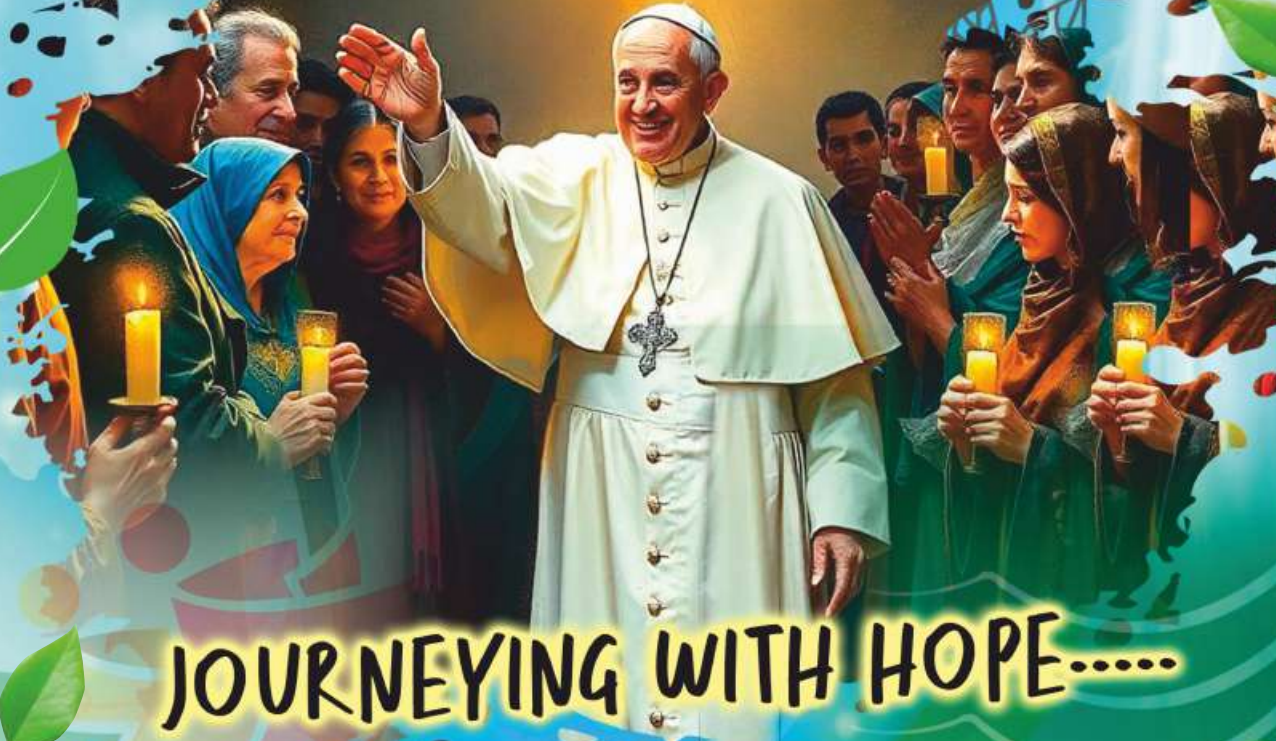




UNITAS

2024



JOURNEYING WITH HOPE.....

St Joseph's Interdiocesan Seminary, Mangalore

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and a

Happy New Year



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EDITORIAL



Fr Ronald Serrao
Editor

We are at the threshold of the Jubilee Year. We have been preparing for this event in the last two years by studying the documents of the Second Vatican Council and by prayer. Perhaps they have set us in the right disposition so that they may move us onwards as pilgrims of hope.

As you open UNITAS 2024, it is Christmas, perhaps even the New Year! I wish you the joys and gladness of Christmas and the New Year 2025. May the love, peace and joy of the feast fill your hearts and minds not only at Christmas season but also right through the New Year.

As we launch into the Jubilee Year, it is my humble prayer and intense wish that the grace and the spirit of the Jubilee may pervade in all Josephites right through the Jubilee year so that we may become beacons of hope for all, especially for those who dwell in the land of spiritual darkness and seek the light of truth.

Pope Francis is not tired of speaking of hope, since “hope does not put us to shame” (Rom 5:5). Let us be clear that during the Jubilee Year, we, as leaders of the Church, need to be men of hope, especially to those entrusted to our care, so that we proclaim to the world that in Jesus alone is our hope and salvation.

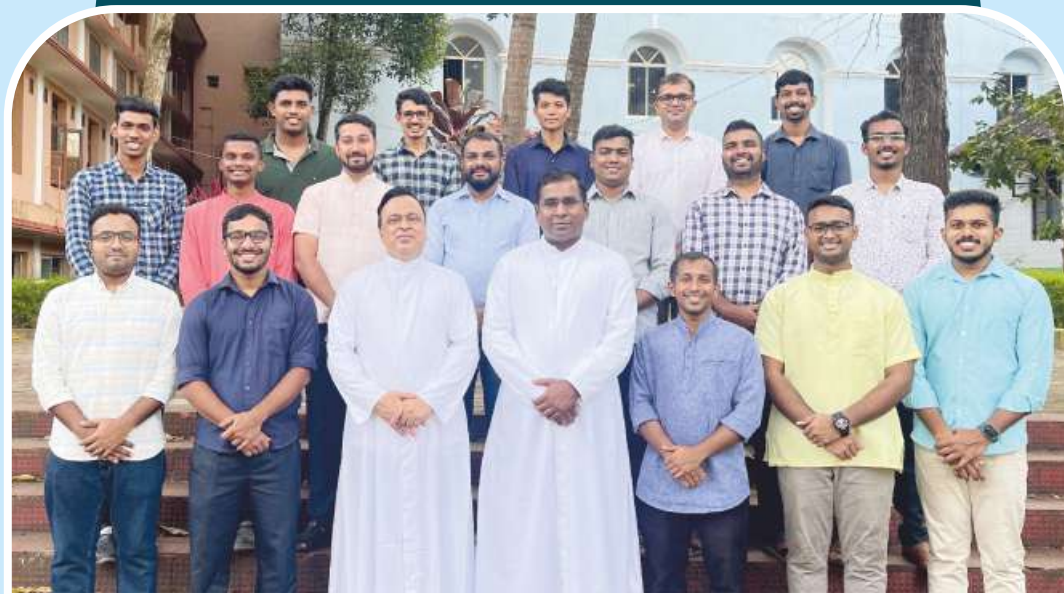
Hope is always positive, though what we hope for may not be crystal clear for us! At times this a particular situation may lead us to conflicting feelings, ranging from serenity to anxiety, and from conviction to doubt. Sometimes we do find people who are pessimistic and cynical about the future as if there is no possibility for happiness. For such, may this Jubilee Year bring brightness and renewed hope.

One of the areas which we need to tap during the Jubilee Year is our spiritual renewal and, of course, that of the people. In fact, the Jubilee Year is an opportunity for us to renew and reform our spiritual life so that we truly become the lights of the world and pilgrims of hope. When we illumine the world with the Gospel of Hope, I am sure we may strengthen the lives of our faithful with faith, hope and charity.

This year our thrust is Spiritual Formation so that we sit at the feet of our Master and learn his wisdom in order to prepare ourselves for the Jubilee Year and grow in holiness. Perhaps, spiritual formation needs more attention today than in the past since we live in an era of spiritual wilderness and a secular world where we find more confusion than consistency. In this context, spiritual formation invites us to grow closer to the Trinity and to come to know ourselves as the sons and daughters of the heavenly Father in Jesus Christ so that the world may know that we are moved by the Spirit and not by the attractions of the world. That is why, we need to go beyond our scheduled common prayer hours to personal spiritual exercises and radiate the spirit of prayer in whatever we say and do.

May UNITAS -2024 inspire you to renew your spiritual life. May it move you to relate better to your alma mater whom you revere. I wish that as we move with the Jubilee Year, may the Lord bring us joy, peace and hope.

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Hearty Congratulations



Most Rev. Dr Francis Tirkey Bishop of Purnea Diocese (51st Student Bishop)

On 17 February 2024, Pope Francis appointed Fr Francis Tirkey, a member of the clergy of Purnea, as Bishop of the Diocese of Purnea, Bihar, India. He was ordained as a bishop on 4 April 2024.

Bishop Francis Tirkey was born on 24 July 1961 in Kolodiah. His academic credentials include studies in Philosophy at St Albert's College in Ranchi and Theology at St Joseph's Interdiocesan Seminary, Mangalore. He was conferred a Diploma in Social Services by the Coady International Institute in Halifax, Canada.

He was ordained a priest on 17 May 1993 for the Diocese of Dumka. Subsequently, following the bifurcation of the Diocese of Dumka in 1998, he was incardinated in the Diocese of Purnea. He served as the assistant Parish Priest at Tinpahar in the Diocese of Dumka from 1993 to 1994. From 1994 to 1997, he assumed the role of Administrator of the Social Development Centre of Dumka. He subsequently undertook studies in social service at St Xavier's College of Social Service in Ranchi (1998-1999). Since 1999, he has held the position of Director of the Social Service Centre of Purnea. He held two prominent roles within the Diocese of Purnea: Diocesan Administrator (2004-2007) and Vicar General (2007-2021). From 2007 until his episcopal appointment, he served as Head of the Labor Commission for ST/SC (Scheduled Tribe/Caste) and Public Relations Officer of the Diocese of Purnea. From 2013 until his appointment, he served as Head of Seminarians, while from 2015 onwards, he assumed the role of Head of Social Communications. The Catholic population of Purnea Diocese is 30,475. The Diocese has 17 parishes, 57 priests, 20 men religious and 93 women religious.

We offer our sincerest congratulations to Bishop Francis Tirkey, extending our best wishes for success and fulfilment in his episcopal ministry. We hope that the Good Shepherd will guide him and that our prayers will assist him in guiding his flock with compassion and dedication.

Hearty Congratulations



Most Rev. Dr Duming Dias Bishop of Karwar Diocese (52nd Student Bihsop)

Pope Francis appointed Fr Duming Dias, a priest of the Diocese of Shimoga, as the Bishop of the Diocese of Karwar in Karnataka, India on 13 January 2024. His Episcopal Ordination took place on 9 April 2024.

Bishop Duming Dias was born on 13 September 1969 in Honavar, which is situated within the Diocese of Karwar. He undertook studies in Philosophy at St Peter's Pontifical Seminary in Bangalore and the Bachelor of Theology at St Joseph's Interdiocesan Seminary in Mangalore, which is affiliated to Urbaniana University, Rome. He obtained his Bachelor of Arts (1987-1990) from Bangalore University, Bachelor of Education (1992-1993) from Kuvempu University, Shimoga, Master of Education (1999-2001) and Master of Business Administration (2009-2011) from Karnataka State Open University, Mysore.

He was ordained a priest on 6 May 1997 for the Diocese of Shimoga. He served as Assistant Parish Priest at Sacred Heart Cathedral in Shimoga (1997-1998) and at St Thomas Parish in Davanagere (1998-1999). From 1999 to 2001, he served as the Parish Priest of St Francis Xavier Parish in Kable. He subsequently assumed the role of Director of the Biblical, Catechesis and Liturgy Commission (2001-2012). Additionally, he fulfilled the responsibilities of both teacher and principal at Sacred Heart College in Shimoga from 2002 to 2012. From 2002 to 2007, he served as the Parish Priest of Mary Immaculate Parish in New Town Bhadravathi. He held the position of Director of the Lourdes Boys School in Davanagere (2012-2014) and Director of the SCC Commission and Coordinator of the Diocesan Commissions of Shimoga (2012-2014). From 2014 to 2021, he was also Associate Director of St John's Medical College in Bangalore. From 2021 until his episcopal appointment, he occupied the offices of Coordinator of the Diocesan Commissions, Director of the Commission for the Family, and Director of Sannidhi Pastoral Renewal Center in Shimoga. The Catholic population of Karwar Diocese is 46,282. The Diocese has 68 parishes, 139 priests, 31 men religious and 232 women religious.

We extend our congratulations to Bishop Duming Dias and wish him every success in his episcopal ministry. May the Good Shepherd guide him and may our prayers assist him in shepherding his flock with love and service.

Hearty Congratulations



Bishop Arokiaraj Satis Kumar
Auxiliary Bishop of Bangalore Archdiocese
(53rd Student Bishop)

Pope Francis appointed Fr Arokiaraj Satis Kumar, a priest of Bangalore Archdiocese, as the auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese of Bangalore on 13 July 2024. On 24 August 2024, Bishop-elect Arokiaraj was ordained as a bishop.

Bishop Arokiaraj Satis Kumar was born on 5 September 1977 in Bangalore. He pursued his studies in Philosophy and Theology at St Joseph's Interdiocesan Seminary in Mangalore and was subsequently ordained to the priesthood on 2 May 2007 for the Archdiocese of Bangalore.

Following ordination, he initially served as Assistant Parish Priest at St Joseph, St Francis Xavier's Cathedral and Christ the King Parish, Malleswaram, from 2007 to 2010. He was awarded a licentiate from St Peter's Pontifical Institute in Bangalore (2010-2012). Following this, he served as Parish Priest of Christ the King in Malleswaram (2012-2014). He then proceeded to obtain a doctorate in canon law from the Pontifical Urban University in Rome (2014-2017). He subsequently occupied a number of roles until his appointment as a bishop. Since 2017, he has served as a Judge of the ecclesiastical tribunal.

From 2018 onwards, he has also fulfilled the roles of Rector of Bhavan Bhakti Minor Seminary and Parish Administrator of Lourdes in Tumkur. From 2019 onwards, he served as Diocesan Chancellor. Additionally, from 2020 onwards, he held the position of Professor of Canon Law at the St Peter's Pontifical Institute in Bangalore. From 2021 until his episcopal appointment, he fulfilled the role of Coordinator of studies for major seminarians. The Catholic population of Bangalore Archdiocese is 360,561. The Diocese has 126 parishes, 149 diocesan priests, 432 religious priests, 2,203 men religious and 2,531 women religious.

We congratulate Bishop Arokiaraj Satis Kumar and wish him all the best in his episcopal ministry. May the Good Shepherd guide him, and may our prayers assist him in leading his flock with compassion and dedication.

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Hearty Welcome to the New Formators



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Theology for the Laity



Seminary Events 2023



Blessing of the Advent Wreath



Silver Jubilee of Priesthood (Batch 1999)



Golden Jubilee of Fr Lawrence Mendonca and Fr William Barocas



Seminary Day 2023



Seminary Events 2024



Eucharistic Procession on the Feast of Epiphany



St Zuze Vaz Feast



Seminary Board Meeting



Unity Octave



Republic Day





Community Day



Inauguration of SJIP



Lecture on 'Food as Vaccine'



Late Bishop Basil Memorial Lecture



CCBI Delegates Visit



St Joseph's Feast & Benefactors' Day



Visit of His Grace Eugene Martin Nugent, the Nuncio to Kuwait, Bahrain and Qatar



Lectio Brevis



Initiation to Sunday & Social Ministries



Workshop on AI



Theologians' Day



St Thomas Feast - Malayalam Academy



Blessing of the Renovated Chapel



Inauguration of the Philosophical English Academy



Laudato Si - Environment Day



Inauguration of Theology Course for the Laity and the Religious



Session on 'Waste Management' : FMCI team



Study Session on 'YOUCAT'



New Priests' Day



Philosophers' Day



Independence Day - Hindi Academy



St Teresa of Kolkata Feast - Kannada Academy



New Priest Fr Gladwin Fernandes



Taize Prayer



Monthi Feast - Konkani Academy



Farewell to Ministerial Year Students



Two New Staff Members



Onam Celebration



New Deacons



Annual Retreat



Admission to Candidacy



Ministries of Reader & Acolyte



Exposure Programme 2024



All Souls Day



ACPI Conference



Golden Jubilee: Rev. Fr Andrew Lewis



Mission Symposium



Mission Auction



Alumni Meet 2024



Archbishop's Visit to the Seminary



Pearl Jubilee of Priesthood (1995 Batch)

1. St Joseph's Interdiocesan Seminary



A Seminary in Mangalore was first established in 1763 at Monte Mariano, about 13 kilometres east of Mangalore city. However, during the captivity of Kanara Catholics under Tippu Sultan in 1784, the seminarians were dispersed or sent to Verapoly and for the next few decades, there is no record to show that a Seminary existed in Mangalore. However, in 1843, a certain Fr Pius Noronha was said to have been the Rector of the Seminary at Monte Mariano. In 1845, when the Carmelites took over the care of the Church in Mangalore, they gathered the candidates to the priesthood in a house which was then situated in the locality which is now St Anne's Convent, near the Cathedral. This Seminary was then transferred to Sunkeri, about 5 kilometres east of Karwar. It was again brought back to Monte Mariano. Bishop Bernadine OCD moved the Seminary near to his residence, St Anne's Convent, in 1846. But his successor, Bishop Michael Anthony OCD acquired a plot of land at Jeppu, where now is Infant Mary's Convent, in 1854, and a large house

with a chapel was built for the residence of the bishop and also for the seminarians. In 1870, there were 34 priests and 12 seminarians in this house of formation.

The Jesuits took over from the Carmelites in 1878, and the very first act of the new Vicar Apostolic, Msgr. Nicholas Pagani, was to reorganize the Seminary. Hence, St Joseph's Seminary came into being on 11 January 1879. During its more than one hundred years of existence, the Seminary has trained a large number of seminarians belonging to several dioceses of India. Initially started as the Diocesan Seminary of Mangalore, the Seminary became an Interdiocesan Institution when the Mangalore diocese was bifurcated into Mangalore and Calicut dioceses in 1923.

Moved by this desire to facilitate the assumption by the diocesan clergy of their rightful role in the formation of the diocesan seminarians, the Karnataka Jesuit Province through its Superior General, requested the Dicastery for the Evangelization of Peoples to be relieved

of the administrative responsibility of the Seminary. Hence, by its Decree dated 15 July 1992, the Sacred Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples authorized the transfer of the administration of the Seminary from the Society of Jesus to the Interdiocesan (Mangalore & Calicut) Board of Administration with effect from 1st June 1995. With the creation of Kannur Diocese in 1999 and of Udupi Diocese in 2012, the Bishops of Kannur and Udupi were also made the Members of the Board of Administration.

St Joseph's Interdiocesan Seminary hosts both, St Joseph's Institute of

Philosophy (SJIP) affiliated to Pontifical Athenaeum Dharmaram Vidya Kshetram, Bengaluru, and St Joseph Institute of Theology, (SJIT) affiliated to Pontifical Urbaniana University, Rome. The formation of a seminarian consists of two years of Philosophy and three years of Theology and a Ministerial year, which culminates with the ordination to the Diaconate.

This year is the 146th year of this house of priestly formation. The thrust of the year is Spiritual Formation and the programme is focused on the motto "To be transformed by the Spirit, we sit at the Master's feet."

Father, let them be one

I lift up my eyes to God
Seeking wisdom and justice
To guide and unite all
Despite injustice and no peace

I seek zealously the truth
Hoping the end of conflict
To enrich the pursuit of brotherhood
To heal the division and chaos

I proclaim the message of love
Reconciling the warring fraction
To promote and nurture friendship
Amidst torrents and tempests

I believe in collaboration
Trusting the road of good will
To conquer every strife and hate
Not minding the cost of sacrifice

I want to build the house of love
Confiding in the grace from above
To live as brothers united
In the Father's house with joy



Pius Nyayin Khangrah
Second Year Theology

2. St Joseph's Institute of Philosophy (SJIP)

(Affiliated to the Faculty of Philosophy of the Pontifical Athenaeum Dharmaram Vidya Kshetram, Bangalore) Email: sjipmangalore@gmail.com

Though a two-year Philosophy Course was a part of priestly formation at St Joseph's Seminary from its inception (1879), a three-year Philosophy course was designed for the Bachelor of Philosophy (B.Ph.) and was affiliated to Urban University, Rome, in 2016 for a period of five years. But with the publication of the Apostolic Constitution, *Veritatis Gaudium* (VG) for higher studies by the Dicastery for Culture and Education in 2018, a process was initiated to affiliate our philosophy course to Dharmaram Vidya Kshetram (DVK) on 13 May 2022 and it was approved by the Dicastery for culture and Education on 23 October 2023 for a period of five years (2023-2028). Most Rev. Dr Peter Paul Saldanha, the Bishop of Mangalore and the Moderator of St Joseph's Institute of Philosophy (SJIP), promulgated the decree of the said Institute on 1 January 2024.

Rev. Dr Ivan D'Souza was appointed as the Director of St Joseph's Institute of Philosophy, Mangalore, with effect from 15th April 2024 for a period of three years by the moderator of the Institute and then the

Permanent Teaching Staff

Francis D'Souza (Personality Development)
Ivan D'Souza (Indian Philosophy)
Jenson Varghese Puthenveetil (Western Philosophy)
Joseph Martis (Western Philosophy)
Joswine Praveen D'Souza (Western Philosophy)
Lilly Pereira BS (Moral Philosophy)
Manoj Palakkal Mathew (Western Philosophy)
Maxim D'Souza (Indian Philosophy)
Nelson Prakash Dalmeida (Indian Philosophy)
Roque Victor D'Sa (Psychology)

appointment was officially endorsed by the Faculty of Philosophy of Dharmaram Vidya Kshetram. Currently, 10 permanent teachers and 12 non-permanent teachers serve in the Faculty of Philosophy.

The academic year begins in June and ends in March. Our academic pursuit is to teach philosophy in such a way "that the students in the basic cycle will come to a solid and coherent synthesis of doctrine, will learn to examine and judge the different systems of philosophy, and will also gradually become accustomed to personal philosophical reflection." (VG Norms, 64§2)

Our Institute of Philosophy aims to equip the students academically to interact with people of other religions with clarity and coherence. The successful completion of philosophical studies qualifies a student for his studies in Theology through the Baccalaureate in Philosophy (B.Ph.). The B.Ph. degree would motivate the candidates to take philosophical study seriously and help them to philosophize in a deeper way.

Non-Permanent Teaching Staff

Denzil Lobo (Latin, Music)
Flavian Lobo (Latin)
Francis Assisi Almeida (Philosophy of Law)
Henry D'Almeida SJ (Sanskrit)
John Sequeira OCD (Hermeneutics)
Melvin Nalikemajalu D'Souza (Western Philosophy)
Naveen Pinto (Music)
Praveen Martis SJ (Philosophy of Science)
Rajesh Melvin Rosario (Latin)
Rocky D'Cunha OFM Cap (Western Philosophy)
Stany Pinto (English)
Vincent Anil Menezes (Public Speaking)
Dane Chandy (Biology)
Shaina Pinto (Biology)

St Joseph Institute of Theology

(Affiliated to Pontifical Urbaniana University, Rome)

Email: sjitmangalore@gmail.com

St Joseph's Interdiocesan Seminary stands like a mighty oak tree, firmly rooted and spreading its branches through seasons and times, commemorating 146 years of illustrious existence. Since its inception in 1879, philosophy and theology courses have been part of the priestly formation at St Joseph's Seminary. Since 1969, St Joseph's Interdiocesan Seminary has been affiliated to the Pontifical Urbaniana University in Rome and awards the degree of B.Th. on successful completion of the theology course.

On 20 July 2023, after following the prescribed formalities outlined in *Veritatis Gaudium*, the Apostolic Constitution on Ecclesiastical Universities and Faculties, the Dicastery for Culture and Education granted the decree of erection of St Joseph Institute of Theology (SJIT), Mangalore, on July 20, 2023, affiliating it with the Faculty of Theology of the Pontifical Urbaniana University, Rome, and approving its Statutes. Subsequently, on 16 October 2023, the Moderator of the Institute, Most Rev. Dr Peter Paul Saldanha, the Bishop of Mangalore, formally promulgated the approved Statutes of St Joseph Institute.

St Joseph Institute of Theology (SJIT) is open to candidates for the priesthood, as well as men and women religious and lay faithful (Statutes, art. 2 §1). The academic degree, i.e., the baccalaureate, is conferred by the theological faculty of the Pontifical Urbaniana University. The Institute conducts its academic activities through the Department of Theology, offering a five-year cycle with two years in Philosophy for fundamental courses and three years in Theology (VG, art. 74, a; Instruction, art. 14, 24). The two years of Philosophical study are organised by St Joseph's Institute of Philosophy (SJIP) which is affiliated to

Pontifical Athenaeum Dharmaram Vidya Kshetram (DVK), Bengaluru, India as on date 01 January 2024. After the completion of the philosophical studies, St Joseph Institute of Theology organizes Three years of Theology and then a Ministerial Year, which culminates with the B.Th Oral exam and the B.Th written exam and the eventual conferral of the degree of Bachelor of Theology.

On 16 October 2023, Rev. Dr Alexander Kalarikkal was appointed as the Director of the Institute and Rev. Dr Antony George Pinto was appointed as the Head of the Department of Theology. The Institute has the following permanent teachers and non-permanent teachers.

Permanent Teachers

Alexander Kalarikkal (Dogmatic Theology)
 Antony George Pinto (Bible)
 John Baptist Saldanha (Dogmatic Theology)
 Leo Lasrado (Moral Theology)
 Milton Jacob (Bible)
 Naveen Pinto (Canon Law)
 Rajesh Rosario (Dogmatic Theology)
 Ronald Serrao (Liturgy)
 Vincent Sequeira (Bible)

Non- permanent Teachers

Deep Fernandez OCD (Spiritual)
 Eugene D'Silva CSSR (Pastoral)
 Joy Painadath (Bible)
 Rudolph Raj Pinto OCD (Liturgy)
 Jason Pinto SDB (Pastoral Theology)
 Sylvie Rodrigues BS (Bible)
 Sudeep Paul MSFS (Pastoral Communication)
 Vijay Machado (Catechetics)
 Praveen Joy Saldanha (Dogmatic Theology)
 Flavian Rajkiran Lobo (Patrology)
 Baptist Rodrigues OFM Cap (Church History)

Seminary Day may be associated with the concept of *communion of saints* since we find every grade of the Church members here, bishops, clergy, religious and lay faithful, who recount the past, cherish the present and think of the future of the Church. Therefore, here we manifest concretely the nature and mission of the Church. Seminary, as the heart of the local church, can feel the vibrations of the Church and thank God for sending so many labourers in his vineyard. As we celebrate the 146th year of our existence in this place, we raise our hearts in joyful praise to God for the wonders he has done for us. Indeed, his love is everlasting! While we sing *Laudate Dominum* for his mighty deeds, we thank you, dear friends, for the wonderful role you play in assisting us to become *administris salutis*, dispensers of salvation.

Seminary Day 2024 is an occasion to admit God's *mirabili dei* and also to be grateful to the galaxy of people who cooperate with us to continue *Redemptoris missio*, the mission of the Redeemer. This year we not only had an abundance of rain, but also felt his bountiful grace, since he has raised three of our students to episcopate: Bishop Francis Tirkey as Bishop of the Diocese of Purnea, Bishop Duming Dias as Bishop of the Diocese of Karwar and Bishop Arokia Raj Satis Kumar as Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese Bangalore. Perhaps with the Psalmist, I can sing: "What marvels the Lord worked for us! Indeed we are glad" (Ps 126, 3). With these 3 new bishops, our number of student bishops goes to 53.



Fr Ronald Serrao
Rector

Seminary day is a time to narrate the story of the formation of young men for the Church in India. Let me try to give a few glimpses of the past year, since the Seminary Day-2023 to communicate our *Gaudium et spes* in the formation of priests for the 25 dioceses of India.

1. The Vision and the Mission

The vision of the Seminary is forming the disciples of the Crucified and Risen Lord to be prophetic proclaimers of the Word, ministers of the sacraments and leaders of the ecclesial community, while our mission is to be authentic witnesses of the Crucified and Risen Lord, through prayerful listening, understanding divine revelation, acquiring a profound knowledge of God, the world and the human person, internalizing the values of the Kingdom of God and immersing in the pastoral and missionary experience to become integrated human personalities.

2. The Thrust of the Year: Spiritual Formation

Since the Jubilee Year is at hand, we decided to prepare our seminarians for the Jubilee-2025 having the thrust of the current academic year, *Spiritual Formation*, with the

key word, *To be transformed by the Spirit, we sit at the Master's Feet*. However, we do keep our hearts and minds open to the other three dimensions of priestly formation, namely the human, intellectual and pastoral, proposed by Pope John Paul II in his Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, *Pastores Dabo Vobis* (1992).

3. Our Institutes of Philosophy and Theology

In the light of the Apostolic Constitution of Pope Francis, *Veritatis Gaudium* (8 December 2017), we now have St Joseph's Institute of Philosophy and St Joseph Institute of Theology, which, under the guidance of Fr Ivan D'Souza (Director of the Institute of Philosophy) and Fr Alexander Kalarikkal (Director of the Institute of Theology), take care of the academic formation of those who wish to study the sacred disciplines. Both Institutes are active with qualified teachers, both permanent and visiting teachers. We are happy with the quality of our education; however, we shall strive our best to enhance our standard. Currently, we have 32 students in the Philosophy Institute with 10 permanent staff, while we have 118 students in the Theology Institute with 9 permanent staff members.

4. Resident Formators and Students

Our Seminary has 15 resident formators who take care of the human, spiritual and pastoral formation of the seminarians. We have 131 seminarians belonging to 25 dioceses of India. While the Philosophy Section has 31 students, the Theology Section has 100 students.

5. Changes in the Staff

- a) Fr Vincent Anil Menezes, a priest of the Diocese of Mangalore, is the Spiritual Director of the Theology seminarians.
- b) Fr Praveen Joy Saldanha, completing the doctorate in Systematic Theology (Leuven) and Fr Flavian Lobo, completing a Licentiate in Church Fathers (Rome), have joined the team on 1 October 2024.
- c) Fr Milton, after continuous 11 years of service, has moved to Italy a month ago for a well-deserved Sabbatical Year. We wish him a relaxing time and a happy return.

6. Priestly Ordinations

23 deacons from the batch of 2023-2024 were ordained priests in their respective dioceses and religious houses, while a few are on the waiting list. We congratulate the new priests and pray to Jesus, the High Priest, that he may bless them and keep them in the hallow of his hands.

Bishop Peter Paul Saldanha ordained 23 of our seminarians to the order of Deacons on 2 October 2024. In addition, we had already 5 deacons ordained a few months earlier. Thus, we had the privilege of beholding 28 deacons at the Altar of the Lord in the presence of almost 600 people of God.

7. Theology for the Laity

The Holy Spirit is the source of creativity. Having completed 16 batches of week-end courses for the Laity and Religious, this year we were inspired by the Holy Spirit, to design the week-end courses

to Monday-Friday evening courses in English and Konkani to facilitate more participation of Laity and Religious. We are glad that more people are attracted to these courses to learn theology.

8. Special Lectures

Besides the regular Philosophical and Theological programmes, we continue our efforts to organize special lectures on relevant issues. Here is the list of special lectures:

- a) **Priestly Formation in the Digital Age** on 22 February 2024 by Fr Sudeep Paul, MSFS (Director, Sandesha) on the occasion of Late Bishop Basil D'Souza Memorial Lecture.
- b) **Artificial Intelligence** on 12 June 2024 facilitated by Fr Anil Fernandes (Director, CCC and Team)
- c) **Our Responsibility towards Environment and Water Conservation** on 27 June 2024 animated by Fr Vincent D'Souza (Secretary, CODP and Team).
- d) **YouCat** on 11 July 2024 by Fr Vijay Machado (National Secretary, CBCI Commission for Catechetics)
- e) **Challenges and Opportunities in the Healing Ministry of the Church in India** on 17 October 2024 facilitated by Fr Santhosh Dias (National Secretary, CBCI Commission for Health) and Fr Ajith Menezes (Administrator, Father Muller Medical College, Mangalore).

8. Pastoral Formation through Parish Exposure Program

If we limit priestly formation to the four walls of the Seminary, especially to academics, we certainly make a mistake. Since priests of today need to animate the local church at the grassroots level, it is but proper that we train them to know and deal with pastoral challenges. In this direction, we provide pastoral ministry for Theology students and social ministry for Philosophy students. In addition, this year we revived the Pastoral Exposition programme for all batches for four days (2 to 6 October) in five different parishes of Mangalore, Udipi and Kannur dioceses, assisted by the local parish priests and our formators. I am sure that this programme has enhanced the vision and mission of their ministry.

9. Alumni Day

For the first time, we had the Alumni Day, a coming together of 10 batches ordained from the year 2013-2023 from 13 -15 November, 2024. It was overwhelming to see 80 of our students coming back to their *alma mater* after a few years of pastoral ministry to share what the Almighty has done in and through them for the Church. Indeed, the joys and challenges of the priesthood were the main concern. But the coming together was a great boost to re-energize the spirit in the hope that better things are yet to come.

10. A Note of Gratitude

We are grateful to God for all his blessings, the intercession of St Joseph, our patron, and the motherly care of Mother Mary. We express our gratitude to the Chairman and the members of the Board of Administration for their visit, direction

and encouragement. We remain indebted to our benefactors, both abroad and local, especially the following:

1. The Dicastery for the Evangelization
2. Mission Aid Societies in the Netherlands and Germany
3. The Pontifical Society of St Peter the Apostle (POSPA)
4. The Board members and executors of Travaglini Trust, U.S.A.
5. Caritas, Prague, Czech Republic through CODP, Mangalore
6. Archbishop Leopoldo Girelli, the Apostolic Nuncio to India and Nepal
7. Mr Michael D Souza & Family, Dubai
8. Mr Louis Fernandes & Family, Valencia

I must acknowledge that because of the good will of POSPA and our

benefactors, we were able to renovate the Theology Block and Chapel. I must confess that the maintenance of the old structures is our concern and challenge. I hope that the Lord will send generous people and help us in right time.

I remain grateful to the staff and students of the Seminary for their goodness and cooperation in our common mission. I thank all the visiting teachers for their service. I am grateful to the domestic staff for their silent work in the formation of future priests. We appreciate the services of Father Muller Hospital Medical team to the Seminary.

As I wind up, I wish to appreciate and thank all of you for your good will towards the Seminary. We have a short cultural programme to inspire you to live the joy of the Gospel. May God bless you all. Have a pleasant evening.

SPIRITUAL FORMATION

The essential content of spiritual formation specifically leading toward the priesthood is well expressed in the Council's decree *Optatam Totius*: "Spiritual formation...should be conducted in such a way that the students may learn to live in intimate and unceasing union with God the Father through his Son Jesus Christ, in the Holy Spirit. Those who are to take on the likeness of Christ the priest by sacred ordination should form the habit of drawing close to him as friends in every detail of their lives.

They should live his paschal mystery in such a way that they will know how to initiate into it the people committed to their charge. They should be taught to seek Christ in faithful meditation on the word of God and in active participation in the sacred mysteries of the Church, especially the Eucharist and the Divine Office, to seek him in the bishop by whom they are sent and in the people to whom they are sent, especially the poor, little children, the weak, sinners and unbelievers. With the confidence of sons they should love and reverence the most blessed Virgin Mary, who was given as a mother to the disciple by Jesus Christ as he was dying on the cross" (*Pastores Dabo Vobis*, 45).



Pope John Paul II

5.

To be Transformed by the Spirit We Sit at the Master's Feet

Most Rev. Dr Peter Paul Saldanha, Bishop of Mangalore and Chairman of the Board of Administration of the Seminary, addressed the staff and students on the occasion of the inauguration of the Academic Year 2023-2024 on 3 June 2024 on the thrust of the Year Spiritual Formation. This is the text of his address.

Looking at the theme of today, “To be transformed by the Spirit, we sit at the Master’s feet”, I was struck by two images. One, sitting at the feet of the Master, drawn from the Gospel of Luke 10:38-42, to listen attentively to him, as Mary of Bethany did. The other image is that of the potter making the pots from clay and firing them to bake. Jeremiah has a beautiful narration. The vessel which the potter was “making of clay was spoiled in the potter’s hand, he reworked it into another vessel, as it seemed good to the potter to do. Then the word of the Lord came to me: ‘O house of Israel, can I not do with you as this potter has done?’ declares the Lord. Behold, like the clay in the potter’s hand, so are you in my hand, O house of Israel” (Jer 18:4-6). God is ready to take upon himself the task of forming us provided we let him do it.

The Two Image Typology for Transformation

Getting transformed by the fire of the kiln, the earthen vessel becomes hard and durable, ready for use. The image of earthenware in the hands of the potter, and



Bishop Peter Paul Saldanha

God shaping each one of us, is thought-provoking. What about the rights of the clay? Can it claim any independence from the potter and demand that it should be remade just in this way? Though the clay, being inanimate, has no claim whatsoever, human beings are created free and God shapes us with our consent, that is, only when we let ourselves to be shaped and reshaped by the potter.

St Augustine has put it beautifully about God’s way of working: ‘God who created you without you, will not save you without you’ (St Augustine, *Sermo* 169, 13 (PL 38,923)). Every single one of us, you and I as well, always have the possibility, the unfortunate possibility of rising up against God, of rejecting him (perhaps by our behaviour) or of crying out, ‘we do not want this man to rule over us’ (Lk 19:14).

The use of freedom to the extent of its surrender is evident in the other image of Mary sitting at the feet of Jesus, listening to him. ‘Mary listened to him speak’. She was attentive to what he was saying

and therefore received him as he was, a prophet who spoke ‘the word of God’ (Lk 8:11). Throughout Luke, sitting at the feet indicates acknowledgement of authority (Lk 7: 38; 8:35, 41; 17: 16; Acts 4: 35, 37; 5: 2; 22: 3). According to Jesus, the essential note of hospitality is to pay attention to the guest and personally accompanying him/her; only that is necessary, the rest is optional. Mary chose the good part, or Mary has made the right choice, of what was necessary. If the guest is a prophet, the appropriate reception is listening to God’s word! Jesus nicely turns the point from one of providing a service to receiving a gift: the other who comes into our space is messenger of grace. By her listening, Mary has received the person of the Prophet, for the Prophet is defined by his “word”. Indeed, Jesus is more than a Prophet and deserves greater attention.

Spiritual Formation is the Theme of This Year

I believe, the ultimate purpose of choosing this theme is to train the seminarians to acquire holiness, closeness to God and God experience, so that as priests you may also be teachers of holiness and facilitate God experience. Priests are called to be men of God, not merely because they stand in the holy place, but they are publicly ordained to represent Christ, *to act in the person of Christ, the Head*.

Pastores Dabo Vobis (PDV) has some beautiful insights about the spiritual formation. The human individual is open to transcendence, to the absolute; ‘he has a heart which is restless until it rests in the Lord’ (n. 45). Since the human formation is carried out in the sphere of anthropology,

it becomes open to the full truth regarding the human person leading it to spiritual formation, for every human being, created by God and redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, is called to be reborn ‘of water and the Spirit’ (Jn 3:S) to become a ‘son in the Son’. This journey is already marked for us, that is, to become a son in the Son.

The Life in the Spirit introduces the candidate ‘to a deep communion with Jesus Christ, the Good Shepherd, and leads to the total submission of one’s life to the Spirit, in a filial attitude toward the Father and a trustful attachment to the Church. Spiritual formation has its roots in the experience of the Cross, which in deep communion leads to the totality of the paschal mystery’ (PDV 45). ‘Spiritual formation is the core which unifies and gives life to his being a priest and his acting as a priest’ says the saintly Pope.

Triune God as the Agent of Formation

Spiritual life is intimately connected with the Father, through the person of Christ, in the Holy Spirit, living an intimate union with the Triune God. The *Ratio Fundamentalis (The Gift of Priestly Vocation)* in n. 125 affirms: ‘The principal agent of priestly formation is the Most Holy Trinity, who shapes every seminarian according to the plan of the Father, both through the presence of Christ in His word, in the sacraments and in the brothers and sisters of the community, and through the many actions of the Holy Spirit’. The Father, keeping the model of the Son, trains each one through the power of the Holy Spirit. The disciple is accompanied by Jesus and the Holy Spirit. Everyone needs to obey

the promptings of God in shaping one's life to fulfil the plan of God for his Church and for each one. We are made capable to understand the word of God and the deeper meaning of the mysteries through the help of the Holy Spirit.

For this purpose, the disciples should incessantly seek Jesus as the first disciples did, 'Rabbi, where are you staying?' (Jn. 1:38). Where can Christ be found? He is found through a prayerful meditation on the word of God, active participation in the Church's holy mysteries and the service of charity to the "little ones." The decree *Optatam Totius* says of the candidates, that "They should be taught to seek Christ in faithful meditation on the word of God and in active participation in the sacred mysteries of the Church, especially the Eucharist and the Divine Office, to seek him in the bishop by whom they are sent and in the people to whom they are sent, especially the poor, little children, the weak, sinners and unbelievers. With the confidence of sons, they should love and reverence the most blessed Virgin Mary, who was given as a mother to the disciple by Jesus Christ as he was dying on the cross' (OT 8).

Prayerful meditation of the word of God, the participation in the Eucharist and other sacraments and collaborating with the Bishop are related to the freedom of the candidate to have communion and intimacy with God. PDV affirms: 'Communion with God, which is the hinge on which the whole of the spiritual life turns, is the gift and fruit of the sacraments. At the same time, it is a task and responsibility which the sacraments entrust to the freedom of the believer, so that one may live this same communion in

the decisions, choices, attitudes and actions of daily existence' (n. 48).

Devotion to Eucharist, its daily celebration, the regular usage of sacrament of Reconciliation, a lively devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and Immaculate Heart of Mary, living out the celibate chastity to resemble Christ, and love him and the people with an undivided heart are the signs of healthy spiritual life. The prayer, meditation, contemplation, *Lectio divina* help us to come closer to God. Our faith is strengthened in responding to the Word of God.

The Transformation of the Seminarian

Prayer is seeking God. The Psalmist prays: 'Your face Lord, do I seek, Hide not your face from me' (Ps 27: 8). The Psalmist further says: 'As the deer pants for flowing streams, so pants my soul, for you, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and appear before God?' (Ps 42: 1-2). The imagery here is of a desert and a thirsty deer running around trying to find clean water to quench its thirst. Prayer is a desire to see God's face. Again, in Psalm 63: 1-2: 'O God, you are my God; earnestly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you; my flesh faints for you, as in a dry and weary land where there is no water'. Here again using the imagery of dry land a man with outstretched hands pleads with God to quench his thirst. Our soul ardently seeks God, and formative period helps to find the legitimate sources to quench the thirst for inner fulfilment.

Zacchaeus was so thirsty to see the face of Jesus that he climbed up a tree like a little child. His life was transformed when

he beheld Jesus and then he promised to do big charity. St Augustine has a marvellous experience of God and in his *Confessions*, he exclaims: 'Late have I loved you, O beauty ever ancient, ever new. Late have I loved you. You have called to me, and have called out, and have shattered my deafness. You have blazed forth with light and have put my blindness to flight! You have sent forth fragrance, and I have drawn in my breath, and I pant after you. I have tasted you, and I hunger and thirst after you. You have touched me, and I have burned for your peace.'

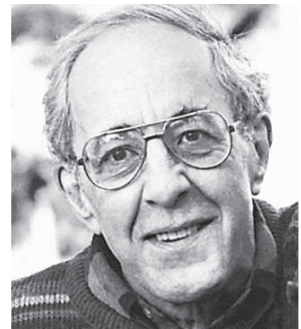
It is the meditative reading and listening of the Word of God that transformed Augustine. His self-awareness of his own misery and God's mercy is immense. God was after him and the Church gained a great witness to the truth of the Gospel.

If we want to truly experience God, we must live in his presence. Brother Lawrence, a Carmelite Friar, explains about his experience to a priest. Brother Lawrence writes: 'I have given up all my non-obligatory devotions and prayers and concentrate on being always in His holy presence; I keep myself in His presence by simple attentiveness and a loving gaze upon God which I can call the actual presence of God or to put it more clearly, a habitual, silent and secret conservation of the soul with God'.

This is the simplest way, Brother Lawrence teaches, to have experience of God. The Son of God is present in the Holy Sacrament of the Tabernacle. We are fortunate indeed. Gazing at him as he gazes at us, will make our encounter possible. May this year be for you a year of great experience of the divine Lord. I wish you all the best for this year.

SPIRITUAL FORMATION HELPS US TO SEE THE FACE OF GOD

Spiritual formation prepares us for a life in which we move away from our fears, compulsions, resentments, and sorrows, to serve with joy and courage in the world, even when this leads us to places we would rather not go. Spiritual formation helps us to see the face of God in the midst of a hardened world and in our own heart. This freedom helps us to use our skills and our very lives to make that face visible to all who live in bondage and fear. As Jesus told his disciples: "So, if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed" (John 8:36).



Henri J. M. Nouwen (Dutch Theologian)

Spiritual Formation: Following the Movements of the Spirit

6.

The Great Formator is the Lord Himself

Address by Most Rev. Dr Eugene Nugent, Apostolic Nuncio to Kuwait, Bahrain and Qatar, to the Seminary Formators and Seminarians, 2 June 2024.

Your Excellency, My dear brother Bishop Saldanha, dear Father Rector, Brothers in the Priesthood, dear Deacons and Seminarians!

What a joy it is to be with you this morning! My sincere thanks to His Excellency Bishop Saldanha for inviting me to come and make this short visit and to share a few thoughts with you. My thanks to Father Rector and the formation team for making this time available to us. As you know, I am here in Mangalore for 4 days, primarily to officiate at a wedding but also to learn something about the life of this Diocese. I am very grateful to Bishop Saldanha for his warm welcome and his gracious hospitality. Likewise, I thank all of you for the warmth of your welcome.

It is my first time in India and the experience is really incredible. What an amazing country! In my capacity as the Apostolic Nuncio in Kuwait, Bahrain and Qatar, I bring you the greetings and blessings of His Holiness Pope Francis. He asks me to assure you of his closeness in prayer. In his name and in the name of the Church, I thank you for your generosity in answering the Lord.

A few days ago, we read the Gospel account of the rich young man who, although faithfully observing the commandments, was unable to let go of his attachment to



his wealth. May the Lord give each one of you the grace to let go, to have that inner freedom, that spirit of detachment, a generous heart in foregoing family and a career to follow Him. Be assured that, in letting go, you will receive an abundance of gifts that you could never dream or imagine. I say this from my own experience.

Never in my wildest dreams could I have imagined when I was a seminarian like you that my life as a priest would take me around the world; first in Turkey for 4 years; then in the Holy Land for another 4 years, thereafter in Hong Kong for 10 years; my first assignment as Nuncio in Madagascar, Mauritius and the Seychelles; my second assignment as Nuncio in Haiti and now for the past three and a half years in the Northern Arabian Gulf. Let go and the Lord will reward you in so many surprising ways. This has been my personal experience.

I have been working in the Gulf countries for the past three and a half years. In Kuwait alone, there are almost one million workers from India - about

150,000 - 200,000 of whom are Catholics. They are of the Latin Rite, Syro-malabar and Syro-malankara. Added to this, we have about another 100,000 to 150,000 Catholics coming from the Philippines, Egypt, Lebanon, Palestine making up a vibrant community of Latin, Maronite, Melchite and Coptic. We have about 20 Indian priests ministering to these Catholics, most of them Capuchins. Altogether we have about 25 priests working in Kuwait. Perhaps one day you will be able to come and see for yourselves this dynamic faith reality.

We are living in a fast-changing world. India too is undergoing immense change. The advent of artificial intelligence and the advances in technology are causing significant changes in people's lifestyles and the way they relate to each other. Climate change is already here, affecting the lives of millions of people all over the world. Kuwait is one of the hottest countries on earth, sometimes summer temperatures can reach 55 degrees and occasionally even 60 degrees with very high levels of air pollution.

The Church in India, as elsewhere, is aware of the challenges that these changes bring. While we embrace what is positive in the change that is taking place around us, we have to be on our guard against anything that might undermine our religious, ethical and moral values. Just to give one example: You are well aware of the gender ideology that would like to blur the lines of sexual identity. Here in the seminary, you are in a privileged position to study these changes, to make a spiritual/theological reflection on them and to make a critical appraisal in the Indian context and in the wider context of the Church's teaching.

While we cannot deny the changes that are occurring around us, some things don't change. In terms of formation and

seminary life, there are constants: the discipline, a daily routine, clearly defined times for personal and community prayer, meditation, time for study, recreation and sport. I encourage you to use your time well and take advantage of all that the seminary has to offer in terms of human, intellectual and spiritual formation.

The great Formator is the Lord Himself, the eternal High Priest, our model for priestly life. The most significant moments of formation are perhaps not in the lecture hall or in the library, but rather when we are on our knees, in prayer, in adoration before the Blessed Sacrament when heart speaks to heart and the Lord makes known His will for us.

Allow me to say a word about your spiritual life. This is the foundation on which everything is built. Do not neglect it! Everyone should have a priest spiritual director who himself should have a deep spiritual life. Sometimes we hear it said that the spiritual director should be like a friend but really, he has a much bigger role than that of a friend. Of course, there has to be openness and trust. But the spiritual director is just that, a director, not someone who is fuzzy-wuzzy, palsy walsy! But someone who listens very carefully, who directs, counsels, challenges, corrects and gives the best advice based on prayer and discernment.

Pope Francis is challenging us all to reach out to the poor and marginalized. Someone has said that the passion of God is compassion, especially compassion for the poor and homeless children of the world. The Holy Father is challenging all of us to be compassionate as Christ is compassionate, to be more fraternal and less individualistic.

I recall the beautiful words of Pope Benedict XVI who said: "We follow Christ in the mission to be fishers of men. We must

bring people out of the sea that is salted with so many forms of alienation, and onto the land of life, into the light of God.” He spoke these words at the beginning of his ministry on 24 April 2005. He invited us to bring people out of the sea that is salted with so many forms of alienation.

Sadly, that crisis of alienation has only deepened since Pope Benedict uttered these words way back in 2005. So many young people today feel alienated either from their families, from their faith and their fatherland. They feel disconnected,

impoverished and unhappy. As you go forward in your formation, aim to bring our brothers and sisters out of their alienation into the loving embrace of Jesus Christ, into the land of life and the light of God. This is the work of evangelization. Take courage! Be not afraid! Christ has promised to be with us always - He is Emmanuel, God with us.

May our Blessed Mother, Mother of the Church and Mother of priests, help each one of you on your journey. God bless you! Let us keep each other in our prayers.

PRIEST IS GOD’S MESSENGER TO HIS PEOPLE

Anyone who wishes to become a priest must be first and foremost a “man of God”, to use the expression of Saint Paul (1 Tim 6:11). For us God is not some abstract hypothesis; he is not some stranger who left the scene after the “big bang”. God has revealed himself in Jesus Christ. In the face of Jesus Christ, we see the face of God. In his words we hear God himself speaking to us. It follows that the most important thing in our path towards priesthood and during the whole of our priestly lives is our personal relationship with God in Jesus Christ. The priest is not the leader of a sort of association whose membership he tries to maintain and expand. He is God’s messenger to his people. He wants to lead them to God and in this way to foster authentic communion between all men and women. That is why it is so important, dear friends, that you learn to live in constant intimacy with God. When the Lord tells us to “pray constantly”, he is obviously not asking us to recite endless prayers, but urging us never to lose our inner closeness to God. Praying means growing in this intimacy. So it is important that our day should begin and end with prayer; that we listen to God as the Scriptures are read; that we share with him our desires and our hopes, our joys and our troubles, our failures and our thanks for all his blessings, and thus keep him ever before us as the point of reference for our lives. In this way we grow aware of our failings and learn to improve, but we also come to appreciate all the beauty and goodness which we daily take for granted and so we grow in gratitude. With gratitude comes joy for the fact that God is close to us and that we can serve him



Letter of Pope Benedict XVI to Seminarians, 18 October 2010

7. Do You Know to Operate Spirituality?

Fr Alphonse D'Lima, once the Spiritual Director of the Seminary, now a retired priest of the Diocese of Udipi, reflects on spirituality through the lens of digital culture.

They Possessed a Camera

A group of five friends decided to go for a tour to the Kashmir valley. This story is of the pre-smartphone age. The leader of the group borrowed a camera from his friend, urgently learnt to operate the camera and off they flew to their tour destination. They clicked photos but when it was all ready for a show, the final product was very poor. Those who viewed the photos did not get any 'inspiration' to make tour to the Kashmir valley. All these negative effects were due to only one reason: They did not know how to operate the camera properly.

Some questions that are heard being asked in daily conversations are: Do you know how to operate a washing machine, a photocopier or even a coffee machine? Our relationship with any tool or machine basically consists of two parts: first, possessing it and second, knowing how to operate it. Today, many families own a car, but not many in those families know how to drive it. Philosophically speaking, the act of buying a car is very different from the act of driving a car. This, a very common phenomenon, highlights strongly the issue of operating a tool or a machine. Having assured ourselves about a 'law' in the material world, let us pass over to the spiritual world.



Religion VS Spirituality

First of all, let us be very clear that practice of religion is different from following a spirituality, though both are related to issues of the divine or the transcendental dimension of human life on earth. Generally speaking, it seems that among the elite today, more people feel at home with spirituality than with religion. It could also be said that a genuine and authentic practice of religion would prepare a person to move into spirituality. Again, it is good to be aware that spirituality makes greater demands on a man or a woman than religion. This is because spirituality is less ready-made in nature than religion. So, it often becomes a journey by a road less travelled.

The public market today seems to be running on a track of easy-going. People who have practically been reduced to the form of customer are likely to follow the path of easy-going even in their journey of spirituality and take it up as a fashion. As we recognize ourselves as citizens of a digital world, we are quick to benefit from online messages on spirituality and take part proudly in related webinars. These exercises

are good in themselves but one has to guard oneself from a refined version of buying. Hence, we have given the title in terms of 'operating spirituality'. So it is an actively passive dimension of life. It is like Mary and Martha of the Gospel coming together in one person.

St Paul as the Animator

Jesus came to us as the promised Messiah. He proclaimed the message of salvation. He inaugurated the Kingdom of God amidst us. He gave us the Holy Spirit as our accompanying counsellor. With all these very significant and definitive items, it would seem that his work towards the salvation of people is complete. Then, what was the need of St Paul in the history of salvation? The question is valid, and the answer is clear. St Paul was primarily an animator. When Jesus proclaimed the Gospel, there was no community of Christians. We could say that Jesus gave the people a tool or a machine for salvation and St Paul trained the people to operate the tool.

Now what St Paul did to the early Christian community, I will have to do it for myself. Of course, I do this within the general framework of the universal church and the local church, the parish. I overcome the temptation of seeing myself simply as one in the Christian crowd. Here I learn better from a high-level manufacturing system. There they manufacture many commodities one-size-fits-all type. They also have a customized service, manufacturing only one item based on the specific requests of the customer. There such needs could be an issue of luxury, but here in spirituality, it is a dire necessity. I need to operate the tool called spirituality that I may be able to attend to God's unique goal in my life.

What is the Role of Spirituality?

A tool is meant to attend to my needs. The main roles of spirituality could be described as follows:

- To formulate meaning to my life.
- To contribute my share in making the world a better place for people.
- To make Gospel values the principles of my behaviour.
- To recognize self-transcendence as the highest need in life.
- To fulfil God-given goal in my life.
- To have the courage to live a life of counter-culture (Rom 12:2).

These are some major skills to be learned in spirituality and we know by experience skills are perfected only when you know to operate the tool. So, it is not just a matter of good intentions.

May be in the garden of spirituality the roots are bitter, but the fruits are sweet. It would be useful to note that we are living mostly among people of religion. All around there are many centres and institutions of religion. Practice of religion offers greater visibility and accordingly the motivating factors in religion are more. You may also have cheap satisfaction in practice of religion. In the background of all such live issues, we could visualize that crossing over from religion to spirituality would not come naturally nor easily. We should visualize a clear and definite period of interior transformation in going over to the world of spirituality, leaving behind slowly the world of religion. It is not said that the two worlds are opposed to each other. Here you are going through a period of novitiate, of course the Holy Spirit is your novice master.

8.

Growth and Stagnation in Spiritual Life

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Introduction

Here, we can only touch upon this topic which is vast enough for several books. Our purpose here is just to point out that we are dealing with a phenomenon that is not primarily based on the theories of psychologists like Karl Rogers, Abraham Maslow and the like. If growth is part of decent human life, it is also part and parcel of Christian discipleship. This idea is often expressed in terms of more and more, and better and better, both in quality and quantity. “For I tell you, if your righteousness does not go deeper than that of the scribes and the Pharisees, you shall never enter the Kingdom of heaven” (Mt. 5:20). “...I have kept all these. What more do I need to do?” (Mt. 18:20). One of the most obvious references to holistic growth in NT is about our blessed Lord Himself. “And Jesus grew in wisdom, in stature, and in favour with God and men” (Lk. 2:52). Another inspiring statement about growth is made by John the Baptist: “He must grow greater; I must grow smaller” (Jn. 3:30). And the apostles belonging to the illiterate, marginalized class who turned into world teachers able to radically transform the Roman Empire are cases of growth in a very special way.



1.0. The Symptoms of Stagnation

In the priesthood and in religious life, some people are growing smaller and smaller until they get exhausted of all their material and spiritual energy resources, while there are others, who once considered to be second-or third-rate persons, grow into first rate instruments in God’s hand for the establishment and spread of His Kingdom. It is in this context that we will reflect on the GROWTH AND STAGNATION OF SPIRITUAL LIFE. There are two parts in this sharing. The first part deals with some of the symptoms of stagnation in the spiritual life a ministerial priest and the second part deals with the means towards growth. The symptoms of stagnation are as follows:

1.1. Lack of Enthusiasm to Work

Lack of enthusiasm leads one to the minimalistic rather than the maximalist formula of life. This implies a lack of warm love for Christ, for the cause of His kingdom, and for one’s fellow humans. This makes the person unable to relate the micro with the macro. Such people define their lives in terms of their little work rather than of Christ’s mission. They may be teachers,

social workers, parish priests, without having the awareness of being collaborators with Christ in His universal mission.

1.2. Lack of Interest to Pray

The place of the priests and the religious is in the sanctuary. Prayer requires discipline and faithfulness. Discipline is to set aside a time to pray during the day and faithfulness is to keep that time. Here, the priest has given-up his daily prayer, namely, breviary, meditation, rosary and all other spiritual exercises. The worst part is that one justifies by saying, "I want to pray but I have no time to pray; my work is my worship." It is St Chrysostom who says that it is not that we have no time to pray but we don't want to find time to pray. We find time for the things we want to do and we find no time for the things we don't want to do.

The work is not worship for the ministerial priest. We read in the Bible that Jesus prayed 17 times. The more He went to the Father the more He went to the people and vice versa. The pastoral charity of the ministerial priest is the result of his communion with Jesus in prayer. In Mark 3:14, the Lord says, "I have chosen you to be with me and I will send you out to preach." The Lord has chosen us for two reasons, namely, to be with Him and to send us out to preach. "To be with the Lord" means to be the friend of the Lord (Jn. 15:15), to have an intimate relationship with Him. "I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing." (Jn. 15:1-4). The ministerial priest who has a lived experience with Jesus can tell others about Him. Without this experience his preaching sounds like the "noisy gong."

The spirituality of the ministerial priest is the spirituality of contemplation in action. His communion with the Lord sends him out to the people in pastoral charity and the pastoral charity sends him back to the Blessed Sacrament. Contemplation makes him to act and action makes him to contemplate. Contemplation and action are the two sides of the same coin.

1.3. Pharisees in Terms of Legalism, Ritualism and Externalism

Pharisees manifest the external piety, a showy spirituality, duplicity or hypocrisy which means acting on the stage. The person acts on the stage what he is not. In other words, there is no connection between the inner disposition and the external religious practices of the ministerial priest. His prayer must make him a loving person. Otherwise, he plays the game of duplicity or hypocrisy. Unless one has experienced the value of being a child of God (Rom 8:14-17; Gal. 1:7) one cannot experience the freedom of the children of God (Gal. 5:1, 13). The pastoral charity of the ministerial priest is the result of his Christ experience. The spirituality of the ministerial priest comprises of three aspects, namely, configuration with Christ, ecclesial dimension which includes obedience to the bishop, brother priests and the faithful, and the pastoral dimension which consists of preaching, sanctifying and shepherding.

1.4. Pessimism and Negativity

For such people hardly anything is right or hardly anybody is good. They can hardly ever be a source of encouragement or enrichment to others. "Criticism is the echo of one's own weaknesses projected on others. The person who is healed from within goes on healing others." The person

who is wounded from within goes on wounding others. We can't give to others what we do not have.

1.5. Hurt Feelings

One of the threats to the vocation of the ministerial priest is the hurt feelings he treasures in his heart. If the hurt feelings are not healed in the initial stage, they turn into anger. When the anger goes deep down, it turns into revengefulness. If the revengefulness is not overcome, it turns into bitterness. When the person is bitter from within, he expresses his bitterness by criticizing others. In this situation, the person simply exists. He gives up prayer, looks for sympathy, takes up drinks, wrong friendships and finally leaves the priesthood. Hence, treasuring of hurt feelings is dangerous.

1.6. The Misplaced Goals and Means

The goal of our priestly life is what St. Paul says in Phil. 3:10-11: "The goal of my life is to know Jesus Christ and to understand the power of his resurrection, to share in his suffering and to become one with his death." The means to achieve this goal are the activities, relationships, spiritual exercises, etc. The means must help me to deepen my vocation and commitment. The danger is when goal becomes the means, and the means become the goal. What is the behaviour of the person? It is jealousy, attachments to persons and things, hoarding up material things, manipulating the accounts. Jesus is no more the first priority, but something else. Hence, power does not come from Jesus in prayer. So, the person depends on others for strength. As a result, he favours the strong, influential

in the community and rejects the weak. The power of the ministerial priest must come from the Blessed Sacrament and from the worldly things.

2.0. Growing Towards Perfection

Conversion is a lifelong process. Hence, our spirituality is a constant struggle against our temptations, not on our own efforts but with the grace of God. Our efforts and God's grace must go hand in hand. It can be compared to the 'Publican' who went to the synagogue to pray. He prayed, "Lord has mercy on me, a poor sinner" (Lk 18: 13). It can be compared to the Prodigal son who returned to the father and said, "Father, I have sinned against you" (Lk. 15: 18). It is a constant returning to the father. It is saying like St Peter at the miraculous catch of the fish, "Depart from me Lord for I am a sinful man" (Lk. 5: 8). It is praying like the Psalmist, "If you, O Lord, should mark our guilt, Lord who would survive. But with you is found forgiveness and mercy, therefore, we revere you" (Ps 130:3-4). We rely on the compassion and mercy of the Lord. Then, we are filled with the presence of God and experience what St Paul has experienced.

Three times I appealed to the Lord about this that it would leave me, but he said to me, 'my grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness. So, I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me. Therefore, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions and calamities for the sake of Christ, for whenever I am weak then I am strong (2 Cor 12:8-10). Here are some of the means to grow towards perfection.

2.1. Growing in Clarity of Vision of the Objectives of the Call to the Priesthood

Here, theology has an important place. One's micro-vision in terms of one's assignment or job has to be connected with the macro vision of Christ's mission. Christ's fundamental mission was to establish and spread God's Kingdom. One has to see how one's assigned job fits in with this universal ideal of Christ. In other words, how does my apostolate contribute towards the "Kingdom" plan of God for the world?

2.2. Growing Fascination for the Ideal of Christ

Here, one has to see how one's emotions are attuned to the ideal or vision of Christ. In other words, one has to negotiate with one's basic drives like the sex drive or power drive to sublimate them for this ideal. The ministerial priest believes that he has a vocation in life, vocation to the priesthood or to the religious life. Vocation gives him a mission and mission gives him a commitment which is expressed in his pastoral activities. All the activities of the ministerial priest must deepen his commitment to the mission. Here, spiritual guidance and discernment are of great value. The more our ideals are rooted in our emotional matrix, the easier will be their realization. In other words, the emotions and the ideal of Christ are to be fused with each other.

2.3. Growth in One's Abba-Experiences

This experience is considered to be the *alpha* and *omega* of Christian spirituality. These are the events and circumstances in one's life where the ministerial priest has experienced God's presence tangibly. One needs to look back to his life history in order

to see the abiding presence of the Lord in his life. Therefore, "Your life history is so precious to you for that is how your God has walked with you." When we re-live these Abba-experiences, all the spiritual loathness is gone, and we are filled with the love of God.

2.4. Crisis-Management Techniques

Crises are part and parcel of life. Crises can bring out the best or the worst in a person. They can cause growth, stagnation or deterioration in a person depending on the religious as well as the secular resources he has at his disposal. Crises such as diseases, accidents, misunderstandings, bad name, disloyalty, failure in one's ventures, family problems, opposition to one's pet projects, betrayals, and the like, are waiting in a long queue to confront us. But "everything works for good for them that love (trust in) God (Rom 8:28).

During these moments of crisis, some people go to meet intimate friends noted for their wisdom. Some try to relax in order to view the situation with peace, while others have recourse to psychological techniques. Certainly, all these skills are valuable as far as they go. But for priests, Jesus is the primary source of inspiration, guidance and help in crisis situations. They are:

2.4.1. Jesus in the Gethsemane Garden

The ministerial priest must turn to Christ in Gethsemane Garden (Mt.26: 36-46), facing the greatest crisis any human being might have ever faced, to become realistic. Jesus prays, "Father, take this cup away from me, not my will Thy will be done." Jesus bends his heart to the will of his Father. That is exactly what prayer is for the priests. It is not manipulating God

and getting what he wants, but a constant surrendering his will to the plan of God. “My God, My God, why have you forsaken me? Father into your hands, I commend my Spirit” (Lk. 23:46).

2.4.2. Peter Walks on the Water

Apart from the Gethsemane scene, another scene one should contemplate is the one in which Peter, after walking on the water for some distance while looking at the outstretched arms of the Lord, shouts for the Lord’s help (Mt. 14:22-23). It is good to imagine that the Lord scolding Peter with these words: “Was it not I who called you into the deep waters of the priesthood? By your commitment, the ground under your feet has been cut off. The moment you lose sight of my outstretched arms due to the surging waves of crisis after crisis, you try to remain afloat clinging to some floating objects such as a prestigious job, name or fame. But unless you catch hold of my outstretched arm as Peter did, you will not be able to fulfil your mission effectively.”

2.4.3. Mary Magdalene at the Resurrection of Jesus

Mary Magdalene at the resurrection of Jesus (Jn. 20:11-18) is another scene to contemplate in the time of crisis to face them. When she was weeping Jesus called out her name and said, “Mary why are you weeping?” This is also our prayer experience. When we come to the Lord in prayer during the moments of crisis, we hear the same words that the Lord speaks to us in the depths of our heart, namely, “Why are you weeping? Have I abandoned you anytime? Have I not stood by you all the days of your life?” These whisperings of the Lord give us a lot of consolation.

2.4.4. Caesarea Philippi

At Caesarea Philippi Jesus asked His disciples, “Who do you say that I am” (Mt. 16:13). In our meditation before the Blessed Sacrament, let us reverse this question and ask Jesus, “Lord, who do you say that I am?” The Lord will answer by saying, “You are my beloved son/daughter, and my favour rests on you.” These words of Jesus resounding at the depths of one’s heart strengthen the priest to face the crisis.

2.5. Contributing to the Growth of Others

Any contribution to the growth of others, as teachers, counsellors, medical persons, and the like, has the power of helping the priest to grow. Such an unselfish contribution always presupposes a certain amount of love. When an old student, a patient, tells the priest honestly, “Today I am what I am because of you, Father.” It can really be growth-giving shot in the arm. Besides, any genuine friendship is growth-giving, chiefly because it is genuine only in so far as each friend makes a conscious effort for the growth of the other. Jealousy is opposed to friendship and growth.

2.6. Involvement in the Welfare of the Poor and the Marginalized

Any service to the poor that comes from personal convictions and inner feelings has the sacramental effect of encountering the risen Christ and of experiencing His love and power. Such an involvement with the poor and the marginalized can save the priest from various artificial problems of a protected life.

2.7. Freeing Oneself from Legalism, Ritualism and Externalism

The Sabbath is for man and not man

for the Sabbath (Mk 2:27). Christ has come into the world so that we have life in greater abundance (Jn. 10:10). “The glory of God is man fully alive” (Irenaeus). Laws are to be followed insofar as they help us to become better humans, in so far as they help us to grow into the image of Christ. If our prayers and rituals do not have a bearing on our day-to-day life, they will lead us to growth-arresting empty ritualism. If our Lord was free from legalism etc. (e.g., Sabbath observance) because of His deep *Abba-experience*, our own liberation from these growth-arresting attitudes presupposes such an experience in our own limited ways.

Conclusion

Growth in the spiritual life is a lifelong process. It is a constant struggle to rise above one’s sin and sinfulness. In this ongoing process, one’s efforts and God’s grace must go hand in hand. When a priest stops making an effort to rise above his temptations, he dies spiritually. To avoid

spiritual death, first, one must be sensitive to oneself which means being aware of the distractions in prayer. What is it that comes up again and again when he is alone? Secondly, the priest should not lose the sense of sin in his life. Thirdly, the priest should discern the presence of God in all the life events and relive his *Abba-experiences* in order to fall in love with the Father. In the context of the above sharing let us reflect on:

- a) From the development of my own understanding of the priesthood from the early days of the seminary until now: How has it changed?
- b) How have I been inspired or discouraged by the example of other priests? Analyse the examples of both inspiring priests and those who scandalize. What are the main reasons for edification and dis-edification?
- c) Have I grown spiritually through my priestly ministry?
- d) What are the priorities of my own priestly ministry?

Infinite Horizons

Shinson Antony O.P., First Year Theology



Beyond the veil of mortal sight,
A realm divine where stars ignite,
A canvas vast where souls take flight,
And God’s eternal love guides us through the night.

In this expanse, where hearts and souls roam free,
We find the essence of divinity,
A reflection of the sacred sea,
Where God’s love and light forever will be.

Like ripples on the shore of Heaven’s grace,
Our lives intersect, forever interlaced,
In a cosmic dance of sacred space,
United by the Lord’s divine embrace.

In infinite horizons, we find our way,
Guided by God’s light through each passing day,
And though the journey’s long, and winding be,
Our souls are anchored in eternity.

9.

Pope Francis and Spiritual Formation

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Introduction

The seminary is a place of formation. A seminarian must form himself holistically in an atmosphere of spiritual growth. Pope Francis emphasizes that prayer, study, fraternity, and apostolic life are the four pillars of formation, which interact with one another: a strong spiritual life, a deep intellectual life, community life, and apostolic life. All four are important. If one of them is missing, formation is not comprehensive (cf. *L'Osservatore Romano*, 18 April 2014).

In recent years, there has been a lot of discussion about priestly formation. In our discussion, we focus on the theme 'Pope Francis and Spiritual Formation'. The reform in the field of spiritual formation proposed by Pope Francis directly addresses the ways and means of connecting the people of God with seminarians in formation. The spirituality practiced in seminaries and formation houses should not be completely detached from the world, nature, or pastoral challenges. Priestly formation depends primarily on God's action in our lives, not on our own efforts.

Pope Francis refers a biblical image from the Prophet Jeremiah, saying, 'The call to priesthood is compared to clay in the hands of the potter' (Jer 18:1-10). A seminarian must surrender himself into God's hands.



1. In the Realm of Spiritual Formation Pope Francis Addresses Two Kinds of Dichotomy.

- a) **Personal Dichotomy:** It is only natural that when there is a dichotomy between what we preach and what we practice, undesired results will follow.
- b) **Institutional Dichotomy:** In many seminaries, there is an institutional separation between the formation house and the institution where the seminarians pursue their philosophical and theological studies. If there is compartmentalization between the two - especially when there are conflicting ideas or models - it can lead to undesirable outcomes, influenced by the lifestyle, formation team, and the seminary environment. If the formator leads a different lifestyle, and the students are caught in between, this can create a lot of confusion. The values lived and preached by the formator have a significant influence on the seminarians. Seminaries and formation houses should form future priests who are compassionate towards the poor. Pope Francis emphasizes the need for seminarians to develop a spirituality rooted in the

concrete circumstances in which the people of God live and struggle. A priest is not formed in a laboratory; his formation begins in the family, with the tradition of faith, and continues with the family throughout the years of formation. During these years, a strong awareness should be cultivated, so that he prepares himself worthily to work in the vineyard of the Lord.

2. New Paradigm of Spiritual Formation

Pope Francis speaks of the new challenges that must be faced in spiritual formation. With the assistance of counselling, psychological approaches, and spiritual support, seminarians can overcome these difficulties. Above all, the solution to this crisis must be found in spirituality.

3. Silence and Meditation are Integral Parts of Spiritual Growth.

Silence and meditation hold spiritual value. The spiritual growth of a seminarian requires certain prerequisites, particularly serenity of mind and internal silence, where the seeds of spiritual life can germinate. The importance of silence must be emphasized during a seminarian's years of formation. Silence shapes the mind and heart to experience the love of God. In silence, God speaks to us in the language of sheer silence (1 Kings 19:11-12). Pope Francis exhorts, 'Only when transformed by the Word of God will you be able to communicate words of life.' Seminarians must be guided and encouraged to read the word of God with deeper understanding, rather than reading it mechanically. It would also be advisable to introduce different methods of meditation, even in major seminaries.

4. Prayer, a New Language of Love.

"Prayer is a conversation with God." In personal prayer, this conversation requires a very personal language. Spiritual formation must help a seminarian to develop an effective conversation with God, which requires a new language of love, forgiveness, beauty, appreciation, compassion, and more. He must learn to converse with God, nature, people, and himself, as a result of his personal prayer and meditation. This should be considered an important task of spiritual formation, especially when addressing challenges and adopting a new paradigm in spiritual development. It is equally important to ensure that seminarians achieve conceptual clarity in the fundamentals of their spiritual development. Seminarians must understand the difference between a sense of sin and feelings of guilt. Even after they have received the Sacrament of Reconciliation, the heaviness of heart may still remain, which can hinder spiritual maturity. Spiritual formation must focus on enhancing a mature understanding of spirituality.

Conclusion

For Pope Francis, spiritual formation includes learning to listen both to God and to others. It requires openness to being transformed by God's grace and a readiness to act in response, whether internally or externally, in the face of various challenges. Internal challenges often stem from the contradiction of counter-witnessing, while external challenges include the negative impact of the internet and social media. The novelty introduced by new spiritual trends must also be addressed. These modern challenges clearly call for a renewed and vibrant spiritual formation to shape future priests.

10. Psycho-Sexual Integration in Spiritual Formation: A Vital Component for Priests and Religious

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Introduction

Psycho-sexual integration refers to the harmonious integration of one's sexual identity and psychological maturity within the broader framework of personal development. For priests and religious, this integration is crucial for authentic spiritual growth and effective ministry. The human person is a composite of body, mind, and spirit; thus, neglecting the psycho-sexual aspect can lead to significant issues in personal well-being and ministry effectiveness (Rodgerson, 2015).

Theological Foundations

From a theological perspective, the human person is created in the image of God, encompassing both body and spirit (Genesis 1:27). The Church teaches that sexuality is a gift from God, designed for love and the creation of life, but it also has a profound spiritual significance (John Paul II, 1981). In religious life, celibacy is embraced as a path to total self-gift to God and others, requiring a deep understanding and integration of one's sexual identity. However, the call to celibacy does not mean the denial of one's sexuality, but rather its transformation and integration into a life of love and service (John Paul II, 1992). Effective spiritual formation must, therefore, include a focus on psycho-sexual maturity, helping individuals to understand and integrate their sexual identity in a way that supports their spiritual commitments.



Psychological Perspectives on Psycho-Sexual Integration

Psychologists emphasize that sexual identity is a core aspect of human personality. Freud (1930) was one of the first to highlight the importance of sexuality in human development, though his views were primarily psychoanalytic. More contemporary psychologists, such as Erik Erikson (1968), have expanded this understanding, suggesting that sexual identity continues to develop and evolve throughout adulthood.

For religious individuals, this development involves integrating sexual feelings and desires in a way that aligns with their spiritual and vocational commitments. In this context, psycho-sexual integration involves acknowledging and understanding one's sexual feelings, managing them healthily, and channelling them towards life-giving relationships and service (Francis & Malley, 2010).

Challenges to Psycho-Sexual Integration in Religious Life

The challenges of psycho-sexual integration in religious life are multifaceted. Often, religious formation programmes focus heavily on spiritual and intellectual

development, with insufficient attention to emotional and sexual maturity (Sharon, 2018). This can lead to issues such as sexual repression, confusion about sexual identity, and difficulty in forming healthy relationships. In some cases, the lack of psycho-sexual integration can result in problematic behaviours, including boundary violations, inappropriate relationships, or unhealthy expressions of sexuality (Plante, 2007). Such issues highlight the need for a more holistic approach to formation, one that includes explicit attention to psycho-sexual development.

Practical Approaches to Fostering Psycho-Sexual Integration

1. Comprehensive Formation Programmes

Formation programmes should incorporate psycho-sexual education, providing a safe space for individuals to explore and understand their sexual identity in the context of their spiritual commitments. This education should include discussions on human sexuality, emotional intelligence, and healthy boundaries (Hahnenberg, 2014).

2. Self-Awareness and Emotional Intelligence

Understanding emotions, desires, and psychological needs is foundational. Emotional intelligence allows priests and religious to recognize and manage their feelings in a way that aligns with their spiritual commitments. This includes being aware of how one's sexuality impacts thoughts, behaviours, and relationships. Regular opportunities for personal reflection and counselling can help individuals process their feelings and experiences related to sexuality. Counselling should be integrated into formation programmes as a routine aspect of spiritual development, rather than

as a response to crises (Rulla, Imoda, & Ridick, 1976).

3. Healthy Boundaries

Establishing and maintaining appropriate boundaries is critical for both personal integrity and effective ministry. This involves understanding the limits of relationships, maintaining professional and pastoral boundaries, and recognizing when to seek help or guidance to avoid boundary violations.

4. Celibacy as a Life-Giving Commitment

Viewing celibacy not as a suppression of sexuality but as a positive, life-giving commitment is essential. This perspective helps in transforming sexual energy into creative and compassionate service, deepening one's relationship with God and others. Priests and religious must integrate their sexual identity with their vocational identity, seeing themselves as whole persons who are sexual beings called to a specific mission. This integration supports authentic living and prevents the fragmentation of the self that can lead to inner conflict or unhealthy behaviours.

5. Transparency and Vulnerability in Relationships

Cultivating relationships where one can be transparent and vulnerable is vital. These relationships, whether with spiritual directors, mentors, or peers, should provide a safe space to discuss personal struggles and receive guidance.

6. Integration of Body and Spirit in Prayer and Ministry

Recognizing the unity of body and spirit in prayer life and ministry is important. Practices that engage the whole person, such as contemplative prayer, mindfulness, and

physical self-care, support the integration of psycho-sexual and spiritual dimensions.

7. Understanding and Navigating Sexual Temptation

Developing strategies for understanding and navigating sexual temptation is crucial. This includes recognizing triggers, employing healthy coping mechanisms, and understanding the deeper needs or wounds that may underlie such temptations.

8. Holistic View of Human Development

Embracing a holistic view of human development that includes physical, emotional, psychological, and spiritual aspects allows priests and religious to grow into mature, well-rounded individuals. This holistic approach helps in fostering a balanced and integrated life, leading to more effective ministry. By focusing on these components, priests and religious can achieve a deep and authentic psycho-sexual integration, which enhances their spiritual formation and makes them more effective, efficient, and elegant in their ministry.

9. Community Support and Accountability

Being part of a supportive community that provides accountability is crucial. This support helps in staying true to one's commitments and offers a space for sharing struggles, joys, and experiences related to psycho-sexual integration. Establishing mentorship programmes and peer support groups can provide ongoing support and guidance for those navigating the complexities of psycho-sexual integration. These relationships can offer accountability, encouragement, and practical advice (Hoge & Wenger, 2003).

10. Ongoing Formation and Education

Psycho-sexual integration is not a one-time achievement but a lifelong process. Therefore, ongoing formation and education should be provided, helping priests and religious continually grow in self-understanding and healthy relational practices (Nouwen, 1972). Continuous personal growth and formation are necessary to maintain psycho-sexual integrity. This includes spiritual direction, psychological counselling, retreats, and other forms of self-care that foster ongoing development in all areas of life.

Conclusion

Psycho-sexual integration is essential for the holistic spiritual formation of priests and religious. By embracing a comprehensive approach that includes psychological, sexual, and spiritual dimensions, religious individuals can achieve greater personal well-being and minister more effectively. Formation programs must prioritize this integration, recognizing that a well-integrated individual is better equipped to live out their vocation with authenticity and compassion.

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Faith

Faith, a light in the darkest night
Guiding us forward, shining bright
A gentle whisper, a quiet voice
Leading us on, a heartfelt choice

With faith, we walk, we run, we stand
Through life's ups and downs, hand in hand
It gives us strength, it gives us might
To face the challenges, to shine so bright

A life of faith, a life of peace
A life of purpose, a life to release
The worries, the fears, the doubts, the pain
Faith helps us rise, to love again

So let us hold on to faith's pure light
And let it guide us, through the dark of night
For with faith, we'll find our way
To a brighter tomorrow, a new day.

Aneesh V. C., First Year Philosophy

11. My Spiritual Formation at St Joseph's Seminary, Mangalore

Deacon Sherin Madavana belongs to the Archdiocese of Ernakulam-Angamaly in Kerala. He serves at St Joseph Church, Meloor, Chalakudy.

My seminary formation has been a profound journey of self-discovery, spiritual growth, and inner transformation, shaping me in ways I never imagined possible.

When I first entered the Minor Seminary, I felt a certain uncertainty about my spiritual life. I remember asking my spiritual Father, "What does it mean to have a 'God experience'?" I don't feel like I've had one." His response, simple yet profound, has stayed with me throughout my journey: "When you pray, if you find an internal peace within yourself, then you are having a God experience." This moment became a turning point in my spiritual formation, guiding me to a deeper understanding of prayer and peace in God.

St Joseph's Seminary, Mangalore, has also been a pivotal part of my formation, helping me to refine my spiritual practices and to embrace a more profound sense of faith. As I complete this chapter, I carry with me the rich experiences and lessons I've gained here.

A Calm and Meditative Lifestyle

Throughout my time at St Joseph's Seminary, I have always been drawn to a calm and meditative lifestyle. My taste for Indian spirituality has been nurtured here, where spirituality is experienced amidst the hustle and bustle of city life - much like



living in the world but not being of the world. Meditation in particular has been central to my spiritual growth, helping me to connect with God on a deeper level.

The times of fellowship, especially the batch Masses we shared, were also deeply memorable. These moments strengthened our bonds as brothers in formation and reminded me of the joy of communal worship and the beauty of being united in the Eucharist. The liturgical music practices that accompanied these celebrations were not just rehearsals, but opportunities to realize the importance of active participation in the Divine Liturgy, deepening our experience of the sacred.

Renewed Life in a Renewed Chapel

This year was significant for our spiritual formation, coinciding beautifully with the renewal of our seminary chapel. The newly renovated chapel became a symbol of our own inner renewal. As seminarians, the chapel has always been at the center of our spiritual life, where we gather every morning, at noon, in the evening and before going to bed. The Eucharistic celebration - truly the heart of our daily life - continues

to nourish us spiritually, reminding us that Christ is at the centre of everything we do. The chapel is not just a physical space but a sacred meeting place with God, where we unite as a community, lifting our prayers, joys, and struggles to the Lord. This renewed space has inspired a renewed spirit in me, further deepening my love for the Eucharist and communal prayer.

Retreats and Diverse Spiritual Traditions

The annual retreats at the seminary have given me the opportunity to explore various spiritual traditions, such as those of the Jesuits, Capuchins, and others. Each retreat offered a unique perspective and a chance to deepen my spiritual practice, allowing me to grow in the rich diversity of the Church's spirituality.

Parish Ministry

During my formation, I had the privilege of serving in the parishes of Sullia and Kalenja. These experiences allowed me to embody and live out my spirituality in a pastoral setting. One of my professors used to say, "We are not just studying theology; we are doing theology." This hands-on approach to ministry has taught me the importance of applying what I have learnt

in the classroom to the lives of the people I serve.

Inclusiveness in Spirituality

For me, spirituality means inclusiveness. St Joseph's Seminary has provided a space where seminarians from all over India come together, enriching each other's experiences. This sense of inclusiveness, of being open to others' spiritual and cultural backgrounds, has broadened my own spiritual understanding and has been a significant part of my formation.

Conclusion

As I prepare to step forward into the next phase of my ministry, I leave St Joseph's Seminary with a heart full of gratitude. The formation I have received here - rooted in prayer, community, and diverse spiritual traditions - has shaped me into the person I am today. It has taught me the value of silence and meditation, the joy of fellowship in the Eucharist, the importance of active liturgical participation, and the richness of living in communion with others. These lessons will continue to guide me in my journey, as I seek to serve God and His people with an inclusive and prayerful spirit.

You must know that a priest who does not pray goes into the rubbish bin. Perhaps he perseveres until he grows old, but in the bin, that is to say, in mediocrity.

Pope Francis



12. Social Media Begins When Life Begins

Fr Vincent Anil Menezes is a priest of the Diocese of Mangalore. He is currently one of the Spiritual Directors in the Seminary.

You might be surprised by the title of this article. Looking back in history we could boldly say, “Spirituality begins when life begins.” In previous generations, most of the world’s population were believers, belonging to one religion or another. Children born into religious families were nurtured in that faith, with a wealth of religious practices and rituals surrounding their birth and upbringing. For example, in the Catholic Church, the spiritual journey of a child begins on the 40th day after its birth. Daily family prayers, Sunday Mass, catechism, sacraments, religious associations, and retreats were integral part of Christian life.

Today, we can say that “social media begins when life begins.” Just as we cannot imagine life without essentials like water, air, light, and food, we cannot imagine life without social media. Just as John the Baptist leapt in Elizabeth’s womb when Mary approached, today’s unborn child might react similarly to the presence of a mobile phone. The Prenatal experiences are increasingly intertwined with the digital world, as mothers constantly engage with social media. This might explain why children seem to be born with an instinct for technology. They learn to interact with mobile devices almost immediately after birth.



1. Machine Becoming Human, Human Becoming Machine

The rise of social media and digital platforms has created a paradigm shift in human life. Machines have been designed to imitate human behaviours like communication, responding to emotions and feelings, and anticipating needs with speed and accuracy. They surpass human intelligence. Tasks that once required physical effort are now handled by automated machines. Tasks such as office work, shopping, education, banking, medical consultations, and communication are now performed faster and more efficiently. This leaves more time for leisure and other productive works.

However, this shift has also led to the exchanging of boundaries between humans and machines. Many have surrendered their God-given intelligence and strength to technology. People have become passive observers rather than active participants in their own lives. Simple tasks that humans are capable of performing are now outsourced to machines. This leads to a decline in physical exertion, mental alertness, and

memory. Humans, like machines, have often become stationary. Machines handle the tasks that used to keep humans moving.

2. Connection and Disconnection in Family, Friendships, and Society

Social media has revolutionized communication. It is easier than ever before to communicate with family, friends, and society. It has erased geographical boundaries. The older forms of communication media such as letters, telegrams, or costly phone calls are now instantaneous. Social media has reached even to the common person in the most remote villages. It has created online communities in areas such as health, education, medicine, and politics. The number of friends and well-wishers has expanded. There are more opportunities to express ideas, intelligence, creativity, and opinions.

While social media has succeeded in connecting people on a global scale, it has simultaneously fostered a disconnection in personal relationships. Family members may be physically present but emotionally distant. There is little sharing of joys, struggles, or sorrows. This disconnection strains family bonds and leads to marital discord. Social gatherings have diminished. People spend hours on social media, but struggle to invest even a few minutes in face-to-face conversations. Friendships have become more superficial and fleeting. Furthermore, the spread of misinformation on social media has caused division, unrest, and polarization within society.

3. Spirituality: Online vs. Offline

Online spirituality has made significant progress in recent years. It has

taken over the traditional offline practices. Social media offers easy access to spiritual content, allowing people to participate in prayer, adoration, sermons, retreats, and even Mass from their own homes. Online communities bring together believers from across the globe. They foster a sense of shared faith and provide spiritual guidance at the click of a button.

However, this online spirituality can sometimes overshadow offline spiritual experiences, which are rich in personal, face-to-face interaction, accountability, and community. Churches, temples, and mosques are losing their traditional importance as virtual religious practices take precedence. The need for a spiritual guide, mentor, or a priest is often replaced by online content. This shift can lead to superficial engagement, a sense of isolation, and a lack of accountability. The authenticity of online content or its source may always be in question.

A balanced approach that blends both online and offline spirituality could offer a more profound faith experience. Attending physical religious services while also participating in online spiritual resources can deepen one's connection with both God and the wider community.

4. Information and Vocation

Returning to the theme "social media begins when life begins," today's children grow up immersed in a digital world from an early age. Information on every topic is at their fingertips. In the past, they had to rely on their parents, teachers, or religious leaders. Today, children make career choices based on the vast array of options available

to them online. They are often making decisions about their future long before they step into the real world.

This easy access to information has a significant impact on religious vocations. As the number of children per family declines and the powerful influence of social media dominates their lives, fewer young people are choosing the path of religious life. Women's religious congregations in particular have seen a sharp decline in vocations. Many houses of formation are on the verge of closing. It mirrors the trend in the West, where churches are being sold or turned into museums. Social media presents the world as glamorous and full of material pleasures. Young minds are exposed to the unethical world. Thus, the spiritual life appears less appealing. The failures of the spiritual leaders are blown out of proportion by the social media. As a result, the youth are dissuaded from pursuing what was once considered a noble calling.

5. Social Media's Role in Formation and Mission

Despite its impact on vocations, social media has also been a blessing in the areas of religious formation and mission. Sharing the Gospel in real time has never been easier. Seminarians and religious students have access to online theological, liturgical, and pastoral resources that enhance their spiritual growth. They are connected to current societal issues even while still in formation. They can share their faith

experiences, offer guidance, and provide prayers to a wide audience.

However, this constant connection to social media comes with its own dangers. The distractions from notifications, reels, and Instagram posts, etc., can take valuable time away from study, prayer, and meditation. Shallow relationships and the need for likes and follows may replace genuine human connection and interior spiritual growth. The active life of the houses of formation is slowly disappearing. People feel more comfortable confined to their living rooms than in public gatherings. The constant online visibility of priests and religious leaders also makes them vulnerable to public criticism, trolling, and personal attacks on their faith.

Conclusion

In conclusion, social media has become an inseparable part of modern life. It influences everything from communication and relationships to spirituality and vocation. While it offers many benefits, it also presents significant challenges, especially in fostering religious vocations. The task of houses of formation is becoming increasingly complex. Access to the social media is uncontrollable. It is also difficult to assess the use and misuse of social media by the candidates in formation. Striking a balance between the online and offline worlds, especially in the area of spirituality, may offer a path forward.

13.

HOPE DOES NOT DISAPPOINT

Reflections on Hope in the Context of ACPI Conference in Mangalore

Fr Joswine Praveen D'Souza is a priest of the Diocese of Mangalore. Currently he is one of the teachers of Philosophy in the Seminary.

Introduction

We are living in challenging times. Armed conflicts, racial and religious discrimination, hate crimes, and terrorist attacks have become common headlines. The rise of far-right ideologies fuels intolerance and division, often leading to violence. The gap between the rich and the poor is widening, contributing to social unrest, while democracy itself is under threat in several parts of the world. To add to this, the COVID-19 pandemic has left behind a trail of suffering, economic hardship and death. On a larger scale, the climate crisis looms as a grave threat to our future, affecting all life on Earth. Rising sea levels, extreme weather patterns, devastating hurricanes, floods, droughts, and wildfires are already becoming a global reality.

Despite this gloomy backdrop, the question arises: Is there hope for our world, for our future, and for the generations to come? It might seem naive to imagine that we can overcome the enormous forces of greed, corruption, and hatred. Yet, amidst this chaos, hope continues to emerge—not as a passive emotion, but as a dynamic and transformative force.

Finding Hope Amidst Chaos

Amidst this chaos, we find hope in the remarkable courage of individuals who



stand against oppression and injustice. These inspiring voices, whether they belong to known activists or ordinary people, resonate long after they are gone. Even in the face of death, their message continues to inspire and give hope—reminding us of the inherent goodness that persists in humanity, despite our flaws. This hope is not something passive or merely wishful; it is active, dynamic, and essential. Hope is the force that drives us forward, even in the face of difficulties. It represents our vision of what we want to achieve, yet it demands effort and determination to bring that vision to life. Without hard work and persistence, hope remains just an aspiration, waiting to be realized. Hope isn't just an emotion; it's something deeper and more essential to our existence. It's not a skill we develop but a fundamental part of our survival, almost like a gift within us. It's a profound force that keeps us going, something intrinsic that helps us endure and push forward when times are tough. Being hopeful inspires action, and action, in turn, creates more hope. That's why Hope is contagious. our actions will inspire others. True hope

compels us to act, to engage, and to believe that our efforts, no matter how small matter.

Jubilee of Hope

This theme of hope is especially significant as we approach the Jubilee Year of 2025, proclaimed by Pope Francis as a “Jubilee of Hope”. As Pope Francis reminds us: “In the heart of each person, hope dwells as the desire and expectation of good things to come, despite our not knowing what the future will bring.” The upcoming Jubilee offers us a chance for renewal, restoring trust in society, in the Church, in human dignity, and in our responsibility to care for creation.

ACPI Conference on Hope

Against this profound backdrop, the Association of Christian Philosophers of India (ACPI) held its 47th Annual Research Seminar from October 19-21, 2024, at St Joseph’s Interdiocesan Seminary, Mangalore. The conference, themed “HOPE: Philosophizing from Multi-horizons,” brought together around 100 participants to discuss 29 research papers, including the keynote address. The aim was to explore hope from various philosophical perspectives, including its role in illness and suffering, and its metaphysical and ethical dimensions.

The themes presented can be categorised generally into two categories, namely analytic and applicative, the former dealing primarily with the analysis of hope and the latter with its application for the good of society at large. The analytic themes can still be subdivided into: (1) hope as internal, (2) hope as external, and (3) hope as a process.

Hope as Internal

Hope serves as a vital internal force that sustains human life, enabling individuals to navigate suffering and loss, while the pursuit of meaning empowers them to transcend despair and find purpose even in the most challenging circumstances. From a psycho-neurological dimension, hope is rooted in specific neural circuits that influence reward processing, emotional regulation, and goal-directed actions, taking into consideration the ethical implications it raises for areas such as identity, autonomy, and moral agency.

Hope as External

The external dimension of hope, emphasises its deep rootedness in everyday experiences, highlighting its transcendent nature, anchored in the divine, fostering self-surrender and revealing the human being’s future orientation toward existence rather than possession. Hope, nurtured by the teachings of religions, fosters a belief in a merciful and forgiving God and thus inspires fortitude and personal growth, affirming the potential for prosperity and peace in both this life and the hereafter.

Hope as a Process

Hope also as a process reveals an ongoing, open-ended activity, rooted in heterogeneity, continually reshapes our understanding of justice, community, and ethical responsibility in an ever-evolving world. Hope thus becomes performative, enabling itself to be applied in diverse situations such as pain-filled vulnerabilities, alienated marginalisation, complexities of modernity, dystopian technological scenario, and environmental degradation.

Considering the seminar's discussions, the ACPI community made several commitments to promote hope in practical ways:

1. Acknowledge the persistence of hope as a vital force in times of suffering, uncertainty and despair to instill optimism and discover the meaning of human existence.
2. Explore the psycho-neurological underpinnings of hope for a positive future, considering its ethical implications for identity, autonomy, and moral agency.
3. Highlight the transcendent nature of hope, respect its divine roots, and advocate for its fruition in everyday life through self-surrender.
4. Foster a culture of hope by embracing diverse perspectives, consequently encouraging ongoing dialogues about justice, community, and ethical responsibility.
5. Support vulnerable individuals in cultivating hope amidst challenges, emphasising the importance of navigating struggles and discovering meaning through shared experiences.
6. Commit to ethical guidelines that promote moral transformation and nonviolence, nurturing hope in the face of technological advancements and societal challenges.
7. Advocate for dialogue and consensus in addressing the complexities of individualism and modernity, emphasising the need for a hopeful

vision that enhances our shared lifeworld.

8. Care for our Common Home in the context of the dominant technocratic and anthropocentric paradigm to uphold ecological responsibility for a hope-filled cosmic harmony.

Conclusion

In our contemporary context, where clouds of uncertainty loom large, hope proves not only necessary but also possible. The seminar participants affirmed the central role of hope in human action, emphasizing its power to foster justice, peace, and ecological harmony. By placing hope at the heart of human agency, they underscored its ability to inspire change and guide humanity toward a more just and compassionate future.

This conviction to “hope against hope” reflects the transformative potential of hope to push us beyond the paralysis of despair into the realm of possibility. As history shows, hope has been the silent architect of resilience, enabling individuals and communities to envision and strive for a better tomorrow, even in the face of overwhelming challenges.

Truly, hope does not disappoint. It sustains us in our trials, inspires us in our actions, and promises a future where justice and compassion prevail. As we continue to navigate the complexities of our world, may we carry this enduring truth in our hearts: hope is the vital force that not only strengthens but also transforms, urging us toward the realization of a more hope-filled and harmonious world.

14.

FIRST ALUMNI MEET 2024

Fr Flavian Rajkiran Lobo is a priest of the Diocese of Mangalore. Currently he is one of the teachers of Theology in the Seminary.

From 13 to 15 November 2024, St Joseph's Seminary, Mangalore, hosted its first-ever Alumni Meet for the graduates of the last decade - a milestone gathering of hearts, hopes, and shared mission. Alumni journeyed from diverse parts of India, each bringing along not just memories, but also stories of priestly service and ministry. The atmosphere buzzed with excitement as familiar faces reunited and exchanged warm greetings.

On 13th evening the Alumni Meet commenced with solemn vespers, enveloping the gathering in a prayerful spirit that set a reverent tone for the days ahead. Following the vespers, Fr Ronald Serrao, Rector of the seminary, extended a heartfelt welcome to all the alumni, expressing joy at their return and gratitude for their continued dedication to the priesthood.

Fr Joseph Martis, the former Rector of the seminary, facilitated a profound evening sharing session. During the session, alumni reflected deeply on the daily rhythms and realities of their priestly ministry. Many expressed that beginning each day with adoration and the celebration of the Holy Eucharist filled them with renewed energy to carry out their missions. They spoke of versatile experiences in ministry across parishes and institutions, serving children, youth, adults, and the elderly. For many, the COVID-19 pandemic posed unique



challenges, but it also opened new avenues as media became a powerful field of ministry, allowing them to reach people remotely and creatively. In his concluding remarks, Fr Martis commended the alumni for openly sharing their experiences, emphasizing that priestly life is an ongoing journey of learning. Emphasizing the need for a synodal approach, he encouraged them to work collaboratively with the laity, embodying the spirit of community. After the supper, the gathering transitioned to a special batch-wise reunion. Alumni assembled in groups according to their graduating batches, and the atmosphere grew lively as laughter and fond memories filled the room.

The second day of the Alumni Meet began with a beautiful thanksgiving Eucharistic celebration. After the Mass, all participants gathered outside the chapel for a group photo, capturing this meaningful reunion moment. Together, they sang the joyous chorus "Rejoice in the Lord always!" as their voices filled the seminary premises with gratitude and celebration.

The first session's facilitator, Fr Vincent Sequeira framed the session's objective: to address the challenges of faith

formation and secular education and to collaboratively explore practical solutions and mutual support mechanisms. Alumni then began sharing their field experiences, raising a variety of challenges. In regions with limited Catholic presence, some alumni explained the difficulty in establishing educational institutions, as local leaders and communities sometimes resisted their efforts. Another significant issue involved value-based education within Catholic schools; attempts to teach values were often misconstrued as religious conversion efforts. The alumni also expressed concerns over the growing trend of youth migrating to metropolitan cities and abroad, often losing touch with their faith. Some alumni highlighted positive, proactive approaches they had taken, such as visiting the families of teachers and students in times of personal hardship, which fostered a special sense of community. Alumni emphasized that fostering vocations was everyone's responsibility and highlighted the steep drop in vocations to religious life among girls. Fr Vincent concluded by acknowledging the complex terrain of catechetical and secular education, commending the alumni for their resilience and for the support they provide each other in their ministries.

The second session of the day created an enriching interaction between alumni and current seminarians. Fr Serrao introduced priestly formation as a delicate, yet vital task guided by key Church documents, such as *Pastores Dabo Vobis* and *Ratio Fundamentalis*. He explained that their seminary's formation strives to balance all four dimensions - human, intellectual, spiritual, and pastoral. Alumni then shared

how they embraced formation's challenges, affirming that the constructive criticism they received had built resilience and openness. They encouraged seminarians to engage actively with formation, describing how the advice of formators had been instrumental in shaping them. In response to a question about managing stress in institutional roles, alumni advised on the importance of collaboration, seeking opinions, delegating tasks, and taking initiative to meet new people within communities. They also noted that criticism outside the seminary can be harsher and encouraged seminarians to embrace the seminary's rigorous formation as preparation for future challenges.

The alumni-teacher interaction was the next session and it was facilitated Fr Joy Painadath. He began reflecting on his 15 years of teaching, he acknowledged that his interactions with seminarians had imparted invaluable lessons, surpassing even those he gained in parish life. An alumnus initiated the sharing by admitting that, people outside the seminary, including non-Christians, often posed questions about sacraments and Church teachings that were challenging to answer adequately. Another alumnus asked if there had been changes in human formation, observing that current seminarians sometimes felt restricted. The teachers then detailed the present formation approach. However, they also pointed out that the expectations of the current generation can be demanding. Some alumni suggested that the seminary could benefit from contextualizing theology to align more closely with pastoral needs. They recommended inviting qualified alumni as visiting staff to introduce fresh perspectives

and provide relevant theological insights. Fr Alex noted that while the seminary is exploring this idea, many dioceses are often reluctant to release their well-trained priests. Fr Leo Lasrado emphasized that formation is a personal responsibility; formators act as guides, but ultimately, seminarians must take charge of their development. Fr Rajesh Rosario shared that formation is a constantly evolving challenge, as today's seminarians represent a "soft generation." The traditional, rigid methods are no longer suitable, and it's crucial to shape them into assets for the Church while being sensitive to their needs. In conclusion, the alumni collectively expressed gratitude for the formators' dedicated service, recognizing the complexity and dedication involved in guiding seminarians through the journey of priestly formation. They commended the teachers' ongoing commitment to nurturing seminarians with compassion and insight.

The final session of the alumni meet focused on the theme "Social Media and Priestly Ministry." The facilitator was Fr Anil Ivan Fernandes, one among the alumni. In his introductory remarks, Fr. Anil introduced the topic and emphasized the need for caution when navigating the media landscape. He then invited the alumni to share their personal experiences of using social media in their ministries, providing the guiding questions. The discussion was lively, with one alumnus sharing concerns about how anything said or done in public can be recorded and posted online. The group agreed that continuous education for both priests and parishioners on responsible

media use is essential. They suggested that local parish efforts, like reporting harmful content to social media platforms, should be the first line of defence. In serious cases, the diocesan Public Relation team could also step in, countering negative perceptions by providing accurate information and a positive perspective on the incident to prevent misunderstandings with people of other faiths. They discussed the need for a diocesan media policy, emphasizing the importance of defining what content should be published and clarifying who is responsible for it. The group shared concerns over unethical Artificial Intelligence applications, such as the manipulation of voice recordings and photos, which can be exploited to create misleading media content. In the discussion's conclusion, the alumni agreed on a disciplined, mission-oriented approach to social media, aimed solely at glorifying God.

Thus, the first Alumni Meet at St Joseph's Seminary concluded on a high note, leaving everyone with lasting memories and renewed bonds. Through heartfelt sharing, insightful discussions, and joyful moments together, alumni and formators alike found a deep sense of connection and purpose. This gathering wasn't just a trip down memory lane; it was a celebration of the values that continue to shape lives and inspire ministry. As everyone parted ways, there was a sense of gratitude and commitment to carry forward the legacy of St Joseph's, united in spirit and mission. Here's to many more reunions and a future bright with hope and service!

Bro. Rakesh Francis is a seminarian of the Diocese of Belgaum. He is a student of Third Year Theology.

Expro-2024, organized by St. Joseph's Interdiocesan Seminary Mangalore, was a noteworthy event emphasizing service, community engagement, and the spiritual growth of the seminarians. It was held from 2 to 6 October 2024 at various locations. The initiative aimed to combine hard work with pastoral outreach, fostering a sense of brotherhood and dedication. The programme showcased meticulous planning, warm hospitality, and commitment of the seminarians to their mission, while providing insights for future improvements in their pastoral ministry.

The Expro programme was carried out batchwise at different locations, each of which was chosen for its suitability and accessibility. Among these, St. Francis of Assisi Church Nainad, Sacred Heart of Jesus Church Vorkady, St. Jude's Shrine Pakshikere, Mercy Village Rehabilitation Centre Kannur and St. Theresa of Lisieux Church Kemmannu stood out for their serene and functional environments. These locations allowed the seminarians to engage in a variety of tasks, ranging from agricultural activities such as planting sweet potatoes and tapioca, to community-centred efforts such as cemetery cleaning and road maintenance.

The advanced communication of responsibilities enabled the participants to prepare effectively, ensuring a smooth workflow. Time was judiciously divided between labour, rest, and recreational activities, allowing for a balanced approach



to work and relaxation. In addition, the generosity and overwhelming support of the local parishioners who treated the seminarians with great hospitality and care, whether through their warm welcome, nutritious meals, or logistical support, was exceptional. The faithful played a crucial role. Their active participation and ability to create a home-like atmosphere for the seminarians was conspicuous.

Notable activities included visits to families, old-age homes, and ashrams, as well as organizing games, ward feasts, and camps for children and youth. Such interactions enriched the pastoral experience of the seminarians, offering them opportunities to connect deeply with the communities they served. Overall, the Expro-2024 was a largely successful event, although there were challenges that offer lessons for the future.

Expro-2024 was a testament to the dedication of the seminarians to the service and to the enduring spirit of community within the Church. It reaffirmed the importance of collaborative efforts, pastoral transcendence and environmental stewardship, underscoring the programme's role in holistic formation, while charting a path for further enrichment. As seminarians, we look ahead and Expro-2024 remains a cherished tradition, inspiring hope, service, and faith in all who participated.

(Continued from December 2023)

Bro. Avil Santhmayor is a seminarian of the Diocese of Mangalore, He is a student of Third Year Theology.

December 2023

7. Seminary Day: We celebrated our 145th 'Seminary Day' with dazzling array of cultural programmes and heartfelt expressions of gratitude to God and our benefactors. Most Rev. Dr Joachim Walder, Auxiliary Bishop of Aizawl Diocese, was our Chief Guest.

8. Christmas Holidays: We began our Christmas holidays and pastoral ministry with zeal and enthusiasm moving to our homes in swiftness. It is true, East or West, home is best.

January 2024

2. Students Return from Holidays: After the Christmas holidays, we resume our seminary life, refreshed by the peace and joy of Christmas. With the flavour of the New Year still fresh in our minds, we hoped to make things innovative in the year 2024.

3. Full-Day Recollection: We did not lose time but set the tone for our spiritual life by reflecting on the thrust of the year with a day of recollection on the theme, *Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God* (Mt 5:8). Fr Naveen Pinto animated the day of prayer with spiritual insights.

7. The Epiphany and the Eucharistic Procession: We celebrated the feast of Epiphany reminding ourselves that we are stars to lead people to Jesus. In the evening, to show our devotion to the Lord, the King



of Kings, we participated in the Diocesan Eucharistic Procession from the Church of Our Lady of Milagres to the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Rosary, with devotion and humility.

16. Feast of St Joseph Vaz: While the local church gloried in the local saint, St Joseph Vaz, the Konkani Academy celebrated their patron saint's day with a Mass in Konkani and sought his help to become missionaries wherever they are sent.

16. Spiritual Conference: Fr Francis D'Souza, our Spiritual Director, addressed us on the theme, 'Learn from Christ to reach out to the sick and suffering' and encouraged us to see the hand of God in sufferings and to discover the face of Christ in the sick.

18. Unity Octave: The inauguration of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity was held in the Seminary at 5.30 p.m. Most Rev. Dr Peter Paul Saldanha, Bishop of Mangalore, Rev. Hemachandra Kumar, Bishop of Church of South India, Rev. Fr Rupesh Madtha, the Diocesan Secretary for Ecumenism, Rev. Prabhuraj, Rev. Sunil Thomas, Rev. Binu John, Rev. Fr Baptist Pais SVD, the CCBI Secretary for Ecumenism, were present along with the

Rector, staff and students of SJS, staff and students of KTC, priests, religious and lay faithful participated in the prayer service. We prayed *Lord, unite us in your love so that all may know that we are your followers.*

24. Inauguration of the Institute of Philosophy: The Rector, staff and students of the Seminary were overwhelmed with joy as the official declaration of St Joseph's Institute of Philosophy, Mangalore, was announced. The proclamation of the decree was read by Rev. Dr Matthew Attumkal CMI, the Dean of the Faculty of Philosophy, Dharmaram Vidhya Kshetram, Bangalore, in the presence of Most Rev. Dr Peter Paul Saldanha and the staff of the Institute. Rev. Dr Ivan D'Souza, the Director of the Institute, and his team were delighted with the event and encouraged everyone to join them.

25. Conclusion of the Unity Octave at KTC College, Balmatta: The Rector, staff and students of the Seminary participated in the concluding prayer service of the Week for Christian Unity at KTC, Balmatta at 6.00 p.m. Fr Joswine D'Souza, our professor of Philosophy preached at the prayer service.

26. Republic Day and Community Day: We celebrated the twin celebrations with joy and happiness. We hoisted the national flag after the Mass and felt the greatness of the Republic Day. Thereafter, we commenced the colourful inauguration of the Community Day with games and fun for the teaching staff, domestic staff and students. In the evening, we gathered around the Lord's table to feel the vibrations of the Eucharistic banquet followed by a cultural feast and a sumptuous dinner. The

second-year theologians won the overall championship, and the blood donors received a certificate.

27. Lecture on Food as Vaccine: The Philosophical English Academy of St Joseph's Institute of Philosophy in association with the Chair in Christianity, Mangalore University, organized a lecture on "Food as Vaccine" at 5.30 p.m. in C.M. Hall. The resource person for the day was Dr Srinivasa Kakkilaya, the renowned consultant physician of Mangalore. Fr Leo Lasrado, the Rector of Gladsom Home for Students, moderated the session. It was attended by a small crowd from our neighbourhood.

February

1. Recollection: "Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called sons of God" (Mt 5:9) was the theme of the recollection. It was facilitated by Fr Joswine D'Souza.

12. Spiritual Conference: Fr Manoj Matthew animated the conference on the theme "Learn from Christ, the Gift of Forgiveness."

13. Pre-Lenten Outing: We prepared for the holy season of Lent with a picnic!

15. Seminary Board Meeting: Most Rev. Dr Peter Paul Saldanha, Bishop of Mangalore Diocese, Most Rev. Dr Alex Vadakumthala, Bishop of Kannur Diocese, and Very Rev. Dionysius Vaz SJ, Provincial of Karnataka Jesuit Province met the staff at 9.00 a.m. and the students of both Philosophy and Theology at 10.30 a.m. in the C.M. Hall and reviewed the formation programme with valuable suggestions to enhance its quality.

19. Ash Wednesday: We began the season of Lent by receiving ashes on our heads, and reminding ourselves of the need to repent and follow the crucified Lord so that we could be His witnesses.

22. Late Bishop Basil Memorial Lecture:

The annual lecture in memory of the late Bishop Basil was held at 6.00 p.m. in the C.M. Hall on the theme Formation in Digital Age: Challenges and Opportunities in the Era of Artificial Intelligence. The resource person was Rev. Dr Sudeep Paul MSFS, Director of Sandesha Foundation for Culture and Education, Bajjodi. The session was moderated by Sr Dr Jacintha D'Souza, DHM, the former Principal of School of Social Work, Roshni Nilaya. A small crowd from our surroundings participated in the lecture.

25. Winding up Sunday Ministry:

Everything that has a beginning has an end! We concluded our Sunday ministry for this year with a rich pastoral experience. Praise the Lord!

28. CCBI Delegates Visit the Seminary:

The CCBI Secretary for Vocations, Seminaries, Clergy and Religious, Fr Charles Leon, and his team conducted a session for the staff in the morning and a session for the students in the evening to face the challenges of formation in India for the next ten years. It opened our eyes to see beyond what the eyes perceive and to prepare ourselves diligently for our mission.

March

3. Recollection: The final recollection of the academic year was held on the theme, "Blessed are those who are persecuted for the righteousness' sake, for theirs is the

Kingdom of Heaven" (Mt 5:10). It was facilitated by Fr Ronald Serrao.

4. Revision Holidays and Examinations:

As the classes came to an end and the semester examinations began, we felt the need to revise and prepare for the exams. *Lord, come to our help!*

11. Spiritual Conference: The last conference of the academic year was on the theme, "Learn from Christ, Self-Denial and the Love of the Cross". It was conducted by Fr Ivan D'Souza.

12. B.Ph. Comprehensive Oral Exam:

The comprehensive oral examination began to the 25 Second Year Philosophy students. After the exam, they understood philosophy better.

18. B.Ph. Comprehensive Written Examination:

The comprehensive written examination was the last nail to philosophical studies! Finally, philosophy is done! We sang silently, *Glory and praise to you*, since we were in the Lenten season!

19. Feast of St Joseph and Benefactors' Day:

We were glad to celebrate the Feast of St Joseph, our Patron, and the Day of the Benefactors. The celebration began with the Holy Eucharist at 11.30 a.m. presided over by Most Rev. Dr Peter Paul Saldanha, Bishop of Mangalore, and followed by a modest festive meal that doubled our joy amidst Lenten penance!

21. Chrism Mass:

We participated in the Chrism Mass at Our Lady of the Rosary, Cathedral, at 5.00 p.m. presided over by Most Rev. Dr Peter Paul Saldanha, Bishop of Mangalore, with over 200 priests and others. The Bishop made us realize the glory

of the priesthood and also reminded us that service is the door to holiness.

23. The Last Exam: As the academic year came to an end with the final written exam, we rejoiced! It was time to pack up and get ready for the holidays!

29. Palm Sunday and Summer Vacations: We celebrated Palm Sunday in the Seminary Chapel at 6.30 a.m. Fr Ronald Serrao, the Rector, celebrated the Mass, preceded by a procession to recall the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem. After the breakfast, we left the Seminary for two months of summer holidays.

June

1. New Academic Year (2024): Students, both old and new, filled the campus early in the morning and quickly settled into their rooms to begin a new academic year. It is always a joy to begin again!

2. Full Day Recollection: A day of prayer was essential after two months of summer holidays! Providentially, the day was blessed by the visit of His Grace Eugene Martin Nugent, the Nuncio to Kuwait, Bahrain and Qatar. He addressed us like a father and reminded us that spiritual formation is at the heart of priestly formation.

3. Lectio Brevis: We began the academic year with earnestness. Most Rev. Dr Peter Paul Saldanha, Bishop of Mangalore Diocese and the Chairman of the Seminary, celebrated the Holy Mass of the Holy Spirit at 9.00 a.m. Later, he inaugurated the academic year with a short lecture on the thrust of the academic year, spiritual formation.

4. Classes Begin: Our academic journey began with the start of classes.

7. Initiation to Sunday Ministry: Fr Charles Menezes, Parish Priest of Our Lady of Dolours Church, Udupi, initiated us into the challenges of Sunday ministry. It was a good beginning for all, especially for those who are starting Sunday ministry for the first time.

8. Commissioning of Sunday and Social Ministries: The commissioning of the Sunday and Social Ministries was held in St Joseph Church, Jeppu, at 12.00 noon. Fr Ronald Serrao, the Rector, presided over the prayer service and exhorted us to be effective in our ministry.

10. Fellowship Groups Begin: We began our weekly Fellowship Group meetings with joy and delight, making the newcomers feel at home in our gang.

11. Study Session: The first study session of the year was on 'How to Study Effectively' conducted by Fr Milton Jacob for the students of First Year Philosophy and Theology at 6.15 pm.

13. Workshop on AI: We eagerly participated in the study session on Artificial Information, AI, and tried to learn the facilities that would help our study. Anil Ivan Fernandes, Director of Canara Communication Centre and Mr Leo conducted the workshop.

20. Spiritual Conference: Fr Alex animated the first Spiritual Conference of the year on the theme "St Aloysius, a Man of Prayer", and set us on the right path.

21. Theologians' Day and Blessing of the Renovated Chapel: We had the joy of the triple celebration: The blessing of the renovated Chapel, the birthday and feast day of Most Rev. Dr Aloysius Paul D'Souza, and the feast of the patron saint of Theologians, St Aloysius Gonzaga. Bishop Aloysius celebrated the Holy Mass, and Bishop Peter Paul Saldanha preached and blessed the renovated chapel. In the evening, Theology students put up a cultural programme. Rev Dr Praveen Martis SJ, the Vice-Chancellor of St Aloysius (Deemed to be University), was the chief guest.

26. Inauguration of the Philosophical English Academy: The Academy was inaugurated by Fr Jason Pinto SDB, the visiting teacher of the Institute.

27. Laudato Si (Environment) Day: The programme included a study session and the cleaning of the compound. The study session was animated by Fr Vincent D'Souza, Director of CODP, and his team.

July

1. St Joseph Institute of Theology launched the Theology Course for the Laity and the Religious.

3. St Thomas Feast: We hailed St Thomas, the Apostle of India! We had a solemn Mass in Malayalam under the leadership of *Marthoma Malayala Samajam*. Fr Antony Olattupurath, a priest of the diocese of Kottapuram and our former student, celebrated the Mass and invited us to inculcate the virtues of St Thomas.

5. Session on Waste Management: FMCI team led by Dr Thomas, Mrs Deena, and Ms Harshitha conducted a useful session

on waste management and directed how to deal with waste.

8. Monthly Recollection: Fr Francis D'Souza, the Spiritual Director, exhorted us to be holy pointing out that prayer is a means of attaining spiritual heights.

11. Study Session on YOUCAT: Fr Vijay Machado and Br Derek Mascarenhas gave an insight into YouCat and taught us how to reach out to our youth with the basic catechism.

18. Spiritual Conference: Fr Vincent Anil Menezes, the Spiritual Director, addressed us on the theme, 'Ignatius of Loyola is a master of discernment prayer' and encouraged us to discern our vocation everyday.

25. Free Thursday: To enjoy the benefits of a free Thursday, we quickly left after breakfast.

August

1. Monthly Recollection: We realized that the Recollection is a time to review our response to the Lord and to plan our commitment for the next month. Fr Harry D'Souza, Spiritual Director of Gladsom Home, emphasised in his talk that *the Word of God is the source of prayer*.

8. New Priests' Day: We cheered our new priests as they walked into the portals of the Seminary. Fr Norman Mathias along with his companions celebrated the Mass at 11.00 am and we greeted them with songs and flowers. Our festive joy was doubled when we had the festive lunch and the festive outing in the afternoon.

12. Philosophers' Day: Fr Denzil Lobo celebrated the festive Mass in the morning, highlighting the virtues of St John

Berchmans, the patron of the Philosophy Section, to deepen our commitment to the Lord and His Church. In the evening, Philosophy students staged a cultural programme to vibrate the festive delight. Fr Vincent Menezes was the Chief Guest of the programme.

15. Assumption of BVM and Independence Day: Fr Rakesh SJ celebrated the solemn festive Mass in Hindi and this was followed by the hoisting of the national flag where we demonstrated our patriotism. The members of the Hindi Academy conducted the events with decorum and precision. *Mera Bharath mahan!*

19. Ad Auds Exam: The students of the ministerial year appeared before three professors for *Ad Auds* examination, and they realized that they needed to study more to be able to deal with pastoral practice.

September

5. Monthly Recollection and the Feast of St Teresa of Kolkata: Fr Stany Goveas, the Parish Priest of the Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish, Madanthyar, steered the recollection on the topic, “A Priest is a Man of Prayer” and shared his struggle in prayer. The recollection concluded with a Mass in Kannada organized by the Kannada Academy, in honour of their patroness. Fr Vinay Kumar, a priest of the diocese of Chikmagalur and our former student, celebrated the Mass and invited the seminarians to imitate St Teresa of Kolkata as an icon of compassion for the sick.

6. A New Priest: Fr Gladwin Fernandes, our student, ordained a priest on 23 August 2024 for the Diocese of Allahabad, celebrated the Mass for us. We expressed

our joy at his ordination and wished him *buon lavoro* in the vineyard of the Lord.

6. Taize Prayer: St Joseph Vaz Academy conducted the Taize Prayer in the evening in place of the monthly Holy Hour. We felt comforted under the shadow of the Cross of Christ, our Saviour and Lord.

7. Monthi Fest: The festive Mass in Konkani on the occasion of the *Monthi Fest* was organized by St Joseph Vaz Academy to radiate the local feast. Fr Lanson Pinto, the newly ordained priest in April and currently Assistant Parish Priest of Urwa Parish, was the main celebrant. The vegetarian meal reflected the local tradition and a sense of family. Thereafter, the Mangaloreans, along with others, rushed home to celebrate the family feast with their family members.

9. Farewell to the Ministerial Year Brothers: There is a time for everything! The time had come for the Ministerial Brothers to say goodbye to us and for us to say goodbye to them. We gathered together to do this noble honour, but with joy, because “their parting is a benefit to the Church”, said Fr Rector. In fact, it was true, because we had 20 more labourers ready to work in the vineyard of the Lord.

10. Thiru Onam: The colourful Onam festival was celebrated in a modest manner considering the tragedy in Wayanad. Fr Shaju Vadakkumbadan, our student from the Archdiocese of Ernakulam-Angamaly, celebrated the Holy *Qurbana* in the Syrian Rite. At noon, we had the traditional *Sadhya*, prepared in our kitchen by our brothers.

11. Revision and Exams: We started turning over our books and notes to prepare for exams, as we cannot move on without exams and grades.

16. B.Th. Oral Examination: We prayed to the Lord for the students of the ministerial year as they moved to the professors' cabins to answer the B.Th oral examination.

23. B.Th. Written Examination: The longest written exam! The students had been in the exam hall for a long time; some of them stayed for a long time to write down what they had learnt in theology in the last four years!

26. Election of the Prefect and the Sub-Prefect: We always need good and new leaders. That is valid for all times! Right? Theologians elected their new Prefect and Sub-Prefect (Bro. Avil Santhmayor and Bro. Ajay Jeevan D'Souza) for the second semester. The Rector nominated Br Andrew Chourappa Kuri as the Sub-Prefect for First Year Theology.

28-30. Annual Picnic: The minor holidays began with the annual picnic. Everyone went off in small groups to relax from the tension of the exams. What a joy! Two days in a wonder land?

October

1. Two New Staff Members: October began on a happy note! Fr Rector celebrated the Mass in the evening and introduced the new staff members: Fr Praveen Joy Saldanha and Fr Flavian Lobo to the community, wishing them well and a long stay at the Seminary. In the same Mass, 13 of our future deacons made their profession of faith and said, *Yes, we believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church...* The Mass was followed by a memorial meal.

2. The New Deacons! Most Rev. Dr Peter Paul Saldanha, Bishop of Mangalore Diocese, ordained 23 new deacons. He reminded them to serve and not to seek

service. We rejoiced with 23 new deacons! After the ordination, we shared a festive meal with our guests, who numbered 600 including women.

2-6. Exposure Program - Expro 2024: The students, along with the Director of Human Formation and the formators, left in batches to their assigned places for the Expro. The First Year Philosophers went to St Teresa of the Little Flower of Jesus Parish, Kemmannu, the Second Year Philosophers to Holy Mount Rehabilitation Centre, Kannur, the First Year Theologians to St Jude's Parish, Pakshikere, the Second Year Theologians to the Sacred Heart Parish, Vorkady and the Third Year Theologians to St Francis Assisi Parish, Nainad. They returned to the Seminary with joy and fatigue after completing their assigned work.

6-12. Annual Retreat: We entered into a period of spiritual rest, the annual retreat for 6 days. Fr Peter Mascarenhas SMM guided the retreat for the theology students and Fr Joel Lopez OFM Cap. for the philosophy students.

13. First Step towards the Altar: As the evening Angelus bell rang, Most Rev. Dr Aloysius Paul D'Souza, Bishop Emeritus, admitted 30 students of First Year Theology as candidates for the priesthood.

14. Ministries of the Reader and Acolyte: We began the day with the Holy Mass celebrated by Most Rev. Dr Peter Paul Saldanha, Bishop of Mangalore Diocese, in which he conferred the ministry of Reader on 20 Second Year Theology students and the ministry of Acolyte on 26 Third Year Theology students. The Mass was followed by a quick breakfast as the second semester classes had started.

17. Mission Symposium: We organized the annual Mission Symposium on the topic “Challenges and Opportunities in the Healing Ministry of the Church in India”. Fr Santhosh Dias, National Secretary of the CCBI Commission for Health, Bangalore, was the resource person. Fr Ajith Menezes, the Administrator of FMMC, moderated the session. It was attended by a few health workers and a few of our neighbours.

19-21 ACPI Conference: We hosted the 47th Conference of the Association of Christian Philosophers of India. Over a hundred Professors of Philosophy from all over the country assembled on our campus to deliberate on the theme *Hope: Philosophizing from All Horizons*, and brought us joy!

24. Celebration of Golden Jubilee: Fr Andrew Lewis, our former student and benefactor, celebrated his golden jubilee of the priesthood with us. As he sang the *magnificat* to God for fifty years, we sang *ad multos annos*.

31. Annual Mission Auction: We organized and participated in the Annual Mission Auction with enthusiasm and excitement. It was a moment to exhibit our love for the mission in many ways but unknown to others. It was also an opportunity to demonstrate our talents in organising and manifesting the culinary arts.

November

1. All Saints’ Day: The liturgy of the Solemnity echoed the universal call to holiness and gave us the hope that we too can be saints, if we follow the Beatitudes. Perhaps it is easy to behold the glory of the saints in heaven, but it is a challenge to live the Gospel and become saints!

2. All Souls Day: We remembered our departed souls, especially the departed Rectors, staff and students who have gone before us to their eternal reward. Fr Rector presided over the Mass and reminded us that love is stronger than death and that we are pilgrims of hope. After Mass we visited the cemetery of priests in Valencia.

4. Archbishop’s Visit to the Seminary: His Grace Most Rev. Dr Peter Machado, Archbishop of Bangalore, who was in town for a programme, celebrated the Mass for us and lifted our spirits with his words of wisdom.

7. Monthly Recollection: Fr Rajesh Rosario animated the monthly recollection and made us realize that prayer is the breath of priestly life.

13-15 Alumni Meet - 2024: There is great joy in coming home! This was true for 80 *alumni* who returned to their *alma mater* for the Alumni Meet 2024. Such a gathering, the first of its kind for the alumni of the batches 2013 to 2023, not only created a good feeling among the staff and students, but also re-energised them for more pastoral work in the vineyard of the Lord.

20. Spiritual Conference. More light was shed on the Liturgy of the Hours in the Spiritual Conference on the topic *Liturgy of the Hours is a School of Prayer* by Fr Ronald Serrao.

23. Feast of St Cecilia: As the choir sang in polyphony on the day of St Cecilia, we contemplated the heavenly glory. *O Cecilia, pray for us!* After lunch, the choir came together to share the climax of the feast in song and dance.

17.

Burse Project of the Seminary

Dear friends and well-wishers,

The formation of the seminarians at St Joseph's Interdiocesan Seminary, Jeppu, Mangalore provides an integral formation to the future priests. The members of the Board of Administration and the dedicated staff of the Seminary work tirelessly in this endeavour. The task of formation involves an economic investment, which is partly met by the Church. However, the Church cannot provide fully due to the limited resources. The Seminary therefore turns to people of good will who can contribute to this mission of the Church.

We have around one hundred and fifty seminarians from different parts of India studying to become priests. We thank the Lord for choosing people to serve in His mission as priests. As the days go by, the cost of living becomes very high. In order to sustain the Seminary through local contributions, Fr Fred V. Pereira, the former Rector of the Seminary, started a project called "Burse Fund" to finance the formation of the seminarians towards the priesthood. The amount donated by the donors is accumulated in this Fund and its interest is used for the formation of the seminarians and the maintenance of the Seminary.

We request you to show your generous heart to this noble cause. God will surely reward you for the great generosity that you will show towards us. Many seminarians and priests will pray for you daily during the Mass and during the adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. You could also send us your intentions of prayer. We also ask you to talk about this with your friends. Please

pray for the vocations to the priesthood and religious life.

The burses are of following types:

Platinum Burse	Rs 6,00,000/-
Diamond Burse	Rs 5,00,000/-
Golden Burse	Rs 3,00,000/-
Ruby Burse	Rs 2,00,000/-
Silver Burse	Rs 1,00,000/-

You can draw a cheque in favour of:
St Joseph's Seminary.

Please contact us for bank transfers.

Our Postal address:

St Joseph's Interdiocesan Seminary, Father Muller Road, Jeppu, P.B. No. 503, Kankanady Post, Mangalore – 575002

For email correspondence:

jeppuseminary@gmail.com

Telephone: 9880539686, 7815013904

POOR STUDENTS' FUND

Seminarians studying for the priesthood have difficulties in meeting their personal expenses because they do not earn and their families may not be able to help them financially. Keeping this in mind, our Seminary has set up a Poor Students' Fund to help deserving candidates. The source of this Fund is the contribution from donors. You are welcome to contribute to this Fund. The details for sending your contribution are the same as above.

Since the Second Vatican Council there has been a lively interest on the part of the faithful, both lay and religious, in the study of theology and other sacred sciences in order to enrich their Christian life, to be able to give a reason for their faith, to exercise their apostolate fruitfully and to be able to collaborate with the sacred ministers in their specific mission.

It is worth recalling what the Council said in this regard: “The Church expects much from the diligence of the faculties of sacred sciences. For to them she entrusts the very serious task of forming her own students, not only for the priestly ministry, but above all for teaching in ecclesiastical centres of higher studies, for scientific research, or for carrying out the most arduous functions of the intellectual apostolate. To these faculties also belongs the task of conducting in-depth research in the various fields of the sacred disciplines in such a way as to attain an ever deeper understanding of Sacred Revelation, to discover more fully the patrimony of Christian wisdom handed down by our elders, to promote dialogue with our separated brethren and with non-Christians, and to respond to the problems raised by the progress of the sciences. For this reason, the ecclesiastical faculties, once their laws have been duly recognized, should promote with great diligence the sacred sciences and those related to them, and, making use of the most modern methods and means, should

train students for the most profound research.” (*Gravissimum Educationis* on Christian Education, n. 11)

Since the Second Vatican Council the laity have had access to ecclesiastical studies in the Faculties of Theology, however, their presence in the classrooms has always been very small compared to those preparing for Holy Orders. Since theological formation exists, both for systematic reflection and for dialogue with the current culture, it offers the faithful an opportunity to reason their faith and to enter into a fruitful dialogue with the sciences and the culture of their time. In other words, it is an opportunity to deepen one’s knowledge of Sacred Scripture, Tradition and the Magisterium, which is always an occasion for growth in one’s own experience of faith.

Keeping the above said thrust in mind, we, at St Joseph’s Interdiocesan Seminary commenced the study of Theology for the Laity in 2002 with a two-year weekend course. The response of the laity has been positive. However, with four batches (2002-2010), the two-year course was redesigned as a one-year course to accommodate more participants. We had a setback with Covid-19. Even though we resumed Theology for Laity, the response was not very encouraging. Hence, this year we have designed the Theology for Laity courses on Monday to Friday evenings (five-day course), both in English and Konkani, so that more lay faithful could participate and choose the courses they like. The response from the laity has been encouraging.

Jubilarians

SILVER JUBILARIANS - PRIESTS ORDAINED IN 2000

Sl. No	Name	Date of Ordination	Diocese
1	Johnson Anthikat	29-12-1999	Trichur
2	Babu Appadan	30-12-1999	Trichur
3	Thomas Parayanuzhiyil	30-12-1999	MST
4	Francis Aloor	01-01-2000	Trichur
5	Vincent Aloysius	28-01-2000	Calicut
6	Paul Arackal	01-01-2000	Alleppey
7	Arulanandam M.	12-05-2000	Ahmedabad
8	Vincent Coelho	01-05-2000	Udupi
9	Nelson D'Almedia	01-05-2000	Mangalore
10	Antony Dais	30-11-2000	Karwar
11	Cyril Dsouza	30-11-2000	Karwar
12	Jayaprakash Dsouza	01-05-2000	Mangalore
13	Prakash Ronald Dsouza	01-05-2000	Mangalore
14	Ravindra Kumar (Egala Agnel)	05-05-2000	Vishakapatanam
15	Elias Ekka	06-05-2000	Raighar
16	Mario Fernandes	09-05-2000	OCD
17	John Kakkatt	01-01-2000	Ernakulam
18	Joy Kallarackal	03-05-2000	Kottapuram
19	Lourdaiah Marneni	05-05-2000	Vishakapatnam
20	Arun J. Mendonca	01-05-2000	Mangalore
21	Varghese Moonjely	01-01-2000	Ernakulam
22	Santhosh Ivan pinto	20-10-2000	Bellary
23	Thomas Plappillil	01-01-2000	MST
24	Edward Puthenpurackal	01-01-2000	Alleppey
25	Michael Ivan Rodrigues	01-05-2000	Mangalore
26	Gerald Maxim Rosario	01-05-2000	Mangalore

GOLDEN JUBILARIANS - PRIESTS ORDAINED IN 1975

Sl. No	Name	Date of Ordination	Diocese
1	Kadamala Abraham	04-04-1975	Tiruvalla
2	Thekumthala Joseph	02-04-1975	Ernakulam
3	Vadakechirayath J.	12-04-1975	M.S.T

20.

New Priests (2023-2024)

Sl. No.	Name	Diocese	Date of Ordination	Present address
1	Ajay Varkey Puthukkattuchira	Chanda	16-04-2024	St Antony National School, Civil Ln, Opp. Head Post Office, Wardha, Maharashtra.-442001
3	Anthony Leo Dominic	Bangalore	02-05-2024	Saint John School, Kuttar Road, Almapur Pipriya, Banda Shahjahanpur, U.P.-242042
4	Antony Stephan	OCD	21-01-2024	Infant Jesus Shrine, Pushpashrama, R.S Naidunagar, N.R.Mohalla, Mysore.-570007
6	Colin Nischith Lobo	Chikmagalur	09-05-2024	Assistant Director, St Joseph's Minor Seminary, Jyothinagar, Chikmagalur-577102
7	Edwin DSouza C	Bangalore	02-04-2024	Newman School, Neotan Village, Changlang District, Miao, Arunachal Pradesh -792122
8	Gladwin Fernands	Allahabad	10-08-2024	Assistant Director, St Joseph's Cathedral, 32, Thornhill Road, Prayagraj-211002, Uttar Pradesh
9	Fr John Clifford Rodrigues	OCD	23-12-2024	Aasha Deepa Carmelite Fathers, Madanthyar, Belthangady D.K-574224
10	Fr Kanikya Swamy Jacob	Bangalore	02-05-2024	St Anne Catholic Church, Gangapur Road, Rudrapur, Uttarakhand-263154
11	Kennedy Fernandez	Bellary	21-05-2024	St Anthony's Cathedral, State Highway 132, Vijayanagar Colony, Cowl Bazaar, Ballari- 583102
12	Lanson Maxim Pinto	Mangalore	11-04-2024	Assistant Parish Priest, Immaculate Conception Church Urwa, Ladyhill, Mangalore-575006
14	Milton Souza	Karwar	11-11-2024	Mary Mother of God Church, Shanti Ashram, Kodani P.O., Via Melin Idgunji, Honnavar, Uttar Kanada-581423
15	Norman John Mathias	Mangalore	11-04-2024	Assistant. Parish Priest, St Francis Xavier Church, Bejai, Mangalore-575 004

16	Pradeep Clarence Rodrigues	Mangalore	11-04-2024	Assistant Parish Priest, St Vincent Ferar Church, Valencia, Mangalore-575002
17	Pranam Jovin Fernandes	OCD	23-01-2024	Infant Mary Church, Bajjodi 2nd Stage, Carmel Nagar, Bikarnakatte, Kulshekhar Post, Mangalore-575005
18	Rikson Monteiro	Udupi	02-05-2024	Assistant Parish Priest, St Lawrence Church, Moodubelle, Udupi-576120
19	Salu Pulimoottil	CFIC	01-01-2024	St Mary's English Medium School, Cherupanathady. 671532, Kerala
20	Santhosh Menezes	OCD	23-01-2024	Carmelite Monastery, Near Victor Hospital Aquem, Margao, Goa-403601
21	Savio Antony Thekkepadath	Verapoly	28-12-2023	National Shrine Basilica of Our Lady of Ransom, Vallarpadam, Kochi-682504
22	Shanto Antony	Calicut	25-04-2024	Assistant Parish Priest, Mother of God Cathedral, Calicut-673032, Kerala
23	Shelly Antony	Alleppey	28-01-2024	St Peter's Church, Vattayal, Alleppey-688543, Kerala
24	Shijoy Francis	Calicut	25-04-2024	St Joseph's Shrine, Mepadi. 673577, Kerala
25	Siltan Philip Noronha	OCD	10-05-2024	Holy Family Church, Carmel Nivas, Lon, Belagavi, Karnataka-591301
26	Stephan Rodrigues	Udupi	23-04-2024	Assistant Parish Priest, St Francis Xavier Church, Udyavara, Udupi-574118
27	Yuvaraj	Bellary	21-05-2024	Assistant Manager, Infant Jesus School, Vidyanagar, Raichur-584101
28	Vijaylal Lal Bhariya	MSIJ	15-09-2024	Fatima Rani Church, Jamburi, Udaipur Diocese, Rajasthan.
29	Vipin Kumar Tigga	Jashpur	15-05-2024	St Paul's English Medium School, Baghima, Jashpur-946331

21.

Statistics

TOTAL STRENGTH (2024- 2025)								
Sl. No.	Name of the Diocese	THEOLOGY				PHILOSOPHY		Total
		I	II	III	IV	I	II	
1	Alleppey	2	1	1	2			6
2	Ambikapur	1	-	1	1			3
3	Bagdogra	1	1					2
4	Bangalore	1	-	2		2	3	8
5	Belgaum	1		1				2
6	Bellary			3			1	4
7	Belthangady			1				1
8	Bongaigoan	1	1					2
9	Calicut	4			3	1	1	9
10	Ernakulam			1	1			2
11	Gulbarga	1	1	1			1	4
12	Itanagar		2	2	2			6
13	Jabalpur		1					1
14	Jashpur	1	1		1	1		4
15	Kannur	5	3	3				11
16	Karwar			1	1	1		3
17	Kottapuram	1	2					3
18	Mandya	1						1
19	Mangalore	3	6	5	4	5	1	24
20	Mysore	1	1	1	1	2	1	7
21	Neyyattinkara				1			1
22	Quilon	2						2
23	Raigarh			1			3	4
24	Shimoga	2						2
25	Trivandrum	1			2			3
26	Udupi			3		1	3	7
27	Verapoly	2	1	1	1	2	2	9

SUB - TOTAL		31	21	28	20	15	16	131
	DAY SCHOLARS							
28	MSIJ				2		1	3
29	O.C.D.	3		5	6			14
30	S.C.J.				1			1
SUB - TOTAL		3	-	5	9	-	1	18
TOTAL		34	21	33	29	15	17	149

No. of Staff: 16

No. of Students

Theology: 117 149

Philosophy: 32

Day Scholars: 18

Residents: 131 149

Regents: 24

THE PATH TO DIVINE WISDOM

Alwin Christopher. R

First Year Philosophy

A world filled with wonder,
Ponders what is life?
Seeking all the wanderers
Wondering what would be its price?

Wisdom's highest yearning
Ignites all of a sudden morning
Life begins with a cry;
Ends with a why?

Wonder leads to knowledge
Knowledge leads to questioning
Questioning leads to understanding
Understanding leads to wisdom

Wisdom springs from God
God springs from within
Within springs endless possibilities
Incomparable boundless abilities

Seek not the pursuit of knowledge alone
For Jesus is the wellspring of wisdom
Seek Jesus the personification of wisdom
For he is the lord of all the kingdoms

Newton's search for knowledge
Reveals under the tree – 'a law'
Jesus the source of knowledge
Reveals on the tree – 'the love.'

22.

Reports of the Academies

a. Theologians' Social Academy

The Theologians' Social Academy is one of the important academies of our Seminary as it works on building the intellectual side of the seminarians. It helps the members to keep in touch with the current social issues and to reflect on any given recent social issue. Thus, the Academy helps its members to acquire the ability to analyse and evaluate a social issue theologically and critically, as future priests in the Church and as leaders to bring about transformation.

Keeping the above thrust in mind, the Academy has reviewed the following books on various issues:

1. The Psychology of Money (Morgan Housel)
2. The Incarcerations: BK-16 and the Search for Democracy in India (Alpa Shah)
3. This Land is Mine, I am not of this Land: CAA-NRC and The Manufacture of Statelessness (Harish Mander & Navsharan Singh)
4. How to Avoid a Climate Disaster: The Solutions We have and the Breakthroughs We Need (Bill Gates)
5. Firebird (Perumal Murugan)
6. 21 Lessons for the 21st Century (Yuval Harari)



Bro. Shawn Savio Andrade

Secretary

7. Shooting the Sun: Why Manipur was Engulfed by Violence & Govt. Remained Silent (Nandita Haskar)
8. India is Broken: A People Betrayed, Independence to Today (Ashoka Mody)
9. Stoned, Shamed, Depressed: An Explosive Account of the Secret Lives of India's Teens (Jyotsna Bhargava)
10. The Age of AI (Henry Kissinger, Eric Schmidt & Daniel Huttenlocher).

We are thankful to Fr Rajesh Rosario, the Director of the Academy, and Fr Praveen Joy Saldanha, the Assistant Director, for guiding us in understanding the issues in theologically based on Church documents. We appreciate Fr Rector and the staff members for their keen interest and encouragement in the activities of the Academy.

b. Philosophical English Academy

The Philosophical English Academy is a unique space for the exploration of wisdom, social justice, and contemporary social issues. Through philosophical inquiry, we challenge assumptions, analyse ethical dilemmas and seek meaningful solutions to pressing societal challenges. Our mission is to develop responsible and thoughtful leaders capable of addressing issues with compassion and insight. As students, we are grateful for this platform that not only transcends language barriers, but also fosters the exchange of fresh and socially relevant ideas.

The Academy is deeply attuned to current affairs, creating a rich learning environment that encourages the acquisition and sharing of diverse knowledge. Every fortnight, students gather to engage in thoughtful discussions on topics such as science, education, judicial reform, healthcare, social dynamics, politics, and religion. These discussions facilitate in-depth exploration and provide a collaborative space for critical thinking, laying the foundation for practical and ethical problem-solving.

The inauguration of the 2024-2025 academic year took place on 26 June 2024, with Fr Ivan D'Souza, the Director, leading the members through an inspiring opening session. We were honoured by the presence of Fr Jason Pinto SDB, who marked the beginning of a new chapter for the Academy.

In the Philosophical English Academy, a total of 31 members were organized into



Bro. Aashton D'Souza

Secretary

five different groups. Four of these groups comprised six members each, while one group had seven members. Each group was dedicated to exploring and discussing significant societal topics.

- Gender Identity – exploring social, psychological, and religious dimensions.
- Indian Agriculture – tracing its journey through innovation and growth.
- Judicial Efficiency – analysing the effectiveness of Indian courts.
- National Education Policy – assessing its current impact and potential.
- Healthcare – conducting an analytical study on system challenges and reforms.

These presentations testify to the member's commitment to research and insight.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to Fr Ivan D'Souza, the Director, Fr Rector and the staff members for their guidance and support.

c. Mar Thoma Malayala Samajam

Mar Thoma Malayala Samajam was established on 3 October 1918, under the patronage of Fr Peter Repetto S.J. Since its founding, the Samajam has remained dedicated to two core objectives: fostering a deep appreciation for Kerala's cultural heritage and advancing knowledge across a range of important fields. In the past years, the Samajam has pursued its mission with steadfast commitment. Therefore, it stands as a stronghold for the Malayalam-speaking members of the Seminary.

The aim of the Malayalam Samajam is to cultivate the spiritual and intellectual growth of future priests, while enhancing their proficiency in Malayalam language. This mission is carried out through a diverse array of activities, such as seminars, symposium, academic presentations, homiletics, the Mass, library services and a programme on the Seminary Day.

This year the Samajam comprises of 49 members from various dioceses and one congregation across Kerala and Karnataka. The Samajam publishes two noteworthy magazines: *Vachana Mozhibikal*, a collection of sermons from the previous year by theology students, released on St Thomas Day; and *Punchiri*, the annual magazine, presented during *Onam*.

The Samajam celebrates both St Thomas Day and *Thiru Onam* as annual



Bro. Jefin Joseph
Secretary

festivals for the Josephite community. This academic year, on St Thomas Day, the Holy Mass was celebrated in the Roman Rite by Fr Antony Olattupuram of the Diocese of Kottapuram, our former student. On the day of Thiru Onam, the Holy Qurbana was celebrated in the Syrian Rite, presided over by Fr Shaju Vadakkumbadan of the Archdiocese of Ernakulam-Angamaly, also our former student.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to Fr Milton Jacob, the Director of the Samajam, for his unwavering guidance and support. We also express our sincere appreciation to Fr Alexander Kalarikkal and Fr Manoj Matthew, who continue to inspire us profoundly. Our deepest gratitude goes to Fr Ronald Serrao, the Rector, and the staff members for their invaluable guidance, unwavering support and encouragement.

d. Kannada Academy

Kannada Academy was established by the late Fr Cyril Pereira SJ in 1952. It has now successfully completed 72 years. We are delighted to have Fr Francis D'Souza as our Director and 26 seminarians as its members.

The Kannada Academy offers the opportunity to participate in homiletics classes, enabling the brothers to improve their Kannada language skills and become eloquent speakers. This year, we organized a study session on the topic 'Improving Our Homilies'. We invited Fr Dominic Vas, a Carmelite priest, who shared with us important tips on how to improve our preaching skills. It was an interactive session where the brothers clarified their doubts regarding homily preaching.

As part of the preparations for the feast of our patron, St Teresa of Kolkata, we organised three competitions for the seminarians:

- Essay Competition (Kannada) for members of the Academy
- Essay Competition (English) for seminarians who are not members of the Academy
- Drawing Competition for all the seminarians.

On 4 September 2024, the eve of the feast, we had solemn Vespers at



Bro. Lukas Pinto
Secretary

7.30 pm, presided by Fr Ronald Serrao. On 5 September 2024, we celebrated the feast of St Teresa of Kolkata, the patron of our Kannada Academy. We had the privilege of inviting Fr Vinay Kumar, a priest of the diocese of Chikmagalur and our former student, to preside over the Mass. The prizes of the above mentioned competitions were distributed after the Mass by Fr Ronald Serrao, the Rector. In the last week of September, we bid farewell to Deacon Bhaskar Dass from the Diocese of Mysore and wished him a fruitful ministry in the vineyard of the Lord.

While we thank all the members of the Kannada Academy for their contribution, support, and help, we also express our gratitude to Fr Francis D'Souza, our Director, Fr Ronald Serrao, our Rector, and our teaching staff and students for their unwavering support for the Academy.

e. Hindi Academy

The Hindi Academy has a history of 45 years. It promotes different cultural beliefs, ideas, and languages. It also fosters fellowship among its members and values the cultural heritage in view of future pastoral ministry. In the current academic year 2024-2025, the Academy has 18 members (14 in Theology and 4 in Philosophy) belonging to 5 dioceses from the North and 2 dioceses from the North East.

As the thrust of the Seminary this year is on the spiritual formation under the theme: 'To be transformed by the Spirit, we sit at the Master's feet', the Academy has tried its best to imbibe spiritual insights from the Scriptures for effective formation. The Academy has conducted a seminar on practical application of the Scriptures in preparation for future preaching ministry.

The Academy has been blessed to have some visiting priests, namely Fr Gabreal Xalxo and Fr Deepak D'Souza, who have celebrated Mass for the Academy members. The Seminary also has a provision to celebrate a Hindi Mass once a month. On 15 August 2024, we celebrated the Feast of the Assumption of Mary and Independence Day with the Mass in Hindi. Fr Rakesh Bara SJ was the main celebrant. Thereafter, we had the flag hoisting ceremony with patriotic songs.



Bro. Albert Tesong
Secretary

The Academy also has a Hindi Academy Library to enhance knowledge. On the occasion of Seminary Day - 2023, the Academy presented a drama entitled "A Saint Walking on Earth" on the life of Br Prem Bhai, a lay missionary who evangelised the people of Arunachal Pradesh.

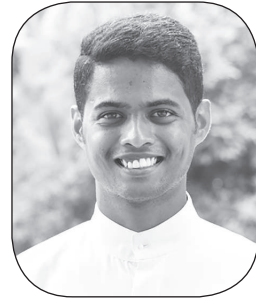
This year the Academy bid farewell to its former Director, Fr Ivan D'Souza, and welcomed the new Director, Fr Joswine D'Souza, for whose support the Academy is very grateful. We extend our gratitude to Fr Ronald Serrao, the Rector, all the staff members, and the seminarians for their encouragement.

f. Konkani Academy

St Joseph Vaz Konkani Academy is in its 29th year of existence. It consists of 43 members, hailing from Mangalore, Karwar and Udupi. Since its inception, the Academy has been promoting the rich cultural heritage of the coastal region under the guidance of the Director and the members. Organizing study sessions, cultural programmes and celebration of feasts related to Konkani linguistic background are the highlighting aspects of the Academy.

Fr Vincent Anil Menezes is the new Director of the Academy. This year the Academy organized three study sessions on Konkani homiletics. The first session was held on 26 June 2024 and was animated by Most Rev. Dr Aloysius Paul D'Souza, Bishop Emeritus. The session focused on 'Homily at the Funeral Mass'. The second session was animated by Fr Kevin D'Souza, the Assistant Parish Priest of Derebail Parish on 2 August 2024 on the topic 'Experience of the Young Priest Preaching Homilies'. The third session was animated by Mr Godwin Pinto, a parishioner of the Bejai Parish, on 9 August 2024 on the theme 'The Expectations of the Laity in Homilies'.

For the first time, the Academy organized a 'Taizé Prayer' on the occasion of the 'Monthi Fest' celebration on 6



Bro. Vinol Robin Fernandes
Secretary

September 2024. This prayer service brought together the seminarians and priests of our Seminary in a serene atmosphere of reflection and meditation. As per the tradition of the Seminary, the Academy celebrated the 'Monthi Fest' on 7 September 2024. The festal Mass was presided over by Fr Lanson Pinto, Assistant Parish Priest of Urwa Parish, and a traditional festive meal was served in the afternoon.

We express our heartfelt gratitude to Fr Vincent Menezes, the Director of Konkani Academy, and Fr Maxim D'Souza, the former Director, for their unwavering guidance and support. We appreciate Fr Ronald Serrao, the Rector of the Seminary, and all the staff members for their constant support and encouragement to the Academy.

23. OBITUARIES

Fr Mark Valder (1936-2024)

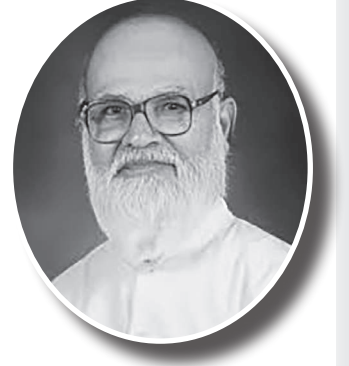
Fr Mark Valder, a priest of the diocese of Mangalore, was born on 22 October 1936 at Ekkar village, Bajpe. He was the son of Benjamin Louis Valder and Carmine Vas. He was the fourth of 13 children, comprising seven brothers and six sisters.

Coming from an agricultural background, Fr Mark Valder had his early education in St Francis School, Permude. Due to financial constraints, he had to discontinue his studies temporarily, however, the introduction of the 6th standard at St Joseph's School, Bajpe, offered him the opportunity to resume his education. Completing his SSLC in 1957, he joined St Joseph's Seminary, Jeppu, for his priestly formation. He was ordained priest on 2 February 1966. He served as Assistant Parish Priest at Barkur, Cascia and Shirvam. He pursued his education with dedication, obtaining a B.A., M.A., and a Diploma in Journalism.

He embarked on his writing journey during his seminary studies, translating moral stories from English to Kannada. During his theological studies, while managing Prakashalaya, a Seminary Unit for Evangelization, he published booklets on faith and Bible education. Notably, he authored a 312-page book in Kannada titled "Bhagavan Yesu Krista", providing a comprehensive account of the life of Jesus.

In 1973, he was appointed as the Managing Editor of Raknno. He played a crucial role in the editorial landscape, publishing literature by renowned Konkani literary figures and fostering the growth of Konkani literature. In 1974, he collaborated with other Konkani leaders to form *Konkani Bhasha Mandal Karnataka*. He played a pivotal role in galvanizing support for the Konkani Movement. His tireless efforts earned him awards and recognition, including a journalism award from the Karnataka Konkani Sahitya Academy.

Following his tenure as the Editor of Raknno for thirteen years (1973-1985), he served as Parish Priest in Ammembal, Moodbidri, Tannirbhavi, Siddakatte, and Gantalkatte parishes. After his retirement, having spent some time in Mount Rosary Charitable Institutions, Alangar -Moodbidri, he moved to St Juze Vaz Senior Priests House, Jeppu, where he breathed his last at the age of 87 due to a massive heart attack on 7 March 2024. His funeral was held on 9 March 2024 at St Vincent Ferrer Church, Valencia. May the merciful Lord grant him eternal rest a place in his heavenly kingdom.



Fr Denis Moras Prabhu (1940-2024)

Fr Denis Moras Prabhu, born on 8 May 1940 to Francis Moras and Juan Pereira, hailed from Bajpe parish. Having completed his primary education in his native parish school, he joined St Joseph's Seminary in 1959 and was ordained a priest for the diocese of Mangalore on 5 December 1967.

Starting as an Assistant Parish Priest in Madanthyar in 1968, his leadership qualities led to various significant appointments, including a teaching role in Shirva from 1969 to 1971. He served as the Assistant Director at St Antony's Ashram, Jeppu, and as the Vocation Director for the Diocese from 1973 to 1975. Recognizing his calibre, Fr Prabhu was entrusted with responsibilities such as Vocation Chairman of Karnataka and Secretary of CBE from 1975 to 1985. His contributions extended to directing the Family Life Service Centre from 1977 to 1986.

Fr Prabhu's pastoral ministry extended across various parishes, where he served as Parish Priest: Milagres (1985-1993), Permude (1993-1996), and Urwa (1996-2001). Thereafter, he was appointed Chancellor of the diocese in 2001 and in 2008 the Vicar General and Director of St Antony Institution, Jeppu, office he held until his retirement in 2018. After retirement, he served as Chaplain at White Doves, Psychiatric Nursing & Destitute Home, Maroli, where his earthly journey ended on 16 March 2024, at the age of 84 in the Father Muller Hospital. His funeral Mass and burial service was held on 20 March in his home parish, St Joseph's Church, Bajpe.

Fr Prabhu's priestly journey spanned over five decades, characterized by an unwavering commitment to his pastoral duties and dedicated service to the Church. He was a holy, humane, bright, people friendly and loving priest, dealing with all the people in respectful ways. He was a very good pastor, taking various responsibilities of the diocese and has lived a simple life. May he enjoy eternal bliss.



Fr Valerian Mendonca (1949-2024)

Fr Valerian Mendonca, the Rector of Milagres Cathedral in Kallianpur, passed away due to a heart attack on Wednesday, 3 July 2024.

He was a native of Pilar, Shirva, born on 9 December 1949. His parents were Gabriel Mendonca and Seraphine Mendonca. Having done his priestly formation in St Joseph's Seminary, Mangalore, he was ordained a priest on 7 May 1976. He held an MA in English and a Diploma in Communications (Radio & AV Aids).



After his ordination, he served as an Assistant Director at St Anthony's Ashram in Jeppu, Assistant Parish Priest at Omzoor, and pursued studies in Communications and served at the Canara Communication Centre in Mangalore. He spent major part of his ministry as an educationist in Milagres Mangalore, Milagres Kallianpur and Aikala Colleges as a Teacher and Principal. His students revere his person and his teaching with gratitude. He rendered his service as Parish Priest at St Francis Assisi Parish, Talluru, Mother of Sorrows Parish, Udupi, and Milagres Cathedral, Kallianpur.

Fr Valerian Mendonca has composed numerous songs, poems and hymns in Konkani, Kannada and English. He has produced several audio cassettes and CDs, which have received wide acclaim. He brought people closer to God through his hymns. He was an accomplished musician, composer and poet. His compositions transcended the walls of the church and touched the core of souls. A beacon of goodness and a soul of kindness, Fr Valerian's presence was a gift to all who knew him. His legacy will continue to inspire, uplift, and resonate wherever he rendered his service.

Fr Valerian was distinguished by his simplicity and as a pastor of the people, who loved and supported them. His funeral service was held on 8 July 2024 at Milagres Cathedral, Kallianpur. May he rest in peace in the loving arms of the Lord and may he continue to sing in the heavenly choirs.



Fr Anthony Peter (1973-2024)

Fr Anthony Peter, Parish Priest of St. Theresa of Child Jesus Church, Shikaripur, Shivamogga diocese passed away in a road accident on Tuesday 23 July afternoon, at Chinnikatte on the way to his parish Shikaripura.

Fr Anthony Peter was born on 7 January 1973. He desired to become a priest and joined the diocese of Shivmoga. He had his philosophical studied in St Peter's Seminary, Bangalore. In 2000, he joined St Joseph's Seminary, Mangalore, for theological studies and was ordained priest on 4 May 2004.

As priest he served as Assistant Parish Priest of Our Lady of Assumption Church, Hiriur, and St Thomas Church, Davanagere. Thereafter, he was sent to Rome for higher studies in theology, where he earned a doctorate. Back to the diocese, he was appointed Parish Priest of St Antony's Shrine, Karehalli. From 2017 to 2013 he was the Parish Priest of Our Lady of Health, Minor Basilica, Hariar. During his tenure, the Shrine was elevated to the grade of a Minor Basilica. He was known for his unwavering dedication to his parishioners and had earned deep respect during his tenure at Harihara Basilica for his spiritual guidance and community service. In 2023, he was made the Parish Priest of St Theresa of Child Jesus Church, Shikaripura.

News of his accidental demise left the local community and parishioners in mourning. His impact on the lives of those he served is being remembered fondly, with many expressing shock and sadness over the loss. He was known for his effective preaching and sonorous singing that captivated the hearts of many. He had exceptional organizational skills that made him an able leader of the community.

His funeral Mass and the burial rites were held on 26 July 2024 were held at the Sacred Heart Cathedral, Shivmoga. Bishop Francis Serrao S.J. expressed his grief at the loss of Fr Antony Peter and said: "we have lost a good and dedicated Priest". Fr Antony Peter, in deed, was known for his love for the Poor and the downtrodden above all love for the Church. His sudden death brought pain for his family members, parishioners and the diocese.

May the merciful Lord, grant him eternal life and count him among his numbered in heavenly Jerusalem.



Archbishop Alphonsus Mathias (1928-2024)

Archbishop Alphonsus Mathias was born on 22 June 1928, in Pangala, Udipi district of Karnataka, as the fourth child of Diego Mathias and Philomena D'Souza. He joined St Joseph's Seminary, Jeppu, Mangalore. Recognizing his intellectual brilliance and spiritual depth, he was sent to the Pontifical Seminary in Kandy, Sri Lanka, where he studied Philosophy and Theology, and was ordained a priest for the Diocese of Mangalore on 24 August 1954 at Kandy.

He was appointed Assistant Parish Priest at St Joseph's Parish, Bajpe. But within a year, he was sent to Rome to pursue higher studies in Canon Law and International Civil Law at the Urbaniana University and the Lateran University, where he obtained the degrees - DD, JUD, and Ph. L. On his return to the diocese in 1959, he was appointed Secretary to Bishop Raymond D'Mello. On 16 November 1963 at the age of 35, he was appointed the first bishop of the new Diocese of Chikmagalur and he was ordained Bishop on 5 February 1964 at St Joseph's Cathedral, Chikmagalur. He attended the Second Vatican Council as a Council Father. Bishop Alphonsus served in Chikmagalur for 23 years. On 12 September 1986, he was appointed Archbishop of Bangalore. His pastoral leadership in the diocese was remarkable in shaping the archdiocese's response to the challenges of the time.

He was elected President of the CBCI for two terms in 1989 and 1993. He was Chairman of St John's National Academy of Health Sciences, Bangalore (1974-1982) and was largely responsible for the upgrading of St John's. He was the Chairman of the Commission for Social Communications of the Federation of the Asian Bishops' Conference (FABC), President of Radio Veritas, Manila, and a member of the Pontifical Commission for Social Communications and the Council for Justice and Peace, Vatican. In these roles, he contributed to shaping the Church's approach to modern communication and social justice issues.

At the age 69, he resigned due to ill health, which was accepted on 24 March 1998. In his retirement, he continued to be a guiding force and mentor to many. His life was a witness to the Gospel values of love, service, and humility. His passing marked the end of an era, but his legacy lives on in the institutions he strengthened, the lives he touched, and the Church he served so faithfully. In commemorating Archbishop Alphonsus Mathias, we celebrate a life dedicated to the service of God and humanity. His vision for a vibrant, dynamic, and socially engaged Church remains a guiding light for future generations.

Archbishop Emeritus of Bangalore Archdiocese passed away on 10 July 2024 at St John's Medical College, Bangalore, at the age of 96. His funeral ceremony took place on 15 July at St Francis Xavier's Cathedral, Bangalore. May his soul rest in peace.



Fr Tomy Rodrigues (1942-2024)



Fr Tomy Rodrigues, a priest of the Diocese of Calicut, was born on 28 June 1942. After studying philosophy and theology at St Joseph's Seminary, Mangalore, he was ordained a priest on 6 December 1969.

Fr Rodrigues served as a Parish Priest in various parishes of the Diocese of Calicut. He was a pioneer in introducing Basic Christian Communities (BCC) units in the diocese. Additionally, he oversaw the Diocesan Choir and initiated the construction of the Morning Star Church at Chathamangalam. Following 30 years of dedicated ministry in the Calicut Diocese, Fr Rodrigues moved to the United States of America and was incardinated into the Diocese of Ohio. There, he served as a collaborator and hospital chaplain over 25 years serving. Upon retirement, Fr Rodrigues returned to India in 2021 and settled with his family in Ernakulam. For three years, he collaborated actively with the parish priest of his home parish, Infant Jesus Church, Ernakulam. Due to various health complications, Fr Rodrigues was frequently hospitalized during the last two years. He passed away on 3 October 2024 at Lourdes Hospital, Ernakulam.

May his soul rest in peace.



Fr Lawrence C. D'Souza (1948-2024)

Fr Lawrence C. D'Souza, a devoted priest, visionary leader and compassionate pastor, passed away on 12 November 2024 at Father Muller Medical College Hospital, Mangalore. He was 75 years old and had been courageously battling illness for several years.

Born on 28 November 28 1948 in Pernal (diocese of Udupi), Fr Lawrence was the son of the late Casmir D'Souza and the late Regina D'Souza. He was ordained a priest on 5 May 1977, after completing his philosophical and theological studies at St Joseph's Seminary in Jeppu, Mangalore. He was academically gifted and held a Master's degree in Philosophy (MA), and a Bachelor's degree in Law (LLB). He pursued a doctorate (PhD) in 'Administration and Supervision in Church-Related Institutions' from Fordham University, USA, furthering his expertise in ecclesial leadership and administration.



Throughout his ministry, Fr Lawrence served with distinction and dedication, taking on roles that allowed him to touch the lives of countless individuals. He was Assistant Parish Priest at Holy Cross Church, Kulshekar (1977-1979), Assistant Director of Father Muller Medical College Hospital, Mangaluru (1979-1984), Secretary of the Catholic Board of Education (CBE) (1984-1992), Administrator of Father Muller Medical College Hospital, Mangaluru (1998-2006), Parish Priest of Holy Cross Church, Cordel-Kulshekar, Mangaluru (2006-2008), Director of St John's National Academy of Health Sciences (2008-2014), Secretary of the Catholic Education Society of Udupi (CESU) (2015-2018) and Parish Priest of Milagres Cathedral, Kallianpur (2018-2020).

Fr Lawrence combined his intelligence and skill with a pastoral heart, becoming a source of strength and guidance for those he served. As a leader, he brought both vision and compassion to every position he held, notably in healthcare and educational institutions where he served as a dedicated administrator.

After four decades of tireless service, Fr Lawrence retired from active ministry in 2020 due to ill health and had since resided at Milagres Home for the Retired Priests in Kallianpur. Even in his retirement, he remained a source of inspiration and wisdom to those around him.

Fr Lawrence will be fondly remembered for his deep spirituality, gentle demeanour, and commitment to the welfare of his flock. His contributions to the diocese and beyond are a lasting testament to his love for God and His people. He leaves behind a legacy of faith, humility, and service that will continue to inspire the faithful for years to come.

His funeral Mass was held on 16 November at 9:30 a.m. at Mount Rosary Church, Santhekatte-Kallianpur, followed by burial in the diocesan priests' cemetery at Santhekatte, Udupi. May the Lord grant him eternal rest and a place in the heavenly Jerusalem.



Fr Devadatta Kamath SJ (1934-2024)

Fr Devadatta Kamath SJ, professor and formator of the Seminary for two decades (1973-1994), passed away on 16 November 2024 after a life rich in devotion, scholarship and pastoral service.

Born into a devout family in Cordel on 8 November 1934, he joined St Joseph's Seminary, Mangalore, with the intention of becoming a diocesan priest, but Providence willed that he joined the Society of Jesus on 8 June 1955. He was ordained a priest on 24 March 1966 and made his final vows on 2 February 1974. In nearly seven decades as a Jesuit, he made an indelible contribution to the Church and the Society through his tireless work and enduring legacy.



Fr Kamath was a professor of Hinduism and a formator of a liberal type. He edited the **Unitas** and directed the English drama on Seminary Day with an Oxford accent to the acclamation of the audience. He was a linguist and promoted Kannada and Konkani. He relentlessly devoted himself fully to the spiritual and intellectual formation of seminarians with perfection. Besides being a teacher, he was also a poet, a retreat preacher, a historian and a guide to many priests and lay faithful.

As a writer, he authored several seminal works such as *Defiant Submission: A History of the Diocese of Mangalore* (Vols. I & II), *Janakana Manadanna – Kristayana*, and *Dharmakanda*. His scholarly rigour combined with his deep faith produced writings that will continue to inspire and inform generations to come. Fr Kamath's life was marked by simplicity, humility and a deep spiritual anchor. His years of convalescence at Fatima Retreat House, Mangalore (2015-2024), were characterized by prayer and quiet reflection, embodying the Jesuit ideal of finding God in all things.

Dear Fr Kamath, we the Rector, staff and students salute you for what you have been and what you did for the Seminary. May the Lord grant you eternal rest.



Fr Varghese Alukkal (1942-2024)

Fr Varghese Alukkal, who lived a life of exemplary service to the Church and the faithful, passed away on 27th November 2024. He was 82 years old.

Fr Varghese was born on 2 February 1942 to Paily and Rosamma Alukkal in Chengal, Kalady. He had five siblings, namely Paulokutty, Susan, Mary, Sr Kennett, and Pappachan. Having completed his early education at St Gamma's and St Sebastian's High School, Kanjoor, he pursued his college studies at St Philomena College, Mysore, and Seminary studies at St Joseph's Seminary, Mangalore. He was ordained a priest on 28 May 1974 by Bishop Patroni S.J.



During his ministry, Fr Varghese held numerous key positions across the diocese, serving faithfully in various parishes: Assistant Parish Priest, Mother of God Cathedral, Calicut (1974), Assistant Procurator, Bishop's House (1975-1976), Parish Priest, St Joseph's Church, Meppadi (1977-1979), Sacred Heart Church, Pazhyangadi (1979-1984), Holy Cross Church, Madai (1984-1990), Little Flower Church, Mavoor (1990-1992), Holy Rosary Church, Thalassery (1992-1994), Manager, Puthukkad Estate, Chemperi (1994-1999), Perpetual Succor Church, Andoor (1999-2003). Holy Cross Church, Poomala (2003-2007), Rector, St Paul's Minor Seminary, Marikunnu (2007), Parish Priest, St Antony's Church, Rippon (2008-2013) and St Antony's Church, Pakkom (2014-2017).

Fr Varghese spent his final years at Shalom Retired Priests' Home, Marikunnu, where he continued to inspire with his humility, faith, and wisdom.

The funeral Mass for Fr Varghese Alukkal was held at Holy Redeemer Church, Marikunnu on 27 November 2024 and later his body was taken to his native place and buried at the cemetery of St George Church, Kalady on 28 November 2024. Fr Varghese will be remembered for his unwavering commitment to God, his compassionate service, and his love for the people of God.

May his soul rest in peace.



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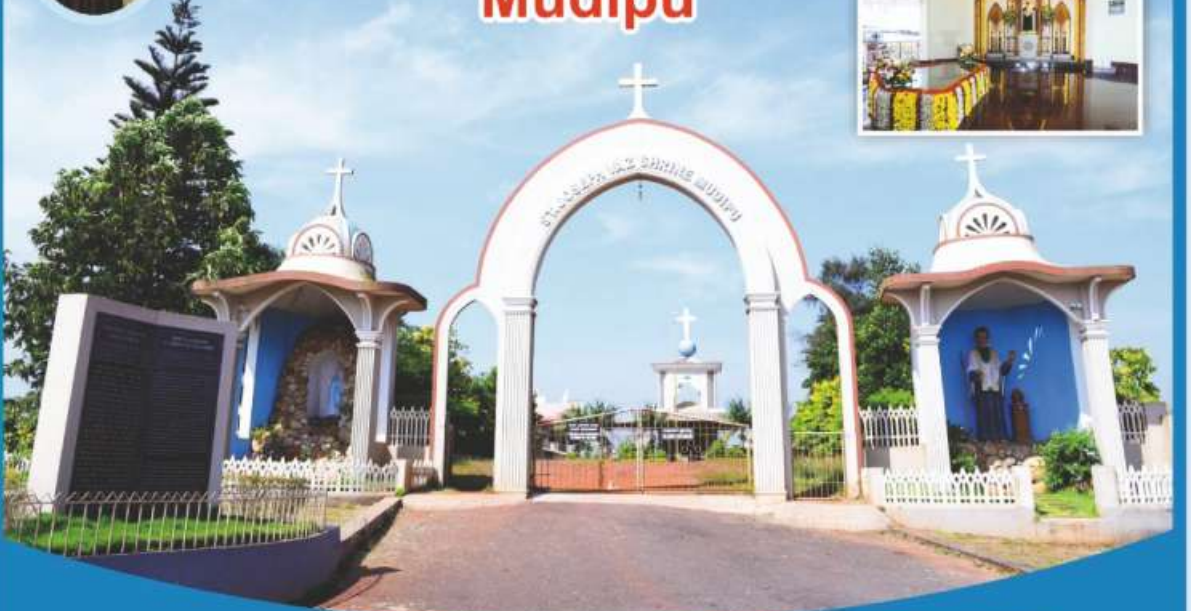
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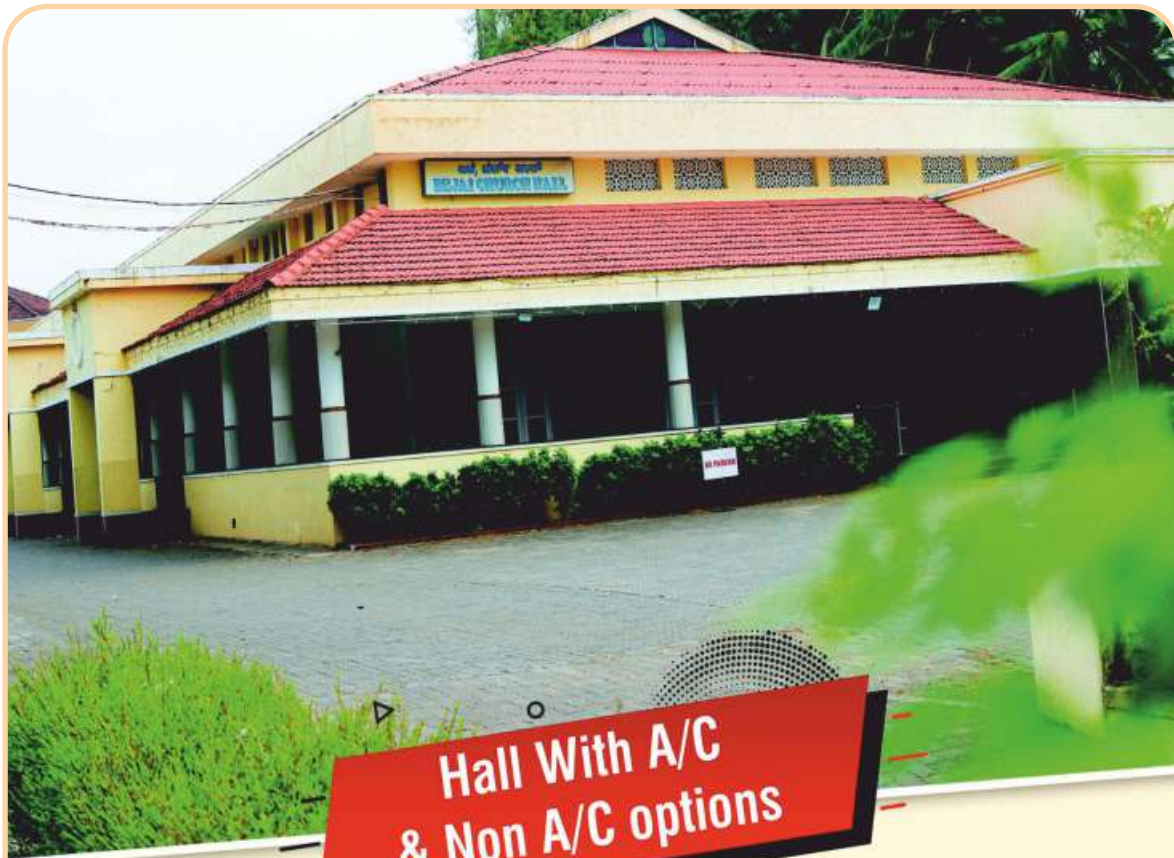
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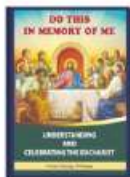
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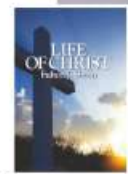
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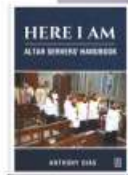
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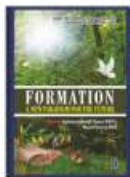
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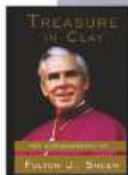
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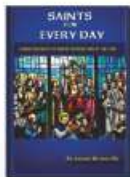
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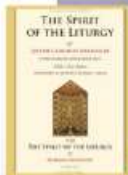
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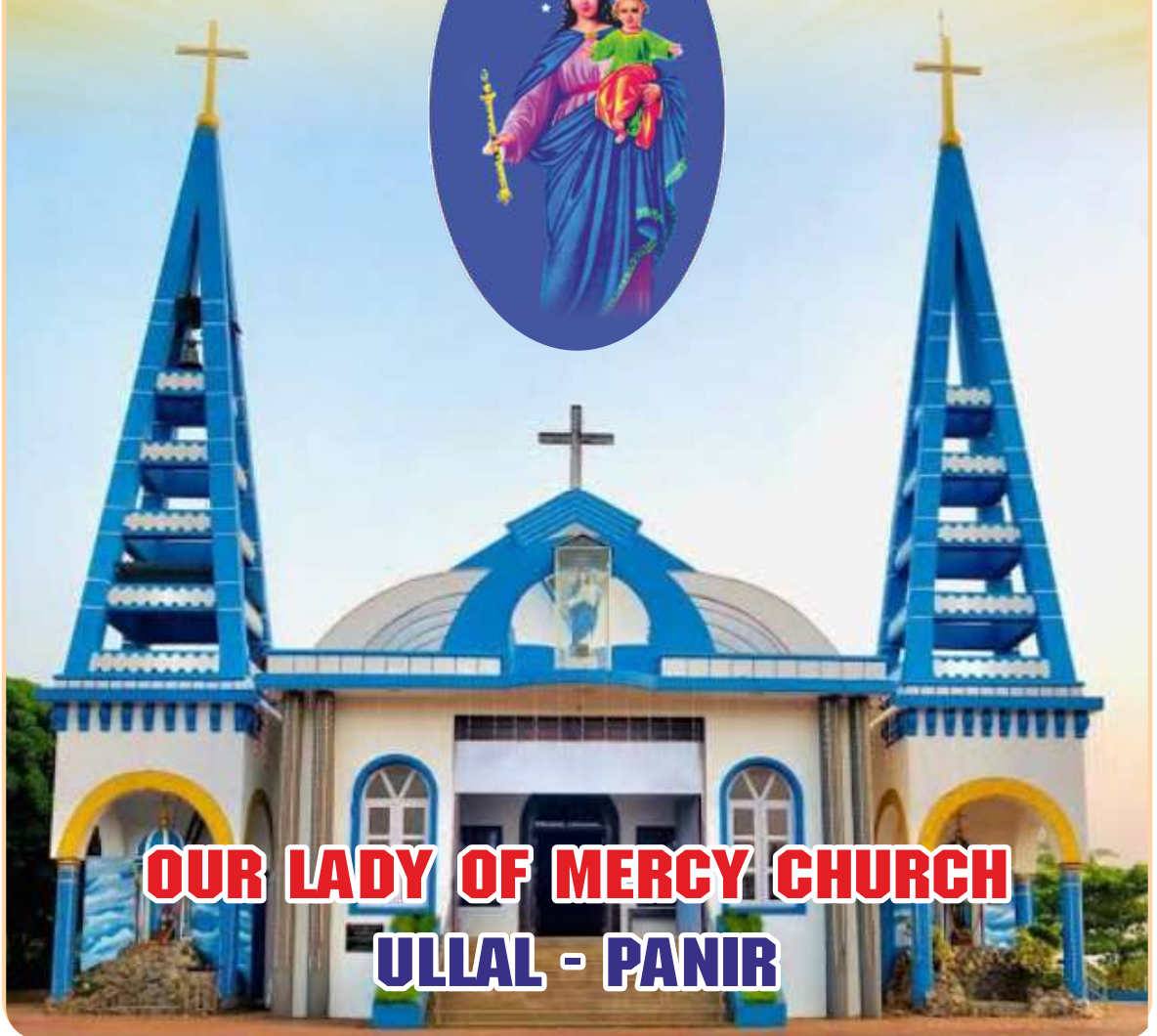
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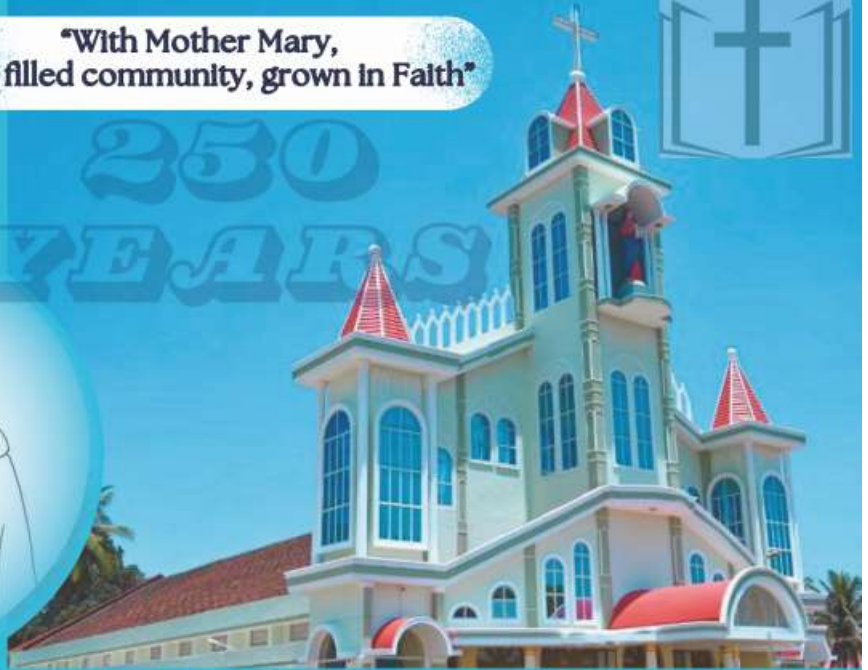
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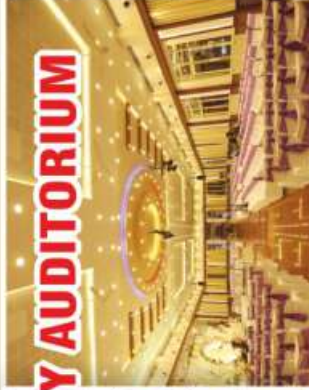


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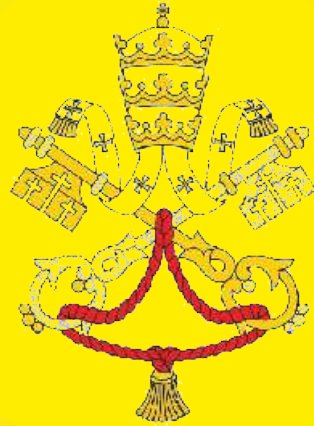
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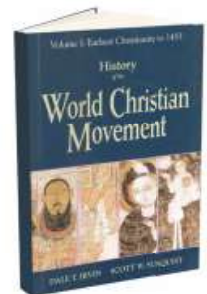
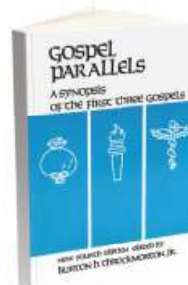
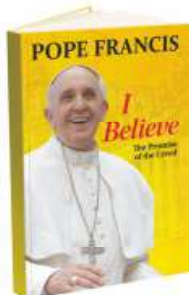
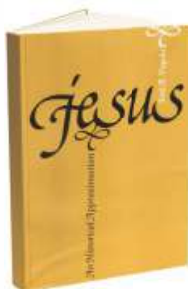
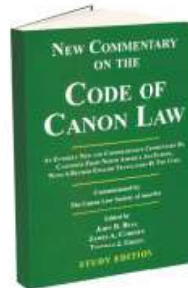
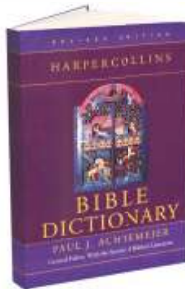
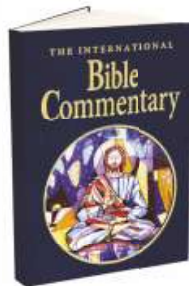
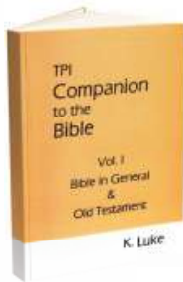
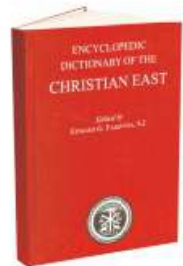
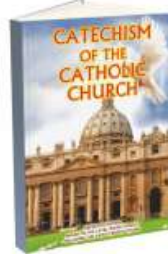
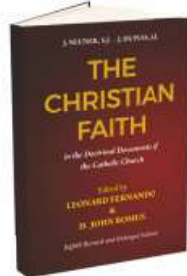
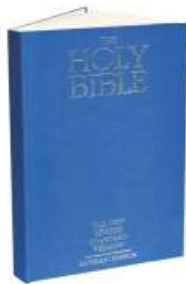
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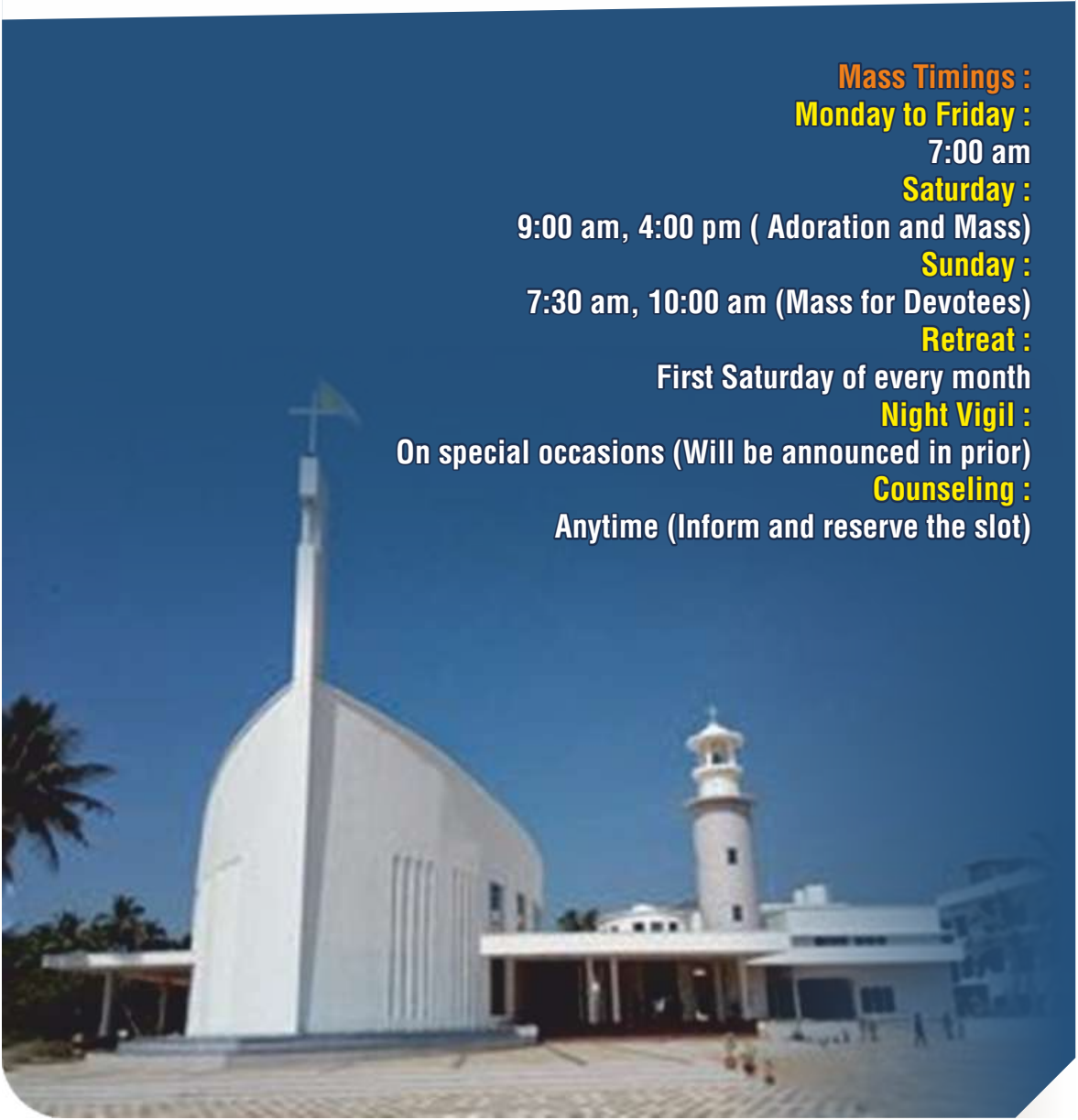
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