



Semachar

Newsletter of St Pius X College - Archdiocesan Seminary

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**Semachar wishes you a very Happy Christmas and a
🌿 Prosperous New year 2023!!! 🌿**



PRIESTHOOD – A Journey through Self-Discovery

“JOURNEYING TOGETHER” – AN EDUCATIONAL PRINCIPLE FOR FORMATION

Fr. Ashwin Castellino gave a spiritual recollection on 3rd August 2022, to the seminarians at St. Pius X College. The recollection was about “Discovering yourself through the Priesthood.” This recollection was in preparation for the feast of St. John Marie Vianney.

Fr. Ashwin spoke on the importance of self-discovery in the priesthood. He shared various instances about how problems arise when one isn’t aware of his true self. He encouraged us to ask ourselves some hard-hitting questions. The seminarians meditated on them throughout the day and it greatly benefited them.

The recollection ended with the Eucharist celebrated by Fr. Ashwin. We are grateful for his insightful recollection and we thank the Spirituality Committee of our seminary for organizing the recollection.



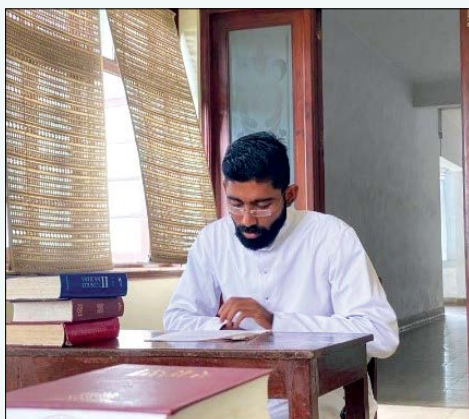
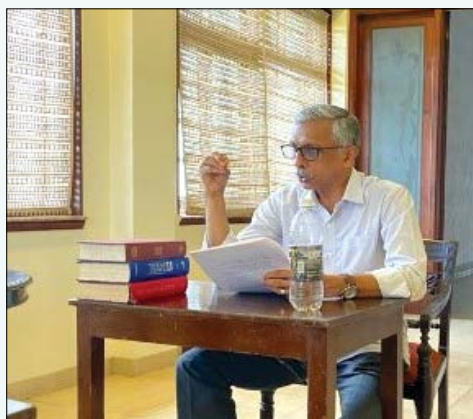
Br. Noel D'Souza
(2nd Year Theology)



COMPREHENSIVE EXAMS - 4th Year Theology

“IF YOU WANT TO GO FAST, GO ALONE. IF YOU WANT TO GO FAR, GO TOGETHER.”

- AFRICAN PROVERB



We are grateful to the six sub-group moderators (core team), support buddies (one-to-one study) and to certain professors who kept encouraging us to study and express ourselves well. This made the process of preparation for the comprehensive exams meaningful.

Personally, I had an amazing experience of preparing a road map of theses through analysis and synthesis. In my analysis, in highlighting the unique bullet points, I was able to explore connections in every thesis with respect to the following themes:-



- Self-communication of God
- Context: world of concerns, world of faith, world of meaning
- Theology - Anthropology - Eschatological vision
- Secular and atheistic perspectives
- Implications for today: dialogue, diversity in unity, discernment, communion.

The analysis could be fruitful only through synthesis. Praying over what I studied, being intellectually alert and not superficial: all this helped me synthesize

related themes in each thesis and showed me how they interconnect and are interdependent with one another.

During the whole process I felt fascinated, even as I trembled. There was joy throughout, in presenting my study and in being cross-questioned.

The exam still continues, as I reflect the same in my own life and in the ministry God is leading me to.

Dn. Dylan D'Souza
(4th Year Theology)



EUREKA!!!

On 7th November 2022, we at St. Pius X College witnessed a powerful spiritual talk, given by Deacon Naveen. He shared several testimonies and experiences of his own life which really made us reflect deeply. He urged us not to get discouraged in times of trial because even when we are not able to understand where our life is going, God is with us and always in control. All human success, achievements and endeavors which we often boast about, are temporary and ultimately lead to 'emptiness'. When we lose someone very dear to us, only then do we realize the 'mortality' of our bodies. We always aspire for more and more, yet at the last we remain 'incomplete'. Deacon Naveen explained that if we pay close attention to our lives, the three factors or the 'EMI' (Emptiness, Mortality and Incomplete) is actually a source of 'The experience of God', "EUREKA!!!"

To fill the 'emptiness', we go crazy after wealth, health, popularity and many other futile things; but still we remain incomplete. God is so powerful and mighty



that he can use our fears and memories to speak to us and deliver us, provided we come closer to God and spend time in prayer. It is our ego and pride which enter our hearts, on account of our self-importance and draw us away from God's love. Therefore, God gives us EMIs to bring us back to our senses. Deacon Naveen mentioned that knowledge of God alone is not enough. We also need to discover and come to the knowledge of self, i.e. what kind of a person am I? Which only comes through self-reflection and prayer.

Br. Alton Extros
(3rd Year Theology)





THE ANDRENALINES

WE CAME, WE SAW, WE CONQUERED!!!

Every year as part of our formation we have the 'Group Building Days' that are scheduled in our academic year, wherein the different groups go for an outing. This year the same was scheduled from 26th September to 29th September. The 'Andrenaline Moderator group' comprising of ten brothers along with Fr. Andrew chose Alibaug, as our destination for the outing. Instead of the usual road travel we took the sea route, to Alibaug. Travelling by the Ro-Ro ferry was a wonderful experience. The scenic beauty was just spectacular and awesome. Upon reaching the Mandwa jetty, we took auto rickshaws to 'Mary of Nazareth Church' Alibaug, our place of stay for the entire trip. On the first day we visited the Alibaug beach and spent some time bonding together as a group and clicked many photos. We returned back and post dinner we had a sharing of our experiences of day one. The next day we went to Korlai, where we visited the Religious sisters who run a boarding. Thereafter, we visited the Mount Carmel Church where Fr. Bonaventure briefed us on the history of the Parish. We then headed for the nearby fort and had to do a little climbing to reach to the top. Although it was exhausting, upon reaching the top we had a sense of satisfaction and enjoyed the experience. After lunch we went to see the Murud-Janjira fort. Since it was in the sea we had to go there by boat. On reaching there, the view was just breath-taking. We saw the fort and also clicked photos there. We then visited the Kashid beach, which was a stone's throw from there. On the third day we visited the 'Sagar ghat' village which is located on a hill. The Mount Carmel Parish supports



the families of this village by providing them ration and other necessities of life. The visit was more like a trek since all of us walked up to the top. Over there one of the social workers explained how the Church is contributing towards helping the families so as to improve their living conditions. We then conducted games for the children which they really enjoyed. We then had lunch and then made our way back. In the evening we went to the Carmelite Sisters' convent. They explained to us the work they do and also the challenges they face, as well as briefed us on the history of their Congregation. The next day we had to return back to the Seminary. It was indeed a wonderful experience as a group wherein we not only saw many different places but also bonded well as a group.

Br. Conrad Pereira
(3rd Year Theology)



THE BENHURITES

GO MAHAD AND MISSIONS

The 'Moderator Group Building Days' give a seminarian an opportunity to mingle with other batch mates. This activity helps to put aside our prejudices and become one with the group which we call 'bonding'.

We the 'First Year Philosophers' under the leadership of Fr Benhur Rodrigues got an opportunity to spend these precious days at Mahad, Raigad. A mission station under the Archdiocese of Bombay and also considered as the land of freedom fighters. Our own dear Fr. Pravin D'souza (Priest- Incharge, Mahad Missions)





and Fr. Sunil Munis gave us a warm welcome and made all arrangements for our comfortable stay. All the Group building activities were pre-planned. On the first day we visited a 'Katkari' tribal village. Our main focus was to know them, speak to them and share our thoughts. Brothers had a great time conducting games, action songs and talking to the tribal children. In the Evening we visited a hostel run by Gujarat Missionary sisters, who shared their experiences of living and working in the Mahad missions. We then conversed with the girls studying and residing at the hostel. Some of us conducted games, while others explained

the importance of education to the girls. We were very overwhelmed interacting and spending our time with them. The next day was packed with fun and frolic. And visit to the Resort and the Farm House was like icing on the cake. We thoroughly enjoyed our 'Group Building Days' and are very grateful to our Moderator, Fr. Praveen and Fr. Sunil for making it a memorable one.

Br. Brayon Mathias
(1st Year Philosophy)



THE JOHNNY WALKERS

EYE FOR GORAI

This time the Johnny Walkers' group, set its eye on Gorai for our group building days. We were warmly greeted by Fr. Edward and Fr. Steven when we arrived there. We thoroughly enjoyed visiting the places in Gorai. We made a quick visit to the beach on the first day and as the sun began to set our first day came to an end. The next day we were set to go for a Bumper and Banana ride which was the highlight for that day. Later during the day we went to an island to celebrate the Eucharist, followed by lunch at the Parish and a visit to the Pagoda and an Old Church ruin around the area. The following day we were excited to spend the day at a Resort. On the final day there was a session conducted by Fr. John based on the theme



'Values' from which the brothers benefited a lot. After a delicious lunch we prepared to leave, bidding farewell to the Gorai Parish team.

Br. Ivan Kamble
(1st Year Theology)



THE GAVINATORS

AMIDST THE LIVING WITNESSES OF JESUS CHRIST



We the group of Gavinators, were fortunate to encounter the living witnesses of Jesus Christ at Dudhani, near Silvasa. This year, for our group building days we stayed at Bhildari, a sub-station of St. Francis Xavier Church, Dudhani. The people of this place are mainly tribal. We had the Eucharistic celebration with the locals in Marathi. We enjoyed the local tribal cuisine for our meals. We experienced the rich culture of this community expressed through the 'Tarpa Dance'. We were astonished to hear that they had represented their culture even on a national platform. During our stay, we went on a pilgrimage to 'Dongar-Mauli', a miraculous place for the people of many faiths.

These days were really beneficial for our group to grow together and get to know each other. We even explored the village and were really amazed at its beauty. The most memorable part of these days was our interaction with Mariadass (Guruji), aged 80 years old, one of the earliest converts to Christianity in Bhildari. In the absence of the priests, amidst the death threats by the strong religious groups in the locality, he catechised the people of the village by bearing witness of Jesus Christ. Presently, there are 100 catholic families, who continue to be witnesses of Jesus Christ amidst various challenges.

Br. Gabriyel Fernandes
(1st Year Theology)



GLADIATORS MARCHING ON

On 26th of September, 2022 the Gladiators headed by our moderator Fr. Gilbert De Lima visited the historical city of Pune for the 'Group Building days'. There we were accommodated at the Redemptoris Mater Seminary, run by the Neo-catechumenal Way; which is situated very close to St Patrick's Cathedral. We received a warm welcome from the Fathers and Brothers of the Neo-catechumenal Movement.

The Group Building days was fun filled and exciting. We visited historical places like the, Sinhagad Fort, Shaniwar Wada, and Shinde Chatri. The visits to these historical places gave us a glimpse into the rich history of the capital city of the erstwhile Maratha Empire. Besides this we also visited places like the Aga Khan Palace, National War Memorial, Katraj Zoo and Tulsi Baug. Visits to Saint Patrick's Cathedral, Immaculate





Conception church (also known as the City Church and the oldest in Pune) and the Jnana Deep Pontifical seminary speaks of the history of the Church in Pune.

While the visits to these places were exciting and knowledgeable, it also gave us a great opportunity to bond together as a group. Being away from the monotonous schedule and worries of seminary life and being together in a new place brought in a breath of fresh air. Also, as this was the first group building to happen since 2020 it was a great experience. In a way this group building gives us a chance not only to be together, roam together and pray together but also a chance to know each other better.

This group building also gave us the opportunity to witness the kindness, generosity and brotherhood that exists among the clergy. In a time where we are bombarded with negative news about the clergy and the church, such positive experiences will go a long way strengthening our vocation and conviction to be better and holy priests in the future.

The three days of group building will always be a memorable one. We look forward to more of such opportunities, where we can come together to enjoy and learn as one family.

Br. Dorson D'Mello
(1st Year Theology)



WALTER BOYS

UNITY IN A UNION TERRITORY

'Walter Boys', nine brothers along with our moderator Fr. Walter D'Souza had a fantastic experience of visiting Silvassa for the group-building days from 26th to 29th September, 2022. It was themed 'Unity' and it focused on working together in achieving a task. We made a short visit to Daman that included visits to the beaches, forts and a church.

The following day involved a drive across villages to Madhuban dam and St. Francis Xavier Church, Dudhani. The visit to Dudhani Church helped understand the theological vision which animated the



founding fathers of this Church that would help the locals experience Christ and live out the mission.

The Parish Priest of St Francis Xavier Church, Dapada invited us to visit the locals of the neighbouring village. We joined in a Community Eucharist in Gujarati, followed by dinner, thanks to the generosity of the villagers. The brothers organised a camp fire that began with the Rosary followed by a camaraderie

of action songs and natter. The Sisters of the Society of the Helpers of Mary, Dapada hosted us for a coffee visit following which we began our return to St. Pius.

The overall experience engaged everyone in every form of activity that contributed to knowing oneself and the other in a deeper and meaningful way.

Br. Akilesh Paul A.
(2nd Year Philosophy)



MISSION EXPERIENCE – BHALE

Our much-awaited 'Mission Experience' was held in the month of October 2022, wherein we the propaedeutic students of St. Pius X Seminary went to Mangaon for our mission experience. During our initial days at Mangaon, we were based at the SVD centre, where Fr. Richard (SVD) had arranged for our comfortable stay. After spending a couple of days at the centre we were finally sent to our mission exposure station. Br. Brijesh and I were sent to Bhale in the Raigad district. Bhale was a much developed place as compared to the other villages around the place. The coordinator from the SVD center 'Sunita Tai' was our guide to the village. We were staying at the Anganwadi, a place for the local community students to study and do their day-to-day school activities. The village comprised of 33 families wherein the majority of the family members were farmers and a few were fishermen. Our stay at Bhale gave us an insight into the life and culture of the villagers.

The children of the village were studying in a Marathi medium school run by the panchayat community of the district. We also had the opportunity to witness the village monthly meeting at the Anganwadi, wherein they discuss their grievances and also share problems faced; owing to lack of essential facilities. The village Head as well as the members of the SVD community introduced us to the gathering. Our interaction with the kids and the elderly helped us reflect deeper and grow in our journey of the priestly formation. Becoming aware of the common problems faced by the villagers, we sensed a great humbling and a need





for simplicity in our life. We were taken around the village to visit the families and know their way of living. The villagers gladly welcomed us into their homes. We thank the Seminary for giving us this wonderful mission experience at Bhale.

Br. Joel D'Silva.
(Propaedeutic Year)



MISSION EXPERIENCE 'YERAD'

For our mission experience we were sent to the SVD centre headed by Fr. Richard Quadros, at Mangaon, Raigad which falls under the mission area of the Archdiocese of Bombay. The hamlet we were sent to was Yerad which is 18 km from Mangaon. We had a lot of fears in our minds before setting out for the village: would we get a proper place to stay and will basic necessities be available?

Would we be able to adjust to the food? Will there be electricity and network coverage for mobiles? etc. However, trusting in God's providence we went out on our journey and the God of surprises was true to his nature! When we reached the hamlet we were surprised to see that all that we needed was available: a place to stay, food, electricity and all we needed. Most of all the couple in whose house we stayed gave us a warm welcome and treated us as one of their own family members. There were 70 to 75 families in the hamlet. Every morning we would spend our



time teaching the children songs and playing games. The villagers seemed happy and content with their work and family as we did not witness any domestic fights or drunken behaviour. When we conversed with the people of the village, we realised that there was a serious crisis of stable jobs and education of children, due to the migration of parents for taking up jobs in the brick making industry. The lack of education led to child marriages. The members of the SVD centre are working on this issue and hope to reduce the number of child marriage cases by imparting proper education. Protecting the forest and its rich flora and fauna was one of their main concerns, for which lot

of plans were already being executed. Also, one day we accompanied the people to fetch drinking water drawn out from a hand pump, from a distant place. This made us realize the value of drinking water which we get so freely in the city and waste. In spite of these and other problems, the people continued to be happy, cheerful and satisfied with what they had; which also became our take away and learning from this mission experience.

Br. Julius Kendi
(Propaedeutic Year)



MISSION EXPERIENCE 'POTNER'

THE SWEET SOJOURN

Our mission exposure stay was at Potner, a hamlet in Raigad district. We were sent as a group consisting of three members. It was a great experience for us to work as a team in the rural setting of the Katkari Tribes. The indistinct view of our neighbouring houses in the morning due to the dense fog, gave us a sense of being in the seventh heaven! The situation of the tribes living in a hamlet of 20 houses may have been less developed, but they all related to each other as one family, with an attitude of love and harmony. The children were satisfied with the minimal resources available to play and enjoyed the day. The main occupations of the community are cattle rearing, farming, and dredging of lakes and ponds. The greenery of nature was a charming sight. Every hour, the clanging of a train could be heard from the railway tracks, which were only a few yards



away from our house and this reminded us of the crowded Bombay local trains. The food that we were served was simple yet delectable. But what was paramount was the care and respect rendered to us by the tribes while we sat down to eat. It was stupendous. Overall, the sojourn was sweet and peaceful amidst a serene environment.

Br. Nirmal Anthony
(Propaedeutic Year)



Ordination to the 'Permanent Diaconate'- Dn. John Serrao, Dn. Glenn Saldanha & Dn. Noel Pinto



Silver Jubilee of the Episcopal Ordination of H.E. Oswald Cardinal Gracias



Celebration - Feast of St. Francis Xavier



Arrival of Relic of 'Blessed Carlo Acutis'



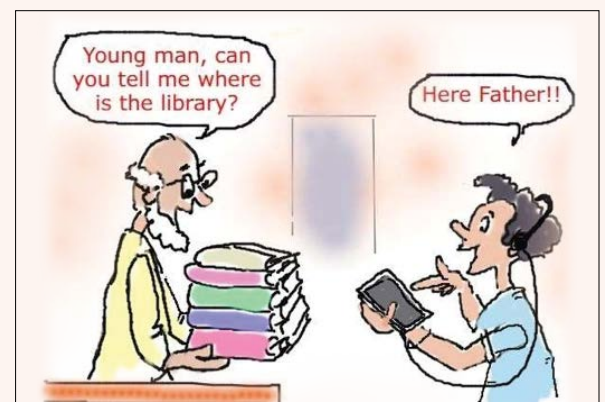


CREATIVITY CORNER

WHEN YOU DON'T COMPETE

When you don't compete, you love others
 When you don't compete, you care for them
 When you don't compete, you encourage others growth
 When you don't compete, you won't get jealous
 When you don't compete, you hate pride
 When you don't compete, you won't be arrogant
 When you don't compete, you live happily
 When you don't compete, you won't feel awry
 When you don't compete, you won't be uncultured
 When you don't compete, you won't loathe your deeds
 When you don't compete, you won't be upset
 When you don't compete, you will be chivalrous
 When you don't compete, you accept your mistakes
 When you don't compete, you forgive others
 So, let's make a competition less world
 By loving and caring for others

Br. Hamish Anto D.
 (1st Year Philosophy)



Designed by  **AMCF** • CATHOLIC COMMUNICATION CENTRE

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