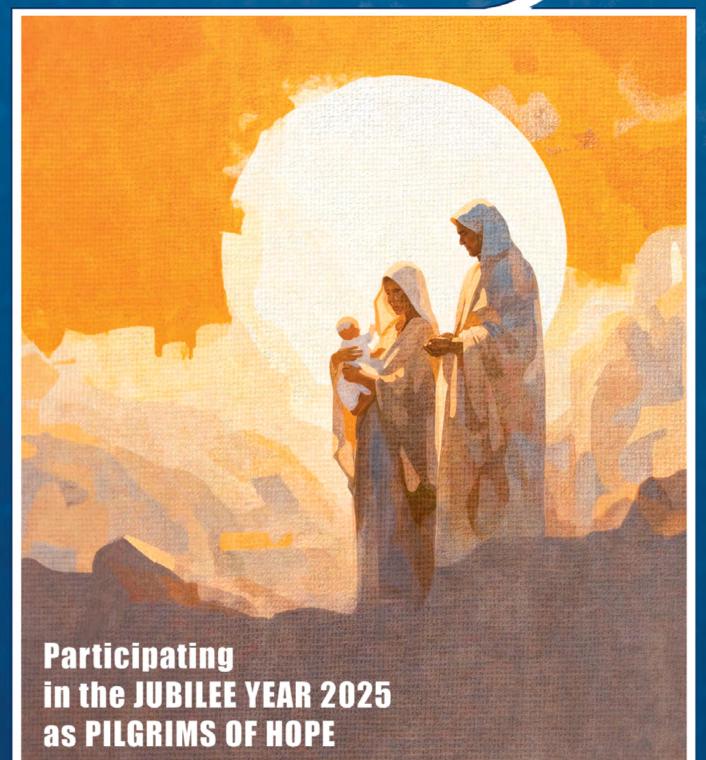
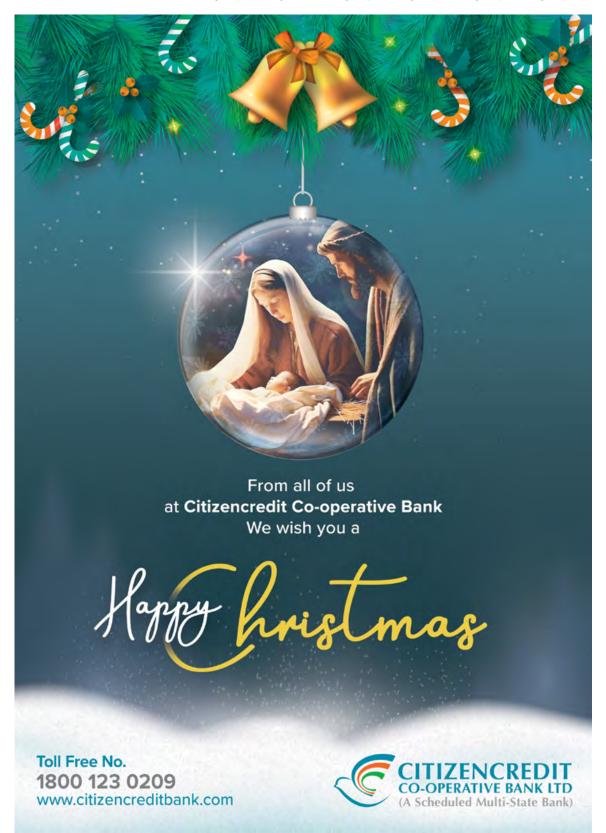
OUR LADY OF LOURDES CHURCH, ORLEM

DECEMBER 2024

Reaching Wut









Reaching Out Theme For February 2025

MARITAL BLISS

Divine Blessing and Human Endeavour. A challenge in today's modern world!

EDITORIAL TEAM

Fr. Aniceto Pereir Brinston Carvalh Lorenzo Fernande Melville X. D'souza Michelle Pinto Renita Sequeira Willrine Vaz

Please send your articles / reports as attached word.doc files and good resolution photographs as jpeg files to reachingout.orlem@gmail.com by January 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

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.

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.

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: +91 9920144967

FUNERAL

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



Jubilee Year 2025 - Pilgrims of Hope

Fr. Cedric Rosario



On Christmas eve, this year, the Holy Father Pope Francis, through the symbolic opening of the Holy Door of St. Peter's Basilica, will usher in the Jubilee

Year for the universal church lasting up to 6th January 2026, when the Holy Door will be symbolically closed.

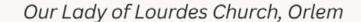
Jubilees are an integral part of our lives, usually serving to mark important milestones on life's journey. Among other things, we celebrate jubilees of our birth, marriage, ordination, etc. Given the commercial baggage that accompanies celebrations of this nature, many people associate jubilee celebrations as a secular concept, and some might even wonder what exactly the church seeks to accomplish by embarking on a year-long jubilee celebration.

Far from being a secular concept that the church has adopted, it is actually the other way round, wherein a religious celebration of deep significance and sanctity has acquired unfortunately commercial overtones in the minds of many people. We find the earliest mention of a jubilee in the book of Leviticus. In fact, almost the whole of chapter 25 is devoted to the year of the Jubilee giving detailed description of the prescriptions to be observed. We are told that this year is a time of restitution and rest, reconciliation and forgiveness of debts. Building on these principles, we have the institution of the Jubilee Year in the church in the year 1300 by Pope Boniface VIII. Initially set to be celebrated once in a century, the celebration of the Jubilee Year was revised at first to be celebrated once in 50 years and subsequently, once in 25 years, so that all the faithful might have an opportunity to experience the jubilee celebration at least once in their lifetime.

Accordingly, at present, there exist two types of jubilees in the church, viz. Ordinary and Extra-Ordinary Jubilees. In keeping with convention, Ordinary Jubilees are convoked once in 25 years, the last one being the great Jubilee which was celebrated at the dawn of the new millennium, in the year 2000. An Extra-ordinary jubilee is one which is convoked out of turn by the Pope, like the Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy of the year 2015-16. Regardless of the nomenclature, a Jubilee Year is characterized as a period of grace wherein each one is called to examine their life and relationships, to intensify prayer life, seek reconciliation by being ready and willing to repair broken relationships, and undertake pilgrimages to churches specifically chosen by the diocesan bishop and avail of the sacramental riches.

The theme for the Jubilee Year, that awaits us is Pilgrims of Hope - a powerful reminder that even in the midst of the great upheavals and uncertainties that surround us, we are pilgrims on this earth who do not journey in despair but are always enlightened by the hope that faith in Jesus Christ offers us. May this period of grace enkindle in us an earnest will to deepen our relationship with the Lord and one another, lest this too pass away as another "activity" in the life of the church.





CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR PROGRAMME

Christmas Eve : Tuesday, 24th December 2024, on 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, Wednesday, 25th December 2024. Mass in the Church.

In English : **6 am, 8 am & 10:30 am**

In Konkani : **7 am**

In Tamil : 9:15 am

There will be NO EVENING MASS

New Year's Eve: Tuesday, 31st December 2024 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

Mary Mother of God: Wednesday, 1st January 2025, Mass will be celebrated as per the Sunday schedule. There will be only one Mass in the evening at 7:00 p.m.







CHRISTMAS

Jane Soares, MoW

Christmas time is here! It's the most wonderful time of the Year. It's a time for carol singing, and shopping, and decorating; it is time for giving and receiving. But there is a deeper significance to these festivities which surpasses the general holiday cheer. The term "Christmas" originates" from the Old English Cristes mæsse", or "Christ's Mass," first recorded in around 1038. Early Christians gathered together to celebrate to honour and remember the birth of Jesus Christ; in time, this developed into a Christian tradition.

On December 25, Christians around the world gather to celebrate Jesus' birth. Joyful carols, special liturgies, brightly wrapped gifts, festive foods – all these characterize the feast of Christmas. The gospels do not give us the exact day, month, or time of Jesus' birth. The biblical reference to shepherds tending their flocks at night might suggest the spring lambing season – a far call from the cold month of December. Scholars have identified the December celebration with the Roman celebration of the winter solstice that fell on December 25.

The significance of Christmas lies in the truth that it embodies and in the immense love of God that manifested itself in the incarnation. God gave up His divinity to partake in our humanity. He took human form and became one of us. He lived among us; He died as one of us. He bore all our sins and died on the Cross, and in doing so gave us the gift of eternal life. At Christmas we celebrate this first coming, whilst we wait in eager anticipation for his Second Coming (Parousia).

Accordingly, the first three weeks of the Advent season are a preparation for the Parousia, while the final week sees us preparing for the celebration of the Incarnation. The season evokes merriment, yet it is also a time of prayer and sobriety. It is a time for reflection and spiritual transformation, marked by prayer, confession and almsgiving.

The story of Jesus' birth exudes simplicity. Born in a manger, wrapped in swaddling clothes, surrounded by shepherds and animals – Jesus' birth story is as ordinary as it gets. Even His parents are simple, ordinary folks. Yet the angels rejoice at His birth, and proclaim the coming of Emmanuel, meaning "God is with us". The name, as Prophet Isaiah foretells, encapsulates the profound truth of Christmas. Emmanuel means that we are no longer alone in our struggles and sorrow. God has stepped into our world; He has walked in our shoes, and has offered Himself as a bridge to eternal life.

This powerful truth must transform us and how we see this season. The angel's proclamation rings out with hope, for the little child brings with Him the good news of salvation, peace, and joy in every heart that receives Him. Having experienced this peace and joy, we must go out and proclaim it to the rest of the world. Our world is broken, let us start putting the little pieces together. May we be the eyes of the blind, and the ears of the deaf, the voice of the voiceless, and comforters of the afflicted. May ours be the beautiful feet that bring the Good News of Jesus Christ to all. May the peace and joy of Christ be with each and every one of us this Christmas.





Preparing for Christmas - Looking ahead with Hope to the Jubilee Year 2025

Melville X. D'Souza

A Jubilee is undoubtedly a milestone in anybody's life, giving one a sense of achievement. For instance, 25 years of married life or a priest completing 25 years in the Lord's vineyard. These are milestones to be treasured.

Pope Francis has declared 2025 as a Jubilee Year, beginning on Christmas Eve, 2024, when the Holy Door of St Peter's Basilica opens, ending on January 6, 2026. The Jubilee Year is a time for renewal and reflection.

The Pope chose the motto, "Pilgrims of Hope" for the 2025 Jubilee Year to encourage people to look to the future with hope and trust.

Preparing for Christmas by renovation of our home, painting, cleaning, dusting, new wardrobe, not forgetting sweets and the Christmas menu is fine. How about clearing the dust from our hearts?

While we prepare for Christmas, we should not lose sight of the Jubilee Year. This is not just another year in the Catholic Calendar, it is the Jubilee year.

We can prepare for the Jubilee year by reading and meditating on the Sacred Scriptures, the Stations of the Cross, especially at 3 p.m. the Hour of Great Mercy. Also, works of mercy, forgiving those who have hurt you or have done you wrong. Maybe undertake a short pilgrimage. Practicing kindness, being understanding towards members of our family, towards

members of our community, carrying out works of charity. Perhaps, even moving away from that 'ME' centric culture to 'WE' centric culture.

Today, the world is in turmoil, with wars and persecutions all across the world, with christian churches and institutions being targeted, in our country too.

In the background of such a dark scenario, the Jubilee comes as a time for healing and looking ahead with hope towards the future. We are not just pilgrims here on earth, we are "Pilgrims of Hope", with the motto for the 2025 Jubilee Year "Pilgrims of Hope" serving as an encouragement for us. The birth of Jesus brings Hope and Peace into this troubled world, to free us from the slavery of sin, to bring us salvation. It's upto us to make this Jubilee year fruitful and meaningful.

In the meanwhile, a Christmas song comes to mind,

A Thrill of Hope for every heart, God is here with us, God is here with us Great Redeemer, great relief Born to set us free, He has set us free!





Called To Be Pilgrims of Hope

Arlene Alves - JBC Community-3 Sector-1

The Holy Father Pope Francis, has declared 2025 as the jubilee year with the theme, "Pilgrims of Hope", a theme appropriate for the present world, suffering the impact of war, ongoing effects of Covid-19 and climate crisis. His Holiness Pope Francis beautifully explains it, we must flame the faith of hope that is being given to us and help everyone to gain new strength and certainty by looking to the future with an open spirit, a trusting heart and far sighted vision.

Saint Paul the apostle is an example of Christian hope. To hope in God is a hope that will never disappoint as the eyes of the Lord are on those who fear Him, in those whose hope is in His unfailing love. No matter the situation, God is going to come through. This is the essence of what hope is. Have faith and the Lord will not abandon you.

The feast of Our Lady of Hope celebrated on the Sunday after September 8 relates to the Franco-Prussian war, when Mary appeared to 6 children in the village of Pontmain on 17 January, 1871 France, asking them to pray for protection as the troops were entering the village and assured that the conflict will soon end. "Pray my children, God will soon answer before long."

True hope comes by trusting God, that God is our help, strength, shield and fortress at all times. And surrendering ourselves in prayer, even in difficult circumstances. Trust means obedience which results in hope and brings about joy and peace with the power of the Holy Spirit.

Romans 14:8 says, "If we live, we live for the Lord: and if we die, we die for the Lord, so whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord." Faith in Christ as pilgrims is our consolation of hope of eternal life.

May the grace of the Jubilee reawaken in us, Pilgrims of Hope, a yearning for the treasures of heaven. Let there be joy and peace of our Redeemer throughout the earth.

Our Journey of Hope with Jesus - Jubilee Year 2025

Olga Pereira - JBC Community 3, Sector 1

"The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor, He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour." (Isaiah 61:1-3).

A Jubilee Year is celebrated in our Catholic Church as a Holy Year for all of us pilgrims, calling us to practice reconciliation and repentance. It is a year of special grace, a time to reach out to all in prayer, hope, justice. To practice humble service towards creation and all creation.





Christmas is a landmark feast in our faith, a commemoration of the birth of Jesus Our Saviour. His birth calls us to be people of good will and messengers of hope like the Bethlehem Star which guided the shepherds and the wise men to Jesus Our Emmanuel. He is the light of hope and abundance of life. This Jubilee Year 2025, we should follow Jesus our shining light and reach out to everyone. We should let go of our hurts, our fears, regrets and ensure kindness and honesty in our dealings with our fellow human beings and also our natural inheritance. We may face unknown challenges and obstacles but when we

persevere in hope and surrender our ups and downs to God Our Abba Father, He will fill us with the grace and strength to face each new day. Our hope lies in Jesus who is our refuge and guide and who has experienced human life.

Even when all seems lost, we must remember that God Our Abba Father who is a source of hope will lift us up. Let us make this Jubilee Year 2025 memorable and meaningful in our journey of life. Wishing each one of us a Joyful Christmas and a Hopeful New Year 2025!

Our Christmas Wishes!

Michelle Pinto, C6S3

"Happy Christmas!" "Peace and Joy be yours!" "May you have the gift of faith, the blessing of hope and the peace of His love at Christmas and always!" "Be blessed with the happiness of Christmas!" At Christmas time, numerous such messages reach us through various channels.

The birth of Jesus profoundly changed the world. By being born in a humble stable, the focus was placed on simplicity and humility rather than grandeur and status. Through His teachings, the Beatitudes, Parables, and other wisdom, Jesus challenged us with a transformative value system - one that calls us to peace, joy, happiness, and unity.

For centuries, Christians have been guided by the values Jesus espoused, finding strength to persevere even through trials and tribulations. As we desire greater justice and peace in the world, we must keep the teachings of Jesus at the forefront. Integrity, Peace, Forgiveness, Mercy, Respect, Responsibility, Compassion, Gratitude, Humility, Faith in God are some of the values that will guide us along the narrow, difficult path of truth and justice.

This Christmas, may the grand vision of Jesus' teachings inspire us to follow him more closely. When we wish others a "Merry Christmas," may the true joy of the Christ values we follow, be reflected in our words and actions.

Jonathan Pinto. Civil Engineer. B.Tech BMC LIC. PMC. BMC LIC. Plumbing Consultant Cell: 9820324492 8097612091/9372131228 Email: workorderrichland@ gmail.com

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A New Beginning!

Sonia Rodrigues, JBC S2

The Old Testament begins with, 'In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.' (Genesis 1:1) We then go on to discover the multihued story of God's chosen people, along with multiple prophecies about a Messiah who is to come, and these are fulfilled in the New Testament through Jesus. This begins with the genealogy (Matthew 1:1-17) that provides a summary of the generations before Jesus and how He became the bridge between the Old and the New Testament.

Some of the names in the genealogy can surprise us. We find ordinary people who played extraordinary roles to bring about God's divine plan. We also find people who led a life of sin, and whose lives were far from perfect. One would think that a holy God would choose a spotless lineage for His Son Jesus to be born on earth. However, the mixed bag of names shows how beautifully He works even through our imperfections and brokenness. As pastor Rick Warren says, 'In God's garden of grace, even broken trees can bear fruit.'

We might look at our past with fear, guilt, shame, or regret. We point fingers at others based on their past. Without a past however, we wouldn't have a present and couldn't hope for a future. Only God has the right to condemn us. Instead, He sent us a gift, an unimaginable gift of grace that restored everything that had gone wrong through a perfect sacrifice. (John 3:16-17) If the One who created us chooses not to condemn us, who are we to do so?

Are we ashamed of our past? Do we feel we have no future? Instead of running away in despair, we must run towards Jesus who longs to embrace us. Like the blind man who threw off his cloak and hurried to encounter Jesus (Mark 10:50), let us throw off everything that binds us to our dark past and rush towards the Light of the world, the only source of endless hope.

As we celebrate the joy of Christmas, let's make a new beginning because He promises to make all things new. (Revelation 21:5)

Diwali - Triumph of Light Over Darkness

Melville X. D'Souza - IRD member

India is a melting pot of various cultures, castes, religions, etc., and with it comes a large number of festivals of every religion in our country. And so, India is rightly known as the "Land of Festivals".

Diwali is one of the greatest festivals celebrated by our non-Christian brethren. In order to create a sense of belonging and identity, and to foster social peace and inclusivity, the Interreligious Dialogue Cell (IRD) in our parish of Our Lady of Lourdes, Orlem, decided to celebrate Diwali-cum-Group Discussion with people of different faiths, on 27th October, 2024. The response was indeed heartwarming.







The Theme was 'Festival of Lights'. The guest speaker for the evening was Dr. Ashish Bhosale, a renowned doctor, with an MD in Pathology from KEM Hospital and JJ Hospital. He runs a healthcare and diagnostic center and is the secretary of a social organization called Lok Seva Trust, Mumbai, founded by the grandson of Mahatma Gandhi.

Dr. Bhosale, in his talk, mentioned that the IRD is undertaking an extraordinary effort of uniting and building the nation. He briefly explained the meaning of Diwali and the significance of each day of the festival. A very thought provoking, informative talk, indeed!

Fr. Aniceto in his address to the gathering, expressed his thanks to the participants for their presence. He also conveyed Pope Francis' wishes to those celebrating the Hindu festival of Deepavali, inviting Christians and Hindus to join hands with the people of other religious traditions, "to do all that we can to promote harmony amidst diversity and despite differences."

Fr. Aniceto also drew a parallel to the Easter vigil service, where the darkness is dispelled by candles lit from the new fire, making it all feel like a Festival of Lights, just like Diwali.

Adonis Dias, the energetic compere, conducted interesting games, helping participants to mingle with people of different cultures, religions, etc.

A group discussion was conducted by Alexio Fernandes, who posed two questions - What is the significance of LIGHTS in the festival of Diwali? And, how do we carry this LIGHT forward in our daily lives, in our neighbourhood?" Fr. Ronny Vaz summarized the discussion's message - living in peace and harmony, helping one another, reaching out to people whenever in need is the way forward.

'Diwali is a time to celebrate the Triumph of Light over darkness, knowledge over ignorance, and good over evil.' So very true! By the end of the day, the participants must have surely felt a change, with joy and peace in their hearts, all set to celebrate Diwali – The 'FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS'!





Readers Roundtable - A Cozy Review Corner

'A Novel Idea' Team



A day before the feast of St. Jerome, patron saint of Librarians, Sunday 29th September 2024 was an exciting day for the young passionate book lovers of our Parish. Our Parish Library 'A Novel Idea' conducted a Book Review for children from Grade V to X. It was certainly a novel event as there were no competitors, only participants, no losers, only winners.

The main aim of conducting this event was to encourage our children to read books and to put the old school treasure in the students backpack....books. Despite the influence of digital media, the importance of reading books cannot be overstated. Today our children face significant stress due to academics and social expectations and surprisingly even extra-curricular activities. There are books of different genres which can help children in personal development, broaden their understanding of different subjects and also enhance their creative, intellectual and emotional growth. Reading a book will likely help them to de-stress even if for a short while.

Since Book Reviews have always been

important, much before the existence of Amazon or kindle, the parish library team introduced this concept to our enthusiastic and passionate readers.

The event was conducted in the Grotto area immediately after the Children's mass. Before we began, the children were energised with snacks. Our young participants confidently expressed their views

on the books they had read, their favourite author, the characters in the book they liked or disliked and their reasons for doing so. One participant also expressed what she would have liked to change in the book she was reviewing, if she were to write it. That was commendable.

At the end, as a token of appreciation, Fr. Clinton Rayar and Fr. Ronny Vaz presented the participants with goody bags. We hope this small event will have a big impact on the kids and their motivators (parents).

As Dr. Seuss famously said. "The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you'll go."

Participants – Marc Sebastian, Rhea Vaz, Jinelle Fonseca, Nathan D'Souza, Rafael D'souza, Elicia Barretto, Reuben Lopez, Annika Fernandes, Aaryan Minj, Tina Pereira, Kiana D'lima, Chrisann Baptista, Rachel Rodrigues, Claire Rodrigues, Jaden Rodrigues, Akansh Mani, Danica Cooper





Give Peace a Chance!

Melville X. D'Souza - Member of the Interreligious Dialogue Cell (IRD)



Non-violence is perhaps the greatest weapon propagated by Mahatma Gandhi. Gandhiji was so staunch in his belief of Non-violence that he continued to use this weapon against the mighty British to finally gain independence for our country. We need to keep this thought in mind while we celebrate the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi.

The Interreligious Dialogue Cell of our parish organized a Silent Peace March on the 2nd of October 2024. It was open to people of all faiths and it was good to see a large turnout which included children and parishioners from Rosary Church, Goregaon.

The Chief Guest and Speaker for the evening, Dr. Jalindar Adsule, retired Principal of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar College and a practicing lawyer Mumbai High Court is well-versed in political science, sociology and is part of several NGOs caring for the poor and marginalized. He emphasized that no religion promotes violence; in fact, if there is one thing common in all religions, it is the message of peace. A key point he highlighted was that, according to Gandhiji, the whole world is one big

family and if you want peace in the world, you must also love your enemies.

Our parish priest, Fr. Aniceto Pereira, in his opening prayer, invoked the Lord to bless our nation and to bind us together with the unbreakable cord of brotherhood and mutual respect. This was preceded by the lighting of the lamp.

Fr. Ronny Vaz, Spiritual Director IRD, addressed the gathering, extolling the values of Mahatma Gandhi and exhorting them to follow his ideals.

The procession wound its way along the busy Marve Road, turning into the inner roads before returning back to the Church premises. We are sure the people returned home with the message of Non-violence, Hope, Peace and Love. Gandhiji says, "Non-violence is the first article of my faith. It is also the last article of my creed."

The message of the Silent Peace March was clear, if you wish to attain peace you can only do it through Non-violence. If you wish to see a change in the world, you need to be that change!





A Month of Devotion: The First Full Month of the Holy Rosary at Atlantis

Collin Mascarenhas (Community 5, Sector 6)



This October marked a momentous occasion for the Atlantis community as we completed our first full month of the Holy Rosary in our new homes at Shreeji Atlantis CHS Ltd, Lourdes Colony. Each evening, residents gathered in prayer to honour the Blessed Virgin Mary and seek her blessings on this new chapter of our lives. The 31 days of the Rosary were a powerful reminder of the blessings and grace that accompany collective prayer. It was a time

to pause, reflect and deepen our relationship with God, as well as to find comfort in the embrace of our neighbours.

The soft glow of candles and the melodies of hymns dedicated to Mama Mary added beauty to our prayerful evenings. We meditated on the mysteries of Christ's life, sharing our hopes, gratitude and intentions with one another. With every prayer, we not only grew closer as a community but also strengthened our individual spiritual journeys.

These Rosary evenings are not merely a tradition; they are a testament to our collective faith and a celebration of the new beginnings in the sacred space that we residents of Shreeji Atlantis call our home.

The Ruby Jubilee of the SCCs in Mumbai

Michelle Pinto, SCC Lay Coordinator, OLLC Orlem

The Small Christian Communities, or SCCs, have completed 40 years in the Archdiocese of Bombay. The first SCC was started by Bishop Bosco Penha in 1984, in the Parish of St Thomas Goregaon East. And therefore the Ruby Jubilee celebrations!

Saturday, November 9 2024, saw a large gathering assemble at the St Thomas School grounds for celebrations, which began with the Holy Eucharist 6 pm, celebrated by Cardinal Oswald Gracias and Emeritus Auxiliary Bishop Allwyn D'Silva.

Cardinal Oswald Gracias, in his message said that the 40th Anniversary of the Small Christian Communities is a testament to the vibrant life of the Church lived at the grassroots. The SCCs have become powerful witnesses of Christian love, uniting families and individuals, especially during moments of celebration, crisis and need.

The Holy Eucharist was followed by a Musical enactment – The Ruby Quest – put up by the parishioners. The Musical, directed by Ms Harriett Fernandes, had 100+ performers, performing and singing, who through their professions and daily routines, endeavor to hunt treasure only to realise the treasure of human relationships, outreach and thus ultimately building communities. It was indeed a solemn, spiritual and musically entertaining evening.





Celebrating World Elders Day - The Seniors' Spirit Lives On!

Melville X. D'Souza (BASCA-Orlem Unit member)



"The spirit never ages. It stays forever young," says Lailah Gifty Akita from Ghana, founder of Smart Youth Volunteers Foundation. Yes, for seniors, the Spirit never ages. To celebrate this spirit we saw a large number of senior citizens signing up for the World Elders' Day event organized by BASCA-Orlem unit, on 25th October 2024 in the Nihar Hall. And, what a celebration it was, you bet!

Fr. Aniceto, the Spiritual Director of BASCA, expressed his gratitude to the team for their efforts in organizing the Elders' Day function for our senior citizens. He was happy to see such a large turnout from the community.

We had Jacquiline, an energetic and lively compere who left no stone unturned to ensure that the seniors had fun with her witty comments, keeping them on their toes and at her wit's end, not knowing what to expect next. The evening was filled with a variety of interesting games, dances and singing.

Fr. Harry, who also attended the function, was at his jovial best. He belted out some popular numbers, entertaining the crowd to the hilt. Desmond Taylor with his live



performance, added spice to the event, taking us down memory lane with some of the Golden Oldies.

We had a number of prizes, including spot prizes, 8 lucky dips and surprise discount coupons for the participants.

It was indeed a great and unforgettable evening, with requests for more events in future A participant, Francis Braganza, said it all when, on behalf of the seniors, he thanked the BASCA - Orlem unit team for organizing such a beautiful event and invoking God's blessings on us all. The congratulatory WhatsApp messages from the seniors continue to urge us on! The seniors' spirit lives on!

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PIUS PEREIRA





Celebrating AGERA! The East Indian Harvest Festival!

Melville X. D'Souza - MGP-Valnai (Orlem) unit member



The farmer has sown and now it's time for reaping. Yes, it is Harvest time, a time for Thanksgiving, a time for celebration! And so, the East Indian community, natives of the soil as we are known, celebrated the Harvest Festival, AGERA at the 8 a.m. mass on Sunday, 6th October at Our Lady of Lourdes Church, Orlem with the Mobai Gaothan Panchayat (MGP) – Valnai (Orlem) unit, leading the celebration. And what a celebration it was!

Fr. Aniceto Pereira spoke briefly about the AGERA festival and appreciated and thanked the East Indian community & the MGP for reviving and keeping alive the East Indian traditions. The Eucharistic celebration was grand, with women in the traditional East Indian 'Lugra' and the men in East Indian shirts of different colours.

The Entrance and the Recessional Hymns were sung in the East Indian dialect by members of the MGP. Vegetables, fruits, cake, etc., were presented to the Celebrant at Offertory time. The paddy, blessed by Fr. Aniceto, was distributed to the faithful.

The East Indian band had the people on their feet, with colourful East Indian umbrellas swirling in rhythm. The joyful procession made its way to the 200-year-old market cross, accompanied by Fr. Aniceto, Fr. Ronny & Fr. Clinton.

Fr. Aniceto, in his talk at the cross, spoke about the importance of caring for the Earth, for, everything that we have today, including our mobile phones, comes from the Earth. He went on to say that the Church is asking us to make the 'care for creation' an important ministry. He quoted the Pope saying, "It is not just an option, if we don't take care of the Earth, we are all going to die together!"

The AGERA celebrations continued onto St. Joseph's school Quadrangle for an afternoon of entertainment - singing, dancing, spontaneous performances, spot prizes. There was also a little skit enacted on social issues.

It was indeed, a grand AGERA celebration, a day to remember, to thank God for his Goodness & Blessings!





Care to Make a Difference for a Better World

Carlyle Pereira (Environment Cell of Orlem)

"Let the little children come to me" – these are the words of our Lord and Master, Jesus Christ. Inspired by this biblical teaching, the Environment Cell of Orlem (ECO) organized its first activity for children: The Toy Donation and Toy Swap Drive on October 17, 2024.

Parishioners arrived with bags of toys their children had outgrown, turning the event into what felt like an early visit from Santa. The collection included cars, board games, stuffed toys, and more. It was heartwarming to see even the Confirmation students of the ECO team join in the fun, playing games like Squab catch ball and others. As the saying goes, "No matter the age, there is always a child within us, bringing out the best in who we are."

The drive was centred around the principles of recycling, reusing, and rejoicing, with all toys distributed free of charge. The response was overwhelming, with more than 200 children selecting toys of their choice. Additionally, toys were donated to Prayatna and the neighbouring parish, Our Lady of the Forsaken. The excitement and sparkle in the eyes of the children, as well as their parents, brought immense joy and satisfaction to everyone involved.

Another activity, the White Elephant Sale, extended the theme of spreading joy and caring for creation through recycling and reusing. Parishioners from Orlem generously donated items in good condition that they no longer needed. The collection ranged from brand-new to gently used items, including household items like

utensils, glasses, decorative pieces and books. Whatever people needed, it was available at a nominal price.

The ECO's guiding motto, "Want Not, Waste Not," was the key theme of the activity. Prices were intentionally kept low to make items accessible to everyone, with the aim of promoting sustainability and contributing to a greener planet. The sale attracted not only people from Orlem but also from nearby areas like Borivali. The sight of eager visitors waiting in line and the subsequent rush was truly a spectacle.

The most touching moments came from the gratitude reflected in the eyes of those who benefitted from the sale. All proceeds from the sale were handed over to the parish to encourage various parish/community activities.

We sincerely thank our parishioners for their unwavering love, support, and wholehearted participation in ECO activities. Together, we are making a difference—one small step at a time.







Rosa Mystica's October Rosary

Lucy Misquitta (Community 7, Sector 3)



Come October, we were all infused with the zeal to sing hymns to our Mother, Our Lady of Fatima, and laud her praises and blessings through the Holy Rosary. The flock of the Rosa Mystica sector, Evershine Nagar, shepherded by Andy Putman, gathered daily at Rajendra Vihar Apartments to recite the Rosary, animated each day by a different member of the community. Every Sunday, there was a draw, and Andy presented two winners with beautiful statues of Our Lady.

Anju, another member of the community, regaled us with her quizzes and games. Our prayerful sessions culminated in a fellowship dinner, mingled with a sprinkle of light banter and jokes.

Our thanks and appreciation go to Andy for her labour of love. She expended a great deal of passion, effort and commitment to bring us all together in praise and worship of Jesus Christ, Our Lord.

An Evening of Prayer!

The St. Francis of Assisi community of the Third Dominic Colony came together on October 4th for a special evening of prayer, devotion, and fellowship, commemorating their patron saint, St. Francis, known as the patron saint of the environment. The gathering was focused on offering prayers for global peace and the restoration of harmony between us humans and the environment we inhabit.

The prayer service highlighted St. Francis'

teachings on caring for creation, calling for everyone to become stewards of the environment and to live compassionately with nature.

Following the prayers, the event took a lighthearted turn with community games and a lively game of Housie. The night ended with everyone savoring delicious snacks, creating a joyful atmosphere and strengthening the sense of community and togetherness.





Vacation Bible Joy 2024

Jane Soares - Coordinator, VBJ, Orlem



The Vacation Bible Joy (VBJ), the annual fun bible camp, was conducted in our Parish during the Diwali vacation from 28th October to 2nd November, 2024. The theme, "Enter the Holy Door - It is the Year of the Lord's Favour" was aimed at preparing the children for the Jubilee Year when the Pope will throw open the Holy Door at the Vatican.

With Scriptural passages from the Old and New Testament, the concept of the Jubilee Year was explained to the children. Through various fun filled activities, craftwork, song and dance, it was explained how Jesus is the Holy Door to God's love and mercy, as well as the Door of Protection and Hope for us. The Praise and Worship at the daily Assembly, led by the Confirmation youth and the youth of the parish, was the highlight of the programme. Children sang and danced, praising God with all their heart and mind.

The Closing Ceremony was an evening of frolic and fun. Through an Exhibition of their craftworks, as well as, a cultural programme of song, dance and skits, the children presented before their parents all that they had learned at the VBJ.



All in all, it was a great end to an actionpacked week of Bible-fun. We thank all the catechists and priests for their untiring work and support in making this programme a success. We also thank the confirmation youth and the youth of the parish for their active participation in teaching and training the children during the programme.







Nivedita Community Sector Feast



We had a delightful celebration of our Nivedita Community Sector Feast on November 15, 2024. Our heartfelt thanks to Fr. Cedric for celebrating the Holy Eucharistic for us.

Following the Mass, we enjoyed refreshments, and the children brought joy to the gathering with two energetic action songs. In honour of Children's Day, which was celebrated the day before, Fr. Cedric personally distributed chocolates to all the

children. We also engaged in some karaoke fun and held a lucky draw before concluding the evening with a lovely dinner.

During the Mass, Fr. Cedric blessed the Animators,

acknowledging their dedication and the invaluable time and effort they invest in our Community. We also extend our gratitude to all those who stepped forward to assist and serve the Community. We appreciate everyone who contributed to the success of the Feast Mass. The impressive turnout for the Mass highlighted the strong connections we share.

May God bless each and every family!

Inter Parish Badminton Tournament

The Inter Parish Badminton Tournament, hosted by St Teresa's Youth Girgaum was held in November 2024 at the Parish in Girgaum. Our Parishioners participated and we congratulate the winners – Mixed Doubles Candida Fernandes & Amit Rebeiro and Mens Doubles – Amit Rebeiro & Carlyle Thomas!









All Saints Community Events

PC & Animators of JBC S1



Senior Citizens Day: In the 1st week of October, the Animators visited our *Young at Heart*, homebound seniors, to wish them a Happy Seniors Day with a gift in our hands and a prayer in our hearts. It was a treat to see a smile on their faces.

Community Rosary: In October, our Sector held the Community Rosary, uniting members of all ages in faith and fellowship. Young and senior participants prayed together, sharing blessings and strengthening community ties. The event offered moments of reflection, friendship, and learning, making it a truly spiritually uplifting experience for everyone involved.

All Saints Sector Feast : We celebrated our Feast on 1st November with the Holy

Eucharist Mass at 7 PM, celebrated by Fr. Clinton Rayar, followed by fellowship. There was singing, dancing, a linguistic parishioner who spoke in many languages, games for children, housie, and much more. The event concluded with a delicious dinner, capturing great pictures and leaving everyone with cherished memories.

Children's Day was celebrated making it an unforgettable day for the over 20 children who participated in various fun activities, showcasing their talents and teamwork. The children were delighted to receive prizes, gifts, snacks, and cupcakes. Parents and organizers were thrilled to see the happiness on the children's faces, embodying the spirit of nurturing young minds.

World Day of the Poor – "The prayer of the poor rises up to God"

Monica Fernandes, C7S5

Pope Francis called on Christians, on this World Day of the Poor, to practise a faith that inspires action, urging the Church and organizations to assist the poor and

marginalised. We, at Our Lady of Lourdes Church, Orlem, commemorated the World Day of the Poor, on Sunday, November 17, 2024.







Many were invited on this day. We began with a prayer led by our Parish Priest, Fr. Aniceto Pereira. This was followed by a talk that assured everyone present that each person is privileged in some way or another, which was met with loud applause and smiles on all faces.

The music started to play and nobody hesitated but came forward and danced heartily. Games were announced and everyone was eager to participate, irrespective of their abilities. Energy and liveliness flowed at their best.

Lunch was served and it was also a time to interact. Soon it was time to say goodbye. Participants were happy that they attended the get-together and expressed that they were looking forward to coming again. They thanked Fr. Aniceto and the organizers – Prayatna, supported by Divine Mercy, SSVP, and the SCC Warriors – for the gift hampers and the wonderful time they had!

October Blessings with Mama Mary

Agnes De Sa, C7S2



The month of the Holy Rosary witnessed a community renewal in St. Francis Xavier Community. Many of us were honoured to receive Mama Mary into our homes. As we carried her statue from home to home, the devotion and devotees increased. Interestingly, one of the common supplications was for families and societies

undergoing 'redevelopment'. Our sector has seen many families move out temporarily and we lifted them up in prayer. May the love and togetherness we experienced in October continue. Mama Mary be with us and guide every step we take.





Pre Baptism Course at our Lady of Lourdes Church Orlem

Michelle Gonsalves, Pre Bap team

Are you a couple soon expecting a baby? If so, we encourage you to register for the PRE-BAPTISM course at our Parish, designed for all expectant parents. Register and attend at the earliest to avoid inconvenience in the later stages of pregnancy.

This course guides you through different aspects of parenthood. At our Parish, we break it down into 4 sessions held once every two months, on a Thursday and Friday, from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

1st session : New life - This session speaks about how a couple, after marriage, enters a new covenant relationship with each other and with Christ

2nd session: Faith Formation for children

- Understand how to nurture and help your child grow in the Christian faith.

3rd session: God Parenting - Understand the importance and relevance of God parents in your child's life and how to choose the right god parents.

4th session - Rights of Baptism - Detailed overview of what to expect when you bring your baby to church for baptism, including the different rituals and rights of the ceremony.

A certificate is presented to the parents and the god parents on completion of the course. Please enquire at the Parish office for more details.



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SSVP - Celebrating the Spirit of Service

Melville X. D'Souza - SSVP member

Serving the poor, is serving God – said Fr. Ronny, Spiritual Director of Society of St. Vincent de Paul (SSVP), at the Thanksgiving Mass on 29 September, as we celebrated the feast of our patron, St. Vincent de Paul. He exhorted the people to emulate St. Vincent de Paul.

The modest celebrations, at the Nihar Hall, were in keeping with the nature of the SSVP work. Fr. Aniceto is his address, thanked the collaborators & benefactors and the SSVP for their commitment and enormous service rendered by them to the needy and poor sections of society.

Fr. Ronny too spoke at the gathering. He said, someone has sacrificed something that is why we are here and so it is only right that we make some sacrifices to ensure that others also come up in life. In fact,

in his homily, he spoke about how the Israelites while complaining about their hardships, did not understand that God was promising them a better life, which is what the SSVP is striving to give to those whom they serve.

Shirley Drego, the President of the SSVP read out the Annual Working Report and thanked the members for their wholehearted support and help.

Dr. Sharad Oza too graced the occasion. We are grateful to him for his magnamity in providing health care to the needy.

It was a fun-filled evening with interesting games and refreshments. Of course, not forgetting our committment to continue serving the needy & the poor.

Winners of the Parable of Talents Quiz

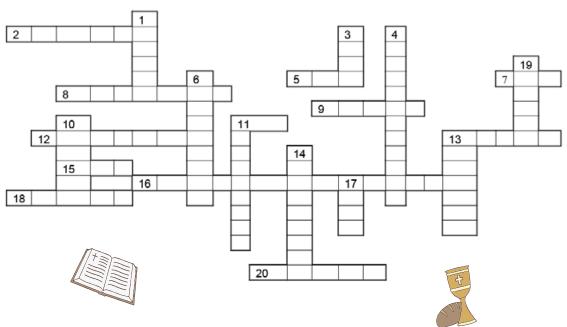
BAUDI	Schneider Dsouza	Cletus D'Souza	Agatha and Aelred Abreo
Maureen Lily	Sheldon Lobo	Gwynet Johnson	Venitta D'souza
Abigail Azavedo	Sharel Lobo	Cynthia Pereira	Mariana Coelho
Philomina Mani	Xiandra Henriques	Philomena Pinto	МІТН CHOWKI
Anthony Dmello	JBC	Giselle D'mello	Allisyn D'Souza
Carol D'Souza	Arlene Alves	Benny D'Souza	Jeremy D'Souza
Ophelia D'Souza	Simran Gond	Lorraine Dias	EVERSHINE
SBLG	Kyle Fernandes	Brian, James, Shaun Fernandes	Gwynette Gonsalves
Elizabeth Saldanha	Leena Rozario	Veronica Ferrao	Jason & Donnamaria Mendonca
Cheryl Dsilva	TANK	Freda Fernandes	Anthony D'Mello
Rita Saldanha	Valerie Fletcher	LOURDES	Joseph D'Souza
		Philomena Ferrao	





The Nativity Quiz

Complete the crossword and send it to reachingout.orlem@gmail.com, alongwith your name, your Community and Sector details.



ACROSS **DOWN**

- 2. Where Mary gave birth to Jesus
- 5. There was no room in the ____ (Luke 2:7)
- 7. Christmas brings us ___
- 8. Who followed the star to find the baby Jesus (Mt 2:1-2)
- 9. Bethlehem was known as the city of ___ and Mary and Joseph were both part of David's lineage (Luke 2:4)
- 12. Who told Mary she would have a baby (Luke 1:26-33)
- 13. One of the gifts the wisemen brought (Luke 2:11)
- 15. Jesus' Father
- 16. Who ordered that everyone was to 14. Mary wrapped her baby in ___ clothes be taxed and was to go to the city of their Ancestors to be registered.
- 18. The Jewish king at the time of Jesus' birth
- 20. Where Mary & Joseph fled to when they found out Herod was going to kill all the babies in Bethlehem

- 1. The Angel said to the shepherds "Fear not for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all ____
- 3. Jesus' cousin born 6 months before him.
- 4. One of the gifts the wise men brought.
- 6. The place that Mary and Joseph had to travel to (Luke 2:4)
- 10. What Mary laid here newborn baby in (Luke 2:7)
- 11. The name of Mary's cousin she went to visit
- 13. A name of Jesus that means "the anointed"
- (Luke 2:7)
- 17. One of the gifts the wisemen brought.
- 19. Mary's husband ____-





























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