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Reaching Out Theme For April 2025

Jesus' Resurrection - Hope for Mankind!

Do you believe Jesus' rising from the dead can fill us all with unwavering hope in all circumstances?

Do we truly experience Jesus' risen life?

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Please send your articles / reports as attached word.doc files and good resolution photographs as jpeg files to reachingout.orlem@gmail.com by March 20, 2025. Kindly mention your Community and Sector number or the Cell / Association you are reporting for.

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The Reaching Out

A Newsletter of Our Lady of Lourdes Church, Orlem

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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:

Weekdays: 10.30 am & 4.00 pm
Sunday: 10.30 am & 5.15 pm

CONFESSIONS

Every Saturday at 5.00 pm - 5.30 pm & 6.30 pm - 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 baptism.

OFFICE TIMINGS

Monday to Friday: 9.30 am to 12.30 pm & 4.30 pm to 7.30 pm
Saturday: 9.30 am to 12.30 pm & 4.30 pm to 6.30 pm

Telephone: +919920144967

FUNERAL

Weekdays: 10.30 am & 5.30 pm
(By exception 4.00 pm)
Sundays: 12.00 noon

Attaining Marital Bliss

Melville X. D'Souza

Marital Bliss – the words sound so nice, portraying that all is well in the marriage. There is sincere, affectionate love between the spouses. **The words give the impression that there's an inward peace and happiness, an unshakable trust and faith in each other.**

Having the nuptials in Church exchanging rings, proclaiming their love, faithfulness for each other in the presence of the congregation means there's Divine Blessing. The Bible views marriage as a permanent, exclusive, and comprehensive union of all that each spouse is with the other.

The presence of Jesus and Divine Blessing by itself however, not being sufficient, there is the element of Human effort, we would call it Human Endeavour, that goes into what we would call marital bliss.

There is no magic formula for attaining marital bliss. Marriage preparation sessions covering several aspects of marriage, could help. At the end of the day however, we need to introspect where we have failed as a couple. **'Being married may be the nicest thing to be' but the real test is in staying married.** Easier said than done, perhaps yes.

Life is not a bed of roses, it is a bed of roses, with thorns. Even as the roses come forth beautiful with their fragrance, through the menacing thorns, we need to fight those thorns in our lives and come forth triumphant. We can certainly do this with the help of Jesus, God the Almighty.

There is no perfect couple, there's no perfect marriage but with God in our midst, we can make it work. **With God on our side, we can withstand the challenges of today's modern, materialistic world which prompts us to believe in a 'godless world'.**

Finally, we need to understand the importance of forgiveness. It is said, **"a successful marriage isn't the union of two perfect people. It's that of two imperfect people who have learned the value of forgiveness and grace".**

So, imperfect though we may be, striving to attain marital bliss should be the goal of married couples.



Living a Christian Marriage in Today's World

Fr. Cajetan D. Menezes



We understand Marriage as a Sacrament and a lifelong commitment. Marriage is a sacred covenant, a commitment for a lifetime that reflects God's love, human faithfulness and stability. In today's fast-paced and ever-changing world, sustaining a Christian marriage requires intentionality, grace, and dependence on God. Here are key biblical principles and practical steps to nurture and strengthen a Christian marriage.

1. Prioritizing God in Marriage : A Christ-centred marriage begins with a strong individual relationship with God. Matthew 6:33 reminds us, "But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well." After personal prayer, we need to talk about regular Spousal & family prayer. Couples should make prayer, Bible study, and participating in the sacramental life of the parish church a core part of their marriage, fostering spiritual intimacy and unity. Families that pray and eat together, stay together.

2. Practicing Love and Respect : Ephesians 5:33 instructs, "Each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband." Husbands are called to love their wives sacrificially, just as Christ loved the church, and wives are called to respect their husbands. This mutual love and respect build a foundation for trust and understanding. Mutual respect and Basic trust are corner stones of a loving Christian marriage.

3. Effective Communication : Open and honest communication is essential in any relationship. James 1:19 advises, "Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry." Couples should strive for active listening, expressing their thoughts with kindness, and resolving conflicts in a Christ-honouring way. Good communication skills and conflict management skills are essential part of sustaining a marital relationship.

4. Commitment to Forgiveness and Grace: Marriage involves two imperfect people, they will hurt each other thus making forgiveness a necessity. Colossians 3:13 says, "Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive, as the Lord forgave you." Extending grace and letting go of past hurts allows for healing and growth. Unresolved conflicts, unmet needs and unforgiving issues is baggage many couples carry and sabotage the present and future. When you forgive, you in no way change the past – but you sure do change the future.(Bernard Meltzer)

5. Intimacy : Nurturing union of mind, body and spirit : God designed marriage to be a union of mind, body and spirit. Intellectual, emotional and physical closeness is ingredient of a good marriage. 1 Corinthians 7:3-5 encourages couples to fulfil their marital duties to one another. Regularly spending quality time together, expressing affection, and maintaining physical intimacy help sustain a healthy and intimate marriage. When married couples find it difficult to be vulnerable and intimate, points to a grave problem in the spousal relationship. Couples need to seek help.

6. Handling Finances with Wisdom : Financial stress can strain a marriage. Proverbs 22:7 warns, “The borrower is slave to the lender.” Couples should practice good stewardship, set financial goals together, and seek God’s wisdom in managing their resources.

7. Guarding Against Infidelity : Marriages face challenges from worldly influences and temptations. 1 Corinthians 10:13 reminds us that God provides a way to resist temptation. Setting boundaries, being accountable, and avoiding situations that compromise integrity help protect the marriage.

8. Building a Supportive Community: Good couple friends and a supportive community helps sustain a marriage. Surrounding a marriage with positive influences is vital. Hebrews 10:24-25 encourages believers to support one another. Being involved in a church community, seeking mentorship, and engaging with other Christian couples provide encouragement and accountability.

9. Keeping a Heart of Gratitude : Grateful

spouses build loving families. Gratitude strengthens a marriage by shifting focus from what is lacking to the blessings within the relationship. 1 Thessalonians 5:18 says, “Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.” Expressing appreciation fosters joy and contentment in marriage. Couples should affirm and appreciate each other every day.

10. Persevering Through challenges : Every marriage faces challenges, but perseverance strengthens the bond. Romans 5:3-4 states, “Suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope.” Trusting God through trials and working together as a team deepens love and faith. Married couples are called to be “Pilgrims of hope” shepherding their families to greener pastures.

Last word : Many couples are struggling in their marriage because they are trying to run their marriage on their own steam and not making God and the community part of their journey. Sustaining a Christian marriage in today’s world requires commitment, faith, and reliance on God’s wisdom. By prioritizing Christ, practicing love and respect, communicating effectively, and embracing forgiveness, couples can build a marriage that glorifies God and stands the test of time. Every Christian couple and their family are called to give witness to Christ and strengthen the domestic church and parish community. The Parish church has a duty to journey with the family at every stage of its development and protect the most precious gift – marriage and family. “The future of humanity passes by the way of the family ...” (St. John Paul II in Familiaris Consortio # 86)

Extracts from Pope Francis' Message for the World Day of the Sick which Coincides with the Feast of Our Patroness, Our Lady of Lourdes

Dear Brothers and Sisters :

We are celebrating the 33rd World Day of the Sick in the Jubilee Year 2025, in which the Church invites us to become “pilgrims of hope”. The word of God accompanies us and offers us, in the words of Saint Paul, an encouraging message: **“Hope does not disappoint” (Rom 5:5); indeed, it strengthens us in times of trial.**

Let us reflect on how God remains close to those who are suffering in three particular ways: through encounter, gift and sharing.

Encounter : When Jesus sent the seventy-two disciples out on mission (cf. Lk 10:1-9), He told them to proclaim to the sick: “The Kingdom of God has come near to you” (v. 9). He asks them, in other words, to help the sick to see their infirmity, however painful and incomprehensible it may be, as an opportunity to encounter the Lord. In times of illness, we sense our human frailty on the physical, psychological and spiritual levels. Yet we also experience the closeness and compassion of God, who, in Jesus, shared in our human suffering. God does not abandon us and often amazes us by granting us a strength that we never expected, and would never have found on our own.

Gift : The second way that God is close to the suffering: as gift. More than anything else, suffering makes us aware that hope comes from the Lord. It is thus, first and

foremost, a gift to be received and cultivated, by remaining “faithful to the faithfulness of God”

Sharing : God’s third way of being close to us : through sharing. Places of suffering are frequently also places of sharing and mutual enrichment. How often, at the bedside of the sick, do we learn to hope, by our closeness to those who suffer, do we learn to have faith and when we care for those in need, do we discover love! We realize that we are “angels” of hope and messengers of God for one another, all of us together: whether patients, physicians, nurses, family members, friends, priests, men and women religious, no matter where we are, whether in the family or in clinics, nursing homes, hospitals or medical centres...

Dear brothers and sisters who are ill or who care for the suffering, in this Jubilee you play an especially important part. Your journey together is a sign for everyone: “a hymn to human dignity, a song of hope” I remember you always in my prayers. I entrust you to Our Lady, Health of the Sick, in the words that we have addressed to her in their hour of need:

We fly to your protection, O Holy Mother of God. Do not despise our petitions in our necessities, but deliver us always from all dangers, O glorious and blessed Virgin. Amen.

Marital Bliss

Arlene Alves, JBC Sector 1

World Marriage Day is celebrated on the second Sunday in February, sometimes coinciding with Valentine's Day. Couples renew their marriage vows and celebrate their love for each other. This acronym "Marital Bliss" is summed up here:

- M** - "Marriages are made in heaven" is a common saying. "Marriage is not a bed of roses." Matrimony is a holy sacrament in which Husband and Wife profess their vows of faithfulness and love to each other forever.
- A** - Accepting each other in the likeness of God's own image the Creator.
- R** - Roles of Husband and Wife are numerous as they journey through life, bringing up their off-springs as parents in moral and spiritual values.
- I** - Inspiring one another and being with each other in all situations.
- T** - Tasks of sharing responsibilities.
- A** - Always caring in good and bad times.
- L** - Loving each other unconditionally and endlessly.
- B** - Blessing, bonding and building good relationship as spouse forever.
- L** - Listening actively, understanding, being patient, kind and forgiving.
- I** - Institution of Marriage dwells on prayer and happy family relationship.
- S** - Serving selflessly with concern.
- S** - Sacred sacrament of matrimony requires one to keep the promises of love and fidelity to each other.

Happiness in marriage is not something ready-made and is not a destination but is a journey finding joy every single day and making the best of everything that one encounters. The gift of love in 1-Corinthians Ch 13 vs 4.7 "Love is patient, love is kind, love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude". It bears all things, believes all things, hope all things and endures all things.

Divinity and Holiness of Marital Bliss

Olga Pereira, JBC, Sector 1

Marriage is not just a legal bond between two people but a symbol of deep love and commitment with God at its core. It represents a deeper connection where each partner prioritizes the other's happiness and nurtures a commitment to love, forming a basis for a stable family life. Marriage is a

threshold where a couple steps in with each one's personality traits, socialness, flaws and merits, as well as inherited or acquired talents, to face life together.

Attaining marital bliss is to accept each other in love, sharing strengths and weaknesses,

facing challenges and uncertainties through open dialogue, communication and compassion. Hurts, pain, failures and mistakes are part and parcel of life. Forgiveness is the best form of love in any relationship but more so in marriage. Communication is a must. We need to dialogue and clear misunderstandings at the right time otherwise they will be the stumbling blocks in life. Thus, to achieve marital bliss, we need to continue praying so as to live each day our marital vows and commitment.

There will daily be silent battles to be fought, moments that humble us and unshed tears. Yet, with God's bountiful blessing we can rise and shine. At the same time, being human, we need to show concrete display of love and affection to each other – maybe a hug, a kind gesture, an uplifting word, close listening, laugh and cry together at times, give one another space for growth and surrender to God's love. With God by our side, we have nothing to fear, pray for

His peace which is a perfect gift.

“Let love be genuine; hate what is evil; hold fast to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honour and respect.” (Romans 12:9-10)

We pray to Our Lady of Lourdes, our Blessed Mother who is an inspiration of selfless love to bless all of us as we celebrate her feast. Happy Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes to us all.



Mary Our Heavenly Mother

Sr. Sagaya Mary FSPM

Mary, our heavenly Mother, is a beacon of hope and inspiration to many across the world. Her faith and obedience are a powerful reminder that our lives are not our own, but a gift from God. Her love for Jesus, knew no bounds. She nurtured, supported, and encouraged Jesus, even in the face of great challenge and adversity. Her selfless love is a model for us all, reminding us of the importance of family, community and compassion.

In a world filled with uncertainty and doubt, Mother Mary stands as a symbol of hope. Her life is a testimony that even in the darkest moments, God is always present, guiding and directing us. Her faith and trust in God inspire us to do the same, to surrender our fears and anxieties to the Lord.

May Mother Mary inspire us to live lives of greater purpose, compassion, and service. May we, like Mary, surrender our lives to God's will, trusting in His goodness and providence.

Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes & World Day of the Sick

Jane Soares, Word Minister



The feast of Our Lady of Lourdes, celebrated on 11th February, commemorates the first appearance of the Blessed Virgin Mary, in 1858, to a 14-year-old French girl, (St.) Bernadette Soubirous, in a cave of Massabielle while she was gathering firewood with her sister and a friend. Little Bernadette continued to receive appearances over the following few days. Eventually our Lady revealed herself to her as the “Immaculate Conception”, asking Bernadette to drink from a fountain. The girl was confused as there was no fountain and so started digging until she discovered the natural spring of Lourdes, to which pilgrims still travel today for healing. The first case of healing was recognised four years later as the first miracle at Lourdes. Many healings have been reported since and thousands of pilgrims have reported of being deeply changed by visiting this site.

Lourdes has become a place of pilgrimage and healing, but even more of faith. To people of faith this is not surprising. It is a continuation of Jesus’ healing miracles – now performed at the intercession of his blessed mother. Pope Pius X, in 1907, introduced the feast of the apparition of the Immaculate Virgin of Lourdes. Several parishes around the world are named after Our Lady of Lourdes and celebrate this special day as their feast. In 1992, Pope St. John Paul II decreed the Feast day of Our Lady of Lourdes to also be the World Day of the Sick.

Every year pilgrims flock to this site on this day and have been touched by the power of what happens here. Large number of sick and ailing people gather to be healed, and hundreds of teenage volunteers from all over assist wheelchairs into the shrine each night, bearing testimony to the fact that the Church is so globally connected. “It was an incredible experience. The help received from volunteers was heartwarming. They helped me in and out of the waters that, despite the chilly weather, did not feel cold. Felt rejuvenated and blessed!” (Bertha Barretto, Parishioner).

We, in Orlem, are blessed to have Our Lady of Lourdes as the patron of our Parish. Happy Feast.

Marriage Encounter

ME Team

What is WORLDWIDE MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER?

It is one of the most successful and dynamic Marriage Enrichment experiences in the world today. More than 2 million couples in over 80 countries have become part of this Movement and enjoy a richer, deeper and more fulfilling relationship.

The Movement has the blessings of the Holy Father and Bishops all over the world. It began, in India, in 1973 and has enriched the lives of thousands of couples and also a good number of Priests and religious.

MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER BELIEVES that

- Matrimony is a **CALL TO LOVE**
- There are no limits in **LOVE**
- We can always **GROW**
- We can always **CHANGE**
- The Church and the world needs **OUR SACRAMENTAL LOVE**

Who is the ME Weekend for?

It is open to couples of any age and all faiths. It is for those who want to make their **ORDINARY** marriage **GOOD** and those who enjoy a **GOOD** marriage, make them even **BETTER**.

It is also open to priests and religious who want to revitalize their relationship with the people of God and develop an even greater appreciation of their vocation.

What is the Marriage Encounter Weekend?

The ME weekend is a positive and personal experience for a couple which offers them a **WAY OF LOVING COMMUNICATION** and gives them an opportunity to **LOOK DEEPLY** into their relationship with each other, with God, with their family, with the Church and the world at large.

Couples can concentrate exclusively on each other with many moments of reflection and sharing interspersed with a series of talks given by a team of trained couples and a priest. There are no group discussions. Talks focus on bringing closeness, intimacy, love and romance, into their everyday life. The Weekend begins on a Saturday morning and concludes on Sunday evening.

What are you waiting for?

Couples lead busy lifestyles and therefore a small investment of time in the weekend programs, will undoubtedly pay rich dividends for the rest of your life.



EMHC Retreat at Vinayalaya

Francis Fernandes



Our Parish organized a Eucharistic Retreat for the EMHC at the Vinayalaya Retreat House, Andheri. 41 of us attended. Fr. Sumit Dsouza SJ prepared and conducted this two - day Silent Ignatian Retreat. Some key insights from the enlightening retreat sessions are as follows:

Retreat – It was a personal invitation from God for each of us to return to Him from our sinful ways. We had to surrender our phones, remain silent throughout the retreat, and speak only when absolutely necessary. This allowed us to truly experience and hear the voice of God while gaining a deeper understanding of our thoughts, emotions, senses and imagination. In silence, we confront the reality of life.

We learnt that the Eucharist is a **Meal, Sacrifice and Sacrament** - a reality that is re-lived at every celebration. It is where we bring our lives, along with all our struggles and difficulties, to the altar, uniting them with bread and wine.

In the Eucharist, Christ is present in

- (1) The Word of God
- (2) The Priest
- (3) Bread and Wine
- (4) People

The Holy Mass is broken down into 5 parts:

- (1) Introduction
- (2) Liturgy of the Word
- (3) Liturgy of the Eucharist
- (4) Communion Rites
- (5) Conclusion Rites

The Preacher emphasized on examination of our Conscience to know the presence of God in our lives. He gave us an acronym - **TORCH** (T – Thanksgiving, O – Openness to the Holy Spirit, R – Re-live your day, C – Contrite (sorry), H – Hope for tomorrow). He told us that we need to examine our conscience for 10 minutes every day before we go to bed.

In prayer, our focus should not be on repetitive prayer. Emphasis should be given

to Contemplative prayer i.e. pause and reflect, allowing your imagination to be free. It should be used to contemplate Jesus in the Gospels – imagining scenes from his life. (Passion narrative, action scenes). We need to know that Jesus is with us in our sufferings and ‘Suffering’ is a part of our Christian Life. If our Lord and Master Jesus Christ has suffered, we too will suffer as his true disciples.

Towards the end of the Retreat there were many questions to ponder on. The one which touched me was, “What will I do for Christ?”

Another key takeaway was the importance


of stepping aside and allowing God to be at the center, taking control of our lives. With Him, everything else will fall into place.

Gratitude to Fr. Cedric Rosario, Merwyn and his core team for organizing this Spirit-filled Retreat for us

Prayer to recite daily: Take Lord and receive all my liberty, my memory, my understanding and my entire will, all that I have and possess. Thou has given all to me. To thee O Lord, I return it. All is thine, dispose of it wholly according to thy will. Give me thy Love and thy Grace for this is sufficient for me. Amen.

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Retrouvaille – A Journey of Rediscovery and Renewal

We got married in December 1999 and recently celebrated our Silver Wedding Anniversary. Like most marriages after the initial years of romance, togetherness and unity we faced multiple challenges due to each of us taking the other for granted, giving importance to other duties such as our careers, children and various other reasons. Over the years this led to a breakdown in communication, with each of us leading our own individual life while staying under the same roof.

Our marriage, once full of promise, had become a fragile thread barely holding us together. The weight of unspoken resentments, constant miscommunication, and years of growing apart had brought us to a breaking point. The Retrouvaille program was recommended and was described as a lifeline for couples in crisis. Sceptical but desperate, we decided to give it one last try. That decision changed the course of our marriage—and our lives.

The Retrouvaille weekend program was eye-opening. For the first time in years, we weren't just talking at each other but truly listening. The program didn't just highlight our differences but helped us understand them. Through heartfelt presentations by other couples who had once been in similar places, we realized we weren't alone in our struggles. We learned the power of forgiveness—not just for our partner but also for ourselves. It was liberating to let go of past hurts and rediscover the love that had always been there but buried under years of bitterness.

The post-weekend sessions were just as crucial. They gave us the tools to build on what we had learned and keep the momentum going. Slowly but surely, we began rebuilding trust, prioritizing our communication, and nurturing our relationship in ways we hadn't in decades.

Now, more than a decade later, we look back on that pivotal year with gratitude. Retrouvaille didn't just save our marriage; it transformed it. Our relationship today is stronger, deeper, and more meaningful than we ever thought possible. We've learned that marriage is a journey, not a destination—and like any journey, it has its challenges. But now we face those challenges as a team, united in love and understanding.

To anyone who feels like their marriage is beyond repair, we offer this: HOPE. Retrouvaille gave us that hope, and it can do the same for you.

Love and gratitude, Preetha and David

Christian Unity – Do You Believe This?

Melville X. D'Souza (IRD member)

Do we all believe that there is only one God and that is, Jesus Christ? Then, it would be only fitting that all sections come together as one United Church. It is with this in mind, that a week of prayer for Christian unity was introduced in the Catholic Church many years ago.

The Interreligious Dialogue Cell (IRD) of our parish invited representatives from other denominations in the neighborhood for an evening of prayer on 23 January at our lady of Lourdes Church. Rev. Fr. Samson from Bethel Mar Thoma Church from Janakalyan Nagar alongwith a few of their parishioners attended.

There were readings from scripture and intercessory prayers & hymns. **The Nicean creed which has relevance to christian unity, was also recited.**

Fr. Ronny Vaz the spiritual director of the IRD, said a prayer for all those present and thanked them for their participation in the Prayer Service.

The final hymn was indeed appropriate – **we are Happy Christians, all United in the Lord.....**

At the end of the day however, we need to ask ourselves, **do we believe that all Christian denominations can unite as one single body of Christ, under a common leadership? It is imperative then, that we must first strive to be united with our fellow parishioners in our sectors in our zones. We need to begin now. Charity begins at home!**

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Conversations in the Spirit – A Method for our Meetings

Michelle Pinto – Parish SCC Lay Co-ordinator

“Conversations in the Spirit” has emerged as a new method of proceeding on the path of synodality, initiated in 2021 by the Synodal Assembly in Rome. It is a practice of inviting the Holy Spirit into our conversations so that the Spirit may guide, unite and direct us on the way forward. This practice may be used in any circumstance and situation in parishes, communities, cells & associations and even in our own families, when we have a decision to make or there is a conflict or disagreement, for which we seek the help of our Heavenly Father to open up new ways, which we thought would not be possible.

The Method: We start with a specific question that we would like to discern about. For example, how can our parish be more missionary? Or as a family, where should we send our children to school? Once we have our question for discernment, here are some basic steps for having a conversation in the Spirit.

First, **prepare yourself personally.** Entrust the conversation to God and the Holy Spirit, reflect in prayer on the question for discernment, also reading the Word of God for some inspiration. Ask God to guide you and the whole group to follow His will.

Second, **listen to the Word** of God together as a group. Choose a fitting passage from Scripture for the question at hand. Pray, sing, be united in God.

Third, **each person then has the opportunity to share** what God has been saying to him/ her about the question. A large group may be divided into smaller

groups. During this first round of sharing, each person has a turn to speak without being interrupted by any other member of the group. One after the other each person shares until everyone speaks. A moment of silence follows so that what others have said can resonate with us.

Fourth, now each person **briefly responds** to what struck him/her about what others just shared. A time of silence again, to listen in our hearts to what has been shared in this second round.

Fifth, the last stage of the conversation in the Spirit is a free exchange among participants, **dialoguing with one another** on the basis of what has emerged in order to discern and gather together the fruit of the conversation in the Spirit that has just taken place. We recognize common points and differences between us. We try and hear what the Holy Spirit is saying to the group so that we can move forward in a common direction. We ask ourselves: “What steps is the Holy Spirit calling us to take together?” And finally, we conclude with a prayer or song of thanksgiving to God.

Having conversations in the Spirit opens up a space for us, a spiritual atmosphere, an “unexpected direction” where true discernment can unfold so that we can move forward together. Conversing with one another, in the Spirit, bears fruit as we put into action what we have heard the Lord speaking to us in our very midst. *“Come Holy Spirit, come inhabit our conversations”.*

Vocational Day for Altar Servers: A Memorable Experience

-Susanne Murzello (Altar Server)



Vocation Sunday, on January 19, 2025, celebrated by the Archdiocese of Bombay was also God's calling ONE as an Altar Server. A special session on Vocational Holy Hour for our Altar servers was organized and led by Fr. Clinton and the Animators on Saturday, 18th January, at the Nihar Hall. The event aimed to deepen our understanding of recognizing one's vocation within the Catholic Church. The theme was shared by the Diocesan Vocation Service Center of Archdiocese of Bombay.

Sr. Virginia, Carmel of St. Joseph's School shared her inspiring journey into religious life, captivating us with her story of faith and commitment. Her experiences resonated deeply, sparking reflection and awe.

Following the session, an opportunity was provided to Altar Servers to share few lines in Social Media as well so that others too are inspired. We then proceeded to the Church, where the Altar Servers prayed the Vocational Rosary which was shared by the Diocesan Vocation Service.

This enriching experience, centered on vocational holy hour, was a first for many of us, making it truly unforgettable. The evening will remain etched in our memories as we continue to grow in faith and service as Altar Servers.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to Fr. Clinton and the Animators for this opportunity.

Celebrating the Holy Family

Melville X. D'Souza - Holy Family community (Baudi)



The Christmas season may have come to a close but for the members of sector 6 of the BAUDI, **the spirit of Christmas continued, with a large turnout for our sector feast of the Holy Family on 14th January 2025 and our zonal priest Fr. Harry, celebrating the Eucharist for us.**

At the outset, Fr. Harry invoked the blessings of the Holy Family and St. Devasahayam whose feast also happened to be on the same day, upon our families, our nation, and particularly those who are sick, the elderly, housebound and those with special needs or special concerns.

In his Homily, Fr. Harry touched upon the topic of relationships like, sharing not only in one another's happiness but also supporting one another in times of difficulties, resulting in more joy & happiness in the family & in the community.

Fr. Harry also gave an insight into the life of the Holy Family, like when they had difficulties, Mary corrected Jesus but at the same time she was also willing to listen to the views of Jesus. And Mary & Joseph accepted Jesus' views but Jesus also submitted to his parents. He also cited the example of St. Devasahayam who fought against all odds, **to become an exemplary example of fortitude and deep devotion.** Fr. Harry implored God's blessings especially those suffering.

What followed after the Mass was fellowship and games and dinner. **The people left with fond memories of the evening and the recessional hymn 'we are one in the spirit, we are one in the Lord' ringing in their ears.**

Nihar Special School – Marching Ahead!

Melville X. D'Souza

Conducting a school for children with special needs is a huge task, rather a challenging task. The Nihar Special School has been doing this for the past 26 years and to celebrate this occasion, they held a little gathering, with the support of the Bombay Catholic Sabha (BCS). Incidentally, BCS have always been a source of strength for the Nihar Special School. Also present were volunteers, well-wishers and Fr. Ronny, attending on behalf of the parish priest Fr. Aniceto.

It was a modest celebration, with the students leading the prayer service. **The enthusiasm displayed by the students was real. Fr. Ronny in his address, recalled the initiative of the late Fr. Hugh Fonseca, growing in stature over the years.**

He praised Nishiganda for taking up the mantle of shouldering the Nihar Special School through the past 20 years.

Nishiganda recalled the moment when she took the decision to become part of the school. She thanked the teachers, volunteers, the BCS, well-wishers and the parents for entrusting their children to their care.

Fr. Ronny also advised the NIOS – National Institute of Open Schooling students not to forget the institution when they have settled down in life, in fact, he said, you must support, give back to the institution what you've received.

After a round of refreshments, it was time for their sports meet.

Here again, the enthusiasm was very much evident. **At the end of the day, these children will always remain special, 'Dew Drops' from heaven, as they are known, to the teachers and to all whom they come in contact with.**



Inter-Religious Christmas Celebration

Candice Collasco [IRD Member]

Psalm 133:1 – How very good and pleasant it is when kindred live together in unity! It goes on to say that, ‘Unity flows and permeates, spreading God’s blessings to the entire community.’

On December 19th, 2024, a Christmas Celebration was organized by the IRD Cell of the Our Lady of Lourdes Orlem Parish in the St Anne’s School Conference room.

The celebration had approximately 80 people of different faiths in attendance. The special invitees included Rev. Fr. Aniceto Pereira-Parish Priest of Our Lady of Lourdes Orlem Church, Sr. Zarina-Principal of Carmel of St. Joseph Orlem, Sr. Leo Vinnarasi-Principal of St. Anne’s High School, Sr. Neeraja, Brahma Kumari – Rajayoga Teacher & center coach, Sri Gurmeet Singhji & Shri Kamaljeet Singhji-members of the Sikh Community, Mr. Pratish Gaikwad-Janessa Freelance journalist & Founder /President of Sanvidhan Sanmak Dal, Mr. Nisar Ali-Journalist working for Communal Harmony since 1989, also a part of Rashtriya Seva Dal, Mr. Prakash Irde-Treasurer of Sadguru Mangeshda Yoga Foundation, Mr. Kiran Sawant-Mumbai President of Bharat Mukti National

Atrocities Prevention Force & Socialist Activist, Mr. Ajaz Ahmed-associated with Jamaat-e-Islam Maharashtra, Mr. Arvind Nigale-Social Activist & author of numerous published articles in reputed Marathi periodicals.

Fr. Aniceto Pereira shared the message that Christmas is that time of the year when we share our feeling of oneness with a common celebration - a season for gift-giving. Gift-receiving is a joyful experience, but gift-giving has an added essence of Christmas. Our rolemodel being Jesus, who gifted HIMSELF to the world.

Fr. Aniceto Pereira, placed the statue of Baby Jesus in the crib which marked the commencement of the celebration. The Master of Ceremonies – Mr. Adonis Dias guided the Christmas march. The traditional cake cutting (a surprise addition to the programme) – courtesy the Sikh Community; gave an additional Christmas flavour to the celebration. Games, spot prizes, felicitation of the Guests of Honour, Carol singing by Br. Alstan’s group were the events of the day. Fr. Ronny Vaz, Spiritual Director, IRD delivered the vote of thanks.

Investments in an Inflationary World!

Melville X. D’Souza – BASCA-Orlem unit member

Where do I invest? What are the risks? How do I budget for so many expenses? How do I remain safe, stay afloat in this inflationary world? Well, it was to seek guidance and answers to some of these issues that a large

number of people assembled at the Nihar Hall on Sunday 12 January.

It was a session on Financial planning conducted by Rajesh Shetty, Financial

strategist & Entrepreneur, a seasoned finance professional, organized by BASCA-Orlem unit

At the outset, a disclaimer was read out, that, the parish team & BASCA Orlem unit are only facilitators for today's programme, owning no responsibility for those intending following any investment advice. Also, the government body, SEBI wants to promote Financial Awareness Programs across communities so that people should not get cheated, and that is what the team is here for. They are here to advise you, as such, they are neither brokers nor agents.

Mr. Shetty having made such presentations at various other institutions could sense the interest elicited by the participants

and threw light on several investment options and the risks involved. In fact, he mentioned that all investments are subject to risk, including Fixed Deposits in banks, also cautioning people against various fake investment schemes which seek to dupe them of their hard earned savings.

The valuable insights on several issues were well taken by the participants. The question-answer session that followed was fruitful; some were not willing to let go even after the session officially came to an end and participants returned home wiser than before.

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Konkani Prayer Group

Jacintha Fernandes

The Konkani Prayer Group of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, Orlem celebrated their 42nd anniversary recently. The group is happy to present the activities in their Ministry.

Meetings : Every Thursday at 7 pm in the Nihar hall for fellowship through Praise and Worship, teachings on the upcoming Sunday Gospel and adoration with intercessions. In addition, Holy Adoration before the Blessed Sacrament is conducted on the third Thursday of every month. First Friday Service - a Konkani service on the first Friday of every month is recently introduced.

Ministries : The group is blessed with several ministries, each focusing on different aspects of spiritual growth and service:

- Service Ministry : Manages the overall coordination of our activities.
- Intercession Ministry :
 - Wednesday Group: Prays for the needs of our group, parish, and community.
 - Whatsapp Group : Conducts 24/7 prayers for emergencies and urgent needs.
 - One-Hour Intercession Group: Spends an hour before the Blessed Sacrament, praying for specific intentions shared with us.
- Children's Ministry : Meets on Thursdays and includes 16-18 children who actively participate in prayer and faith-based activities.
- Music Ministry : Leads praise and worship, enriching our gatherings with spiritual music.
- Tuesday Ministry : Focuses on in-depth teachings about the lives of saints, Bible studies, and specific biblical characters or books.
- Visiting Ministry : Visit the sick to offer prayers and support. If they are comfortable, we pray a decade of the Rosary with them and provide guidance for medical care if needed.
- Counselling Ministry : We have spiritual counselling and according to needs we advice and pray

Special Programs : Other programs are :

Outreach Programs : Held once every three months

Annual Events : Recollections, picnics, and retreats to strengthen our faith.

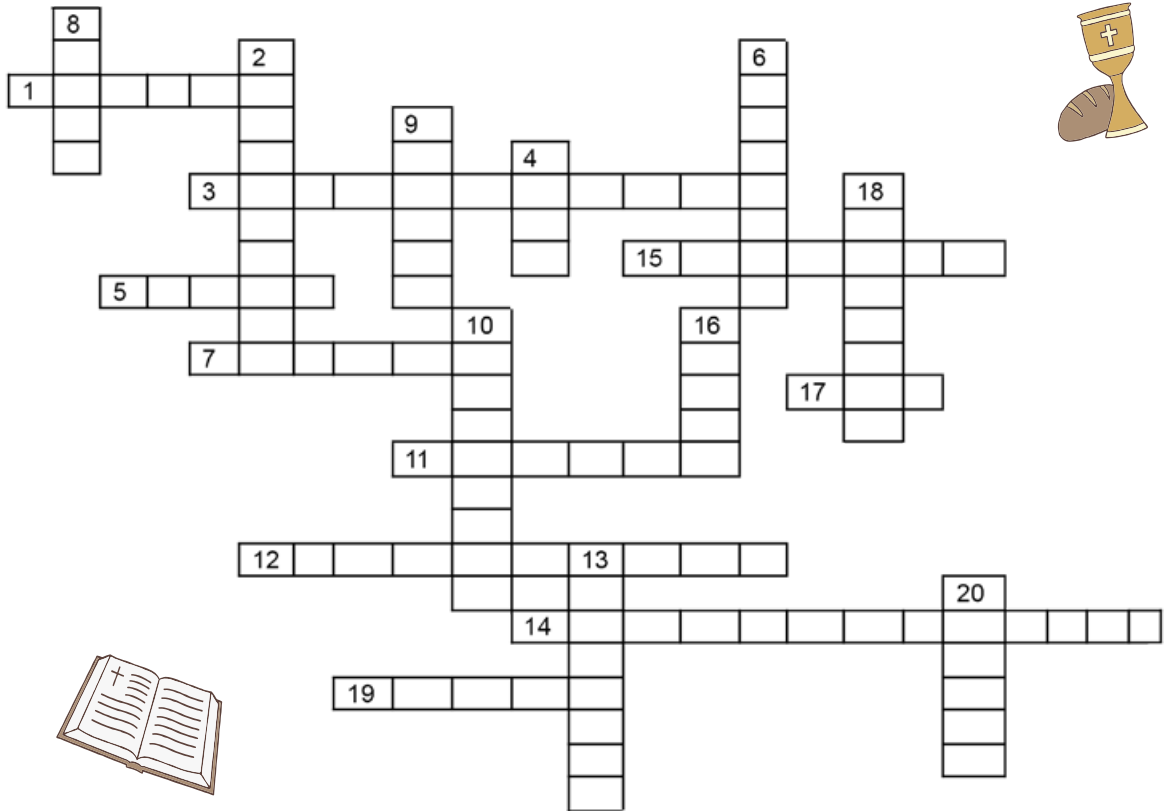
Missions : Advent and Lenten missions twice a year

Winners of Nativity Quiz

Community	Winners	Sector
Baudi	Maureen Lily	St Anne
	Abigail Azavedo	St Anne
	Philomina Mani	Dominic Savio
	Anthony Dmello	Dominic Savio
	Diana D'Souza	Holy Cross
	Marina Gonsalves	Holy Cross
	Carol D'Souza	Holy Cross
	Ophelia D'Souza	Holy Cross
SBLG	Helen D'Souza	St Thomas the Apostle
	Merick Fernandes,	St Thomas the Apostle
	Rita Saldanha	St Thomas the Apostle
	Schneider Dsouza	St Thomas the Apostle
	Sheldon Lobo	St Thomas the Apostle
	Sharel Lobo	St Thomas the Apostle
JBC	Arlene Alves	All Saints
	Simran Gond	All Saints
	Kyle Fernandes	All Saints
	Ramona Dsouza	St Joseph
	Sonia Alva	St Joan of Arc
	Leena Rozario	St Joan of Arc
Tank	Valerie Fletcher	St Anthony
	Gwynet Johnson	St Anthony
	Cynthia Pereira	Our Lady of Assumption
	Philomena Pinto	Our Lady of Assumption
	Giselle D'mello	Our Lady of Assumption
	Lorraine Dias	Mother Theresa
Lourdes	Philomena Ferrao	Santa Monica
	Agatha and Aelred Abreo	St Bernadette
	Sydelle Rodricks	St Luke
	Zita Pereira	St Mark
	Xiandra Henriques	St Mark
	Caroline Mall	Holy Spirit
	Mariana Coelho	Holy Spirit
Evershine Nagar	Anthony D'Mello	Rosa Mystica
	Criselle Lobo	St Theresa of the Child Jesus
	Joseph D'Souza	Rosa Mystica

The Lourdes Quiz

A quiz on Lourdes and Our Lady of Lourdes. Complete the quiz and send it to reachingout.orlem@gmail.com, alongwith your name, community, sector number.



ACROSS

- 1 Lourdes is a village in _____
- 3 Grotto of _____ is at Lourdes
- 5 Our Lady appeared dressed in _____
- 7 Bernadette's sister _____
- 11 At Lourdes a _____ flows
- 12 There were reports of _____ cure
- 14 Pope Pius XII encyclical describing events at Lourdes
- 15 Many are cured by _____ in spring.
- 17 Our Lady promised that in the _____ her immaculate heart would triumph
- 19 First word of the Hail Holy Queen in Latin

DOWN

- 2 Our Blessed Mother appeared to _____
- 4 Great number of _____ visit Lourdes
- 6 Bernadette's sister
- 8 Bernadette returned to the grotto after _____ days
- 9 Bernadette's apparition asked for _____
- 10 Bernadette's apparition also asked for _____
- 13 Bishop _____ declared the Marian Veneration in 1862
- 16 _____ has a grotto too (Mumbai)
- 18 Many are cured by _____ from the spring.
- 20 Our Lady is our Spiritual _____



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Living Waters Prayer Group (English Prayer Group)

Ralph Fernandes

The Living Waters Prayers Group (LWPG), of our parish, is a part of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal, Mumbai, which works towards equipping parishioners and members to grow, build and anchor their foundation in Christ, by encouraging worship, a deep passion for the Sacraments and, the Word of God.

LWPG meets for prayer meetings in the church every Thursday, 7:45 p.m. onward, where we have a time of praise & worship, sharing and reflection as well as Eucharistic Adoration (which happens once every month). We are committed to nurturing and building the families within our parish spiritually and for this purpose also encourage our parishioners to join in every Thursday along with their families.

The following would best represent the 4 pillars of our prayer group:

Discipleship: We meet separately during each week as part of various cell groups, which are essentially, focus groups that specifically cater to the needs of each of the respective categories of our members.

Our cell groups include the men's cell, the youth cell, and various cells located in specific zones of our parish. These provide a platform for the members to share their experiences, pray together and effectively understand and reflect on scripture.

Intercession : We also meet during the week on various days to pray and intercede together. Intercession, forms the back bone

of any group and the intercessory cells meet to pray every week, focusing specifically on praying for the needs of our parishioners as well as for needs of those who have shared across their petitions and prayer requests.

Evangelisation: We encourage our members to work towards creating worship to be a lifestyle and not just an event by embedding worship in daily routines, within our families and in the manner we conduct ourselves, in order to become dynamic, vibrant and contagious catholics.

Scripture & Sacrements : The Word of God is alive and active and at our prayer group, we encourage parishioners to cultivate the habit of reading the Word of God, to grow in their study of scripture, praying the rosary and deeply reflecting on the catholic teachings as well as frequenting the sacrements.

We invite you to come join us and be a part of our family as we grow together to build our parish into a community that works, prays and serves together.

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Walking in the Footsteps of Our LORD

Holy Land Pilgrimage (Israel - 8 Days) (Israel-Jordan - 10 Days) (Israel-Jordan-Egypt - 14 Days)

★ Bethlehem ★ Jerusalem ★ Nazareth ★ Galilee ★ Tel Aviv ★ Tiberias ★ Haifa ★ Jericho ★ Amman ★ Mt. Nebo

HOLY MASS will be held daily and below are the Holy Sites to be visited

- | | | | |
|--|---|-----------------------------------|---|
| ★ Milk Grotto | ★ Church of the Agony | ★ Cenacle - The Upper Room | ★ Mt. Zion-St. Peter in Gallicantu |
| ★ Capernaum | ★ Church of Bethphage | ★ Bethlehem Nativity Church | ★ Stella Maris Church-Elijah Cave |
| ★ Wailing Wall | ★ Garden of Gethsemane | ★ Palm Sunday Hosanna Path | ★ Nazareth - Annunciation Church |
| ★ Burning Bush | ★ Mary's Well - Nazareth | ★ Church of Dormition Abbey | ★ Mt. Sinai-St. Catherine Monastery |
| ★ Pool of Bethesda | ★ Synagogue of Nazareth | ★ Mt. Carmel - Bahai' Gardens | ★ Church of the Primacy of St. Peter |
| ★ St. Anne Church | ★ Dominus Flevit Church | ★ Church of St. John the Baptist | ★ Mt. Tabor-Transfiguration Church |
| ★ Shepherds' Fields | ★ Chapel of the Ascension | ★ Pontius Pilot's Judgment Hall | ★ Mt. of Beatitudes - Sermon on the Mt. |
| ★ St. Joseph Church | ★ Wedding Church at Cana | ★ Ein Karem - Visitation Church | ★ Tabgha - Church of the Multiplication |
| ★ Pater Noster Church | ★ Church of the Flagellation | ★ Boat Ride on the Sea of Galilee | ★ Benedictine Monastery in Abu Ghosh |
| ★ The Way of the Cross (Via Dolorosa) - Holy Sepulcher Church | ★ The Longest suspension bridge in Israel - City of David | | |
| ★ Dome of the Rock (view) ★ Jezreel Valley & Mt. Precipice (view) ★ Mt. Temptation (view) ★ Dead Sea floating experience | | | |

Also we will be visiting the biblical and historical place the dead sea where the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah used to be.

Optional Visit: Sound & Light show at The Tower of David, Petra, Great Pyramids, Sphinx, Museum & Nile Cruise.

Departure Dates: 27 May, 15 October, 22 October, 29 October, 5 November & 12 November - 2025.

Grand European & Asian Tours - 2025

Vatican City - Italy - France - Portugal - Spain - Germany - Switzerland - Austria

Poland - Czechia - Hungary - Slovakia - Croatia - Bosnia & Herzegovina

Finland - Norway - Sweden - Denmark - Estonia - Latvia - Lithuania - Iceland

West Europe
14 Days - June

East Europe with Lourdes
16 Days - June.

East & West Europe
25 Days - June.

West Europe
16 Days - June.

East Europe with Lourdes
& Fatima **19 Days** - June.

Scandinavia - Santa Claus Village - Midnight Sun - Baltic
with Lourdes - Fatima & East Europe - **29 Days** - June.

Lourdes & Fatima with Scandinavia
Santa Claus Village Midnight Sun - Baltic Region (June)

Norway - Denmark - Sweden - Finland - Estonia - Latvia

Lithuania - **21 Days** & Optional visit to Iceland - **4 Days**

Oslo, Tromsø, Alta, North Cape, Copenhagen, Stockholm,

Helsinki, Honningsvåg, Rovaniemi, Tallinn, Vilnius, Riga.

Singapore - Malaysia
Thailand - **11 Days** - May.

Vietnam - Cambodia
Singapore - Malaysia
Thailand - **19 Days** - May.

Vietnam - Cambodia - **9 Days** - May.

Australia - New Zealand - 18 Days - August.

Queenstown, Skyline Queenstown (Gondola Ride) - Milford Sound Scenic Cruise - Wanaka - Franz Josef - Greymouth Transalpine Express Train - Auckland - Waitomo Glow Caves - Melbourne - Phillip Island - Penguin Parade - Great Ocean Road Tour - Cairns - Big Cat Green Island Cruise Franz Josef, Christchurch - Neve Discoverer - Glaciers - Semi-submarine & Glassbottom Boat Sydney Tower Eye with 4d Experience - Sunlover Outer Barrier Reef Cruise with Semi-submarine - Blue Mountain Tour with Featherdale Wildlife Park and more....

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"We place our destiny in the hands of the LORD, not in human hands, because HIS Mercy is as great as HIS Majesty" (Sirach 2:18)