. If we want the Word of God to yield fruits a hundred fold in us, we should take this **extra effort** with perseverance, patience and diligence. We need a great spiritual strength to succeed in the process of overcoming the tendencies of the flesh by the spirit. Fervent sacramental life, reflective meditation of the Word of God, meditative study of the Word of God, penance without deception, etc. will strengthen our inner spiritual person. As an unprepared athlete faces failure and a soldier untrained becomes fearful before the enemy, the person without spiritual armour gets lost in the spiritual battle. Let our inner man grow while the physical man diminishes during this lent.

As we take **extra time and extra effort** to be with Jesus and identify with him, let us also make **extra time and the extra effort** to keep our sisters with us, to listen patiently, to understand with concern and love sincerely those whom He has given us. Our communities will become paradises of sharing if we focus on “what I can give” instead of “what I can get.” Let us forgive and forget the shortcomings and failures of those sisters who have been relegated to the dark corners of the community and pushed into the graves of our hearts due to their past weaknesses. Let us loosen their bondages as they try to become new creations in Christ. Let us lead them to the door of life with mercy. Let us write in our hearts the formula which Bishop Hippolytus Kunnunkal OFM Cap taught us: “I + You = We, Jesus in our midst.” Let me wish you all the peace and joy of Easter with love.

We celebrated the feast of Blessed Rani Maria, who saw God in the poor and gave her life for their sake and literally sealed with her blood the words of Jesus: “There is no greater love than to lay down one’s life for his friends.” Let us imbibe her mercy, forgiveness and love into our lives. As this year mark the Golden Jubilee year of our Bl.Rani Maria’s First Profession, we were fortunate to have our Apostolic Nuncio, Archbishop Leopoldo Girelly as the main celebrant in the Eucharistic Celebration. Mar Chacko Thottumarikal the Bishop of Indore, Mar Sebastian Vadakkal, Bishop of Ujjain, His Grace Mar Peter Rimal Kharadi the Bishop of Jabua, and Mar Leo Cornelio, Bishop Emeritus of Bhopal, truly elevated the occasion, adding a touch of grace and reverence to our festivities.

I am very happy to inform you that on 17 February 2024, all the twenty six artists who toiled on the set and stage of the film “Face of the Faceless” including its prominent Director Mr. Sheison P Ouseph and Producer Ms. Sandra D’Souza Rana were honoured at Portiuncula. It was a blissful event during which they shared their joy and experiences. The blessing of the newly erected Rani Maria Cloistered Convent, Udainagar, Indore for the sisters in mission who desire a contemplative life was held on 26 February 2024. Mar Chacko Thottumarikal the Bishop of Indore, was the main celebrant. The presence of His Grace Mar Leo Cornelio, the former bishop of Bhopal, Mar Sebastian Vadakkal, Bishop of Ujjain, and Msgr. Thomas Mathew the bishop elect of Indore made the occasion more graceful. Sr.Shiney Pazhoor of Nirmal Jyothi Province, Dimapur (one of the pioneers of the Cloistered Contemplative House, Munippara) and Sr.Bindu Maria of Amala Province, Bhopal are the pioneer members of this convent. Let us remember and pray for them. With profound gratitude, I remember our former General Councillor, Sr. Starly FCC, who labored tirelessly for the establishment of the convent from the day the land was purchased. We pray that may the Lord reward her for all her sacrifices undertaken with foresight, dedication and willingness. Let me also extend deep sentiments of gratitude to the Provincial Superior, Sr. Prabha FCC, and all the sisters of Rani Maria Ashram who supported her wholeheartedly. The esteemed presence of Mother Marianna and Mother Ann Joseph our former Superiors General enriched our gathering and infused it with a sense of solemnity and honour. Also on behalf of the FCC family, I thank all the Provincial Superiors and sisters who graced the occasion and made it memorable through their presence.

As you know, the 51st anniversary of the raising of our Congregation to the Pontifical right and the approval of our Constitutions fall on 01 March 2024. Let us thank God for blessing FCC with His graces. Let us remember with gratitude our Bishop Hippolytus and Mother Maurus FCC who rendered selfless service for the growth and uplift of our congregation. Let us strive to become holy FCC sisters by leading a life according to the charism and identity handed over by our founders.

25th March is the feast of Annunciation. When we prepare ourselves for the Feast of our Mother, who said Amen to the Will of God and gave flesh to the Word in her heart and womb, let us also try to forgo our interests and submit ourselves to the Will

of God in both favourable and unfavourable conditions. Let us pray for her intercession. Happy Feast to all!

Animation

The preparations for the Thirty Three Days Retreat, as part of the animation programme in FCC, formulated as per the divine inspiration, are almost over. The Thirty Three Days Retreat will be held in Malayalam from 19 July to 21 August 2024 and from 01 September to 03 October 2024 at Karukadam and Thiroor retreat centres. Sisters from Germane and Faustina groups should be given preference. Sisters of St. Joseph group who have completed five years after their perpetual profession also can take part. This is informed in advance for making it convenient for the sisters to take leave from their apostolates. Make sure to send at least three sisters from each Kerala province to participate in these retreats. Sisters from Mission provinces also can participate in the retreats. The names of participants in the retreats should be given to the Generalate before 31 March 2024.

The following animator sisters are requested to come to Portiuncula for the immediate preparation of the Thirty Three Days Retreat on 01 March 2024. Sr. Leema (DLH), Sr. Sayujya (BPL), Sr. Ann Maria (ELURU), Sr. Jolly Tom (NDA), Sr. Delphy George (EKM), Sr. Lissy Joseph (TMY), Sr. Maria Joseph (TSR), Sr. Pradeepa Jose (EKM), Sr. Rani Vattoth (PALA).

Formation

The Common Juniorate Programme for the year 2024 – '25 will begin on 01 June 2024 in Portiuncula and 15 June 2024 in Indore.

The three months course and retreat for the second year Novices in Kerala who are to make First Profession in 2024 will be held from 17 June to 15 September 2024 at Antonianum Convent, Konnakuzhy. The course for the Novices in Mission (from 29 February 2024) is postponed. The date and place will be informed later.

The sisters in charge of the Postulants and Novices, where there is no Postulancy or Novitiate at present, are to participate in the Formation Course for the Mistresses. (Cir. Prot. No. 411/2023).

Examination

Sr.Anu Jeas (BPL), Sr.Mareena Mathew (CHY) won the First and Second prizes respectively and Sr.Mary Joseph (TSR), Sr.Angel Maria (IJK) and Sr.Agatha Kavina (IMPL) shared the Third prize for the exam conducted in preparation for the Perpetual Profession. Congratulations to you dear sisters who obtained good marks. May God bless you to apply all that you have learned and move forward in the FCC.

Meeting

The seminar for sisters who are engaged in Evangelization in Kerala Provinces will be held at Okhal from 10 am on 12 April to 4 pm on 14 April 2024. Sisters who participated in the previous meeting held at Portiuncula in 2023 are invited to attend, and newcomers who wish to join are also welcome. When you come, kindly bring the report of your activities during the last one year. The course fee is Rs. 600/-. The Way of Life Revising Committee Members are to attend the Meeting which will be held at Portiuncula from 10 am on 1 April to 4 pm on 3 April 2024.

The committee members of the Evaluation Committee are to attend the second session from 10 am on 4 April to 4 pm on 7 April 2024. When you come kindly bring FCC Constitutions, Way of Life and Ratio.

Thanks for the Prayer

We, the General Councillor, Sr. Jyothis and I, have returned safe and comfortable after the visitation of Kenya-Tanzania Mission. When I say that all the travels and visitation programs were divinely blissful, I remember with gratitude the invaluable prayers of each one of you. Let me congratulate all our sisters who earnestly endeavor to extend the Kingdom of God in the Land of Africa. With immense love and gratitude we remember the sisters who took care of us with great generosity and sacrifice making all the facilities available even in the midst of inconveniences and obstacles. Our prayer is that the African Mission, which is ripe for evangelization, may continue to grow further.

Let us Pray

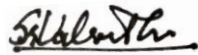
With the upcoming Lok Sabha elections and crises emerging from every nook and corner of India, it is expected that each Provincial Council will make appropriate

decisions and implement them to strengthen the Church. Let us move forward with special prayers and penance, as informed earlier. During times of crisis, as we strive for holiness and bear witness, let us walk in the footsteps of St. Francis.

Obituary

Let us pray for the departed souls of Sr. Consolata (TSR, 10.01.2024), Sr. Feltan (TSR, 13.01.2024), Sr. Sancta (EKM, 14.01.2024), Sr. Libertha (CHY, 16.01.2024), Sr. Anaklate (KLM, 27.01.2024), Sr. Blais (KLM, 27.01. 2024), Sr. Dayanishya (KLM, 06.02.2024), Sr. Lisieux (CHY, 15.012.2024), Sr. Floras (TSR, 17.02.2024), Sr. Christeena (CHY, 19.02.2024) and Sr. Sneha Jose (EKM, 21.02.2024).

Your humble servant in Jesus Christ,



Sr.Litty

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(Kindly make this letter available in all our houses)

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