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JESUS – The Reason for the Season

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Reaching Out Theme For February 2024

We Celebrate the Feast of our Patron Our Lady of Lourdes

Can we emulate Mary to
shape our spiritual lives that
impact us and the lives of all
those around us?

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PARISH INFORMATION

MASS TIMINGS

WEEKDAYS 6.00 am, 6.45 am, 5.30 pm & 7.00 pm

SATURDAY 5.30 pm & 7.00 pm

SUNDAY 6.00 am, 7.00 am (Konkani), 8.00 am, 9.15 am
(Tamil), 10.30 am (Children), 4.00 pm (Tamil
Children), 5.15 pm, 6.30 pm (Youth) & 7.30 pm

MARRIAGE

Couples intending to marry in our church have to meet any
priest at least six months in advance, to check the availability
of the church as well as to be briefed on marriage procedures.

Timings for Masses are as follows:

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Sunday: 10.30 am & 5.15 pm

CONFESSIONS

Every Saturday at 5.00 pm & 6.30 pm
Thursday before First Friday from 6.15 pm to 7.00 pm
Dialogue confession is encouraged with prior appointment.

BAPTISM

Every Sunday at 11.30 am

Expectant parents are requested
to complete the pre-baptismal
course and produce the certificate
while fixing the date for the
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OFFICE TIMINGS

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Saturday: 9.00 am to 12.00 pm
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Merry Christmas





How Beautiful are the Feet of those Who Bring Good News!

Fr. Reuben Tellis

St. Paul in his letter to the Romans 10: 14-15, quotes these words from Isaiah 52: 7, to insist upon the blessedness of being an apostle of the Lord, being sent to bear forth the Word to the others. A prerequisite is that the person has received the Word, to share it with others. Some have thought that it is the feet, and therefore the evangelist, who does the tough work, compared for example to the eye or the ear. But this is not right. The feet are beautiful because it is a beautiful message. But more tellingly, the feet are beautiful because of the walk, or Christ-like character of those who bear this good news.

For us as parishioners of Our Lady of Lourdes Church, Orlem, these words will form the backdrop for the year ahead. If we are celebrating our faith today it is because of the apostles of the Lord who amidst opposition and threat, bore witness to his name. They used every opportunity to make Christ known to people and to bring people to Christ. They were the beautiful feet which brought the good news to the world.

During the following months, let us deepen our call to become preachers of the gospel - the good news - depending on what our state of life is - as priests, religious, married persons, singles, senior citizens, youth, children or in our professions as doctors, nurses, social workers, educators, lawyers, entrepreneurs and even caregivers or for that matter through the services rendered in the parish as animators, catechists, or even as members of the cells, ministries and associations. We are all needed and called to care for one another and the good news lies in the good deeds of love, compassion, mercy and generosity to name a few.

It was in Matthew 9: 37-38, that we heard our Lord Jesus say, "The harvest is plentiful, but the

labourers are few." We can look at the parish as the harvest, or for that matter the area where we live with a plurality of religions or even our schools, colleges and places of work. The beauty of the good news is that it challenges us to be like Christ who reached out to the poor, the sick, the prisoners, the marginalised and the outcasts of society.

The good news that Christ proclaimed was not just by his preaching but also by praxis. We can easily say that "he walked the talk." The Gospels beautifully describe his actions of mercy and compassion towards children, youth, seniors, the sick, the rejected, the marginalised and sinners, even at the point of death. His miracles at the wedding at Cana, at the feeding with the loaves and fish, raising the dead to life, healing the sick, where people were even ready to touch him or lay on the ground he walked on, indicate the beauty of his message of love and peace. At the Last Supper, when Our Lord washed the feet of his disciples, it was an act of preparing them to "walk the talk."

Our worship as disciples of Christ should reflect our readiness to serve, to make Jesus known to all through our words and actions, our involvement in the Small Christian Communities should help everyone experience a sense of belonging, where "no one is in want," and our service through the ministries, cells and associations should celebrate the vision of the early Christian community as described in Acts 2: 42, where the disciples were known for their life of prayer and good works.

The onus first lies on each one of us as individuals to identify a scope of activity to proclaim the good news either in the neighbourhood or wherever one is placed, then it is up to the family to recognise a need where help can be rendered and at the larger parish level, we can draw up an action plan of activities through

the SCCs, associations and cells to share the beauty of the good news.

We must never forget that in these times of social media, we have available tools to help in proclamation. We must be grateful to God for the numerous fingers that bring good news to the world - keying in on the smart phones, feeding in from the laptops and desktops, posting messages and videos and so many ways of sharing the good news of our gracious

outreach with the world.

As stakeholders in the mission of Jesus, let us work together as we seek the joy of the Lord in the words of the hymn:

*I give my hands to do Your work
And, Jesus Lord, I give them willingly.
I give my feet to go Your way
And every step I shall take cheerfully.*

Jesus Our Focus for all Seasons

Angela Fernandes, Community 1 sector 2



Who is Jesus ?

Jesus is both divine and incarnate. There is power in the name of Jesus. He is obedient to Abba Father's plan of salvation for sinful mankind. He lived a humble life in Nazareth. He began his public ministry for 3 years teaching in synagogues, healing and curing the sick. Jesus was the epitome of love compassion and the suffering servant.

Jesus endured the most excruciating suffering which culminated in his death on the cross.. He

prayed often being in communion with Abba Father. As a helpless divine child he instilled fear in King Herod when he heard a king is born. King Herod plans to kill all infants but Joseph escapes with the child and his mother to Egypt. The first fall of Jesus was for the murder of holy innocence.

Today, man rolls in sin of smoking, drinking, gambling, sexual abuse, live-in relationships and divorce. Satan's grip on sinful mankind caused Jesus to fall the second time.

Greed for power, wealth make leaders rule the country with malignant governance. Nuclear weapons, religious intolerance, dictatorship, curbs on internet, social activist and murders have caused Jesus to fall the third time.

By his death, Jesus redeems man and opens the gates of heaven for us. Let us love Jesus and bring him in our homes, neighborhood and community. Follow his teachings the beatitudes, love people you interact with, pray for your enemies. Let go of greed, forgiveness, revenge and malicious gossip. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you, and surrender your life to Jesus. Jesus loved the poor, the orphans and widows. Do we reach out and empathize with them. To love Jesus is to do his will. Only then can we experience the Love of Jesus.



Our Lady of Lourdes Church

Christmas and New Year Programme

Christmas Eve: Sunday, 24th December 2023, on the Church Grounds

Tamil

Carol Singing at 7:00 p.m. followed by Mass at 7:30 p.m.

English

Carol Singing at 10:00 p.m. followed by Mass at 10:30 p.m.

Christmas Day: Monday, 25th December 2023, Service in the Church

Morning: 6 am, 7 am (Konkani), 8 am, 9.15 am (Tamil) & 10:30 am
There will be **NO EVENING MASSES**

New Year's Eve: Sunday, 31st December 2023, Service in the Church

Tamil

Thanksgiving /Adoration at 7:00 p.m. followed by Mass at 8:00 p.m.

English

Thanksgiving /Adoration at 11:00 p.m. followed by Mass at 12:00
midnight

New Year's Day: Monday, 1st January 2024, Service in the Church

Morning: 6 am, 7 am (Konkani), 8 am, 9.15 am (Tamil) & 10:30 am
There will be only one Mass in the evening at 7:00 pm



Celebrating the True Essence of Christmas!

Melville X. D'Souza

We are in the Christmas season, busy decorating our homes, putting up streamers, bunting, putting up new curtains, getting new clothes. We would also be putting up a star outside our balcony. And, setting up a crib with new creative ideas, etc. Then, there would be late night parties, visiting friends & relatives, making merry. **It's Christmas after all, so we all have fun!**

In the midst of all this excitement, we need to take a pause, to ponder and ask ourselves, **what does Christmas mean to me? What are we celebrating at Christmas time, why are we celebrating Christmas? What is the Christmas season all about? What is the reason for the Christmas season in the first place?** You could possibly share and discuss these questions with your family.

Yes, we tend to forget the true essence of Christmas, we tend to forget the very reason for this celebration. We must understand that there is '**CHRIST**' in **CHRISTMAS**. If we remove CHRIST from CHRISTMAS, Christmas would be meaningless. Christmas would seem like just another festive season. **Let's bring CHRIST back into our CHRISTMAS celebrations. Jesus is the reason, rather, the only reason for the Christmas season!**

Jesus was born into this world not just for you, but for your family, for your neighbours, for your community, for society, for the world at large. So while we celebrate Christmas with our families, we need to expand the scope of our celebrations to include our neighbours, members of the community, people in society, the poor, the old, the sick, the aged, the housebound. Also, those in grief having lost their family members, or those in some sort of distress. **Jesus came down to share his body & blood with all of us. He came to give us Life. It is fitting therefore that we share the joys**

of Christmas with others.

We all want to be rich, rich with material possessions, but what about our spirituality? The Beatitudes say, 'blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven.' In order to enter the kingdom of Heaven, we need to acknowledge that we are in need of God. **Christmas offers us the opportunity to make amends. We need to ask God for forgiveness and save us.**

We all love gifts at Christmas time. This Christmas, Jesus offers us gifts that go beyond material possessions. **He offers us unending Peace, Love, Hope.** Are we ready to accept His offer?

Seasons come and seasons go, and we move along, embracing all seasons that come our way. **This Christmas season will also soon pass in a couple of weeks time. What is it that you would remember about the Christmas season.** Would it be the new curtains, or perhaps, new clothes, the dances, the late night parties? Yes there will be so many things you would remember about Christmas time. **But once again, the question crops up, will you remember Jesus, the very reason for the Christmas season? Some Food for Thought - in the New Year ahead!**



“JESUS” – The Reason for all Seasons

Olga Pereira, JBC Community 3, Sector 1

“Glory to God in the Highest Heaven and Peace on Earth to those with whom He is pleased” (Luke 2:14)

The season of Christmas is a time of great rejoicing because it was out of God our Abba Father’s abundant love for us that he sent His only Son to be our Saviour and Redeemer. Jesus our Emmanuel. And, Jesus came to us in human form.

Jesus is the reason for our Christmas celebration today and forever. Jesus is the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. He is the light, set to brighten our path. The season of Christmas will end but the Spirit of Christmas is everlasting. We need Jesus to dispel the darkness and protect the dignity of every human being. We need Jesus to comfort the vulnerable and those suffering pain and anxiety. We need Him to bring reconciliation and mediation and thus restore peace and harmony in a world torn by war. We need Jesus in our family, our community, our society, our place of work. We need to keep Christ alive and present in our lives.

We must reach out and comfort our family members, our elders, the sick and lonely. Our actions and attitudes should be of humble service, filling them with the love and hope of Jesus and bring them cheer and joy. In this way true celebration of Christmas will be achieved in a concrete manner and not just words alone. Thus, we share the Peace and Joy of Christmas with them.

Jesus came to walk with us to share in our joys and sorrows and He gave us valuable lessons for life like patience, self-reliance, forgiveness, compassion, acceptance, unconditional love and courage. He taught us that our earthly journey is temporary and we should live a life worthy of our heavenly destination. As his followers we



too can spread kindness and love to everyone and especially lending a compassionate ear to someone who needs to be heard, sharing a genuine smile with a person who feels alone, extending a helping hand to anyone who is helpless and speaking words of kindness to those who are often spoken rudely to. In our workplace we can spread love and cheer with our colleagues and subordinates, by our care and concern, by being sensitive and kind.

Let us this Christmas surrender wholeheartedly to Jesus and He will help us to walk across rough highways and dark valleys for He has said, “I am the Light of the World, he who follows Me will not walk in darkness but will have the light of life.” (John 8:12)

May our homes be filled with Christ’s Peace and Harmony and may His Love radiate this Christmas and all seasons throughout the year. May Our Lady lead us through her intercession with Jesus into the New Year 2024. Wishing all of us a Christ filled Christmas and a Blessed New Year 2024.

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JESUS – The Reason for the Season

Arlene Alves, Community-3, JBC Sector-1

'MARANATHA' COME LORD JESUS COME.

Come to our suffering, as Savior and comforter
Come into our world of conflict, as prince of peace

Come to our families as Heavenly Father
Come into this world of darkness, despair and to the broken hearted as Jesus you are the "Light of the World."

The reason and season to sing "Maranatha" is to rejoice in the birth of the Lord Jesus, Savior of the world. His Kingdom there, will have no end, the promised Messiah, may be ever present in our lives and thus can we radiate light, love and hope to everyone. Jesus in all human frailty, in grace and will of the Father rose in divinity. The world is in turmoil and suffering today still seeking peace, tranquility and harmony.

Can we increase our faith and our works of faith and charity towards the less fortunate, needy, poor and marginalized? Thus bringing cheer, joy and happiness to them just as Jesus set an

example living His mission on earth fulfilling His Heavenly Father's will.

Jesus Christ was chosen to be our Savior. He also offers us peace and strength in times of trial and difficulties. God loved us so much that He sent down to earth His only son Jesus, to teach and love and to die for us to save mankind.

Our Savior Lord Jesus came among the people in all simplicity, humility, lowliness, holiness and divinity, as God's only begotten Son. Today humanity is the need of the hour in the world of strife, violence and war. Can we see through the eyes, hands, feet and heart of Jesus to love others in this special Season of Christmas. Can we visit the sick, the house bound, the less fortunate, bringing joy and cheer to one and all spreading the love of Jesus. Thus the spirit of Christmas will reign in our hearts as happy memories forever.

Happy Christmas 2023

Christmas with a Reason

Philomena Pinto, Comm.4 Sector 2

The theme for December is "Jesus - The Reason for the Season" and rightly so, as we celebrate Jesus' birth this month. How do we bring Jesus to our families, neighbours, communities and the poor in spirit? By following His teachings and obeying his commandments.

1. The eight Beatitudes (Mat. 5: 3 - 12) The Beatitudes show what we must be like and how we must live, to be followers of Jesus.

2. Jesus' Main Commandment (Mat. 22: 37-39) Loving God and loving your neighbour. This great commandment of Jesus is important too, for the whole law is founded on it. The two of

them offer hope for the future - the Kingdom of Heaven.

The acronym **JOY** will help us follow these. Remember **J stands for Jesus, O for Others and Y for Yourself.**

So keeping in mind the three letters, always give Jesus the first preference in your life, in thought, word and deed. Then radiating Jesus' love, reach out to others. Finally, think of yourself. Thus we will spread the Light and Love of Jesus, not only at Christmas but through the year.

Have a Holy Spirit-filled Christmas!

Vacation Bible Joy 2023 - "Journeying in Faith"

Lorraine Bent, C1S5

The VBJ was conducted in our parish, from November, 13-18. This six-day, three-hour holiday Bible camp, is an Archdiocese of Bombay, Ministry of the Word programme, envisioned in the 1990s by the late Fr. Leslie Ratus, taken forward by the late Fr. Roland Fialho and now spearheaded by Fr. Jude Ferreira. It aims at making children familiar with scripture in a fun way. The Word Ministers, Sunday School teachers, teachers and youth of the parish, all contributed valuable time and energy to make this programme a success. For six days, the teachers diligently worked to communicate to the kids God's message of love through scripture. Teaching methods included a half hour assembly of praise and worship and the breaking of the Word, followed by class sessions made interesting with craftwork, action songs and Bible study.



The Anthem Song "We are going on a journey," became viral on social media as it was vibrantly sung and danced to by children in all parishes across, even outside Mumbai. The closing ceremony on the last evening saw children performing the themed bible stories in drama, song and dance bringing out the best in them, and touching the hearts of the Parents who came in large numbers to cheer them.

A big shout out to our Priest Team who supported us all the way and kept our energy levels high by expressing solidarity through their presence and active participation on all days. All in all, a great experience as, together, we "Journeyed in Faith!"





A Day Much Awaited

Sharon Monteiro C5 S1

A fabulous weekend celebration drew a good number of Santa Monica sector residents in soaring spirit, to Joe Pas Mansion on 26th August, 2023.

Come August and it's a time of coming together to celebrate the feast of our sector patron saint, Saint Monica, the exemplary mother of Saint Augustine. She perseveringly pursued her wayward son, not with threats, but with prayerful cries to heaven. What better way than to start the evening with a short brief on the life of Saint Monica, who through sorrow and pain, persevered

and constantly devoted herself to God. This was followed by prayer; petition & hymns lead by Dazzle. All were urged to attend the Eucharistic celebration at 5.15 pm being the feast day of Saint Monica.

The evening came alive with the spirit of playfulness in a game of Housie that everyone enjoys most. Mouth-watering snacks kept everyone satiated.

Music, like a magic thread, weaves through the gathering, connecting everyone in its rhythmic embrace of a sing song with Louis at the beat box.

Our sector feast is not just a simple event. One of the most beautiful aspects of the gathering is the sense of unity and togetherness it brings, reflecting the essence of our community. As we eagerly await its arrival each year, we're reminded of the bonds that tie us together, and the happiness that radiates when we celebrate as one. Thanks to our Parish Councillor Tanya and her team of Animators who orchestrated the event.

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All Hallows Eve

Rhonda Divecha

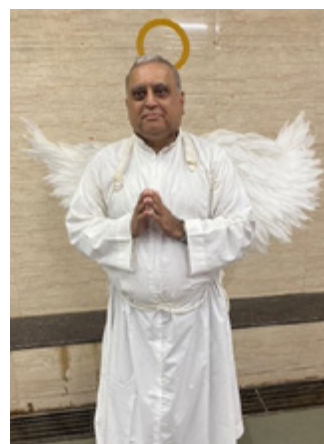
Every year on the 1st of November, we observe All Saints Day. We, the members of the Christian Family Movement (CFM) and the Family Cell of our Parish celebrated this event in a special way this year, like we had done last year, by organising ALL HALLOWS EVE on Sunday, 29th of October 2023, to enable parishioners to prepare for All Saints Day, by learning more about our saints in an enjoyable way, dressing up and role-playing different saints. No-one went away empty handed, as besides prizes for the winners, there were also tokens for all participants for their efforts in costume making and acting, and spot-prizes for the audience.



There were four age group categories. Our youngest (4 years) came as St. Nicholas and our oldest was a lady (85 years) who came as St. John the Baptist. The others were Saints Joseph, Maria Goretti, Lucy, Theresa of Roses, Anne, Carlos Acutis and even St. Pope John Paul II. The judges were Sr. Zarina and Mr. Ladislaus D'Souza.



The CFM and Family Cell members teamed up beautifully to plan, prepare and execute the event, which was a great success.



Fr. Harry Vaz was very encouraging and motivating towards the idea of this event.



SSVP Annual Gathering – A Modest Celebration

Melville X. D'Souza – SSVP member

We all love to celebrate feasts of saints, especially when it is our patron saint. And so, members of the **Society of St. Vincent de Paul (SSVP)** assembled at the Nihar Hall on Sunday October 2, for our annual celebration, beginning with the Mass at 6.30 that evening.

Fr. Harry appreciated the work the SSVP have been doing in the parish and around the world. He encouraged us with his enlightening talk, giving us an insight into the field of social work. We should be helping others not just out of pity, you need to have the compassion and dedication, otherwise it is meaningless. **Fr. Harry further said that it is not important just to belong to an association but to pick up the very core of the charism of that association.** He implored God's Blessings on us all.

Fr. Sunil, our spiritual director spoke a few words of encouragement and assured us of God's Blessings for the work that we do.

The celebration was a modest celebration in keeping with the nature of our association, which included a couple of games, singing, refreshments.

We were glad to have four of the confirmation youth joining in the celebration.

A couple of special guests, rather benefactors like Dr. Sharad Oza, Dr. Denis Alappat, Tony Trinidad and Chetan the Pharmacist from Care First Pharmacy too graced the occasion.

October - the Rosary Month!

Melville X. D'Souza (Comm.1 Sector 6)

October 13 is a special day in the Catholic calendar, for it was on this day that our Lady made her final appearance to those three children at Fatima. To commemorate the event, the members of the Holy Family Community (Comm.1 Sector 6) gathered together at Vasant View society for a special Rosary.

Various intentions were prayed for during the Rosary - needs of the community, the Church and the world at large. The whole hearted participation from the community was encouraging.

The parish councillor, Flavia, took this opportunity to explain to the community the concept of the Small Christian Community (SCC). She stressed upon the need to form and strengthen the SCC, as it would be beneficial to all members of the community, especially

the aged, sick and the housebound. This would result in better bonding among the members of the community. In short, **we need to ensure that everyone is cared for and that there is 'no one in want'.**

October 31st marked the end of the Rosary month. And so once again, members of the community assembled at the Grotto at Vasant View society for reciting the Holy Rosary. Here again, the turnout was heartwarming.

Once again, various intentions were prayed for. The Rosary was followed by a small fellowship where members interacted with each other amidst some refreshments.

Flavia again reiterated the importance of the SCC and we are hopeful that the SCC will take root in our community.

Orlem Youth Week '23 Unveils 'The Carnival'

The highly anticipated Orlem Youth Week 2023 unfolded over five days from the 28th of November to the 2nd of December and featured various events and artists, each intricately woven around the overarching theme of 'The Carnival'. A result of months of tireless planning, brainstorming, and precise execution, carried out after long and sleepless hours of practice by the youth of Orlem.

The meticulously crafted schedule included five distinct events: Carnival Twist, Drama, Singing, Fashion Show, and Dance, with each day blossoming as a unique spectacle. It featured performances not only by our youth but also by various parishioners.

Carnival Twist seamlessly combined a talent show with an art installation competition, creating an immersive experience for participants and spectators alike. Drama, exploring the theme 'I Had a Dream', offered participants a canvas of possibilities to unleash their creativity. Singing took on the enchanting form of 'Muzical Swap', a musical battle that resonated with the audience's rhythmic sensibilities. The Fashion Show, aptly named 'Carnival of Couture', transported the audience around the globe by portraying Carnivals from various cultures, all accomplished within budgetary constraints. The Dance event brought forth the mesmerizing world of 'Cirque du Soleil', which captivated the audience by incorporating various genres in the circus.

This extraordinary event not only showcased the exceptional talents of the youth of Orlem but also featured remarkable performances by Raaga Trippin', India's premier acapella group, and Serious Jokers, who had us clutching our stomachs with laughter on day one at the Carnival Twist. And on day five, we had the special kids of Armaan put on a beautiful dance show that stole our audience's hearts. Each day, the event attracted a sizable crowd

eager to witness the extraordinary talents of the youth of Orlem. Behind the seamless execution of this grand spectacle stood the collaborative efforts of 15 zonal coordinators, 10 event heads, the heads of the 12 departments and the dedicated volunteers who formed the backbone of the workforce.

We extend our gratitude to the team of priests, our generous parishioners, sponsors, and the church and school staff whose unwavering support made this year's Orlem Youth Week possible. Special acknowledgement is reserved for the P.Y.A.T. core members—Allan D'mello, Michelle Lobo, Roselle Fernandes and various other members of the extended P.Y.A.T.—who lent their invaluable support and innovative ideas to the core team, zonal coordinators and our event and department heads.

Lastly, we sincerely thank our Youth Director, Fr Arun, whose presence, guidance and encouragement breathed life into this spectacular event. With his guidance, Orlem Youth Week blossomed into the resounding success that it became.

Overall, putting all of this together was all a matter of teamwork—we all planned together, laughed together, cried together, stressed together, cheered each other on, encouraged and motivated one another, and poured our hard work and passion into Youth Week, shaping it into the remarkable event that it has become. Through this collaborative journey, we forged lifelong friendships and created memories that will forever be etched in our hearts, and for this immense opportunity, we are truly grateful.

As we fondly reflect on past Youth Week events that provided platforms to budding talents like the Kevinda's and Thomson's of our community, we are grateful for Youth Week for the invaluable skills it has brought out in us,

resounding success of OYW'23 is a testament to this enduring tradition.

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Articles from Children of Std IX and Std X on their Experience at the Sunday School Camp to Karjat 12-14 November 2023

Adventure - the Oxford definition of the word is "an unusual and exciting or daring experience."

Youth are filled with adrenaline, fuelled by growth. Each day we yearn for an adventure or for a meaningful experience. Thanks to our Parish for noticing our restlessness and longing and planning this trip.

Our stay at Karjat was nothing short of an adventure. It instilled in us a sense of independence and maturity. Honestly, it wasn't anything like I had imagined. The simplicity of this trip is what charmed me the most. It wasn't a great challenge for only the aspiring vagabonds, nor was it a task for a homebody - it was the perfect balance. The weather chose to be on our side as well, with an ample amount of sunlight and frequent cool breezes.

This trip wasn't just for the thrill, it was also for the questions we youth are often afraid to ask. I'm beyond grateful to our Catechists and Priests for allowing us to open up and explore our faith in a simpler way. Along with that, the activities planned were perfect! The exhilarating rock climbing, the peaceful morning trek through the village and the bonfire party truly brought out our fun side.

The food was amazing! For the first time, I was not homesick. The beds, the food, the ambience - all felt familiar, almost like a home, away from home.

The faith sessions were deeply informative and thought provoking. Also, knowing that a room full of people struggle with things that I too struggle with, made me feel understood. Sharing a meal with people I've never even acknowledged before felt so new and

different, but lovely nonetheless. Praying and worshipping together gave me the confidence that the Church and its people will always be there, as a sanctuary for me in troubling times. The spirit of teamwork flowed through us as we engaged ourselves in team sports. Along with new interests, we also found new competition! These 3 days were more than just days of guidance, or days of enjoyment they are days of memories that I will truly cherish for indeed a very long time!!!!

- Amelia Mireille Soares, JBC, Std X

This camp featured engaging faith-based sessions where students shared their views and queries about religion. Exciting activities such as rock climbing, zip-lining and sports like volleyball, badminton, and football gave us a good workout.

Throughout the camp, participants deliberately disconnected from their electronic devices and modern technology, immersing themselves in nature and forming new friendships. The experience created a wave of joy among all children, turning the camp into a cherished and enjoyable trip for everyone involved.

- Yohann Rodrigues, Evershine Nagar, Std IX

The camp was a fun learning experience for all of us where we had a wonderful time participating in all the fun filled activities and sessions conducted by the catechists. I loved spending quality time with our teachers and friends.

- Liz Gomes, Tank Colony, Std IX



Camp is one of the best ways to freshen our minds and enjoy every moment of nature. The Sunday School Camp to Karjat was a beautiful experience.

There were faith-based interactive sessions, along with team games and activities like hiking, rock climbing, swimming, camp fire etc.

For our stays we had dormitories separate for

girls and boys. Delicious food was served for our meals. Fr. Cedric Rosario celebrated the Holy Eucharist and enlightened us with his meaningful homilies.

It was a fun learning experience. I thank our Sunday School catechists for organizing this camp.

- Edel Fernandes, Tank Colony, Std IX

A moment of Great Joy and Pride for our Parish and Carmel of St. Joseph

Valentine Vaz



You may ask why?

Three of our budding hockey girls L-R Taleesa Vaz, Liz Gomes and Nysa Coutinho were a part of the Bronze medal winning team of Hockey Maharashtra Sub Junior team at the West Zone, Hockey India conducted tournament.

The tournament saw 7 teams playing the round Robin league with each other and the top 4 playing Knockouts. Maharashtra beat Rajasthan for the Bronze medal

While everyone was busy with Cricket finals, Carmel of St. Joseph school went about winning the U16 girls Savio 5 tournament over the weekend. The tournament saw 117 games played on 2 pitches

- the Men's and Women teams U14, U16, Open and Veterans with teams from Mumbai, Navi Mumbai, Pune, Bangalore, Mysore, Qatar and Tamil Nadu competed for the winner's trophy in their categories.

What a treat to witness top class rink hockey.



Team Hockey Maharashtra



EMHC Picnic

EMHC Coordinator

24th OCTOBER 2023 was a day to remember for every EMHC who embarked on the journey to 'BOSCOWADI', a picnic spot in Uttan that reminded us of the SIMPLE picnics we had in the days of yore. Fun+games+delicious East Indian food.

The day started with games that activated us physically as well as mentally. It didn't matter which team won, all that mattered was that EVERYONE including Sr. Assumpta and Sr. Priscilla participated and enjoyed the games. The ever-smiling Fr. Stephen Kika graced us with his presence and blessed all of us. After a short cooling off session in the pool we were treated to a simple yet sumptuous spread followed by Housie. The picnic continued in the

bus with a singsong session of some beautiful Konkani "mandos" and Tamil songs too, as our Tamil Eucharistic Ministers enthralled us with their singing.

Before this day, we were just names on the EMHC roster, but now we could put faces to the names. This picnic gave us a small window to help know and understand our fellow Eucharistic Ministers better. In gratitude we thank Fr. Reuben and Fr. Sunil for reviving this picnic after 13 years, so that we could have a great time, which we sure did! Thank you, Faye, Tara, Sharel and Stanley for the painstakingly detailed games. Thank you to the EMHC core team for your time and effort put into planning this picnic.

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EMHC Picnic

Altar Servers Gathering

"Let the little Children come to me Do not stop them..." - Mathew 19:14"

A time of fellowship with God and each other was organized by St. Pius X College, Bombay Archdiocesan Seminary, Goregaon East, Mumbai on Thursday, 16th November from 8:00am to 1:30pm with breakfast, soft drink and lunch. Six neighboring Parishes participated in this gathering. There was a football tournament for the boys, dodge ball for the girls and a drawing competition, in two categories (5th to 7th Std and 8th to 9th Std). The topics for 1st category were any one from the three (Deepawali or Morning scenery or Family while eating Bhel). And, the 2nd category any one from the three (Deepawali or any game or Children while eating Ice Candy).

Both the teams (Football and Dodge ball) won the runners up trophy. And in the drawing competition Kaeden Sheikh won the 2nd Prize in the first category, 5th to 7th Std.



Messages from the participants:

With gratitude in our hearts, we thank Rev. Fr. Sunil and our Super Coach Sir Alexio who trained us very well so that we could make it to the finals, along with our entire cheerful Altar Servers of Orlem. They mesmerized us by playing so well to make us proud. All the teams played with full strength, right strategy and put in a lot of effort, that made them shine till the end and have a sporting spirit. The tournaments were quite interesting as every team was doing their best to win.

Especially a big thank you to our Chef's and Food Servers at the Food Court who made the delicious food for us. Also, thanks are due to, Father John Barretto and Bishop Percy. We also want to thank our Bro. Rejith and the Animators and our Parish Fathers who helped in arranging this program. A good performance was portrayed by all the Altar Server participants from the seven different parishes. Everyone had a great bonding time so it didn't matter whether they won or lost.

- Jasmine Vaz

The Our lady of Lourdes team delivered an impressive performance in 3 matches at Goregaon St Pius X College. The first match was played against St. Francis Xavier, Vile Parle. Aaron scored 3 goals and Travis D'Silva added 1 more, leading to a convincing 4-0 victory. The team maintained their winning momentum in the second match played against I.C, Parish Borivali, as Aaron converted a penalty and Reuben Lewis contributed another goal, defeating the opponents. However, the team faced a setback in the third match against the St. Anthony's Malwani, narrowly losing 1-0. Despite the final loss, the team's overall display showcased resilience and skill, setting the stage for a promising season ahead.

- Aaron Lewis

With a grateful heart, I take this opportunity to thank Father Sunil and Alexio sir, for providing us with an opportunity to travel to the Seminary for the Altar Servers Event (most of us for the first time). In spite of seven parishes who took part in this event, we did our best to bring laurels to our parish by participating in the Football, Dodgeball and the Drawing competition and explored our talents. We were very well taken

care with snacks, refreshments and lunch, being served to us. All the participants had a fantastic time and also had the privilege to interact with the Altar Servers of other parishes. Looking forward to participate in many such events in future as well.

- Susanna Murzello

Our kids shone brightly in today's competitions, showcasing incredible talent and effort. Congratulations to all the participants for their wonderful performance! A special shout-out to the winners; your achievements are truly commendable. Gratitude to Fr. Sunil and Alexio Sir for providing this enriching opportunity. The joy and fun our children experienced were priceless, making the day memorable.

The dodge ball team won the 1st match 17 - 9 against St. Francis Xavier, Vile Parle. 2nd match won 23 - 3 against St. Anthony's, Malwani. But, lost the Finals against I.C, Borivali 20 - 24.

A big thumbs up to Kaeden for securing the 2nd prize in Drawing—your artistic flair is inspiring! Here's to a day filled with accomplishments and continued growth of our children's skills.



Borivli Deanery Small Christian Communities (SCC) Rally

Michelle Pinto SCC Parish Lay Coordinator



The SCC Rally is one big way to help showcase what SCCs in Parishes, big or small, do, to reach out to those in need and fulfilling the SCC Mission statement of "No one in want". This also helps us learn from other Parishes' experiences. While we are all quite familiar with the word SCC, the SCC works of other Parishes may not be known to all.

Last year, April 2022, our Parish had the SCC Rally of the 8 Communities/ Zones of our

Parish, on our grounds, which brought about a good understanding of what our sectors do in the SCCs and what more can be done. This year, the SCC Rally is being held at the Deanery level, with the theme "Hearts on Fire, SCCs on the Move", on January 7, 2024 at St Thomas School grounds, Goregaon East at 5.30 pm. 15 parishes from the Borivli Deanery are participating, in this event.

Our Parish has set up a team to organize our part of the event and to present the work of our SCCs at the Deanery Rally.

AAGERA - The Thanksgiving Harvest Festival!

Melville X. D'Souza

AAGERA is a traditional, ages old celebration and is part of the annual festivities which mark the Thanksgiving celebration of the East Indian communities of the Archdiocese of Bombay, Vasai and across Raigad, and also by the East Indian diaspora all over the world.

The Rice sheaves are cut from the fields and brought to the Church to be blessed at the Altar and thereafter distributed to the faithful after Mass.

Here are some glimpses of the **AAGERA - Thanksgiving Harvest Festival** held on October 1, 2023, led by the Mobai Gaothan Panchayat (MGP).



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Bonding with Mother Mary

Santana Coutinho, C7S3

October and there's excitement in the air - it's the Rosary month. To commemorate this month, the Rosa Mystica Community came together as one big family to show our devotion to Mama Mary. It was a joyful affair with enthusiastic participation from everyone in leading different parts of the rosary. Animator Andreena would faithfully prepare the altar with fresh flowers.

Sundays were made extra special with a lucky draw and the privileged was gifted a statue of Mama Mary and a book of Reflections from 'Our Daily Bread'. Besides every day we got to

taste a variety of snacks served.

The Rosary month concluded on 31st October with a thanksgiving prayer and fellowship. We were blessed to have our Community Priest Fr. Sunil D'Souza join us. Our Parish Councilor Assumpta conducted the Thanksgiving service along with the Animators. The Animators also cooked a delicious meal for the Community which was relished by everyone. Everyone departed with fond memories till we meet again in October 2024. God bless Our Community.

Marching for PEACE

Melville X. D'Souza, IRD member (Our Lady of Lourdes parish, Orlem)

October 2 is a very important day in the history of our nation, for, on this day was born the great Mahatma Gandhi, **a universal symbol of peace and tolerance**. A man who defied the mighty British Empire and gained freedom for us, through '**Non-violent**' means.

In order to commemorate Gandhiji's birthday, the Inter-religious Dialogue (IRD) cell of Our Lady of Lourdes Church, Orlem organized a Peace March, inviting people from all faiths to participate in the Peace March. The turnout was encouraging.

The function commenced with an introduction, followed by a brief prayer by Fr. Harry Vaz.

The Peace March began from the Church premises, winding its way through Marve Road, through the roads behind the Church and back. It was good to see a number of school children along with their teacher, Candice among the gathering, **holding up a banner and posters extolling the virtues of the great Mahatma Gandhi**.

Adivi in her speech in Marathi, spoke of the greatness of Mahatma Gandhi, his virtues, his ideals, his contribution towards building up our nation. Today, we are living in a world filled with violence, one nation in war with another, communities fighting each other, brothers killing each other and the list can go on. We all want things to change for the better. Everybody is searching for peace, in fact, the whole world is searching for peace.

Mahatma Gandhi believed in Peace and Tolerance and this is the message we need to take to the world.

A quote from Mahatma Gandhi is relevant to today's times: "Be the change that you wish to see in the world." This may seem like a very difficult task, but perhaps, not impossible.

Another very important message we need to take home is that **we must first be at peace with ourselves. We must say to ourselves, 'Peace begins with Me'.**

The function ended with a Vote of Thanks.



SSVP -Taking Time out!

Melville X. D'Souza – SSVP member

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul (SSVP) is one of those who have responded to the call to work in the Lord's vineyard, serving the needy and the poor in our parish community. However, while we continue our charitable work, we needed a little time of relaxation and fun, taking Time out, so to say. And so, on the 21 of October, members of the SSVP embarked on a picnic to Farrys in Gorai, so far to a certain extent, unaffected by urbanisation.

It was fun right from the moment, Go, from the bus journey to the resort – singing, dancing, interesting games, jokes, etc. It was all an unending trail of fun! But of course, we did begin with a prayer, Rosary and hymns. A Biblical round of Housie, the swimming pool and the beach added to the excitement. Interestingly, we even discovered new talent among the members and that will stand us in good stead. It was indeed a day to remember. Memories of this picnic will linger in our hearts and minds for a long time to come!

All Saints Community, JBC S123

October and November events

All Saints Community in collaboration with the Archdiocese of Mumbai Outreach team & Helpage organised a Free Medical camp for senior citizens on 1st October. We had around 300+ Senior Citizens who availed of the opportunity to meet a team of 25+ doctors. Around 100+ Spectacles, walking sticks, and medicines were distributed to our Senior Citizens.

All Saints Community visited the homebound in the sector on the occasion of World Elders day & gave them a token of love – a personalized Cushion! It was such a joy to meet them as they welcomed us with a warm smile.

October Rosary was recited at all buildings in our sector. Animators and respective building people joined in large nos. in devotion to Our Lady.

All Saints Community organized a Redevelopment Awareness session on 15th October, The Speaker was Advocate Monarch Gandhi. We had 50+ participants. It was a very inspiring & informative session, especially in

these times when many buildings around are going in for redevelopment. Advocate Gandhi shared the guidelines and directives for the Redevelopment of the building of the Co-operative Housing Society.

All Saints Community celebrated our sector feast on 1st November. We celebrated Mass together in the Church at 7 pm followed by an evening of fellowship which included snacks, dance, games spot prizes, and dinner. We had an overwhelming response of 100+ participants.

All Saints Community distributed snack boxes to their Building Watchman on the occasion of Diwali on 14th November, sponsored by Uncle's Kitchen.

JBC Community celebrated Children's Day on 12th Nov at Nihar Hall. Kids had fun as they participated in games and dance. The children were enthusiastic and excited.

Thanking all our volunteers & participants for making the events a success!

Community that Prays Together, Stays Together

Sharel Lobo, C2S1

"Give me an army saying the Rosary and I will conquer the world." - Blessed Pope Pius IX. With this thought in mind the community of St. Thomas the Apostle, came together to pray the Holy Rosary in the month of October. Considering that families are spread out in Somwar Bazaar area, cluster wise Rosary was conducted each Sunday in October by the respective Animators. The aim was to get maximum people praying together and the theme was focused on family and its various needs.

On October 15th, post rosary they celebrated Novem (the harvest festival) where each family prepared a dish and everyone had dinner together. We were blessed to have Fr. Sunil D'Souza joining us in our prayer and celebration. Overall, we had about 95 people across the 5 Sundays who came together. It was a heart-warming experience to see people come, pray the Holy Rosary and mingle with each other to build a stronger community.



Mithchowky Rosary

Florinda Cardoz, Mithchowky Community

The Mithchowky Community came together as a family to pray the Rosary on 14th October 2023.

Each sector prayed a decade with intercessions and hymns. We also spent time together sharing not just snacks but healthy conversations and smiles too.

"The Holy Rosary is the storehouse of countless blessings" - Blessed Alan de la Roche. Mother Mary bless our community and keep us connected always, like the beads of the Rosary.

ECO (Environment Cell of Orlem) News

Wilrine Vaz, For ECO team



ECO has been doing extremely well through small steps towards the Environment. The Tetra collection not only got us a bench as an outcome and the bin for tetra, but due to an overwhelming collection for the past 4 years have been honoured with a **Gold award** this year, on the 1st September 2023.

We have been contributors to more than 1 and half lakh (approx.) of tetra packs in the last 3 and half years and counting. The note received was extremely overwhelming.

The Gold award both the trophy and a stool along with a certificate has been presented to Our lady of Lourdes, Orlem, Malad west which is another feather on our cap as a team.

White Elephant Sale

Jill, For ECO team



The White Elephant Sale organized by E.C.O. (Environment cell of Orlem), took place on **Sunday 19th November 2023 at St. Anne's High School**. The sale featured a wide range of donated items including furniture, electronics, books, toys, vessels and more.

The organizing committee worked diligently to pre work on categorizing, to ease the sorting and display the items effectively. A multi-channel approach was used to promote this annual event, including announcements

after masses on the previous two weekends, social media-WhatsApp & Instagram Posters/ messages and the Church community bulletin board.

The White Elephant Sale was a resounding success, not only as a fundraising initiative but also as a community-building event. The dedication of volunteers, the generosity of donors and the active participation & support of the Parish team & community contributed greatly to the positive outcome.



WORLD ELDERS DAY – An Evening of Fun n Frolic!

Melville X. D'Souza - BASCA member

The Welcome poster and the invitation passes said it all - an evening of 'Fun n Frolic' for senior citizens, to mark WORLD ELDERS DAY, on September 30, organized by Our Lady of Lourdes Church, Orlem unit of BASCA - Bombay Archdiocesan Senior Citizens Association.

It is said, we are not senior citizens but 'recycled Teenagers' and they just proved it by the enthusiasm, excitement, the zeal they displayed that evening at the Nihar Hall, whether it was the games, the dances - fox trot, waltz, jive, Jerusalem dance, the singing, whatever. The sing-song session was loved by all, complete with a guitarist, the bongos & the Base Box in attendance and, Fr. Harry, the spiritual director of BASCA, stealing the show enthusiastically leading the singing and dancing. A treat to watch!

This was preceded by a prayer by Fr. Harry imploring God's blessings on all elders.

Fr. Sunil later, blessed the people while saying the grace.

Did the people enjoy the evening? You bet, they did, and clamouring for more such events. It was indeed, Fun & Frolic all the way! BASCA was overwhelmed by the appreciation expressed by the participants at this function.

The Narohna Sisters!

Meet the Narohna sisters - Tia and Renee, from Community 2, St Thomas the Apostle sector.

Tia Noronha, grade 8, secured 1st place (Gold) at the Maharashtra State and district Artistic Roller-Skating Competition, age 11 to 14, in the solo dance, quartet and precision category. This event was Held at Prabodhankar Thakrey Krida Sankul Vile Parle East, in November 2023. Tia would be now be representing Maharashtra at the National championships in December 2023 to be held in Chennai.

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Tia is seen in the picture with International Judge and Maharashtra artistic skating coach Mrs A Singh and Maharashtra Artistic team choreographer Mr Munish Kotian.

Renee Noronha, age 17, won a silver medal in the 3 hrs category nonstop swimming event called Dusk to Dawn at Pavala Lakeshore in September 2023.

Congratulations and best wishes to the duo!

Our Lady of Rosary Sector Comes Together!

Parishioners of our Lady of Rosary Sector, Mithchowky came together to celebrate their sector feast on October 8, 2023. With prayer and petitions, innovative games and Bible housie, prizes and good food and the presence of our Community Priest, Fr Arun Philip, it was time well enjoyed with the community.

Community Rosary at Skywalk Complex

Nivedita Community C4S8

Every evening at 8pm members of the Skywalk family met in the compound during the month of October to recite the Rosary. On the first day there was a candle light procession to the beautifully decorated altar prepared within the complex to honour Our Lady. The rosary was prayerfully led by the Animators on the first day and each of the 4 clusters in our complex was given one week to conduct the rosary.

A beautiful blend of young and old attended. It was inspiring to see the joyful and enthusiastic

participation of the children, not only through recitation of prayers but also through prayerful dance and singing of hymns.

Rosary on the last day concluded with fellowship and a lively game of Housie. We are grateful to our Animators and other helpful members of our complex for their efforts and commitment in uniting our members under the mantle of Our Lady and renewing our bonds of friendship, care and concern for each other.



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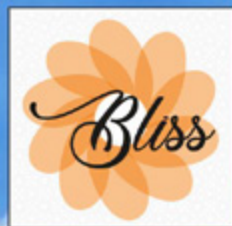


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