



To the Provincials and the Superiors
of the Pre Provinces



Dear Sisters,

I am happy to communicate to you the place and the theme of the **worldwide celebration of gratitude 2020**. We, the FMA, laity, and young people all feel involved, in giving thanks to the Lord, for the accomplishment of these six (or more precisely twelve) years in the service of animation and government of our Mother Yvonne, “bond of communion and center of unity of the 'Institute' (C. 116).

There are many reasons for the gratitude that we want to express: for Mother Yvonne’s fidelity, for her unceasing self-giving with love and wisdom, for the charismatic passion that she communicates with so much enthusiasm, for the courage with which she has faced numerous journeys and the inevitable inconveniences involved in order to reach the educating communities in every part of the world, without ever sparing herself, with an ever joyful face.

In this great, worldwide celebration to the Lord there shines forth, like a star in the galaxy, the gratitude that each community also expresses and celebrates in the reciprocal gratitude between FMA, laity, and young people for the gift of sharing and co-responsibility in carrying out, not without daily life difficulties, the educational mission.

The celebration this year will be held in

Rome
in the Roman Province of St Johni Bosco
on April 26, 2020

It will be prepared with the collaboration of the Sisters of the Pre-Province of Mary, Mother of the Church and the Sisters of the Generalate. **The proposed theme is :**

*Your life is like a tree that bears much fruit.
Thank you, Mother!*

The logo represents a flourishing tree, leaning towards the city, symbolically represented by the bridge over the Tiber river and the dome of St Peter, which draws life from the river and extends it to young people, in a circular movement that opens them up to the newness of the Spirit.

The Institute has always nourished itself from the living source of Jesus and the Church, and in it has given witness of a consecrated life spent in total dedication to young people in the "*da mihi animas cetera tolle*" and in the response to the mandate "*I entrust them to you.*"

The "thank you" is for the life, for the beauty of the charism that we receive and give, and for the mission that Mother Yvonne carries out in the Institute.

The word of God that has been chosen is taken from Psalm 1:

*Blessed is the man who finds joy in the law of the Lord, and meditates on this law day and night.
He is like a tree planted along waterways, which bears fruit in its time:
its leaves do not wilt and everything he does, he does well.
The Lord watches over the path of the righteous.*

The Psalm presents the path of the just person, in harmony with creatures and with Creation, faithful to the Law of the Lord and trusting in his Providence.

The analogy of the tree planted along the river recalls the commitment of ecological conversion to which the Pope invites us and which, in the Message for the World Day of Peace this year, is linked to dialogue and reconciliation.

As a seed which has sprouted becomes a tree, so does the life of the Institute which, along the river of history, has given and continues to give the fruit of an integral education and holiness for many young people.

Listening attentively to the voice of the Holy Spirit and to the hearts of the young people of every land, the creative fidelity to the charism of Don Bosco and Mother Mazzarello moves every Educating Community to say "Thank you", and saying "thank you" means remembering the "great things" that God has worked and continues to work in our life and history.

We know well that the Feast of Gratitude is not merely a formal recurrence, nor is it just an expression of kindness, but it touches the identity of the Institute which, in Don Bosco's charismatic project, was generated as a "living monument of gratitude to Mary Help of Christians", a prolonged thanks in time and space with young men and women of various continents.

Starting from Psalm 1, and in particular from the above verses, we express our thanks together to Mother Yvonne for the service she has carried out with wisdom, foresight, and dedication, as a woman faithful to the Gospel, and to the dream of the Founders.

The Sisters of the Roman Province of *St. John Bosco* propose that we meditate as communities on Psalm 1, using the attached reflection, if useful, and in the period preceding the feast, to pray the *Our Father*, the prayer of child to its Father, of those who are in harmony with the Creator and with all of Creation.

As a sign of communion, each Province is invited to choose one of Mother Yvonne's Circulars and make it an object of sharing and prayer with the Educating Community. Starting from this sharing, we invite you to offer Mother Yvonne a 'thank you - commitment' by answering the questions contained in the Circular that is chosen. The answers can be sent to portale.fmairo@gmail.com.

We are asked, as an Educating Community, in particular the children, and young people, to make a gesture that expresses the commitment of reconciliation and ecological conversion (for example: taking care of a flowerbed, or a little vegetable garden, planting one or more trees, cleaning up an abandoned green area or urban space ...). Please send a photograph of this activity taken with a regular camera (not with a mobile phone) in a high resolution horizontal .jpg format (not less than 200 dpi) or a short video recording (at 1920X1080 resolution) lasting a maximum of no longer than 60 seconds by **March 31, 2020** to portale.fmairo@gmail.com.

On social media channels (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Youtube) the FMAIRO Roman Province of Sr. John Bosco and on the Province website (fmairo.net), 'posts' will be inserted periodically which will recall the theme and the proposed signs of communion. The images received from the Provinces will compose a video that will be published on the occasion of the Feast of Gratitude.

On the FMA Institute website you will find information and news on the Roman Province.

Annually, the worldwide Gratitude Day unites the Provinces in a gesture of solidarity that makes the family spirit and the communion of goods visible, helping us to broaden our gaze as an the Institute and as a large and varied world Family.

The offerings that will be collected this year and sent to the General Bursar, will serve for the urgent needs of the Institute, and to support the implementation of a project to combat families in social and economic distress, of minors and young people welcomed into the “Mary Help of Christians” Educational Day Center in Sanluri (Sardinia), and the implementation of micro-projects with the aim of strengthening and increasing socio-cultural and sports activities in favor of children and young people in Ladispoli (Lazio).

To Mary Immaculate, our powerful Help, Mother and Teacher, true Superior of the Institute, we entrust the life and mission of our Mother Yvonne as we offer thanks and grateful prayers.

I greet you on behalf of the the Sisters of the Council. Let us continue continue to pray for vocations, for peace for all humanity, for our Sisters who live in lands ravaged by war and by violence. These Sisters share the fears, suffering, and hopes of many people, especially the young, who face an uncertain future.

I wish you a good preparation for the celebration and I greet you with affection and gratitude.

Rome, February 11, 2020

Sr. Chiara Cazzuola
Vicar General