



HOPE IS BORN

Christmas returns to us this year with a message our hearts long to hear: Hope is Born. Not a fragile hope or a distant hope, but a living, breathing hope that takes the form of a child lying in a manger. At a time when our nation and our world feel weighed down by tensions, uncertainties, and wounds, Christmas proclaims that God enters our story – not with judgement or power, but with tenderness, humility, and promise.

For us in India, this message speaks with particular depth. Our country is vibrant and full of grace, yet we also feel the strain of divisions in society, the pain of communal mistrust, and the quiet fears that mark everyday life. Many families struggle with unemployment and rising costs. Many young people feel uncertain about their future. And countless migrants travel across states, carrying the weight of hope on their shoulders as they search for safety, dignity, and work. Into all this, God whispers through the birth of His son: “Do not be afraid. Hope is born for you.”

The Bethlehem of long ago was not so different from the world we see around us today. It was a place marked by political tension, economic hardship, and social anxiety. Yet God chose that very place to reveal His love. This is the heart of Christmas: hope is not born in perfect situations but in the midst of real struggles. Christ enters the messiness of human life – our fears, our worries, our brokenness. He comes not to escape our darkness, but to shine within it.

As divisions and conflicts arise in various parts of India, and as harsh words and hostility fill our public spaces, the Child of Bethlehem invites us to believe that hatred is not the final word. He stretches out His tiny hands to teach us a new way – the way of gentleness, truth, and reconciliation. Hope is born whenever even one heart chooses peace over anger, dialogue over suspicion, compassion over indifference and love over hate.

When faith is used to draw lines or deepen mistrust, Jesus reminds us that authentic faith always heals and unites. The manger does not belong to one group or one community; it gathers shepherds and travellers, insiders and outsiders. In a land as religiously diverse as India, this simple manger scene becomes a profound proclamation: Hope is born wherever we choose to welcome rather than exclude, to respect rather than divide.

And when we think of the millions who migrate within India – families who leave home with nothing but courage and longing – we remember the Holy Family who fled to Egypt for safety. Jesus walks with every migrant worker, every displaced child, and every parent who carries dreams for a better tomorrow. Hope is born in their resilience and in the compassion we extend to them.

This Christmas, as we stand before the manger, let us allow this truth to fill our hearts: Hope is not an idea or a feeling. Hope is a person. Hope has a name. And Hope is born for us – here, in our struggles, in our homes, in our parish, in our country.

Fr. Jolly, SVD



OUR PASTOR SAYS...

Dear Parishioners,

We have just concluded the joyful feast of Christmas, the greatest love story ever told, the second person of the Holy Trinity becoming flesh and embracing our human condition. As we continue in this spirit of grace, we are truly blessed to celebrate the feast of St. Arnold Janssen, the founder of the Society of the Divine Word (SVD), on 29th January at the 6:00 pm Mass along with St. Joseph Freinademetz.

From his childhood, Arnold Janssen was deeply in love with the LOGOS (the Divine Word) as his father Gerhard Janssen read and reflected over the prologue of St. John (Jn 1:1-18) during the family prayer. Arnold Janssen drew inspiration from this pious practice and began to dream of starting a mission seminary that would carry the Divine Word to far-off lands, especially to places where Christ had not yet been proclaimed. His dream, however, faced enormous challenges. The political climate of his time, particularly the anti-Catholic *Kulturkampf*, and the lack of financial resources made it seem almost impossible to begin a mission seminary in Germany.

Arnold Janssen – a man with a “heart on fire” – never gave up. When people told him that his plans for a mission seminary during such turbulent times were foolish, he responded with faith-filled courage: “The Lord challenges our faith to do something new, precisely when so many things are collapsing in the

Church.” With quiet determination and bold trust in Divine Providence, he established the first mission seminary – not in Germany, but across the border in Steyl, Holland, on 8th September 1875. What began in a small rented house has now grown into a worldwide missionary family, present in nearly 80 countries, with over 6000 members today, announcing the good news and making their feet beautiful (Is 52:7), embracing various cultures,

languages, and peoples. Truly, it is a miracle of faith, perseverance, and unwavering confidence in God.



What makes St. Arnold truly inspiring is not only *what* he accomplished, but *how* he lived, quietly, prayerfully, humbly, and yet utterly fearless when it came to God's work. He teaches us that holiness is not loud or dramatic; it is simply saying “Yes” to God again and again,

even when the path is uncertain.

As we celebrate his feast this year, St. Arnold invites each of us to deepen our trust in Divine Providence, to open our hearts to the needs of the world, and to allow God to work wonders through our smallness. His life continues to whisper to us: “*Announce the Gospel with your life; God will do the rest.*”

Wishing you all a very happy feast of our beloved founder, St. Arnold Janssen.

Fr. Henry Dsouza, SVD
Parish Priest



Parish Priest: Fr. Henry Dsouza SVD
Fr. Jomet Joseph SVD (Asst. Parish Priest)
Fr. Shinoy Mathew SVD (Principal)
Fr. Callisto Gomes SVD (In residence)
Fr. Jose P.A. SVD (In residence)

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MASS TIMINGS:

Weekday: 7:00 a.m.; 8:00 a.m. & 7:00 p.m.
Sunday: 7:00 a.m.; 8:30 a.m. 10:00 a.m & 6:00 p.m.
Sunday School: 9:30 a.m.

CONFESSIONS:

Saturday: 7:30 a.m. - 8:00 a.m.
6:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

BAPTISMS:

(As per prior appointment)

MARRIAGES:

Regarding marriage formalities meet the priest on duty well in advance. Bring your latest Baptism Certificate (issued not more than six months earlier and a copy of Marriage Preparation Course Certificate)

BURIALS:

Copies of Death Certificate & Municipal Burial permission required.
Shroud burials are highly encouraged.

OFFICE TIMINGS:

10.00 a.m. – 1.00 p.m.; 5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.
Closed on Sundays & Bank holidays
Send your feedback/contributions to the parish office

Please email your pictures and articles for the VISION: sttheresavision777@gmail.com



EDITORIAL

During the Jubilee Year 2025, Pope Francis invited every one of us to embark on a pilgrimage of hope, exhorting us: "We must fan the flame of hope that has been given 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." This is in sync with our theme – Born to Bring Hope – when we celebrated the birth of Jesus Christ, who is the living icon of hope, bringing joy to the world and lighting up our lives.

Hope is the slender lifeline that sustains many a wounded soul. We do search for the silver lining in the cloud, the rainbow after the thunderstorm... "We are all in the gutter, but some of us are looking at the stars," Oscar Wilde's famous quote resonates with us. Everyone faces hardship, but we have the choice to face life's challenges head-on, focus on the positive, maintain perspective and hope and chase our dreams, believing that God is on our side... and miracles do happen!

As we usher in 2026, let's hope for the best in all that we do, lacing our deeds with kindness and generosity, especially to our less fortunate brethren. Let's also endeavour to spread this message of positivity and hope to all we come in contact with, to 'heal the world, make it a better place'!

Marianne



Happy New Year!



ST. THERESA'S PARISH THEME 2026

Faith-filled Families



The theme for our parish 2026 is **“Faith-filled Families.”** The rationale for choosing this theme is twofold: to deepen faith in families and to celebrate the families in our parish. A faith-filled family is not a perfect family, but a family that keeps God at the centre of everyday life.

A faith-filled family is:

- ★ **Rooted in prayer** – praying together in simple ways: before meals, at bedtime, the rosary, reading a short passage from the Bible. As Joshua says, “As for me and my household, we will serve the Lord” (Josh 24:15).
- ★ **Formed by love and forgiveness** – living what St. Paul teaches: “Put on compassion, kindness, humility, patience... forgive as the Lord has forgiven you” (Col 3:12–13).
- ★ **Strengthened by the Eucharist** – Sunday Mass becomes the heart of family life, where the family is nourished and sent out to live the Gospel.
- ★ **Witnessing in daily life** – parents become the first teachers of faith by their example, not just by words. Children learn faith by seeing faith lived.
- ★ **Open to hope and service** – even amid struggles, illness, or financial worries, the family trusts in God and reaches out to others.



CHRISTMAS 2025

St. Theresa's Parish celebrated Christmas with great solemnity, centered on the theme *“Born to Bring Hope.”* Fifteen priests from the Society of St. Paul and SVD concelebrated the Midnight Mass. Charlie's Angels choir and musicians enriched the liturgy with their melodious singing. In his homily, Fr. Renold D'Souza, Professor of Philosophy at Goregaon Seminary, reminded the faithful that Jesus is the true hope we can rely on in every situation of life. During the *Gloria*, the newly wedded couple – Rahul Macwan and Amanda Cruz – presented Baby Jesus to the main celebrant, Fr. Henry D'Souza. The large turnout, with all seats occupied and many standing, reflected the parish's vibrant faith. At the end of the mass the parish theme “Faith-filled families” for the year 2026 was unveiled by the Jacinto family from Khar. Fr. Shinoy, the spiritual director presented prizes to altar servers with the highest attendance. The celebration concluded with parishioners sharing Christmas cake and greetings. It was indeed a hope-filled Christmas.





Christmas Quiz

Test your knowledge of Christmas and enjoy this festive challenge.

1. What is the traditional Christmas drink made from eggs, milk, and nutmeg?
2. Which of Santa's reindeers shares its name with a celestial object that orbits the sun?
3. Who wrote the classic story "A Christmas Carol"?
4. What is the best-selling Christmas song of all time?
5. In the song "The Twelve Days of Christmas," what is given on the eighth day?
6. What is the traditional meat eaten during Christmas dinner?
7. Which plant is known as the Christmas Flower?
8. Elvis isn't going to have a white Christmas, he's going to have a....
9. Stolen is a traditional fruit cake in which country?
10. What are you supposed to do when you find yourself under the mistletoe?
11. What band had the hit single 'Last Christmas'?
12. How do you say "Merry Christmas" in Spanish?
13. Which spirit is traditionally poured on top of a Christmas pudding and then lit?

Answers: 1. Eggnog 2. Comet 3. Charles Dickens 4. "White Christmas" by Bing Crosby 5. Eight maids a-milking 6. Turkey 7. Poinsettia 8. Blue Christmas 9. Germany 10. Kiss 11. Wham! 12. Feliz Navidad 13. Brandy

Answers



My Journey of Hope



Life is a journey, marked by valleys and mountain tops; yet, through every path Hope remains our constant companion. How is Hope defined? It is not wishful thinking but a quiet assurance of God's promises. We all have a plan for our life and hope goes along with it. But sometimes (or should I say often) we forget God's promises (Jer 29:11) "For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, to give you a future and a hope."

At this juncture, let me share with you my journey of hope that was crushed on two occasions, when I lost two of my boys to cancer – one aged 7 and the other 15. My journey of hope began to spiral down into the valley of wilderness and for a long time, I didn't see the mountain top. But Hope taught me patience when there were no answers, or they seemed delayed. I didn't understand then, but I do now that He had me on His mind all the time. And slowly but surely His Love drew me closer and closer to Him. It

was a process (Psalm 85:15) "But you, O Lord, are a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness."

Today, as I walk ahead, His word reminds me (Isaiah 40:31) "Those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint." Hope does not disappoint, for it is rooted in a faithful God who never fails. Today the impact of His word has brought me out of the wilderness to the mountain. He turned my trial into a testimony for His glory. Amen.

Renita D'Abreo



The first candle lit in Advent is the candle that stands for Hope. I lit my Candle of Hope in March this year. But my journey of hope had begun way back in 2017, when I was first diagnosed with cancer. Thereafter, I have not stopped trusting in the healing hand of God. Even as I journeyed through 2023 with a recurrence of cancer, my sojourn with Hope continued.

This year, in March, the cancer had spread to my stomach. I trusted only in the power of the Eucharist, which I knew was the only thing I needed. Jesus, present in the Eucharist, was all I took by mouth, every morning, for 21 days of my hospitalisation. I knew that where Jesus had touched the recesses of my stomach, the healing had begun. He gave me direction and put me on the path to the right treatment with the very best of oncologists.

Throughout my treatment, I have never lost hope for even a single day and I've taken the good days with the bad days. I have been in much pain, yet am able to endure it, to offer it up to our Lord, to even thank Him for allowing me some share in His suffering. I always knew that He died for us, but now I believed that He died for me, personally.... and that he would restore life to me, and life in abundance.

After being on a feed tube for almost six months, just to be able to eat again has filled my heart with unimaginable gratitude. The treatment I was receiving showed that I was clinically better. I am indeed a witness to the miracles of Jesus and the Power of the Eucharist. I continue, strengthened, on my journey of hope.

The promise that I made in faith to Mother Mary at the feast of the Annunciation, that we would celebrate Jesus' birth together, would never be possible had I not lit that Candle of Hope. I look forward to celebrating the birthday of our Lord this Christmas with a heart full of gratitude and blessed to be His witness.

*The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, His mercies they never come to an end.
They are new every morning, new every morning, great is his faithfulness.*

Patricia Affonso



Growing Microgreens with Care

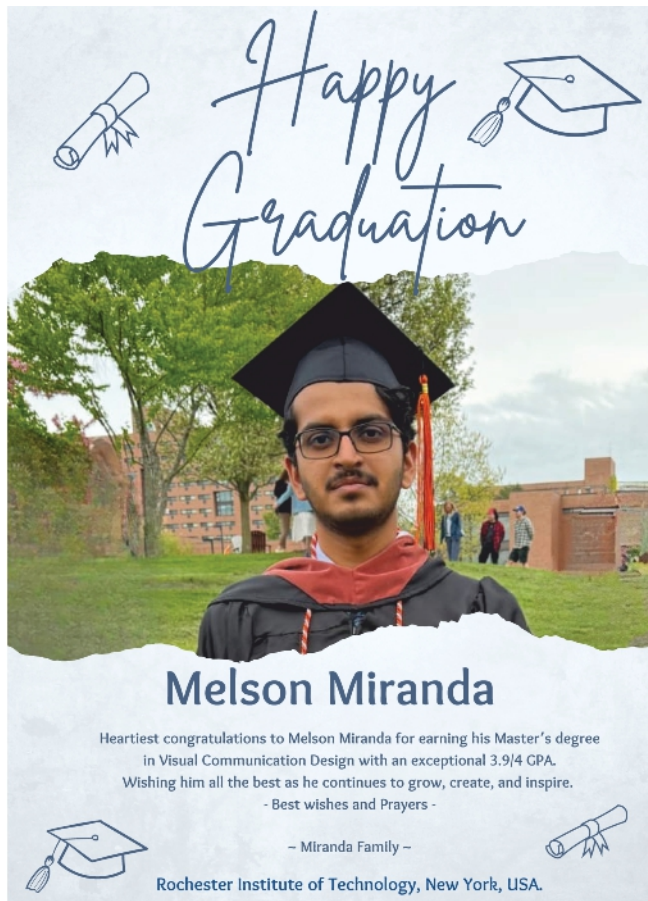
On 29th November, the Care for Creation Cell of St. Theresa's Parish conducted a Microgreens Workshop with Saurabh Nagre from Oligo. This covered all the key aspects of microgreens – from understanding what they are, and their importance in health and nutrition, to learning how to grow and manage them. With expert tips from Saurabh, this was a truly comprehensive session, that was attended by 19 people. A microgreens kit was also available at the venue.

Everly Quadros



Microgreens, a hypothesized term used for the emerging food product that is developed from various commercial food crops, such as vegetables, grains, and herbs, consist of developed cotyledons along with typically, the first pair of very young true leaves. These immature plants are harvested between 7–21 days (depending on variety). With the typical size being 1 to 1.5 inch long, they are used as a visual, flavour and texture enhancement, adding sweetness and spiciness to foods, providing garnishing for salads, soups, sandwiches, and plates.

Microgreens are generally described as being an easier plant to grow but may have complications, ranging from preventing and managing fungus or mould growth to providing the right nutrients and growing media to the plants in order to ensure quality produce. A shallow plastic container with drainage holes, such as a nursery flat or pre-packaged salad box, will facilitate sprouting and grow out on a small scale. Grown in soil such as peat moss, they require high light levels, preferably natural sunlight with low humidity and good air circulation. They are planted with very low seed density compared to sprout processing. Microgreens are considered a "superfood" due to their intense flavour and high concentration of nutrients, vitamins, and antioxidants, about five times greater than their mature plant counterparts.





Jingle All the Way – A Festive Weekend

Jingle All the Way was a fun-filled and joyful two-day weekend celebration organised by the TYM on 13th & 14th December, spreading Christmas cheer, laughter, and togetherness all around. The event was buzzing with exciting Christmas-themed games, cheerful spot prizes, and lucky raffle prizes that kept everyone smiling throughout.

Both days ended on a high note with lively housie sessions, made extra special with amazing gifts and lots of festive excitement. Our parishioners added heart and flavour to the celebration by putting up food stalls filled with delicious and lovingly prepared treats, making the atmosphere even warmer and more joyful.



We express our heartfelt gratitude to Fr. Henry for his constant guidance, encouragement, and unwavering support. A special thank you to our spiritual director, Fr. Callisto for his blessings and inspiration. We also sincerely thank Fr. Shinoy, Fr. Jomet, Fr. Jose, and Fr. Cosmos for their support and presence throughout the event. Jingle All the Way was truly a memorable celebration this year. Until we meet again, we wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Rahael Baretto



Sharing Christmas Joy

As that holiest of nights, 'Christmas' approaches, the Florian Community decided to put the Advent virtues of Hope, Joy, Peace and Love into practice, inviting 24 children (mostly non-Christian) from the surrounding wadis to a pre-Christmas celebration.

There is something about seeing a child enjoy Christmas that delights the soul and we had the privilege to experience exactly that on 19th December in the Church Council room. Games and more games were the order of the day, but not before an introduction explaining that the reason for the season is Jesus, not Santa or Jingle bells. A short video on the Nativity story reiterated this. Fr. Henry, along with Fr. Callisto greeted the smiling faces. Two little ones even shyly danced with our parish priest.

The children eagerly threw themselves into the slew of games planned for them. The highlight of these was a mixed relay game, which required big and small girls and boys and children from the different wadis to mix and mingle and support the other. Team names? Hope, Peace, Joy and Love. Little Snow White leading her dwarfs, Santa's Elf and the other elves, a Chinaman and his chopstick-wielding friends, and the colourful Ninja turtle gang, all descended on the celebrations! A counting game for little ones, a Noddy-Santa dialogue, Hula hoop and the classic, 'passing the Santa,' were enjoyed thoroughly, judging by the hoots of laughter and mirth. Everyone decided that they prized fun more than the prizes!



Captivating Advent Recollection

As the Jubilee Year 2025 was drawing to a close, on 5th December, 2025 our Parish held an Advent Recollection (Prepare the Way of the Lord) for our parishioners, as a spiritual preparation for the feast of Christmas. Fr. Jude Ferreira, the popular preacher of the Mahim Church Novenas, reflected with the parishioners on the theme of 'Waiting'. Advent, which is derived from the Latin word 'Adventus', is a season of waiting between the two comings of the Lord: the first coming of the Lord in history is when He came as a man and the second coming will be when the Lord comes in all His glory, at the end of the world.



Quoting Isaiah 40:31, Fr. Jude said “But those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary; they will walk and not be faint.” It is not passive waiting, but a waiting prioritising rest and reflection. Advent is the time to slow down and spend time in reflection. It is a time to ask -Where is my life going? What am I doing here on earth?

In the second part of his reflection, Fr. Jude dwelt on the four themes of Hope, Peace, Joy and Love. These banners are prominently displayed on our altar along with the Advent candles. The Church gives us Advent, which is a time of grace, to bear the (Gal 5:22-23) “fruits of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.” This is possible only when we mend our ways and put our relationships in order. In this regard, he clarified that healing happens in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament. No one can claim to heal others; at most, they are facilitators. It is the Lord in the Blessed Sacrament who heals. To experience inner healing, we need to work on our relationships, repent and let go of our negativity.

It was an enthralling hour of Reflection. Fr. Jude, true to his reputation, held the Church spellbound with his fiery oratory. He quoted extensively from his own life, his late vocation, his initial resistance to his vocation and then surrendering to God's will. He used real life examples interspersed with down to earth Hindi quite often, to embellish his Reflections. Needless to say, these struck a chord with the faithful as they lapped up every word of wisdom. Looking forward to many more stirring sessions like this!

Edwin Fernandes

with Kids of the Wadis



Seeing how good the children were, our slim, tall and handsome Santa magically appeared and what a welcome he received! Even as he individually handed gifts to each child and a delicious jar of pink-and-white confection (made by Ankita), peals of laughter rent the air. A bout of energetic dancing with Santa followed, and snacks sponsored by Fr. Henry. Then came the finale: Each child bringing one statue of the crib-set to form the entire crib – amidst lit candles in a darkened room, as 'Silent Night' and 'A Happy Birthday to Baby Jesus' were sung.

We express our gratitude to our priests, Pauline Sisters, Hinga and Dorothy, to Surekha, Snehal, Ankita, Ian, Aidan and all in the Florian Community who helped sponsor the event.

Odelle D' Silva



Cricket Celebrates Commitment and Community



The Sports Ministry proudly organized the thrilling Women's and Men's Zonal Cricket Tournament on 2nd October, 2025 transforming the grounds into a vibrant arena of teamwork, talent, and spirited competition. Participants from the four zones came together, not only to compete, but also to celebrate the true essence of sportsmanship and community.

The atmosphere was electric, as teams displayed remarkable dedication, discipline, and passion throughout the day.

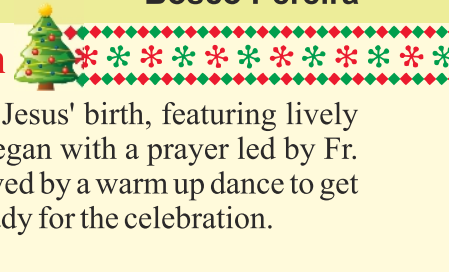
After a series of closely fought and highly entertaining matches, Zone 4 (Boys) and Zone 2 (Girls) emerged as the champions, lifting the winners' cups with pride. Their victories were the result of consistent hard work, excellent coordination, and an unbreakable team spirit. Heartiest congratulations to both teams for their outstanding performances!

A sincere word of gratitude goes to the organising committee, whose meticulous planning and tireless efforts ensured the success of the event. From scheduling matches and setting up the grounds to coordinating teams and overseeing logistics, their commitment played a pivotal role in making the tournament smooth, enjoyable, and memorable for everyone involved. We also extend a special and heartfelt thank you to our Spiritual Director, Fr. Shinoy, Fr. Jomet, and Br. Akshit, who graciously volunteered to umpire the games. Their guidance, fairness, and cheerful presence added great value to the event. Their involvement not only ensured the integrity of the matches, but also highlighted the spirit of unity and collaboration that the Sports Ministry stands for. The day concluded with smiles, applause, and a renewed sense of fellowship. It was truly a wonderful occasion filled with fun, excitement, and healthy competition – an uplifting reminder of how sports can bring people together, build relationships, and create lasting memories. As we look forward to future events, the success of this tournament stands as a testament to the strength, enthusiasm, and togetherness of our community.

Bosco Pereira



Sunday School Christmas Celebration



Our Sunday School's Christmas celebration was a joyful event focused on Jesus' birth, featuring lively carols and a heartwarming Nativity play by the children. The celebration began with a prayer led by Fr. Callisto, followed by a warm up dance to get the children ready for the celebration.



The nativity skit, directed by Doris Patton and Rebecca Ferreira, took us all on a trip from Mumbai to Bethlehem. Our first stop was Nazareth, where Mother Mary said 'Yes' to God's will. We then journeyed to Bethlehem, where Joseph, having been obedient to God's message, took Mary to Bethlehem for the census. The journey continued and since there was no place to lay the baby, Jesus was laid in the manger.



Friendship, Faith and Fun



Our Altar Servers' picnic at Jeneva Farms, Gorai was truly a day well spent - filled with laughter, joy, and unforgettable moments! Before we began our journey, Fr. Henry offered a thoughtful prayer, asking for God's guidance and protection throughout the day. With 17 cheerful and enthusiastic Altar Servers, the atmosphere remained lively from start to finish - from engaging games and tasty food to all the shared smiles and light-hearted moments! A warm thank you to Fr. Shinoy for joining us with his supportive presence and blessings, which made the day even more meaningful. Here's to friendship, faith, and the moments that bring us closer - truly a picnic to treasure forever!

Veroshka Jacinto



A Visit to Remember

"The biggest disease today is not leprosy or cancer or tuberculosis, but rather the feeling of being unwanted, uncared for, deserted by everybody," wisely said Mother Teresa. Taking a leaf from her book, the SVP members, along with their Spiritual Director, Fr. Callisto, made their annual visit to Eduljee Framjee Allbless Niramay Niketan (EFANN) to interact with the inmates suffering from leprosy.

Run by the Society of St. Vincent De Paul (SSVP), EFANN is the first leprosy hospice in Asia, instituted in 1885, which was awarded for its meritorious service on 30th January 2016 for treatment of leprosy and its eradication. Later, EFANN also started the HIV/AIDS hospice, which continues till today.

The mission of EFANN is to offer compassionate care and unwavering support to homeless elders and individuals living with psychosocial disabilities. We believe in upholding the dignity of every person with respect and freedom, irrespective of their background, identity, or beliefs.

The Manager showed us around the place, which was very clean and well kept. Three new projects have been taken up by the home - the Destitute home, Emergency Care and Rehabilitation Centre (ECRC) and Palliative care on an OPD basis.

Presently there are altogether 70 persons (male and female), who are lovingly cared for by the team of staff including nurses, doctors and caregivers. Our members met each one of them and enquired about their well-being. All of them looked very happy and content. While leaving the home, they thanked us for visiting them and also requested us to keep them in our prayers. Our hearts melted on experiencing their love and affection, which they glowingly expressed in so many ways. If only others would make the effort to visit them, it would make such a great difference to their lives...

Antoinette Jacinto

and the shepherds and the kings worshipped him, offering him gifts of Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh.

After the Christmas Tableau began the festive part of the celebration – children dancing to the Christmas Polka, a group game (Bombing the City), a sing-song of Christmas carols, a few spot prizes and then there came Santa! The children were excited to see Santa, and surrounded him to receive sweets and gifts. The celebration ended with the cutting of the birthday cake and singing a Happy Birthday to Jesus. All the children skipped home happily with delicious snack boxes in hand.

Suzette Gigool



T H E R E S I A N

A Vibrant and Enriching Training Session

The theme “Anger Management in the SCC Animation Ministry,” drew enthusiastic participation of around 100 attending the session from across all Bandra parishes. This lively training session for SCC Animators, Coordinators, and parishioners was hosted by the Bandra Deanery on 20th November, 2025 at St. Anne's School Hall, Pali Hill.

The session was led by Fr. Dr. Henry D'Souza, Parish Priest of St. Theresa's Church, whose dynamic and compassionate approach set the tone for a transformative evening. With relatable stories, pastoral wisdom, and a deep understanding of human emotion, Fr. Henry guided the participants to view anger, not as a threat, but as a natural emotion that can become a source of healing and growth. He highlighted that SCC leaders, who often navigate complex and diverse community situations, can greatly benefit from emotional awareness, spiritual grounding, and Christ-like patience in their ministry.

The training session was open to all, fostering a vibrant mix of parishioners and SCC members eager to enhance their understanding and strengthen community bonds. The Bandra Deanery SCC Coordinators ensured smooth planning and attendance coordination, contributing to the efficiency and inclusiveness of the event.

Fr. Henry offered a rich blend of Scripture-based insights and practical tools, covering essential aspects of anger and emotional management. Key topics included:



- ❁ Understanding Anger & Biblical Guidance
- ❁ Righteous vs. Unrighteous Anger
- ❁ Common Triggers & The Anger Cycle
- ❁ Consequences of Uncontrolled Anger
- ❁ Ego vs. True Self
- ❁ Healthy Expression of Anger
- ❁ Practical Tools for Anger Management
- ❁ Core Gospel-Based Values for SCC Leaders

Through engaging discussions, reflective sharing, and interactive learning, participants discovered constructive ways to address conflict, promote understanding, and nurture harmony within their families, communities, and ministries.

The session was met with warm appreciation as participants expressed how deeply the insights resonated with their personal, professional, and ministry experiences. Many felt empowered with practical tools to respond calmly and effectively to challenging situations. Gratitude was extended to Fr. Henry, the Bandra Deanery SCC Coordinators Team, and all who contributed to the success of the program.

With hearts renewed and spirits uplifted, the Bandra Deanery celebrates a truly meaningful formation experience – one that strengthens its mission of building stronger, kinder, loving, spirit-filled communities rooted in Gospel values. All glory to God for a grace-filled and inspiring evening!

Bosco Pereira
SCC Co-ordinator



Fantastic Festival of Families

On 28th December 2025, as the Jubilee Year drew to a close, the Feast of the Holy Family was marked as the Festival of Families at Our Lady of Velankanni Shrine, Uttan. More than 2,000 faithful from over 40 parishes across Bombay, including St. Theresa's, came together, united by shared faith and belonging.

At the heart of the festival was the Holy Eucharist, celebrated by Archbishop John Rodrigues and co-celebrated by Bishop Dominic Savio Fernandes. In his homily, the Archbishop reminded families that faith is formed, not through grand gestures, but in everyday acts of patience practiced, forgiveness offered, and love sustained.

Live music, cultural performances, games, and food lent a joyful vibrancy to the day. St. Theresa's Family Cell, accompanied by Fr. Jomet, offered a thoughtful presence through a game stall - 'Gathering His Flock' - echoing the call to journey together in faith.

It was a celebration of families at the heart of the Church, faithful and formative. Thanks to Fr. Henry, our parish priest, who arranged the transport for our parishioners to be part of this memorable celebration.

Earle D'Abreau



Delightful 90th Birthday

A familiar sight, walking down 29th Road for the last 65 years, is a beautiful lady, peeping out of her tiny, cozy home ready to welcome one with a smile and a handshake! That's Jacqueline, fondly called Aunty Jacqueen, who turned 90 and was felicitated by the Florian Community on 1st October 2025. Fr. Callisto, our zonal pastor, who administered the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist to Jacqueline, was part of the celebration.

Jacqueline's daughter, Maria, comes daily from Andheri to tend to her mother's needs. All three children – Maria, her (late) sister Flora, and her brother, Lawrence (who lives with Jacqueline) - were baptized in St. Theresa's Church and they are proud of the strong faith their mother has imparted to them.



The nonagenarian was beaming with joy to cut a chocolate cake and receive a gathering of Florian Community members into her humble home. Among them were Sr. Hinga and Sr. Dorothy from the Daughters of St. Paul, her helpful neighbours - Caroline, Surekha and Anthony - along with Ian and Odelle. Lucia, a familiar presence, broke into a Konkani song of blessing, much to Jacqueline's delight. We thank God for His abundant mercy poured on Jacqueline these past 90 years. May she continue to bask in His love and protection.

Lucia Mendes

Remembering the Dear Departed!

*Sadly missed along life's way,
Quietly remembered every day,
No longer in our life to share,
But in our hearts, they're always **there**.*

T H E R E S I A N V I B E S

The Eucharistic Service for the deceased **community members of Zone 4** was solemnly celebrated by Fr. Jomet Joseph, our Zone 4 community pastor, on **10th November, 2025** in the **Gomes Compound, Khar**. Fr. Jomet delivered a very interesting homily, using extracts from the eulogy given by Jawaharlal Nehru, our first Prime Minister, on the death of Mahatma Gandhi, the father of our nation. He spoke of “the light going out of our lives” for many, “but the period will pass soon” because we will still feel the love of those who passed. The 70+ members present sang, responded to the prayers and participated heartily. The evening ended with a delightful fellowship, with many volunteering to serve for the forthcoming Christ the King feast. May their dear souls rest in peace.

Edelweiss Quadros

CHRISTMAS TRIVIA

- In 336 AD, the Roman Emperor Constantine declared December 25th as the official date for celebrating the day of the Nativity of Jesus Christ.
- The tradition of putting up a Christmas tree began in Germany.
- Christmas Island is a real place that belongs to Australia.
- In 1955, Sears department store began an annual tradition of hosting a Santa Claus hotline, which allowed children to call and speak to Santa directly.
- Santa Claus is based on the Christian bishop, St. Nicholas, who came from Turkey.
- Traditionally, single women looking for a husband eat the gingerbread man during Christmas for good luck.
- Mince pies should be eaten on each of the 12 days of Christmas to bring good luck for the year ahead.
- Christmas is celebrated in Russia on 7th January.
- Norway sends a Christmas tree to London every year.
- Coca-Cola is said to have given Santa his traditional red and white clothing.
- If children want to write a letter to Santa, the address they need to use is: 123 Elf Road, North Pole.
- 364 gifts in total were given in “The Twelve Days of Christmas” song.
- Boxing Day is named after the practice of wealthy aristocrats giving boxes and gifts to their servants one day after Christmas i.e. 26th December.

Happy Christmas and Blessed New Year

HOTEL COLVA PLAZA

Benaulim, Goa

Clary Pinto: 9850478889

Clevio Pinto: 9850926050

Community Bonding Through Football and Tug of War

The Parish Sports Ministry successfully organised a distinguished day of sporting events on 7th December 2025, featuring a Parish-Level Football Tournament and a Women's Tug of War Competition. The programme was marked by exceptional participation, disciplined sportsmanship, and a strong sense of community engagement.

The Football Tournament brought together four parish teams, including two teams from the Hindi Community, competing with commendable enthusiasm and collaborative spirit. The matches demonstrated high levels of skill, tactical play, and team coordination. After an intense and closely contested final, the Hindi Community Team emerged as champions of the tournament, demonstrating determination and cohesive play.

The Women's Tug of War competition featured three dynamic teams, each displaying remarkable strength, teamwork, and resilience. The event generated tremendous excitement among spectators, adding vibrancy to the day's activities. In a competitive final round, Team Suzette emerged as the champions, showcasing exceptional coordination.

The event reflected the Parish Sports Ministry's commitment to promoting unity, healthy competition, and community well-being through sports. Both competitions were conducted with professionalism and fairness, contributing to an atmosphere of positivity and mutual respect. The Ministry thanked Fr. Shinoy, Spiritual Director, for his steadfast guidance and support, Fr. Henry, Fr. Jomet, and Br. Akshit, for their continuous encouragement, special recognition to Fr. Cosmos, for coordinating the marking of the ground, with the assistance of the Hindi Community, Core Committee Members: Rishi, Nerisa, Rickashe, Sophia, Pramilla, and Tina, for their dedicated planning and execution and Eva and Rahael, for their valuable assistance throughout.

It was more than just a day of sports – it was a celebration of fellowship, unity, and the vibrant spirit of St. Theresa's Parish. As the event concluded on a high note, everyone left with smiles, cherished memories, and a renewed sense of belonging.

The Parish Sports Ministry remains committed to fostering a culture of teamwork, discipline, and fellowship, and looks forward to organising more events that nurture talent and strengthen community spirit through sports. This stood as a beautiful reminder of what can be achieved when a community comes together with love, enthusiasm, and a shared purpose.



THERESIAN VIBES

Step, Slide, Smile... and Repeat!

My Line Dancing Journey

When I first heard the announcement about line dancing in our Parish about a year ago, I had two reactions at the same time – excitement (who doesn't love the idea of dancing?) and scepticism (I'm over 60 and aches and pains are starting to send me polite reminders that they exist!). The thought of dancing with strangers made me even more nervous. I've been born, brought up, married, and still live in this parish, so I was sure I'd see familiar faces, but how do you break the ice with people you've silently smiled at for years?



Still, one fine day, I threw caution to the wind and called the number on the notice. Thelma answered reassuringly: “Just come on Monday and see if you like it. No fee, no pressure.” So there I was on a mid-May manic Monday, walking in like a school girl on her first day – butterflies and all. And what did I find? About 25-30 women chatting, laughing, giggling... and looking just as nervous as I felt! That instantly calmed me – turns out butterflies don't discriminate by age!

Introductions began, Thelma took the lead, and our then instructor, Yvonne brought the room to life. Within minutes, we were smiling, stepping, and discovering the joy of line dancing – a whole new world! My husband, Floyd and I have always enjoyed dancing at parties, but this was something else... a fun, rhythmic break from the everyday routine.

Fast forward 18 months...

Some faces have changed, new friends have joined, and I've personally gained:

- ★ A lovely new circle of friends
- ★ Invites to family gatherings
- ★ Countless shared recipes, stories, laughs
- ★ A weekly dose of joy and movement
- ★ A memory workout (trust me, remembering steps IS exercise!)
- ★ And best of all... a renewed connection with my fellow parishioners!

We practice like mischievous schoolgirls, teasing each other when we forget steps, encouraging one another, and looking forward to every single Monday. I now catch myself dancing in the kitchen, forgetting steps, remembering steps, laughing at myself – and loving every moment of it! The class is pocket-friendly, fun, social, and genuinely good for the mind, body, and soul. Girls from other parishes have joined too – and trust me, it's one big happy hen party!

So here's my gentle nudge:

If you want to try something new, make friends, or simply dance your worries away – come join us! No age limit. No judgement. Just joy. Call 9819611173 to join in the fun!

Maria Gomes
Theresian Line Dance Group

When values took the winning shot!

The Theresian Family Cell, alongside the Focolare and TYM, turned this Children's Day into more than a set of telegames. It was values in motion. The buzz was real, the smiles were wide, and the energy, off the charts!

Each game started with a toss of the dice that revealed a value to play by. With ten mixed teams formed at random, familiar circles opened up to new friendships even before the first whistle. The young and the young at heart teamed up like naturals. The grounds whirled alive; ropes tugged, hulas hooped, old calendars turned into channels of peace, boxes towered, and the sponge soak relay drenched everyone in joy. The short pauses between rounds became moments of reflection. And through it all, laughter was the best soundtrack.

Then came the moment of truth. Scores were ready, hearts were racing, extra points for values added the twist, and the call for two claps met with a joyful drumroll of a response. One team claimed the win but the real victory was shared, felt in the spark of belonging and the warm glow of new bonds. We prayed, played, laughed and ate together. This Children's Day was a celebration of being one big beautiful Theresian family. A warm thank you to our parish priests, sponsors, Focolare, TYM and the Family Cell for powering this joyful day.

Nancy D'Abreo



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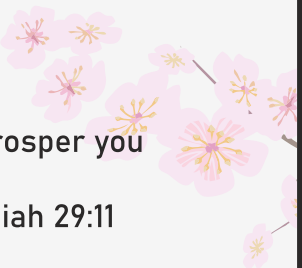
JAPANESE CUISINE



Kalpitam 16th Road, Bandra (W)

For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.

Jeremiah 29:11



Best Compliments

from

Travis Braganza



bōkka
c o f f e e

Silver Croft Building, 16th Road, Bandra (W).



With Best Compliments

From

Mrs. Everilda D'Mello

And Family





Christmas Cake



Ingredients:

250 gm maida
200 gm sugar (powder)
200 gm butter
5 eggs
300 gm raisins
200 gm black seedless raisins
200 gm papaya peel (cut fine)
50 gm mixed orange peel
100 gm ground almond and cashew nuts
25 ml vanilla essence
25 ml glycerine
15ml black caramel colour (add less for lighter colour)
1 ½ tsp baking powder
1 ¼ tsp all-spice powder (cinnamon, cardamom, nutmeg, cloves)

Method:

Beat butter and sugar. Add eggs one at a time and beat. Next add vanilla and caramel colour. In half the quantity of maida, mix all the fruit along with baking powder. Then add the remaining maida to the batter and mix well. Add the ground nuts (omit if any nut allergy). Lastly, fold in the mixed fruit and maida. Check the consistency - if it's too dry, add some warm caramel liquid. The batter must not be runny. Pour the batter into greased cake tins: two loaf pans or one 7" square tin. Bake in the oven at 160°C for two hours or till the cake is done.

Zenia Machado

PARISH REGISTER - (October 2025 to December 2025)

BAPTISMS

Born in Christ

Ariana Gowray	Ashford and Diana Gowray	01-11-2025
Bennett DMello	Patterson and Barbara DMello	21-12-2025
Kaya Marie D'Mello Ballentine	Bryan Ballentine and Darielle D'Mello	28-12-2025



WEDDINGS

United in Love

Pritom Saikia and Priyanka Shah	01-11-2025
Alister Suares and Raylene Monterio	12-12-2025
Rahul Macwan and Amanda Cruz	12-12-2025
Kyle Pereira and Alisha Drego	13-12-2025
Arjun Rego and Tanisha Andrade	20-12-2025
Daniel Cardozo and Kimberly Paes	27-12-2025



DEATHS

Rest in Peace

Giles Drego	69 years	07-10-2025
Carmin Pereira	80 years	30-10-2025
Dean Fernandez	57 years	09-11-2025
Doreen Dourado	93 years	13-11-2025
Mary Fernandes	96 years	13-12-2025
Victor D'Souza	100 years	23-12-2025
Theresa Gawrya	81 years	31-12-2025





An Unforgettable Session on Alzheimer's and Dementia



Who doesn't forget names, places, things, appointments? Everyone! We're all victims of a bad memory – it's only the extent that matters! Moreover, as our life expectancy has shot up, people are living longer, but our grey cells can't keep pace. To enlighten everyone on the subject, Holy Family Hospital, in coordination with our Parish Health Cell, held an interactive session on Alzheimer's and Dementia, for 42 people, in our Parish Council Room on 25th October.

Dr. Sunanda Anand, a highly qualified stroke therapy specialist, covered the subject, highlighting the early warning signs, then the more advanced signs and symptoms of Dementia. As the short-term memory is affected, the person keeps on repeating the same question, which can be quite irritating. Alzheimer's is a more advanced form of Dementia. Unfortunately, modern medication can only slow down the onset, but not cure it. The most important aspect is prevention, mainly by keeping the brain active, exercising and communicating with others regularly.

The attendees enthusiastically participated in the question and answer session. As a token of our appreciation, Dr. Sunanda was presented with a potted plant.

Joe Rodrigues

Early Signs and Symptoms of Alzheimer's and Dementia

Alzheimer's and Dementia are brain diseases that cause a slow decline in memory, thinking and reasoning skills. The warning signs and symptoms are as follows:

- ⦿ Memory loss that disrupts daily life
- ⦿ Challenges in planning or solving problems
- ⦿ Difficulty completing familiar tasks
- ⦿ Confusion with time or place
- ⦿ Trouble understanding visual images and spatial relationships
- ⦿ New problems with words in speaking or writing
- ⦿ Misplacing things and losing the ability to retrace steps
- ⦿ Decreased or poor judgement
- ⦿ Withdrawal from work or social activities
- ⦿ Changes in mood and personality

Get checked. Early detection matters. If you notice one or more signs in yourself or another person, visit a doctor and take necessary action.

Ways to Prevent Alzheimer's

There is no way to prevent Alzheimer's at present, especially since so much of contracting it has to do with your genetics; however, there are a few healthy choices you can make to decrease your odds of getting Alzheimer's in future.

1. **Exercise often:** Exercise can improve our mood, build muscle tone, and keep our waist trim. It can also increase blood flow and the level of chemicals to the brain, which can improve cognitive functioning. To reap these benefits, be sure to get at least 150 minutes of exercise a week.
2. **Stay social:** The best way to improve our memory is to challenge our minds – do puzzles, crosswords, Sudoku or read. Being social also helps as it requires you to test your memory and can lead to complex conversations and thoughts.
3. **Watch what is on your plate:** Consume the proper amounts of nutrients to allow your body to run as it should. To increase brainpower, an emphasis should be placed on heart-healthy fats, unrefined grains, proteins, and green leafy vegetables – the Mediterranean diet.
4. **Sleep in:** When you sleep, your brain has time to clean itself up, removing proteins that accumulate during the day. Establish a routine bedtime, avoid napping, and limit screen time to ensure you fall and stay asleep for the recommended seven to nine hours of sleep each night.
5. **Find peace:** Cortisol, the hormone released when you experience stress, has been linked to Alzheimers in multiple studies. Tools to manage stress include practising breathing techniques, meditating, and learning to be mindful.

Harvest Festival 2025: A Celebration of Faith, Culture, and Unity Among Migrants



The Harvest Festival 2025 was a vibrant and deeply meaningful celebration that brought together thousands of migrant faithful living in Mumbai. Organized by the Urban Community Development Centre (UCDC) in collaboration with the Archdiocesan Migrant Commission (AMC), the event took place on 12th October 2025 at St. Theresa's School Ground, Bandra West. Rooted in gratitude and faith, the festival became a powerful expression of unity among the Chotanagpur Adivasi and Tribal migrant communities who have made Mumbai their home.

Harvest celebrations have a sacred biblical history. From ancient times, the people of Israel offered their first fruits to God in thanksgiving, acknowledging Him as the source of life and blessing. Even today, especially among migrant communities who journey far from their homeland in search of livelihood and hope, this tradition carries deep meaning. The Harvest Festival served as a reminder that despite the struggles of migration, God continues to accompany His people with love, sustenance, and strength.

For the Adivasi community, the festival was not merely a cultural gathering but a reaffirmation of identity, dignity, and belonging. Living far from their native Chotanagpur region, the celebration offered an opportunity to preserve their heritage, strengthen communal bonds, and reflect on the importance of unity. The purpose of the festival extended beyond festivities. It aimed to foster solidarity among migrants spread across Mumbai, raise awareness about their rights, and encourage cultural and spiritual pride. It also emphasized the values of dignity, empowerment, and community life through faith and shared traditions.

The heart of the celebration was the Harvest Thanksgiving Mass (Navakhani). As the evening sun glowed over Bandra, more than 5,000 faithful gathered in traditional attire, carrying baskets of grains, fruits, and flowers. The Holy Mass was presided over by Bishop Kishore Kumar Kujur, joined by priests from UCDC and AMC. The liturgy began with a colourful procession accompanied by traditional drums and dances, filling the ground with joy and reverence. In his homily, Bishop Kishore reminded everyone, "We are all migrants on this earth; our final home is with God." He called upon the community to offer, not only the fruits of their labour, but also their dreams, struggles, and hopes. The choir's hymns – sung in Hindi, and Tribal dialect – beautifully united cultural diversity in worship. The Mass concluded with a special blessing for all migrant families and workers.

Following the Eucharistic celebration, the evening transformed into a cultural festival. Tribal dances, songs, and talks reflected the rich inheritance of tribal tradition. A special message by Fr. Herman Minj encouraged everyone to embrace their identity with pride, declaring confidently, "I am an Adivasi." Women's self-help groups showcased traditional food and garments, promoting enterprise and empowerment. The celebration concluded with a common tribal dance where priests, families, youth, and children joined hands, symbolizing unity and joy.

In his closing address, Fr. Cosmos Ekka, SVD, expressed gratitude to all contributors and encouraged the community with the words, "Together we can, together we will." He thanked the parish/school management for providing the venue and the community for their active participation. The Harvest Festival 2025 was more than an event – it was a spiritual and cultural revival. It strengthened the identity of the Adivasi migrants, created solidarity within the Church, and echoed Pope Francis's call to accompany those on the peripheries.

Fr. Cosmos Ekka, SVD

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