



AMBASSADORS FOR CHRIST

# Sambachar

Newsletter of St Pius X College - Archdiocesan Seminary

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PAINTING BY AVINASH DHODHADE (3RD YEAR THEOLOGY)



On 5th October, 2019 all roads led to St. Pius X College, the Archdiocesan Seminary. On that day, Cardinal Oswald Gracias, Archbishop of Bombay, formally inaugurated the Diamond Jubilee year of St. Pius X Seminary with a solemn Eucharistic Celebration. A few bishops and archbishops, alumni of our seminary, and the priests of our Archdiocese concelebrated.

St. Pius X seminary is a magnificent edifice in the heart of Mumbai. It was inaugurated on 05 October 1960. The building itself stands as if with its arms outstretched to welcome all. The blue strip around the building reminds one of the blue girdle around the waist of Our Lady at Lourdes. As one enters the foyer one cannot but be amazed looking at the double spiral

staircase leading to the chapel. St Pius X College is a place of formation for the future priests not only of the Bombay Archdiocese but also of various dioceses and religious institutes all over India.



It is in this magnificent building that men and women now serving in various ministries in the Church were trained. St. Pius X College is 60 years young, it is as vibrant today as on the day of its inauguration on 5th October, 1960.

Today, the seminary fondly remembers late Cardinal Valerian Gracias for being the founder of this Seminary. We also acknowledge and remain grateful to the Jesuits for their enormous contribution to the seminary before its administration was handed on to the archdiocese.

- **Victor Rodrigues** (2nd Year Theology)

## THEOLOGICAL SYMPOSIUM: THE PRIESTHOOD TODAY CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The theological symposium, on the occasion of the Diamond Jubilee of our Seminary on October 5, 2019 had as its theme: 'The Priesthood today: Challenges and Opportunities'. The Christian priesthood is a sharing in the unique priesthood of Christ; hence we sought to understand the priesthood today through the lens of experts in different fields.

**Royston Braganza**, the CEO of Grameen Capital, India presented a thought provoking reflection on Priest as

CEO. He stated at the outset that the challenges we face are in themselves, opportunities. He explained lucidly that the priest-pastor, using management principles, should enable the laity to make their own appropriate contributions to the building up of the church (1 Cor. 14:20). In all this faith plays a vital role!

**Fr Frazer Mascarenhas SJ**, former principal of St. Xavier's College, Mumbai then threw light on the Priest as Educator. In the light of the Draft Education Policy of the



to become a sacramental manifestation of Christ in the Church and the world!

**Teesta Setalvad**, a renowned social activist, challenged us to a deeper commitment of Social Involvement. She reminded us that when a government does not believe in the Constitution it can become very dangerous. Speaking on the ongoing National Register of Citizens (NRC) exercise in Assam, she expressed her apprehensions about the possibility of such an exercise being undertaken across the country. While she praised the Christian community for its consistent commitment in the fields of education, medical assistance and social involvement, she called us not to sit on our laurels but rather network with individuals and movements that seek to empower the disadvantaged.

The Panelists then fielded questions from the floor of the house. Cardinal Oswald Gracias profusely thanked the Speakers for sharing with us their insights and challenging us to greater heights of endeavour. He also reiterated that we need to discern how and when we can work with moderate forces in the government and society to empower the poor and the marginalized.

- Fr. Gilbert de Lima

Government (2019) he highlighted some of the Realities we may face: Removal of Minority Rights, Aided Institutions becoming “Public” institutions, contending with the Privatization of education, etc. Consequently our Strategies might include: encouraging a multi-religious ethos, inspiring critical thinking and creativity and networking with civil society. Indeed, despite the challenges ahead, our educational institutions are called to play a crucial role, he anticipated, to fashion a new society!

**Fr Victor Ferrao, from Rachol Seminary, Goa then spelt out ‘The Spirituality of the Diocesan Priest’.** The spirituality of the diocesan priest, within the universal call to holiness, will take on an incarnational and sacramental perspective, challenging him

## GROUP BUILDING DAYS

### JOSEPHITE’S JOURNEY - PUNE

The Group building days were amazing and memorable. It was an enriching experience for all of us. From planning the itinerary to working in teams, sharing and having fun with fellow brothers, this trip to Pune really helped the group to bond well. We visited places like: Dagadusheth Halwai Ganapati Temple, Shaniwar Wada, Rajiv Gandhi Zoological Park, and JDV seminary. We also visited Empress Botanical Garden and St. Patrick’s Cathedral. We cooked our own meals as a family. This made it a wonderful evening, as everyone helped out in the cooking. Above all we learned the art of balancing or setting priorities and making maximum use of the resources available.

- Ashwin Barnis (1st Year Philosophy)



## IN THE LAP OF MOTHER NATURE – KHANDALA



Anthonites - led by Fr. Anthony L. Fernandes went to Khandala, one of the hill stations in Pune district, for our much awaited Group Building days. We stayed at St. Mary's Villa, a Jesuit house. During these days we had one-to-one interviews, group building sessions, games, discussion on seminary guidelines and so on. In the evenings we visited a few institutions and places such as Don Bosco Apostolic School, 'Maria Ashiana', which is a rehabilitation centre for addicts, run by the Salesians, Bushi Dam which is an ideal spot for all those who wish to relax in the lap of Mother Nature, because it has serene and tranquil surroundings and crystal clear water.

We enjoyed great hospitality from all those we encountered during these days. These cherishing moments spent together help us to maintain a fraternal spirit in our group.

- Gabriel Fernandes (*1st Year Philosophy*)

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## SAPUTARA, WE ARE UNDER YOUR SPELL!



Breathing in fresh air from the rolling hills of Saputara, criss-crossing the Ambika river and surrounded by lush green valleys, the 'Giladiators' of Fr. Gilbert's group, sensed the providence of God during their memorable Group Building Days in Saputara, Gujarat. The high point of our trip was our mission experience to the Dangs. Fr. Joel Pais, the Vicar General of Baroda, outlined for us the history of the missions in Gujarat. Recalling the 1992 Christian persecution in Dangs and encountering the tribal Christians who lived

their faith in testing times was a deeply rewarding experience. Our Morning Prayer, Eucharist and study of our Community Guidelines were a powerful experience of the Lord and an expression of a deeper encounter with one another. Throughout our journey the words of the Psalmist echoed in our hearts: 'Where can I run from your love? If I fly to the heavens you are there; if I fly to the sunrise or sail beyond the seas, still I'll find you there!'

- Dylan D'Souza (*1st Year Theology*)

## IN MOMENTS LIKE THESE



The second year philosophers, along with Fr. Benhur, went to Rajodi, Vasai for the Group building days. We stayed at “Dhyanashram”, a retreat house run by the Carmelite Fathers. The three days were a combination of fun and sessions. We visited a nearby parish named Our Lady of Health and also an institution run by Assumption Sisters for the empowerment of the local tribals, migrants and poor. One of the highlights of these days was a visit

to a family who was just blessed with a baby girl.

Here, the depth of lay spirituality was witnessed, as next to the bed of the baby was a portrait of Mother Mary breast feeding baby Jesus. To connect this image in the context of one’s life was simply amazing. Because of enriching moments like these, we had a great experience. Highly anticipating our next group building days!

- Noel D’Souza (2nd Year Philosophy)

## JOHNNY WALKERS AT ARNALA

Time well spent is more valuable than money earned. This year we, ‘Johnny Walkers’ of Fr. John Barretto’s group, spent nearly four days together in Arnala. The most beautiful part of the outing was the visit to the Arnala Fort, which is located on an island, a kilometre away from Arnala Village. In order to reach there we had to take a ferry. It was very fascinating to know and learn about the place, people and all the troubles they have to undergo to survive. We also had various kinds of activities during these days, which helped us to discover various talents



and capabilities of each other. We also visited Vasai, where we experienced the magnanimity and generous hospitality of priests and parishioners, who helped us to discover the beauty of the Vasai fort.

- Amol Thopelya (1st Year Theology)

## ADRENALINES IN IGATPURI



It is not time that makes us happy but the memories hidden within it. The 'Adrenalines' went to Igatpuri for the group building days. We stayed at Satyagiri Dominican Centre. We are grateful for the hospitality of the Priests at the Centre. The scenic beauty of Igatpuri provided a colourful backdrop to the joyful fellowship of the group. Swimming in the crystal clear water of a dam, relishing the breathtaking valleys and waterfalls, lifted up our souls to God in praise of His creation. We also visited the Buddhist Meditation Centre where we read about the life and miracle stories of Buddha imprinted on the walls with specific icons. We also learnt about the different levels of meditation practiced at the centre. The climax to our group building was spending time in Adoration in the evening. We came close to each other as we connected with the Lord.

- Libin Raj (*1st Year Theology*)

## PROPAEDEUTICS BACK PACK TO THE COASTAL ISLANDS

We decided to take a break from the hustle and bustle of Goregaon and go to a place where we can have fun, a bit of adventure and relax in some scenic beauty. Obviously we decided to take our back-packs to Gorai, Manori and Uttan the coastal Islands of Mumbai.

It's an incredible place on the coast of the Arabian Sea and a countryside harbouring a fishing community of Maharashtra. We were warmly welcomed in the parishes and houses we visited; we were served with delicious food, and obviously with a lot of fish. There are numerous churches and chapels around the place which witnesses to the devotion of the fisher-folk community.

This trip also helped us build a strong bond among ourselves, as we engaged in various activities and visited numerous places. This included boating to Vashi Island, visiting the Grand Pagoda and the East Indian Museum. We returned well bonded, like the East Indian community itself!

- Richard Chettiar (*Propaedeutic Year*)



## FR. MARCELLUS' GROUP TROOPS TO NASHIK



With enthusiasm and in good cheer we, members of Fr. Marcellus' Moderator Group, proceeded to Nashik for our group building days. We experienced a mixture of emotions during these days, as one brother had to leave for home due to the demise of a relative, while another fell sick. We stayed at Divya Daan, Salesian Philosophate in Nashik. We visited Infant Jesus Shrine, the beautiful York winery, Muktidham Jain Temple and the famous 'Gargoti Mineral Museum.' These days were truly enriching as we grew in brotherhood, getting to know each other and engaging in interesting discussions and games. The bond of fellowship was sealed through the time we spent together praying as a group, which brought us closer in a deeper way.

- Santhosh Dodabatti (1st Year Theology)

## NOT KNOWING, BUT LIVING CHRIST - MISSION EXPERIENCE



This October when politicians were busy propagandizing in the agrarian lands of Raigad, we Orientals (or 'Propaedeutics') from St Pius College went there for a more rudimentary experience. After a two day orientation at Sarva Vikas Deep by Fr. Richard Quadros, we left for various "Wadi's" in pairs of two staying, there for eight days: not so much to evangelise, as to be evangelised.

The rich who can afford to be hospitable, rarely take such a burden on themselves. But these daily wage earners, in their humble homes with floorings of cow dung and broken roofs, treated us nothing less than

God. The Sanskrit saying, "atithi devo bhava" was taken quite literally, in their community. With no fear of tomorrow, they enjoyed the present day to the fullest. They believed that there is no point in sacrificing today, for tomorrow. The future is filled with uncertainty, leaving man certain only about "Today." Why give up on today's "certainty" for tomorrow's "uncertainty"?

Living as a community came naturally to them. One of them said, that he would lose his identity if not for his community. They didn't have locks on their doors, saying, "Why would we fear our fellow humans, they ain't animals".

We came back knowing ourselves and Christ a little more. During the course of this mission experience, I doubt the Adivasi community learnt anything from us, but we undoubtedly learnt a million things about "Life" from them!

- Richard Chettiar (Propaedeutic Year)

# AZAD KAIDI – BREAKING THE PRISON WALLS WITHIN



Continuing the tradition of St. Pius X College, this year the Seminary staged, on 7th & 8th December, a Hindi Play titled “Azaad Kaidi” that had the following catch line, “A story unfolding within prison walls, but revealing the prison within us.” The plot revolved round a prison, where the prisoners are offered freedom by the jailer, if they can successfully kill a fellow prisoner, a Christian, imprisoned on charges of forced conversion. The story tantalisingly revealed what freedom meant to each prisoner but culminated with the idea of what true freedom really is- that Jesus Christ could offer, which goes beyond the boundaries of death itself! The play exposes the glorified mirage of the media, the self-seeking and selfish attitudes that our minds are clogged with, the subtle manipulations and the fleeting temptations of this world. The message of Christ in the play was loud and clear, recorded in the words of St Paul, “Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.” (1 Corinthians 3: 17).

The play was well directed by Fr Ryan Alex and actively supported by Br Cliffy Fernandes. It was filled with intense drama, suspense and moments of humour. The Actors stole the limelight with their captivating performances on stage. Along with them, all the brothers worked extremely hard despite the regular tight schedules of the seminary, supporting one another in various portfolio departments assigned to them. Thus as one united family, all contributed greatly to the grand success of the play. The Rector and Staff too were supportive throughout the entire endeavour. It was indeed a great learning and growing experience for all of us in the seminary!



We thank all our benefactors, well-wishers, families, professors, relatives and friends who continually support this project each year. Your love, generous contributions and prayers help and inspire us to give our best in all we do! May God bless us all!

- Alan Fernandes (3rd Year Theology)

The Semachar Editorial Team wishes our readers a  
*Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year 2020*

**Editorial Team:** Fr Julian Saldanha SJ, Br Michael Einstein and Br Anish Devasia

St. Pius X College - Archdiocesan Seminary, Aarey Road, Goregaon (East), Mumbai 400 063 | Tel: 29271217 / 29271560 / 29271554 / 29276891 | Email: piuscol@mtnl.net.in