

News and Views

Newsletter of the Divine Providence Province



“CHRISTMAS – a PRO-LIFE – CELEBRATION”

Our earthly life is described in a variety of ways with the help of metaphors and images. Some of us consider it a challenge and some of us view it as a battle or an opportunity. The Christian scripture looks at our life as a journey. The idea of pilgrimage or sacred travel runs deep in many religious traditions and more so in the Judaic tradition as we find in Ex 3,13-17. The paradigm shift that took place in the Catholic Church after the Second Vatican Council is from a *Triumphal Church to a Pilgrim Church*. The Church as the people of God is called to be a Pilgrim of Pilgrims. In this process each of us is requested to value the true sense or purpose of our pilgrimage: *a true movement to God and our connectivity with others*.

I feel one with you all at this juncture of nearing the celebration of the New Liturgical Year in our Catholic Church. We celebrate the Nativity of Our Lord or Christmas every year. But how close are we to a true movement toward God? And how are we connected with others who are true images and likenesses of the same creator who created us as individuals? Let's be reminded of the single motive

of Jesus' entry into our world as a human. He entered into our world in order to enter into our lives. He came to share what we are, to give meaning to what we do, to heal the wounds, to give life. Are we prepared to let Him into our lives? From the Angel's opening statement to the shepherds of Bethlehem in Lk 2,10, we derive the worth of the celebration of Christmas for three reasons: IT is personal (I bring you), IT is positive (Good news of great Joy), and IT is universal (for all people).

Out of these three reasons, it is quite fitting for us Servants of Charity as Guanellians to make the Christmas celebration a universal one including everyone regardless of any differences like race, gender, caste, religion, physical fitness and so on. During the month of December every year we bring the differently-abled children (*Buoni Figli*) to the forefront in public by conducting various events for them and honoring them with the distribution of gifts. Is it a mere external celebration without a deeper meaning? Or is it a worthy celebration illustrating that each of us has received life as a most precious gift from God? Basically children are blessings to humanity and are to be treated as such. This becomes meaningful in our Christmas celebration as Jesus came for all. Hence, it is a mandate for us to respect, know and love them as equals. The birth of Baby Jesus our savior should be an event for these underprivileged to recall over and over. It is important that we bring hope into their lives and make their existence joyful.

We, as Servants of Charity, have initiated so many residences all over the world, caring for these differently-

December 2017

Volume 10 Number 12



“I bring you good news of great joy for all people!”

Luke 2, 10

abled children whom we call - like our Founder - 'Good Children.' Without ever discriminating against them we are called to be sensitive to their originality as human beings created 'in the image and likeness of God' (Gen 1,27). By helping them enjoy and cherish the most precious gift of life from God we must learn to do the same with regard to our existence. In doing so we would be fulfilling our moral obligation to be pro-life in every aspect as our only Master, Jesus Christ, Who was Word become flesh (Jn 1:14). I wish you all a Pro-life Christmas celebration.

Fr. Soosai Rathinam.

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December Calendar of Fr. Provincial

- 5 **Coimbatore:** Visiting Confreres in Prison
- 10 **Chennai:** World Special Peoples' Day Celebration
- 11-12 **Bangalore:** Tutorate Program - GPN
- 14 **DPP Skype Council Meeting**
- 19 **175th Birthday of Our Founder**
- Chennai:** Synchronized Mass, Conferring of Ministries, GLM Pledge - DGMS
- 22 **Chennai:** Christmas Celebration with Evening School Children
- 24 **Chennai:** Christmas Vigil Mass - Washermanpet
- 31 **Te Deum**

The Holy Innocents Feast Day By Fr. Joseph Rinaldo, SdC

In these days we experience the love of Christmas, which gradually draws us to the source of Christian joy. We are called to foster this joy among our relatives, friends and neighbors. It is important that we do not let ourselves be robbed of this joy.

Christmas is also accompanied by tears. The Evangelists did not disguise reality to make it more credible or attractive. They relate the birth of the Son of God as an event full of tragedy and grief. Quoting the prophet Jeremiah, Matthew presents it in the bluntest way: "A voice is heard in Ramah, wailing and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children" (2,18). It is the sobbing of mothers mourning the death of their children in the face of Herod's thirst for power. Today too, we hear this touching cry of pain, which we neither desire to ignore or to silence. In our world we continue to hear the lamentation of so many mothers, for the death of their children, their innocent children.

To contemplate the manger also means to contemplate this cry of pain, to open our eyes and ears to what is going on around us, and to let our hearts be open to the pain of our neighbors, especially where children are involved. It also means realizing that a sad chapter in history is still being written today. Can we truly experience Christian joy if we turn our backs on these realities? Can Christian joy even exist if we ignore the cry of our brothers and sisters, the cry of the children?

St. Joseph faced the atrocious crimes that were taking place. St. Joseph, the model of an obedient and loyal man, was capable of recognizing God's voice and the mission entrusted to him by the Father. Because he

was able to hear God's voice, and was docile to His will, Joseph became more conscious of what was going on around him and was able to interpret these events realistically.

The same thing is asked of us today: to be attentive, and not deaf, to the voice of God, and therefore more sensitive to what is happening all around us. Today, with St. Joseph as our model, we are asked not to let ourselves be robbed of joy. We are asked to protect this joy from the Herods of our own time. Like Joseph, we need the courage to respond to this reality, to arise and take it firmly in hand. The courage to guard this joy from the predators of our time, who devour the innocence of our children. Innocence robbed from them by the oppression of illegal slave labor, prostitution and exploitation. Thousands of our children have fallen into the hands of gangs, criminal organizations and merchants of death. We hear these children and their cries of pain; we also hear the cry of the Church, our Mother, who weeps for the pain caused to her youngest sons and daughters.



Today, as we commemorate the feast of the Holy Innocents, let us renew our complete commitment to ensuring that these atrocities will no longer take place in our midst. Let us find the courage needed to take all necessary measures and to protect the lives of our children in every way, so that such crimes may never be repeated. In this

area, we support, clearly and faithfully, zero tolerance.

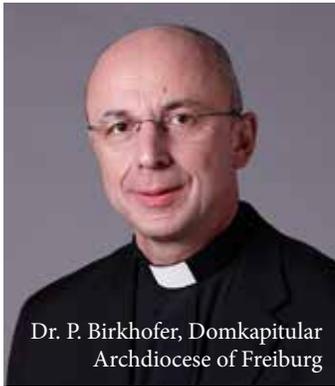
Christian joy does not arise on the fringes of reality, by ignoring it or acting as if it did not exist. Christian joy is born from a call to embrace and protect human life, especially that of the holy innocents of our own day. Christmas is a time that challenges us to protect life, to help it be born and grow. It is a time that challenges us to find new courage. The courage that generates ways capable of acknowledging the reality that many of our children are experiencing today, and working to ensure them the bare minimum needed so that their dignity as God's children will not only be respected but, above all, defended.

Let us not allow them to be robbed of joy. Let us not allow ourselves to be robbed of joy, but guard it and nourish its growth.

Holy Providence Never Sleeps!

We are sending you, interested readers of our large Province the latest news. World Church at Freiburg has decided to give financial support of the theology students in India and Philippines. Dr. P. Birkhofer was personally approached by Fr. Luigi during our courtesy visit on September 19th. On behalf of the Diocese of Freiburg, Dr. Birkhofer has issued a letter announcing the award of 24,000 € to support our students.

Friends of Providence



Dr. P. Birkhofer, Domkapitular Archdiocese of Freiburg



Johannes Frank Lemke, Director Caritas Pforzheim

The brochure from Caritas illustrates the top corners of a true neighbor's tender love and their commitment to serving those most in need.



The second good news is the Media conference which was held on November 28th at the local office of Caritas at Pforzheim. The reporters detailed the project in the Solomon Islands which has been given full support by Director Lemke. Director, Johannes Frank Lemke is a good friend of the Guanellians and a personal friend of mine since I was the active social assistant at Caritas from 1966-69. Caritas is accepting donations from interested parties on behalf of the Servants of Charity for a community center in Noro, New Georgia that will provide basic services to the local people of the Solomon Islands. It is estimated that the first phase of this project can be completed with 20,000 €.

Pray with me to the Lord for a positive outcome of our present intensive efforts.

During Advent let us focus our intentions for a good and coordinated development of Guanellian intensive engagement in neighboring European countries such as France and Great Britain.

Gero Lombardo, German Guanellian Procure



↑ Fr. Luigi Amongst the Youth of Noro →



Feast of Our Lady Good Health

KUMBAKONAM - Guanella Nagar Parish celebrated the feast of Our Lady of Good Health in Chinammal Kallarai. The feast began on November 11th with



a flag hoisting and solemn Mass celebrated by Msgr. T. Gnanaprakasm, Vicar General of Thanjavur. In his homily he said that the protection of Mother Mary in our day-to-day life is necessary and he shared the miracle

that he experienced from Mary at the Velankanni Basilica. The Second day of the Novena was celebrated with the Holy Rosary and Holy Mass celebrated by Fr. M. Thomas, CME, Parish Priest of Villiavarambal, he preached that Mother Mary is the model of our faith and he blessed the statues of Our Lady of Good Health, St. Antony and St. Michael after Mass. The statue of Our Lady of Good Health was processed through the streets of College Road. On the following day, Fr. C. Alphonse Maria Ligor, Sdc, Superior of Thalavadi, celebrated Mass and preached the homily in which he mentioned how we have to be obedient, care for our family members with sacrificial love and that Mother Mary is one of the best ways for salvation. After Holy Mass he lowered the flag and the celebration came to an end. The guidance of the parish priest, Fr. A. John Bosco SdC, and Fr. M. Vincent SdC, Assistant, Srs. Lourth and Juli and Bro. John Bosco helped the people to animate the liturgy well. Let the intercession of Our Lady of Good Health and the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ give us inner peace and joy.

Visit of Justice Selvam

THALAVADI - Nazareth Illam inspires people to come forward and show their love toward the needy. People from Sathy, Erode and other districts all the way come climbing the mountain to visit our home. Justice Selvam, Division Court Judge Sathy, and some of the lawyers visited our home. He and his team met the residents and spoke to them.



The residents welcomed them with joy and danced and sang for them. The whole team was glad to see firsthand the mission and the work we do. Justice Selvam in his talk said, "If you take medicine without fail and eat well, you'll be cured. Listen to the priests and obey the staff." After a while they served snacks to all the residents, who enjoyed the snacks and thanked the officials.

Fourth Provincial Chapter

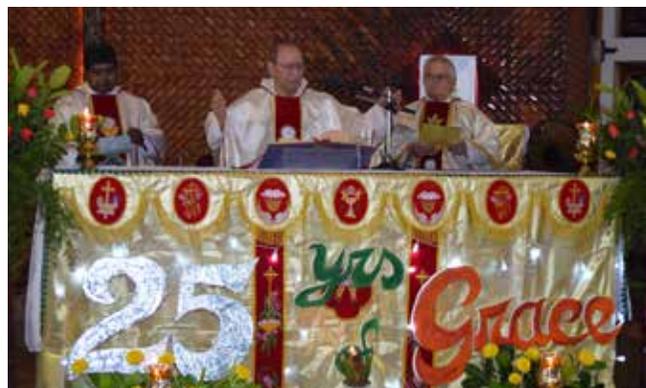
PONDICHERRY - The Divine Providence Province's Fourth Provincial Chapter began as the chapter fathers gathered at Prsahanth Vanam on November 20th. Fr. Alphonso Crippa, Superior General, enlightened the confreres with inspiring thoughts during his recollection talk. He highlighted three important points: Wisdom of



God, Guanellian Simplicity and Mission. He underlined the fact that we are gathered here not merely just to make some governing proposals or administrative rules, but to seek what the Lord wants from us. He stressed the importance of dialogue and fraternity. The chapter continued until the evening of the 24th. The chapter fathers went to St. Joseph's Seminary for the Silver Jubilee of their presence in India and Golden Jubilee celebration of Fr. Joe.

Jubilee Celebration

CUDDALORE - On November 24th the Silver Jubilee of the Guanellian presence in India and Priestly Golden jubilee of Fr. Joe started with decorations, rangoli, songs,



and programs at St. Joseph's Seminary. After the conclusion of the Provincial Chapter the celebration began with Holy Mass presided over by Fr. Joseph Rinaldo, as thanksgiving to God for all that we received in these years of mission, years of grace and fraternal love among us and with all the people he has met. After Mass everyone gathered in the auditorium where Fr. Joe cut and served the anniversary cake. A cultural program dedicated to the Golden Jubilarian was performed and Fr. Soosai Rathinam recounted the history of St. Joseph's Seminary and the pioneers to India. The celebration ended with the thanksgiving note of Fr. Visuwasam, Superior of the Cuddalore community.



Guanellian priests and sisters as well as the whole parish community. Thus the dream of the parish is now becoming a reality in this jubilee year of the Guanellian presence in India.

Let us pray that construction of the church goes on without any disturbance.

New Release by Don Guanella Publications

CUDDALORE - On the occasion of the celebration



of the Golden Ordination Anniversary of Fr. Joseph Rinaldo, he officially released the new Tamil Bible Diary 2018 edited by the Guanella Communication Centre. The First copy was given to Fr. Alfonso Crippa, Superior General. Copies were also given to Fr. Gustavo De Bonis, General Secretary; Fr. Soosai Rathinam, Provincial Superior; and Sr. Victoria, Delegate Superior. To thank all those who contributed to the book, Fr. Arockia Raj, editor, honored the reflection writers with a shield.

Laying of New Beginnings

CUDDALORE - On November 25th the foundation stone of the new parish church for Our Lady of Perpetual Succour, Samupillai Nagar, was laid by Fr. Alfonso Crippa, Superior General. This great event happened in the presence of Fr. Gustavo De Bonis, General Secretary; Fr. Soosai Rathinam, Provincial Superior; Fr. Visuwasam, Superior of the Cuddalore community; Fr. Periyayagasamy, Parish Priest, and many other

Visit of Local Officials

THALAVADI - We are indeed happy to say that our ministry in Nazareth Illam is edifying many government officials of the Erode District especially Mr. Prabhakaran, Erode Collector. They have a good consensus of our mission. On November 27th Mr. Eshwaran, MLA of Bhavani Sagar and General Secretary of KMDK visited our home. All the residents cordially welcomed him at the entrance gate with a shawl and flower bouquet. He thanked them and also took time to chat with them. We, as a community, officially wrote a letter requesting a stipend every month and for a wall for our campus, since there are no safety measures. He promised that he'll do his best to meet the needs of our mission. Mr. Kumar, DDRWO, also visited with his team. They met with the residents and enquired about the mission. The residents were so happy to welcome them and perform dancing and singing. The officials were so pleased to see our approach with the patients. Mr. Kumar then went through all the records, signing them with high remarks.



All Saints and All Souls

LEGAZPI - “From purgatory, which is painful and sorrowful, the crying voices of the souls resound in great sorrow, with the belief that mother Mary will have pity on those who cry for help.”



The holy souls not only wait for Mother Mary, they also wait for the prayers of their own family, their beloved ones. Unfortunately, many are forgotten by their own families, forgotten by this world. They can no longer do anything for themselves in order to get back to God, Who is the greatest desire of all souls. They suffer the great fire which burns in their hearts day after day. The only hope that they have is the Church Militant who journey together in this world to pray for them and to do acts of charity for them. We must always remember the holy souls, what they had done for us while they were in this world. After their passing from this life, they must not be forgotten but must be remembered everyday of our lives. In November especially, the novices went to many different cemeteries to visit the holy souls and to pray for them according to the teachings of the church.

Filling our Hearts with Jesus

LEGAZPI - The Harong Kan Sagrada Familia community welcomed Fr. Charlton Viray for a visit November 6th-8th. During his visit, he offered a class for all the novices entitled, “Prayer with the Bible” teaching them to use this kind of prayer in their own spiritual life. He



said, “once, one gets to know and apply this prayer in their spiritual life, one may discover their own self and may realize their own self with the painfulness of spirit which self needs to accept it in order to grow.” With this type of prayer, we no longer pray alone, but we listen, understand and meet Jesus in our hearts. Prayer becomes a personal dialogue with Jesus and we discover “who is Jesus in my life?” In seeking him in others: neighbors, poor, needy, we also see him in our own hearts, for He is waiting for us there. Getting to know Him is getting to know ourselves.

Dinner for a Cause 2017

MANILA - The 6th Annual Dinner for a Cause was held at Ang Bahay ng Alumni at Diliman, Quezon City, Metro

Manila. The Servants of Charity hold this event for the benefit of the children of Guanella Home. The evening began with a prayer led by Ate Ding Legaste, Guanellian



Cooperator. Fr. Battista Omodei warmly welcomed the visitors followed by an intermission number by our special kids from Guanella Home.



The money generated during the event will be saved primarily for the needs and necessities of our special kids. Fr. Charlton gave an update about last year’s Dinner for a Cause and how the funds were spent. Fr. Battista, Fr. Charlton, Fr. Charles and Fr. Loyola gave Certificates of Appreciation to people and organizations that have been constantly helping the Servants of Charity. To all the people who supported and helped in making this event a success, a simple thank you would not be enough, we really appreciate the efforts you have done.

Be Grateful in all Things

LEGAZPI - Fr. David Stawasz was a brother in the Legazpi community nine years ago. He paid

a visit to share his own vocation story with the novices. God's love calls many to step out of their own way to follow His way, the way which He has prepared. We don't know what will happen in this life, but we do know that we must trust in His call and do our best to follow it. This call



can only be found through prayer. Moreover, through prayer we trust in God little by little and believe that God will help us to realize His call and to keep forming us according to His will. Sometimes, we might not know where God is. These are the times we need to pray harder and to keep ourselves from getting lost in this life. To stay on the right track keep in mind Who you belong to. Time has passed since Fr. David was here, but he did not forget how much he loves HKSF and its people. The heart of love is tireless and full of gratitude and faithfulness for the people of God.

Strengthening Harong Kan Sagrada

LEGAZPI - "Zumba" is the new fitness activity of the staff and members of SAGRADA FAMILIA which they are enjoying it with all their strength. They dance not only for relaxation, but they also to build relationships in the spirit of "SAGRADA FAMILIA". There is no distinction between priests, seminarians, teachers, staff, social workers or therapists, but all are "Family". We work not for our own good but for the common good of others, coming together as a community to improve the lives of those who are lacking in society.

On the occasion of the feast of Fr. Guanella, we



also needed to acknowledge the staff at HKSF. Many of the staff were inspired by Fr. Guanella to dedicated themselves for this work of charity. The strong witness is the length of time which they have been working here in this community. Through many difficulties, challenges and lack of material goods in the very beginning, they and the Guanellian priests worked tirelessly to develop the community not only for the present but for the future good of all.

English Academy in Vietnam

HO CHI MINH CITY - Fr. Felicks teaches Basic English to the initiation students in our house, to the students at the Franciscan Missionary sisters(FMM) and to some



students of Benhai Church. An English Academy program was organized to hone and show off English speaking skills and singing English songs.

Altogether 25 students participated in the English Academy. The judges were Br. Hoang, SdC; Sr. Vy, FMM and Mrs. Judith who is originally from the Philippines. Our Initiation students benefited from the program because it was the first one organized in our community to display their speaking and singing talents. The students who performed well received gifts. The event ended with

a small agape meal and time of sharing.

A Celebration of Saints



E. PROVIDENCE - Each year the students of Sacred Heart School celebrate All Saints' Day November 1st by dressing as a saint. The entire school attends Mass which is followed by a parade of the Saints. The main purpose for this activity is to help the students learn about the lives of the saints, the Church Triumphant, and the contributions that they made to the Kingdom of God on earth. The parents get involved too, because they are helping to create the costumes, therefore the Annual All Saints' Parade is an event to enrich the lives of the extended Sacred Heart School Community.

30 Years of Charity for St. Louis Center

CHELSEA - St. Joseph Mercy Hospital-Chelsea was the place to be on the evening of Saturday, November 11, 2017, as the 30th Annual St. Louis Center Fall Dinner Auction was held once again in the hospital's dining room. Initiated in 1987, the



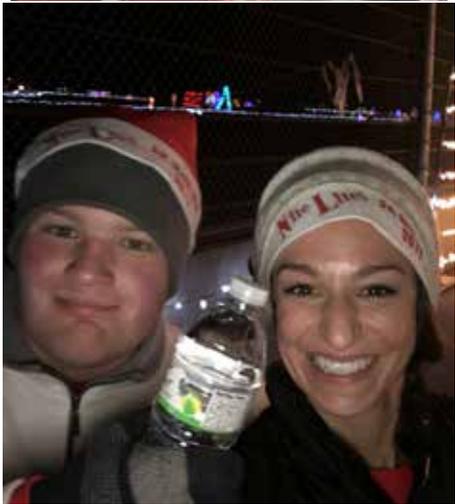
event was meant to generate support in the community for St. Louis Center. "We've come a long way during the past 30 years," said former hospital CEO Will Johnson, "and I'm proud of the work we've done to support SLC over the years." The hospital donates the food and the wait staff for the event so that all proceeds go directly to the charity. According to Chairwoman Kathi Neuman, "This was one of our biggest turnouts, and we had a lot of great bidders here to support our cause. We are grateful to everyone who came out to support us tonight."

Kicking off the Holidays with Fitness

CHELSEA - To kick off the Holiday season Caitlin Blomquist, Fitness Specialist, planned for the SLC residents to participate in the Nite Lites 5k Run. The fitness event was held at Michigan International Speedway on Wednesday, November 22nd concurrently with the grand opening of the Holiday Light display. Participants in the 5k Run/Walk were routed through the lighting displays after they were officially illuminated.



Twenty-five residents and staff ate a protein packed sack dinner before making the journey to the race. According Caitlin the event was very successful because everyone crossed the finish line. She said, "I wanted them to understand the concepts of a healthy lifestyle; the combination of healthy activities and healthy eating. I was so proud of everyone because despite age, ability or the frigid temperature, everyone finished the race. This is a great achievement for the SLC Fitness Program." Race participants were offered cookies and a visit with Santa at the finish line.





December Calendar of Events

- 8 **Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary**
- 9 **Chelsea:** Vocational Retreat for Boys
- 9-10 **Manila:** Vocation Seminar
- 10 **Chelsea:** SLC Christmas Program - SLC
Kumbakonam: Gathering of Tuition Children
- 12 **Our Lady of Guadalupe**
Grass Lake: Mother of Divine Providence Day at PUSJ
- 16 **Chelsea:** 50th Ordination Anniversary Celebration for Fr. Joseph and Fortunato
- 17 **Kumbakonam:** Half-Day Retreat for Parishioners
- 19 **Grass Lake:** Monthly St. Joseph Day at PUSJ
- 24 **Vigil of the Nativity**
- 25 **Nativity of the Lord**
- 26 **St. Stephen, Martyr**
- 27 **St. John**
- 28 **The Holy Innocents**
- 29 **Kumbakonam:** Picnic for Tuition Children
- 31 **The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph**

Best Wishes and Prayers to:

- 3 **Fr. Anil Kumar, Fr. Francis, Bro. Xavier, Bro. Antony Xaviour R.:** feast day
- 7 **Fr. Charles:** feast day
- 8 **Fr. Nino Minetti:** birthday; **Fr. Amalorpavanathan, Fr. Amalraj, Bro. Abraham A.:** feast day
- 9 **Fr. Antony Lourduraj, Fr. Charlton Viray:** ordination day
- 10 **Fr. Paul Francis:** birthday
- 13 **Fr. Joseph Rinaldo:** birthday
- 19 **Fr. John Bosco A.:** ordination day
- 20 **Fr. Robert:** ordination day
- 21 **Fr. Peter DiTullio, Fr. Joseph Rinaldo:** ordination day
- 22 **Fr. Kulandaisamy:** birthday
- 23 **Fr. Fortunato Turati:** ordination day
- 24 **Fr. Battista Omodei:** ordination day
- 25 **Fr. Ronald:** birthday; **Bro. Bala Vissampalli:** feast day
- 26 **Fr. Benson, Fr. Johndass, Fr. Kulandaisamy, Fr. Pravin, Fr. Ronald, Fr. SP Samy:** ordination day
- 27 **Fr. John Kennedy, Fr. Shantham:** feast day
- 28 **Bro. Michael Durai Samy A.:** birthday



Have questions or comments about this newsletter?
Email the Communications and Community Relations Office at: kellyf@stlouiscenter.org