

Reaching ut



FEEDING
THE POOR

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Cover Page Credits - 'Germany's children are starving!' Illustration by Käthe Kollwitz

REACHING OUT TEAM

Fr. Harry Vaz	Melville X. D'souza
Francis Rodrigues	Michelle Pinto
Lorenzo Fernandes	Willrine Vaz

PUBLISHED BY

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Our Lady of Lourdes Church,
 Orlem, Malad(W), Mumbai 400 064
reachingout.orem@gmail.com

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Theme for the December 2021 issue of the Reaching Out

**Our Crib this Christmas
 Artifact of Wood & Straw?
 Or, Cradle in Heart & Spirit!**

Please send in your articles, as attachment by email only, to reachingout.orem@gmail.com, latest by 15th November, 2021. Article sent to any of the members of the Reaching Out team will not be considered. Please send article as attachment. Please send images separately and not along with the Word document. Please do not forget to mention your zone and sector number.

FEEDING THE POOR

Fr Harry Vaz



I began to write this Editorial on 27th September, the Feast of St Vincent de Paul (1581-1660), a model of Christian humility and charity. Is it coincidence or providence? I prefer to think the latter. This saint was born in the south-west of France into a family of rural farmers. As a young priest, he became personally devoted to the service of relieving the sufferings of prisoners in miserable galleys. He went on to inspire and found Confraternities of men and women for compassionate service of the poor and the sick. One of their main charitable works was to **caringly feed the poor**. The Lay SVP was founded by Frederic Ozanam in 1833.

October is the month Mission Sunday is observed. It's good to remind ourselves that at the very core of the **Gospel message**, preached by Jesus and the Good News proclaimed by the Apostles, **is caring for the poor, compassionate works of feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, attention to the lonely and the sick, etc.** Are we content making monetary contributions to the Church and social organizations for them to do all charitable and missionary works? As People of God, we too have a sacred mission to involve ourselves as individuals, families and as a parish community to manifest our own awareness, concern and compassion for

the poor and suffering, in ways that are possible and suitable to our way of life.

In today's Mumbai, in high income and even some middle-class homes, overstocking of foodstuffs and wastage of food occurs more frequently than in earlier difficult years of thrifty budgets. Wiser amount calculation in food preparation, generous sharing of excess fresh food through the community fridge and donations of family packages of food-grains, pulses, cooking oil, etc. are evidently possible ways in which all can help; not only by dropping these off for others to distribute. Is it not possible that more persons volunteer to do so just once a month or even twice a year, to hand over in a personal way with caring eyes, cheering-up or comforting words, smiling face and most importantly compassionate hearts!

When youth groups and parish association members have done so in visits to orphanages, senior-citizen homes, mission-centres and even local parish or SCC community level held occasions, **the joy and gratitude of those who receive passes on by osmosis, into the hearts and lives of the caring givers.** May we all grow in the spirit of generous giving and loving charity!

MATTER OF SURVIVAL

Melville X. D'Souza



When was the last time you have been starved of a meal due to lack of money? When was the last time you have had to wear the same old clothes for a function because you had no money to buy a new outfit? Have you ever had to drop out of school because your parents couldn't afford to pay your fees? The list of questions could go on. **The answer probably would be a No!**

Coming to the question of survival, well, food for the stomach, is one of those things that would sustain us in life. How long can one live without food? Well, we may never have had to face such a situation because we are in a position to provide food for ourselves and for our family. However, do we give a thought to those thousands of people who are unable to get even one square meal a day? Do we understand what it means to suffer the pangs of hunger? We must have seen children rummaging through dustbins on the street to find some food? We must have seen people begging for food?

We must have also come across several videos circulating on the social media, of people struggling for food. One such video shows a man who comes to a restaurant, sees how customers waste their food, sometimes half the plate is just left away. What does this man do? He collects the leftover food in packets or bowls and goes out into the street. He would do this everyday. **The manager and the staff find it quite strange and**

one day they decide to follow him. And what do they see? The man distributing the food to the people on the street. I came across this quote which says, "Trash bins are full but stomachs are empty." This good man understood this very clearly and prevented the food from going into the Trash bins.

Well what is your response to this situation? What are we doing about it? Is your heart moved with compassion and pity at such a sight? Do we think we can do something about this situation? Perhaps we will throw a few coins at them. Well, there was this man, Vincent de Paul in France who was moved with pity and compassion. He decided to dedicate himself to the service of the poor. We have the SVP cell in our parish doing the work of St. Vincent de Paul, identifying poor families, helping them with rations, education, etc. **They promote community self-sufficiency, enabling people to help themselves. And that is perhaps the right way to help the underprivileged class is society, rather than offering food at random.**

We are in pandemic times and almost all of us are facing difficult times struggling to support the family. There has been loss of employment and savings are depleting. **In the midst of our own limitations, we are called to share the little that we have and to help and support one another. Are we willing to do that? It is said, where there's a will, there's a way. Perhaps there is a Highway!**

Feeding the Poor

Angela Fernandes - Community 1 Sector 2

Poverty is contagious in a country that is eroded by the malpractices of the government of that country. To quote Nelson Mandela, "while poverty persists, there is no true freedom".

To align physically and emotionally with the poor, the slums, the down trodden and the marginalized, we need to give them their basic needs i.e. food, clothing and shelter. When the poor are ignored, there is erosion of the conscience, there is a pathetic blindness. To quote Saint Mother Theresa, "If you can't feed a hundred people then feed just one".

Our so called high society binges on extravagant parties and opulent waste, while the poor cringe in hunger in their shanties and dig for a scrap of bread.

St Vincent de Paul, born in France, dedicated his life to serving the poor. St Vincent de Paul Society has its ramifications all over Mumbai. The members and volunteers reach out to the most vulnerable in society, assisting them with ration, food grains, medicine bills, school fees, etc., without discrimination of culture, religious or political beliefs. The aim of St. Vincent de Paul Society is to tackle poverty in all its form. Apart from feeding the poor, they also reach out to the lonely. St Vincent de Paul Society abroad provides crisis accommodation for the homeless, recreation activities, health and emotional counselling.

Stark naked poverty is seen among the poor countries of Asia namely, North Korea, Nepal, Yemen, Cambodia, Myanmar and Syria. To quote Mahatma Gandhi, "There is enough on this planet for everyone's need, but not enough for everyone's greed".

In Luke 16:20 Lazarus the poor man, wanted to be filled with the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table. In Mathew 14:13-21, Jesus had compassion on the large crowds that followed Him and asked his disciples to do something for them. When Andrew said we have 5 loaves and 2 fish, Jesus

took the loaves and fish and worked the miracle of multiplying the loaves and fish, thus feeding the poor, numbering 5000 men, not including women and children. The disciples collected 12 baskets of leftover.

The various organizations under the umbrella of Our Lady of Lourdes Church, have reached out to feed the poor. Since 2020, the Divine Mercy has organized and provided breakfast for the poor of our parish, municipal workers and beggars. Fruits, eggs, vegetable and milk from our community fridge are provided to the poor and the marginalized. Our volunteers provided ration, food, fruits to the lonely and also families infected with covid. Hotel boys, rickshaw drivers, barbers, construction workers were provided with financial help and ration. We helped other poor parishes and mission stations financially and with food grains, groceries. The parish council members & animators, the Divine Mercy group & others, all contributed in helping and reaching out, not forgetting the magnanimous generosity of our Parish Priest who oversees everything.

More than 80000 people live in Dharavi (Asia's largest slum) alone. Non-profit NGOs are making the city bearable for them. St Jude's India Child Care Centre provides nutritious food for children suffering from cancer and provides their family temporary shelter and emotional support.

Several NGO's, civil society groups and charity organizations have come forward to distribute free food and ration packets amongst the hundreds of daily wagers rendered jobless due to the current lockdown. Similarly, several businessmen like Salim Kodia and other organizations are reaching out to the poor in society.

On an individual level, each of us can help our domestic maids by providing them food and medicines. It is more blessed in giving than in receiving, The measure you give is the measure you will receive.

JESUS OUR GREATEST BREAD GIVER OF LIFE NOURISHING ONE PHYSICALLY AND SPIRITUALLY

Arlene Alves - Community 3 Sector 1



Psalm 78 - "The Lord gave them bread from Heaven". Vs 24-25 states, Jesus commanded the doors of heaven to open and gave them grain from heaven by sending them manna to eat. So they ate the food of angels and God gave them all they wanted.

In the old testament Book of Exodus Chp. 16, when Moses was leading the Israelites in the desert, the Lord said to them, "At twilight you shall eat meat and in the morning you shall be filled with bread. Then you shall know that I am the Lord your God". Jesus feeds the multitude and hungry. A miracle, awesome indeed!

In the Gospel of Mathew 14 Vs 16 to 21 and Chp. 15 Vs 32 to 38, Jesus had pity on the people who followed him to listen to his preaching as they were with him for long hours. So he asked his disciples to bring the 5 loaves and 2 fish that the little boy had in the crowd. Then Jesus gave thanks to God, blessed it and asked his disciples to distribute the bread and fish to the people satisfying their physical hunger and keeping them enlightened spiritually. Jesus was truly concerned for the crowds that followed him even for 3 days, as they did not have much to eat. He wanted to feed the crowd in the desert instead of sending them away hungry. In these two chapters of Mathew, he feeds the 5000 people, not counting the women and children.

Gospel of Mark Vs Chp. 14 Vs 22v - "The Lord's Supper", while they were eating, Jesus took the bread, gave a pray of thanks, broke it, and gave it to his disciples. "Take It," he said, "This is my body." Then he took a cup, gave thanks to God, and handed it to them and they all drank from it. Jesus said, "This is my blood which is poured out for many, my blood which seals God's covenant."

A thought for us, may we never forget the surpassing value of the precious food of Jesus' Body and Blood for our spiritual growth which we receive at every Eucharistic celebration. Holy communion is food for eternity as Jesus holds our future.

Jesus has been the provider of food and drink for many, both physically and spiritually, nourishing them, bringing about wholeness in them. All those who believed and put their trust in the Lord were given plenty.

Every day when we recite the Lord's prayer, "Our Father..... give us this day our daily bread.....", we trust the Lord that he will be our provider at all times and be with us always.

Saints such as St. Mother Teresa and St. Vincent de Paul followed Jesus' example, serving the poorest of the poor, the needy and downtrodden, the abandoned and outcasts, the homeless and orphaned. They provided them food, clothing, shelter, medicine and above all, Love and care. These saints are examples for one and all to emulate. Mother Teresa was an active and loving care giver and had a heart of Love of our Saviour. Her love was simply over flowing to the least and dying, lighting up the faces of many.

"Not all of us can do great thingsbut we can do small things with great love." Quote Saint Mother Teresa .

Feeding the Poor

Oswald Joseph – Comm.4 – Sector 5



With the ongoing pandemic situation extending for more than a year, so many daily wage earners have become jobless leading to poverty and hunger. They can't afford even one square meal.

How can we help? We need to create an awareness among the well-to-do in society, by collecting food made in excess at any function or leftovers from hotels and restaurants, which would have otherwise been thrown out. This food can then be distributed to the poor at a selected place, time and day.

Abroad, 'Soup Kitchens' are very popular, where food is given to the very poor on a regular basis. This food is cooked by volunteers and funds for

these Kitchens are raised by the well-to-do of society. Our country has the potential to do this, providing we all get together and show concern for the hungry, needy and poor.

If people genuinely devote a bit of their time for such a service, together we can bring about a big change to have a hunger-free world. There is no better feeling than the joy of feeding a hungry man.

"When a poor person dies of hunger it has not happened because God did not take care of him or her. It has happened because neither you nor I wanted to give that person what he or she needed"

- St. Mother Teresa of Calcutta.

CLEAN YOUR PLATE

Augustine Fernandes - Community 4 Sector 2

Are we wasting food at our dining table? My answer is in the affirmative (Defiantly Yes), we're only human, we have some irrational tendencies and some major blind spots not to mention busy schedules that don't always align with our diet and eating habits. The menace of food wastage by humans was brought to our notice by our Lord JESUS CHRIST when he instructed his disciples to collect the left overs, even the crumbs after the miracle of multiplication of 5 loaves & 2 fish.

1/3 of the world's food is lost or wasted and this can be prevented by micro management of food. This micro management of food begins with our personal and family consumption of food. We must not bite more than we can chew. We must not order more than our necessity. We must take special care to make the plates for our children and preserve food for later consumption. We must support our communities by donating untouched

food that would otherwise have gone to waste.

Wasted food does not mean only economical losses but also natural loss, growing (water, fertilizer, fields), packing and transportation. Preventing food wastage does not only save money from buying less food but also reduces methane emissions (green emissions) from land fills and lower carbon footprint.

CRUMBS :- Crumbs are the guilt feelings when we allow our mouth to overload our backs by our attitude disease (indifference).

St. Vincent de paul was born to a peasant family in France. He lived at a time when Europe was torn by war and engulfed by famine. He knew the importance of food and feeding the poor. Vincent de paul was a visionary, he knew that you cannot build a peaceful world on an empty stomach.



FAITH IN WORKS OF CHARITY

Olga Pereira, JBC Community 3, Sector 1



“What good is there in your saying to them, ‘God bless you! Keep warm and eat well!’ – if you don’t give them the necessities of life? So it is with faith: if it is alone and includes no actions, then it is dead.” (James 2:16-17)

St. Vincent de Paul says “Go to the poor: you will find God.” Charity is the cement which binds communities to God and to one another.

All human history attests that food is a basic necessity for man’s survival and happiness. As Cicero, a great philosopher has rightly put it, “One should eat to live, not live to eat.” Mumbai is a city which attracts people from all over India. They flock to the city of their dreams to earn a livelihood, for the better prospects of their families in their native place. Sometimes they succeed, but many times they suffer from lack of basic amenities. In this context, St. Vincent, de Paul Society caters to them. St. Vincent de Paul Society was founded by a 20-year-old student named Frederick Ozanam and for the last 170 years they have been reaching out to the underprivileged people with the values of Christ’s Charity, with Love, Respect, Justice, Hope and Joy.

As baptised Christians, it is also our duty and privilege to reach out to the poor and needy in selfless service, when we have the opportunity. The teachings of Jesus on Christian Charity invites us to reach out to the poor and needy without

expecting any reward or recompense and our reward will be given us by God, our Abba Father. “I was hungry and you fed me, thirsty and you gave me a drink.” “I tell you whenever you did this for one of the least important of these followers of mine, you did it for me!” (Matthew 25 : 35 & 40). St. Mother Theresa of Calcutta, stresses this point when she says, “If you can’t feed a hundred people, just feed one.”

Jesus was Compassion personified. He felt the physical hunger of the crowds following Him and worked the greatest miracle of feeding the multitude with just 5 barley loaves and 2 fish. Jesus could empathize the need of food for the crowd and he gave us an example to reach out to the people, who live in a world which is dimly lit because of poverty, other reasons and the present pandemic. We too can help them experience the light of the love of God by our sharing of food, clothing, etc. “Share your bread and it tastes better, share your happiness and it grows.” – Phil Bosmans.

Mother Mary was always alert to the needs of the people around her especially those in distress. At the wedding at Cana, the young couple was about to face on embarrassment of shortage of wine. She was quick to notice and she went to Jesus with faith and told him, they have no wine and on seeing her trust in him, Jesus performed his first miracle of changing water into wine. We are blest to have Mary as our Mother who has a great charitable heart and we can emulate her in reaching out with selfless charity to those in distress.

We must refrain from wasting food as it is God given and everybody has a right to it. Jesus told his disciples, “Gather the pieces left over; let us not waste a bit.” (John 6 : 12). When we waste food we are depriving another of his portion of food because we are the creation of God our Abba Father and all creatures have a right to food. Mahatma Gandhi has said “There are so many hungry people that God cannot appear to them except in the form of bread.”

FEEDING THE POOR

Dr Shirley Fernandes

Basic necessities for every human, are shelter, clothing and food,
These being essential, to live a life that is good.

Hence to feed the poor is the duty of one and all,
And we do no one a favor when we answer this call.

However each one of us has a poverty of some sort,
The financially poor, yes, but also those who are well off.

Because of fallen nature, in every human we find,
There lurks one or more needs of a different kind.

Looking around to seek, we will see,
Every person has some hardship, including you and me.

Therefore searching diligently with eyes heart and mind,
We'll discover in each individual soul, a lack of some kind.

Maybe a talent is under some bushel kept,
Or bereavement for someone is being silently wept.

The old, the sick, the abandoned, the abused and those alone,
Wait anxiously for a knock, a visit or a phone.

This day, the one in dire need of sympathy,
Could be enriched, with a generous dose of empathy.

To be loved, wanted, and acknowledged, is everyone's need,
Fulfilling this would their downcast emotions feed.

To a spouse, child, neighbor acquaintance or friend,
A smile, hug, pat, kind word or listening ear could be lent.

To educate and give inclusivity are absolutely necessary,
To boost both, the others morale, and integrity.

Our happiness proceeds from external material things,
Whereas joy emanates, from our core, deep within.

Hence there is more joy in giving than in receiving,
Which in addition, gives a bonus of self growing.

These are some of the ways in which feeding of the poor is done,
And embracing them, will make God's kingdom come.

Just a Click Away! : The Media Cell of OLLC

Eden Fernandes (on behalf of the Media Cell)

At a time when significant aspects of our lives are governed by technology, the only way we can stay in touch with our faith and community seems to be through the screen. We hear Mass, participate in Holy Hours and prayer meetings online almost on a day-to-day basis...but who are the people behind the scenes? The Media Cell of our parish was created in July 2021 with the sole purpose of making the Eucharist more participatory and keeping our parishioners updated. A group of vibrant youth guided by Fr. Cedric Rosario makes up the media team! They have paid special attention to the technological aspects that are now a new part of the act of prayer, so that faith and other important parish events are made accessible to all.

Since its emergence, the media cell has worked in order to make the daily Mass a participative experience by enabling projection of the hymn lyrics and prayers to our screens so that we all feel engaged with the Eucharistic celebration. The social media page [@youthforlem](#) on Instagram and Facebook is being regularly updated with

the important parish events. Parents' Day, paper drives, competitions, birthdays of priests, etc have all been put up on these pages so that our youth and parishioners can stay in touch with all the opportunities and occasions that are a part of Our Lady of Lourdes, Orlem! The Media Cell is divided into two teams: The Tech Team and the Social Media Team. The tech team manages the presentations and other technical related aspects of both, daily Mass and Sunday Masses.

On the other hand, the social media team creates updates, posters and announcements for the social media pages. Both work with each other so as to create a smooth working of faith alongside technology. We are also involved in the regular updating of the parish website (www.ourladyoflourdeschurchorlem.com) and are presently looking to make it more feasible for parishioners to avail church services without having to come to the parish office.

Should you need any assistance do remember that we are just a click away!

COCKROACH MENACE

For Total Extermination, Call

PEST - TREATMENT

(Pest Control Service)

Member - PCAI

Termite, Rodent, Bugs, etc.

Odourless, SPray, Herbal & Gel Treatment

Elias Gonsalves

28832959/9820666582

SVP Caring for the Underprivileged

Carl D'Penha, SVP Member

The Society of Saint Vincent de Paul, has been operative in our Parish for the past 65 years, "**Feeding the Poor**" is the principal work of the SVP.

Currently, we assist 51 families, whom we have adopted into our society. Each family is given personal attention and contacted on a weekly basis by a team of dedicated and committed members. Majority of these families are widows, mainly employed as house maids, left with the unenviable task of bringing up 2 to 3 young children, others are singles abandoned by their children, left to fend for themselves. We provide them bi-weekly, a healthy mix of rations, comprising of rice, wheat, pulses, dals, sugar, cooking oil, soap etc. School and Tuition fees which make up a huge chunk of their monthly expenses is also taken care of. Additionally, they are treated by our panel of Doctors and provided free medicines and other medical assistance. **Grateful thanks to our panel of Doctors, Dr. S. A.Oza, Dr. K.A. Pathak, Dr. Albert Pais, Dr. Denis Allapat and the late Dr. Marionette Pereira for their commitment and dedication.**

As it's not practical to visit our families during the pandemic they are contacted over regular phone calls and their needs are catered to, cash in lieu of rations is handed over to them. We have been active during the pandemic as many have lost their jobs, or having to work on reduced remuneration. Since the outbreak of the pandemic till date, we have disbursed assistance totaling Rs.17.96 lakhs. The break-up is as follows:

Ration & Cash : Rs. 9.72 Lakhs

Medical Aid : Rs.3.77 Lakhs

Educational Aid : Rs.4.47 Lakhs.

We depend totally on our generous benefactors who, understanding the current scenario, have dug deep into their pockets, we pray for their wellbeing. Our accounts are audited and published in the Reaching Out annually. All donations are 80 G compliant. **Our inspiration and guiding light is none other than Fr. Michael Pinto, a once dedicated Vincentian himself, Fr. Sunil D'souza our spiritual Advisor and the team.** The feast of our Patron St. Vincent de Paul, falls on 27th September, we have offered a Mass in his honor.

Under our larger umbrella The Central Council of Bombay, we run a home for the aged, in Kalyan, called **Shanti Bhavan Old Age Home, which is a home away from home for senior citizens whose children have no time or love, to look after their aged parents.** These very parents, who sacrificed the prime years of their lives to make them what they are today. Around 50 kilometers away at Trombay, is **Nirmay Niketan, HIV/ Aids Care Centre & Leprosy Home, where patients are given professional medical treatment under clean hygienic living conditions, good meals and counselling as required.** The Sisters are very loving, as they see the Face of Christ in each patient and offer individual attention, and it also caters to OPD patients.

A very Happy Feast to all our Vincentian members, benefactors, and well-wishers.

SOCIETY OF ST VINCENT DE PAUL
Conference of Our Lady of Lourdes, Orlem
ANNUAL STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31-03-2021

<u>RECEIPTS</u>		<u>PAYMENTS</u>	
1 OPENING BALANCE		1 RELIGIOUS PURPOSES	
Cash in Hand	6,132.00	Masses	150.00
Cash in Bank	86,367.00		
Fixed Deposits	6,50,000.00	2 CHARITABLE PURPOSES	
	7,42,499.00	Aid in kind (Rations etc.) & Cash	6,67,468.00
2 CONTRIBUTIONS		Medical Aid	2,34,169.00
Monthly Donations	93,490.00	Educational Aid	2,67,260.00
Casual Donations	5,18,044.00		11,68,897.00
Income Tax Refund	4,710.00	3 SPECIFIC PURPOSES	
Bank Interest	21,894.00	Christmas Hampers	38,500.00
	6,38,138.00		
3 SPECIFIC DONATIONS		4 ADMINISTRATION	
Christmas Hampers	42,000.00	Printing and Stationary	640.00
Educational Grants	4,91,400.00	Travelling Expenses	1,550.00
	5,33,400.00	Audit Fees	8,850.00
		Bank Charges	4,323.00
			15,363.00
		5 CONTRIBUTIONS	
		SVP Institutions	10,000.00
		6 CLOSING BALANCE	
		Cash in Hand	5,577.00
		Cash in Bank	3,75,550.00
		Fixed Deposits	3,00,000.00
			6,81,127.00
Total	19,14,037.00	Total	19,14,037.00

[Signature]
 Victor D'Souza
 (Treasurer)

[Signature]
 Noreen Ferreira
 (Secretary)

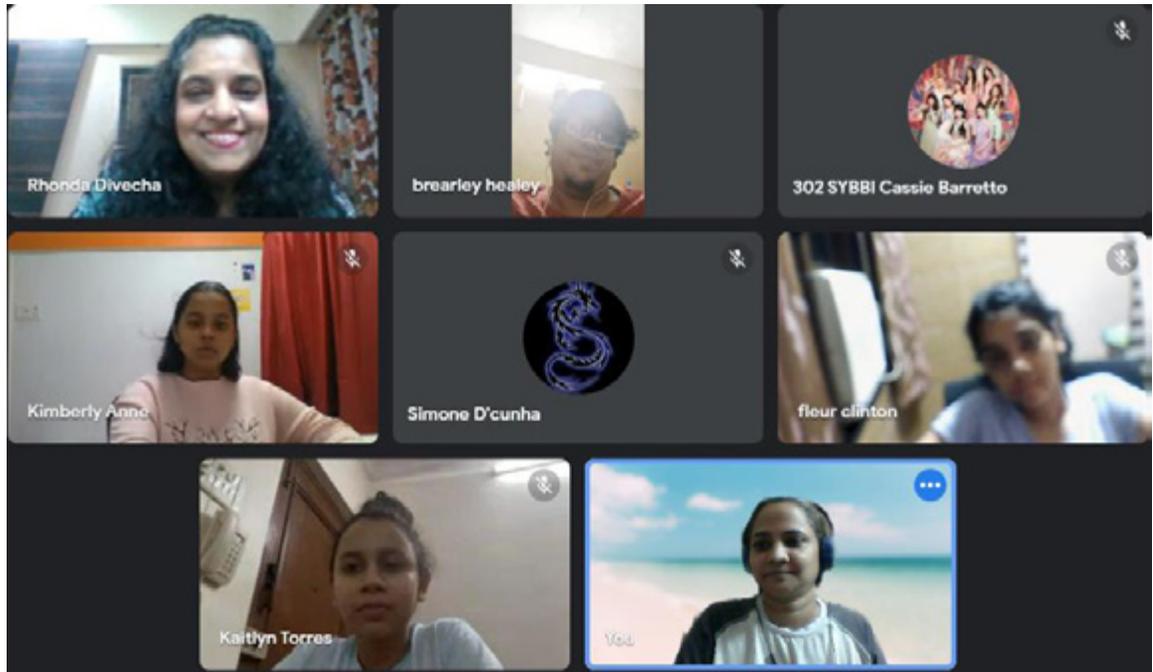
[Signature]
 Cahute Fernandes
 (President)

[Signature]
 U.G. Devi & CO.
 (Auditor)



Finding the Secret to Happiness – Youth Connect

JBC– All Saints Community



A big thank you to Mrs Rhonda Divecha for the session on **Finding the SECRET to HAPPINESS**. It was an inspiring, interactive & inspiring session. Sharing takeaways from the session:

- 1) Focus on what you have rather than what you don't. Be happy being yourself.
- 2) The moment you get an idea to help someone or make them happy, do it immediately.
- 3) Make everyone around you happy. You will get the satisfaction of bringing joy to others and their positive energy will come back to you.
- 4) Understand that there is a reason why things don't happen as we want sometimes.
- 5) Look for the good in everything by Jason Mraz

Thank you Kimberley for hosting the session!

Requesting our youth to continue to share their suggestions, ideas & join in future sessions.

Teachers' Day Celebration



All Saints Community of JBC, celebrated Teachers day by appreciating our teachers with a gift in the hand, a smile on our lips and a prayer in our hearts. We appreciated 30 Teachers in our Community which included current and retired teachers, lecturers and home tutors. Do take a moment to say a Prayer for Teachers who have touched your lives.

Animators of All Saints Community sharing the joy with our Teachers.

The North Star

Kimberley Jesson, St. Mark's Community, Lourdes Colony - 5, 2

"One child, one teacher, one book and one pen, can change the world" - Malala Yousafzai

Teachers help us grow. They guide and support us in everything we do, help prepare us for a world of opportunities and challenges to come. On Teacher's Day, around 3 youth & 6 children paid a little visit to the Teachers of Lourdes Colony (Sector 2). The box of yummy cupcakes presented to them seems only a small token of appreciation for their efforts. Especially in the times of the Covid-19 Pandemic, they truly are an inspiration to all children and adults alike. May they continue to be the 'North Star' for the young explorers of tomorrow!



Feeding the Poor – Mercy in Action

Divine Mercy Member

**The world says, “The more you take ... the more you have ...”
Christ says, “The more you give ... the more you are ...”
“Frederick Breuchner”**

The Divine Mercy Association has been working tirelessly, feeding the poor, since the start of the Pandemic. We wish that God’s abundant blessings be bestowed on the generous benefactors of our Parish, some of whom prefer to remain anonymous.

The Covid-19 crisis has dampened the spirit of families who have lost loved ones and those who have been rendered unemployed, the worst hit being the daily wage earners who are unable to overcome these ongoing challenges.

The members of Divine Mercy Association have whole-heartedly supported and helped not only those who are financially backward, but have also been providing ready-to-eat meals for breakfast and lunch, to the poor and the needy. Besides providing groceries to the underprivileged, those of whom include peons, security guards, municipal workers, red light workers, sex workers, members of the transgender community etc., financial assistance is also offered to them, if necessary. Snacks have been provided to the volunteers, doctors, nurses and helpers at the Parish Vaccination centre. Our community fridge has been stacked and is overflowing with fruits, eggs, milk, cheese, dry fruits and packets of fish, which are distributed to the poor, irrespective of caste or creed. Animators have been sending across T.B. patients every week and they are being given nutritious food like milk, cheese & eggs from our community fridge. Arrangements have been made, to provide cooked meals to families who’s loved ones are ailing at home or who are in hospital, in addition, to those families who have lost their loved ones.

Announcements are made at Sunday Masses, informing families facing crises of any kind during this Pandemic, to avail of food being regularly distributed. Our Parish has been generous in providing employment to those with culinary skills, by employing them to prepare breakfast and to cook lunch, thus enabling them to earn their livelihood, rather than opting for financial help. This act of kindness has brought a smile to their faces during these troubled times.

Hampers have been distributed on special occasions, to our specially challenged children and to the needy students of the NIOS. All thanks and appreciation in this regard, goes to the Divine Mercy Association for their whole-hearted service towards the poor and the marginalized.

Let us be spiritual beings on this, our human journey and be of service to the poor, whole forging a close bond with God, our Heavenly Father.

Parents' Day Celebration at Nivedita

Annie Braganza, Tank Colony, Sector 8

We commemorate 26th July, the feast day of St. Anne and St. Joaquim, parents of the Blessed Virgin Mary as Parents' Day.

Year after year the youth of Orlem have been organising fun- fulfilled entertainment programmes for parents and grandparents at the Community level to say ' we love you , we thank you , mum and dad, grandma and grandpa. However, given the present circumstances, the youth of our Sector could not organise fun-filled games and a sumptuous meal like in the past, nevertheless they tried their level best to make parents and grandparents feel special on their special day through a virtual celebration via Zoom on 24th July.

Prior to the Zoom programme, handmade cards prepared by the children and youth were personally handed over to every family of our Sector to wish parents and grandparents on the occasion. The Zoom programme began with a prayer

service wherein our children and youth thanked the Lord for His wonderful gift of parents and grandparents. Through personal video messages, the children and youth of our sector wished and thanked their parents, grandparents and even great grandparents for their immeasurable contribution in their lives. Through skit, story and song our children and youth stressed on the role of parents in the holistic growth of the child. Becky's and Naomi's rendition of the song '**Every morning when the day's begun we thank you , Lord, for our parents so dear, Every evening we kneel to pray ,bless our parents, O Lord , each day**' reflected our gratitude and love for our parents for the countless sacrifices they make to make us men and women that God designed us to be.

We, parents and grandparents, thank the children and youth of our Sector for organising the Virtual Parents' Day Celebration in our honour. Thank you for your love and appreciation! God Bless!

NOTICE REGARDING TEMPORARY GRAVES

The temporary graves of our dear departed, who were buried in our Church cemetery on or before December 2019, will be opened in the days to come. Those family members, who would like to exhume the mortal remains of their dear ones, in order to place the same in their family grave or niche, are requested to contact the Parish Office latest by 30th November, 2021. A list of the deceased, whose graves will be opened for exhumation, has been put up on the Church notice board.

Enabling Online Education!

The pandemic disrupted the education process of school going children, taking them from the classroom to online studies at home. While most adapted to the new way of learning, many were left helpless without the means to own a mobile. However, one appeal to parishioners in Orlem, highlighting this need, made the impossible possible, as generosity flowed once again. Parishioners came forward and donated old and new moblies, laptops to help those who needed it!



Bonding Together as One Body of Christ

Carl D'Penha, Animator Community III, Sector II

JBC, Sector 2, St Joseph Community, have been witnessing the guidance of Mama Mary who has brought this community together in Prayer and Fellowship. During the month of May, we prayed the Rosary Online and had at least 25+ people joining in. On the last day, 31st May, 30+ people participated in the online Rosary. The recitation of the Rosary continued in July and August as well.

In July and August we organized Quizzes / Riddles based on current topics, a Quiz session on Mother Mary on Mount Carmel feast, besides the Monthly Rosary conducted. It is heartening to see the Community come together things get managed and are made possible by the grace of God

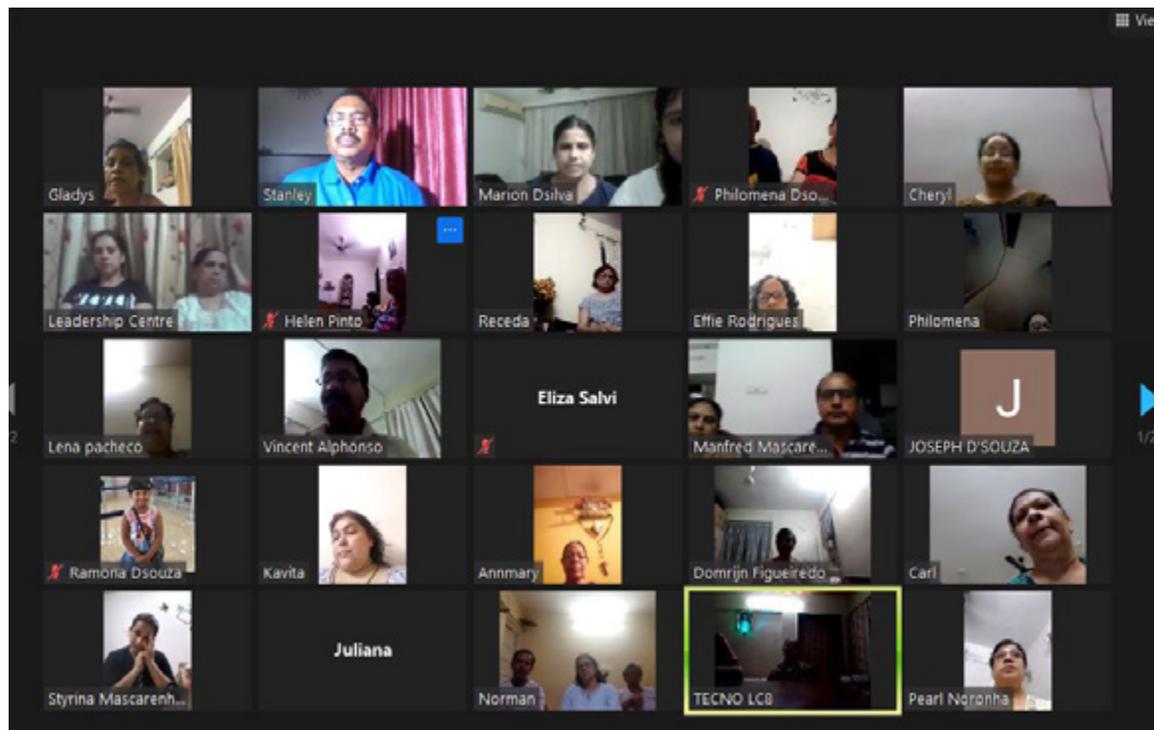
GRAND PARENTS DAY ---- WOW !

This year, July 26th, the feast of Saints Joachim and Anne, traditionally celebrated as Parents Day, was also celebrated as "Grand Parents Day". The

word 'Grand' also means magnificent, imposing in appearance! However, the role of Grand Parents has, till recently, been the most unrecognized and seldom given the status it truly deserves.

Grandparents have sacrificed many of their yesterdays to enable their children see a better tomorrow. Sometime these same children often dump their parents in old age homes, in the twilight years of their life, when they are unable to care for themselves or their grandchildren. A visit to any of the many such homes reveal true but sad stories of these aged, loving, caring folks, just existing, some waiting for their children to return, as unfulfilled promises.

It's nice that this year the Christian community has recognized the role of Grand Parents, even though the day was clubbed with Parents Day, there by diluting its importance and relegating it to the back burner. Maybe be in future a separate day will be earmarked as Grand Parents Day.



While saluting Grand Parents and wishing them all the very best, I end this with a small poem in their honour:

“Grand Parents have ears that really listen,
Arms that always Hug and Hold,
Love that’s never Ending,
And a heart that’s made of Gold”

The Animators honoured our sector Grandparents by handing them a memento in gratitude for the guidance they provide to their families and the Community.

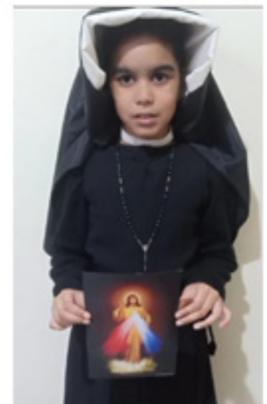


Girl Child Fancy Dress Competition

Velanie D'lima, Lourdes Colony sector 2

September 8th marks the birthday of Our Blessed Mother, Mary. On this occasion, the Church celebrates the Girl Child Day. So, this year Lourdes Colony, St Marks Community, Sector 2 decided to make it special by inviting all the young daughters

of their community to participate in a Fancy Dress Competition dressed as their favourite Christian female religious figure. We were thrilled as we received a number of entries.



Happy Girl Child Day!

Animator, Mith Chowki, Sector 3

September 8, the feast day of the Nativity of Our Lady, was also celebrated as Girl Child Day. Our Sector, Mith Chowki, Our Lady of Rosary sector, celebrated the Girl Child Day and a treat was in store for our girls, with hand-made cards and gifts

too! Animators went out of their way to ensure an enjoyable time, keeping in mind the norms of COVID appropriate behaviour. It was truly a memorable evening. May our Lady intercede and always protect the Girl child.



Sunday Schoolers Celebrate 9 Blessed Days in Honour of Mumma Mary-T'was Indeed Different!

Lizelle Ann Henriques (Sunday school Catechist)

Our Parish began the novena in preparation for the feast of the Nativity of Our Lady, from 30th August 2021. This year too, the pandemic prevented us from gathering together in Church to honour our Blessed Mama Mary. However, the children of Our Lady of Lourdes Church Sunday School did not let this dampen their enthusiasm for honouring and celebrating their beloved Mama Mary. From volunteering to animating the novena Masses to wholeheartedly carrying out the list of ritual activities suggested by the DCC Bandra, our children put their heart and soul into expressing their love and devotion to our Blessed Mother. The themes for this year's novena Masses were based on the important events in Mother Mary's life, as found in the gospels.

It was heartening to see the children animate each day's novena mass by prayerfully and confidently introducing the day's theme, proclaiming the Word, offering up intercessory prayers and reciting the novena prayer, accompanied by joyful voices lifted in song and praise. Listening to the youth give a short teaching based on the day's theme, was enlightening and inspiring to both children and adults alike.



The ritual activities encouraged entire families to spend time together in prayer and creative endeavours; while also acknowledging and reaching out to the larger community around them – senior citizens, helpers like the security guards, domestic helps, small vendors, etc. Children fashioned vibrantly colourful and artistic paper garlands and greeting cards for senior citizens and helpers. They delighted their parents and families by helping out in daily household chores, reaching out with medicines or daily necessities to lonely seniors in their respective communities, saving their pocket money and using it to help those in need. Many families grew closer in faith as they gathered together to pray the rosary. Children composed their own poems/prayers of thankfulness for blessings received. As they prayed for those afflicted by illness and offered up intentions for their families and communities during the rosary, our children emulated Our loving Mother Mary in Her gentle



kindness and intercession for those in need. On the 9th day, children transformed their homes into chapels of holiness by enthroning the Bible with flowers, candles and a special place of honour within their families.

The nine-day novena culminated in the celebration of Mary as the Ray of Sunshine for the Girl-child. As we celebrated the birth of Mary, our parish family was encouraged to pray for girls/women everywhere and never to discriminate against them.

Independence Day & Feast of the Assumption of Our Lady

All Saints Community, JBC, invited DIY videos, photographs, songs from the Community for a video to be shared on 15th August 2021 within the Community to celebrate Independence Day & Feast of the Assumption of Our Lady.

The video included:

- 1) Emily Monteiro - Sharing in the festive spirit
- 2) Mithai by Lovely Miranda - From London to India, here's wishing all my friends a happy Independence Day.
- 3) Tricolor food preparations by Arlene Alves

- 4) Tri color pizza by Kimberly and Kaitlyn
- 5) Icecream sticks Photoframe, Patriotic song & Pathoyo recipe by Kyle Fernandes
- 6) Letri by Leean Fonseca
- 7) Family wishes by Carol Pereira & family
- 8) Tricolor Salad by Zoe
- 9) Video compilation by Darrel Dsouza
- 10) All the Animators of All Saints Community for support & enthusiasm

The Video was very well received & appreciated by the Members of All Saints Community!



Independence Day Celebrations

Lester Pereira, Community 4 / Sector 5

15th August Independence Day is an important day for every Indian. Year after year, it reminds us of our great freedom fighters who struggled and sacrificed their lives in order to free our motherland from British rule.

This year, the members of Tank Colony, Sector 5 celebrated Independence Day. We had planned an ethnic wear theme and decorated the venue. Mr. Bonnie Pereira set up the tricolor and filled it with flower petals. The flag was then hoisted by a designated individual Ms. Seema who is the cleaner of a few buildings. This was followed by singing of the national anthem. Ms. Seema then expressed how honoured she felt to be chosen to hoist the flag even though she belongs to the lower strata of society, given that we could have chosen some renowned person instead. Subsequently, her daughter Sania who is a Class VIII student of Nutan Vidya Mandir High School gave a very emotional and heartfelt speech on how her mother has been working so hard for their education and supporting them to give them a better life and future than what her mother had in her own life. After the speech, Swilden, a young lad, sang a patriotic song and rekindled patriotism in us all.

Our Parish Councillor Mrs. Sabina D'Souza concluded the celebration with a vote of thanks and gifts were given to Sania and Swilden as a token of appreciation. Post this we had a fellowship of snacks, cake and juice. Overall, there was great enthusiasm among all.



Legion of Mary Centenary

Clara Alvares, Legion of Mary

The Legion of Mary celebrates its Centenary this year. The Legion was founded by Servant of God Frank Duff in Ireland on September 7th, 1921. It first came to India in Chennai in 1931. It was established in the Archdiocese of Bombay at Our Lady of the Rosary Church in Mazagaon in 1943. An ardent SVP member Blessed Frank Duff, felt the need to increase Marian devotion and started the Legion to do so. Hence, the Legion is dedicated totally to our Blessed Mother, through whose intercession we reach her son, our Lord, Jesus Christ.

The Legion of Mary is an Association of Catholics who, with the sanction of the Church and under the powerful leadership of Mary Immaculate, Mediatrix of all Graces, have formed themselves into a Legion for service in the warfare which is perpetually waged by the Church against the evil powers of the world. The Legion of Mary therefore is organized on the model of the army of ancient Rome, the terminology of which is adopted also. The object of the Legion of Mary is the glory of God through the holiness of its members, developed by prayer and active co-operation, under the ecclesiastical guidance in Mary's and the Church's work of crushing the head of the serpent and advancing the reign of Christ.

The spirit of the Legion is that of Mary herself. Profound humility, perfect obedience, continual prayer, universal mortification, heroic patience, self-sacrificing courageous love of God and above all, faith.

In our Parish of Our Lady of Lourdes, Orlem we have five Praesidia. Two English and one Konkani speaking for adults, besides a Youth and a Junior Praesidium. We also have a Tamil Curia, a higher council, which caters to a number of parishes having Tamil speaking Praesidia. All these are governed by the Senatus which is the highest Council in India. The Star of the Sea Senatus, meets once a month at the St. Pius Seminary, Goregaon and reports to the Concilium in Dublin, Ireland, where the Head Quarters of

the Legion of Mary are situated. The Bombay Senatus covers most of western, northern and eastern India, including Delhi, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Goa, covering 45 dioceses. Besides they have been given the additional responsibility of overseeing the Calcutta Comitium, as well as Nepal and Bangladesh.

The basic works of the Legion are home visitation, where the legionaries are sort of intermediaries between the Parish Clergy and the parishioners. They also visit hospitals, institutions like orphanages, aged homes, the clergy home and homes of people of other faith, etc. where they interact with the patients/care givers and residents there. Legionaries always go out in pairs, like Christ's disciples, and report on the work they have done at the weekly meetings. The meetings are very structured and this is the place where the Legionaries are assigned weekly work. However due to the Covid pandemic all this is now put on hold and only online meetings are held where the Tessera prayers are recited. The Tessera is a collection of the essential prayers of the Legion of Mary.

There are two categories of Legionaries, active and auxiliary. Active Legionaries who attend the weekly meetings and carry out the works allotted to them, and Auxiliary Legionaries who pray the Tessera prayers. The commitment of the Auxiliaries is to pray the Tessera daily, which includes the Magnificat and the recitation of the holy rosary without fail. This commitment sustains the active members as they go about their allotted work, making them diligent.

We wish all Legionaries, present and past as well as Auxiliaries, a blessed Centenary. We thank you for your commitment to the Legion Apostolate and we appreciate all you do towards the greater glory of God. Congratulations and God bless!

"I am all yours, my Queen, my Mother, and all that I have is yours." Ave Maria.

Euthanasia move in Europe is sign of 'throwaway culture' says Pope Francis.

In March, Spain's parliament passed a law legalizing euthanasia in the country.

(Sourced from the internet)

Increasing calls to legalize euthanasia in several European countries, as well as the disregard for vulnerable people and the unborn, are signs of a "throwaway culture" that is gaining ground across the continent, Pope Francis said.

"What is (deemed) useless is discarded. Old people are disposable material; they are a nuisance. Not all of them, but of course, in the collective subconscious of the throwaway culture, the old, the terminally ill, and unwanted children, too; they are returned to the sender before they are born," the pope said in an interview with COPE, the radio station owned by the Spanish bishops' conference, broadcast Sept. 1.

"This throwaway culture has marked us. And it marks the young and the old. It has a strong influence on one of the tragedies of today's European culture," he said.

In March, Spain's parliament passed a law legalizing euthanasia in the country, making it the fourth European country to legalize physician-assisted suicide after Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg.

Other European countries, such as Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Finland and Norway, allow for what is known as "passive euthanasia," in which patients, under strict circumstances, can elect to not receive treatments, such as nutrition or hydration, that would prolong their lives.

Recently, in Italy, 750,000 people signed a petition to abolish a clause in the Italian criminal code that makes assisted suicide punishable by five to 12 years in prison.

Supporters of euthanasia, the pope said, often use "the idea of compassion, 'that this person may not suffer.' But what the church is asking is to help people to die with dignity. This has always been done."

Pope Francis also lamented "the demographic winter" in Europe, particularly due to increased cases of abortion.

The pope said that while he does "not like to enter into discussions" on whether abortions are "possible up to here or whether it is not possible up to there," what is indisputable is the existence of human life.

"Any embryology manual given to a student in medical school says that by the third week of conception, sometimes before the mother realizes (that she is pregnant), all the organs in the embryo are already outlined, even the DNA. It is a life, a human life.