

12th May, 2021

"Let us stand in solidarity, not to a specific country, race or religion but rather to humanity."  
David Vox

To,

**The Staff, Students, Parents, AFJM, Benefactors, and Well Wishers,  
Our dear Sisters and Brothers,**

As we come to the close of another year let us thank God for his protection despite the grim reality of Covid 19. As the impact of the pandemic has affected our communities, families and all those associated with our institutions (schools and colleges), we're sure we all have been gripped by some kind of fear – fear of the Corona Virus..... fear of being tested positive.....fear of death and fear of losing a loved one. This has resulted in stress and anxiety for ALL of us.

We have had to cope with the death of our own sisters, staff members, family members, relatives and friends and very often the manner in which we had to bid our farewells have been extremely painful. Words will never be able to give comfort at this moment of grief.

Today, we the Sisters of Jesus and Mary, the world over stand in solidarity with you. We have been receiving emails, messages and phone calls expressing concern and empathy, for what we as a nation are going through. Let us be united in this situation to face the greatest challenge of our times!

**To you our dear Staff** – we are deeply grateful to each one of you for having collaborated with us to take up the challenge of online teaching and making it possible to find some way of connecting with our students. It has not been easy as you had to cope with the demands of family and make your homes a school. We are grateful not only to you but to your families too. Thank you for the Care, Courage and Commitment you have shown during this difficult year.

**To our Non-Teaching Staff** – who have had to take the risk of attending to school work so that the audit could be completed, salary bills sent so that the staff could receive their salaries on time and for all the minute details you attend to so that the work goes on along with your life.

**To our Support Staff** – Surely, it has not been easy for you. We are indeed grateful as often your lives have been at a greater risk every time you went on outdoor jobs – either to the education department or the bank or the post office. You continued attending school to see that our schools were kept clean. Thank you for your dedicated service!

**To the AFJM members** – Thank you for being our Partners in Ministry!!! Oftentimes, you have risen to the occasion and supported us with your prayer – praying for all those who have been affected by this deadly virus. Our sincere thanks...for your prayerful support, collaboration and reaching out to Covid patients through your generosity.

**To our very own students** – We believe that you and your generation have been very unfortunate to have to go through this experience in your lifetime. Let us draw lessons from this experience so that we can come out stronger. What can we learn from this in order to make the world a better place for future generations? Thanks to each child for your perseverance to go through the online classes and assignments with no social interaction and fun on the playground.

**To the parents of our students** – We think you have had the greatest challenge of all time – that of striking a balance with home, school at home and for many your homes also became your places of work for you or for other family members. Thank you for supporting the institution with your fees to enable the staff to get their salaries and continue the work of educating our students.

**To our benefactors, well wishers and all who support us in one way or the other** – Thank you for your prayer, support and for joining hands with us in all our outreach programs. It is truly with your support and collaboration that we can together make a difference. God bless you!

As we express our appreciation and gratitude to each of you, we assure you that we are all together in this difficult time and so we urge you not to lose hope. Let us remember that our God is with us and so we are not alone. Pope Francis, when celebrating the Easter vigil mass alone in St. Peter's Basilica, encouraged the people to "sow seeds of hope with small gestures of care, affection of prayer" despite the fear of the pandemic. António Guterres, the Secretary-General of the United Nations declared that the pandemic has "reinforced the need for solidarity more strongly than ever. We belong to each other. We stand together, or we fall apart".

The Dalai Lama too emphasizes that "as the world navigates the Covid -19 pandemic, rising conflict and growing demands for justice, the need for individual, societal, and international compassion and resilience has never been more urgent". Let us then as daughters of St. Claudine Thevenet find hope in the undaunted courage of our foundress who relied on divine providence and was never overcome by any adversity. Trusting in God's goodness and mercy let us move forward living each day fully, not knowing if it may be our last. Let us be channels of love, peace and joy and be reconciled to each other in our families, communities and institutions.

United with you,

**Sr. Janet Kottamkompil RJM**

Vice Province of Kolkata

**Sr. Antoinette Mae De Deus RJM**

Province of Delhi

**Sr. Felicia Pereira RJM**

Province of Vadodara

**Sr. Ursula Pinto RJM**

Province of Pune