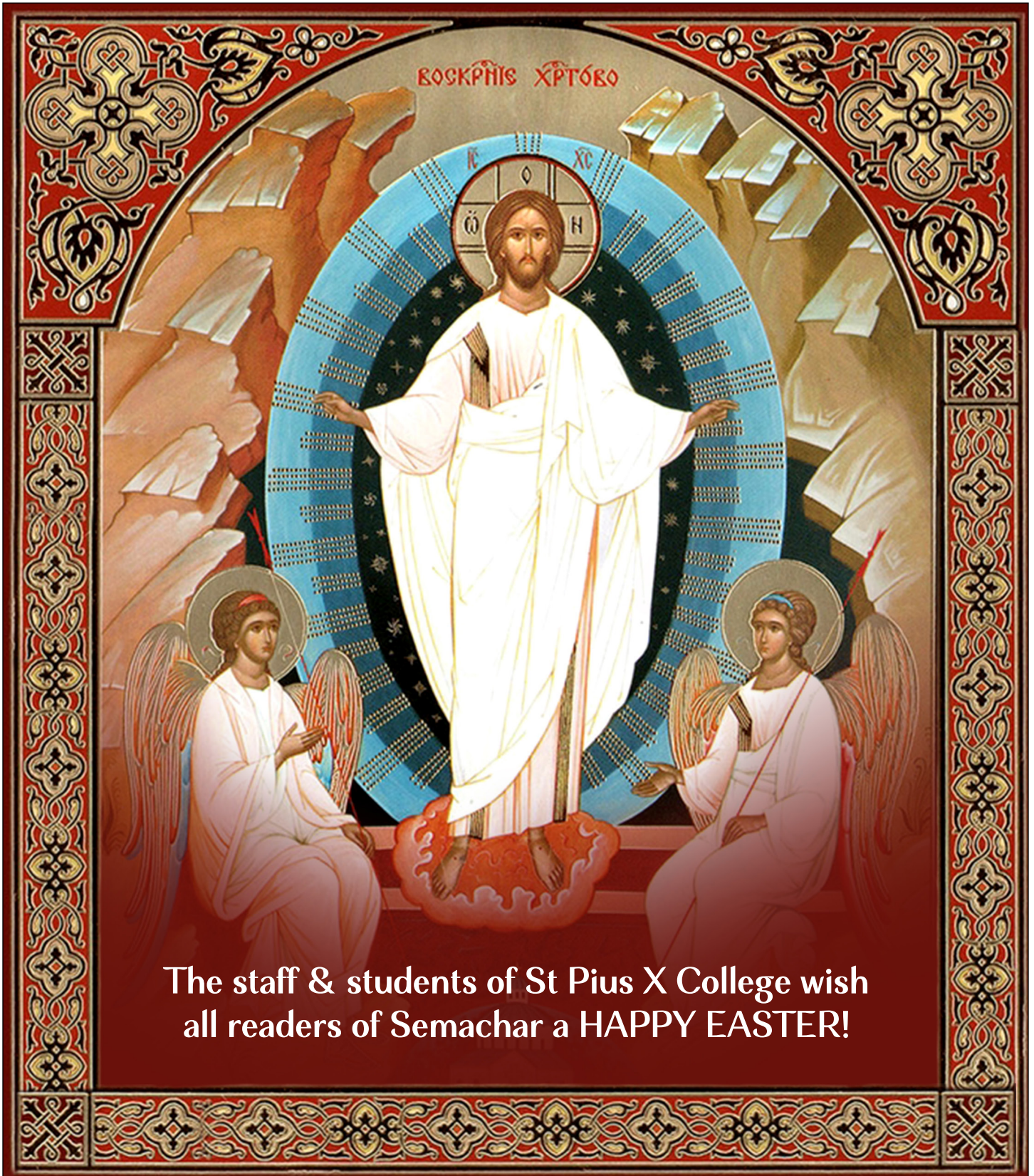




Semachar

Newsletter of St Pius X College - Archdiocesan Seminary

April 2021 | Vol XX, Issue 1



The staff & students of St Pius X College wish
all readers of Semachar a **HAPPY EASTER!**

FROM THE Rector's DESK



AN UNUSUALLY FRUITFUL YEAR 2020-2021

At long last we are coming to the end of an eventful academic year, a very unusual one indeed! We managed to get eight months of formation time, although for the first four months the program was online, and only the second half was in person. We are aware that we were very fortunate indeed as compared to others at various levels of education. The way the pandemic has hit everyone, one of the profound lessons has been to be grateful to God for small mercies!

As we look back at the first four months of online formation (Sep-Dec 2020), we realized that the success of every dimension of the program during that period depended on the electronic equipment and its network. So, the hardware was procured on a war footing, cables laid, software installed, and there we were ... staff members along with some student volunteers getting the wheels of the first term chugging! His Eminence, Cardinal Oswald Gracias, the Patron of the Seminary, celebrated on 30th August 2020 the “Online Mass of the Holy Spirit”! By the end of the first week, we had ensured that all our students had successfully plugged in, be it the brothers, candidates for the permanent diaconate and lay students from Mumbai, as well as all other seminarians from as far North as Delhi to Kottar in the South!

It did not surprise us that the success of the whole first term was dependent on the ‘connectivity issue.’ In life, we are meant to be connected to survive, to develop and to step into our futures. Just as we took all the trouble to launch out into this term by ensuring

internet connectivity, maybe we should also ensure that our connectivity with God, with one another and with our mother earth is maintained unhampered!

In contrast, the second term from January to April 2021, is happening in-person. After coming back from various parts of India in January, we were quarantined for a few days to ensure that everyone was covid-free, and then the whole community took the decision to spend the entire four months without moving out of the campus, unless for emergencies or necessary engagements. Symbolically, a ‘Noah’s ark’ experience, and quite literally too!

The dynamic of the ‘proximity issue’ also reminded us of the experience of the apostles in the cenacle, even as they waited huddled together after hearing about the death of Jesus, and the uncertainty about seeing him alive. Their proximity to each other in the upper room helped them to have solidarity with one another, coming to terms with their apprehensions, and discerning as a group the way forward. This finally led them to jointly experience the presence of the Holy Spirit as tongues of fire resting on each one of them, empowering them to go out and shoulder the responsibilities of the nascent church. There is no doubt that our proximity to every member of the community during the second term has enabled us to come to understand and empathize with the myriad difficulties that the community members faced, with courage, patience and faith. Indeed, this entire year has been a profound learning experience!

We would never wish to forget how the various adversities during this year have permitted us to build a rapport with all others who are suffering grievously due to the pandemic. Pope Francis, in *Patris Corde*, the Apostolic Letter announcing this year as a Year dedicated to St Joseph, has made an elaborate list of such persons: “Doctors, nurses, storekeepers and supermarket workers, cleaning personnel, caregivers, transport workers, men and women working to provide essential services and public safety, volunteers, priests, men and women religious”; what a debt of gratitude we owe to all of them! May the sufferings that the whole of humanity has experienced because of the virus, blend us slowly but surely into one universal family!

Fr Aniceto Pereira

THE Academic DIMENSION OF Formation DURING THE Pandemic

A STAFF MEMBER'S PERSPECTIVE:



The Covid pandemic of 2020-21 posed significant challenges to academic formation. The seminary faculty, after establishing protocols to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all, decided to start online classes from 31st August – roughly 10 weeks later than normal. Class schedules had to be thoroughly revised. To make up for the lost days we decided to hold classes six days a week and shorten the vacations.

Steps were taken to ensure that online classes went on smoothly. Laptops, cameras, Zoom software, and internet lines had to be upgraded. We appointed a couple of representatives from each class to function as “online beadles” to assist professors with online teaching and to coordinate with their classmates who were following the classes online. Seminarians were posted in parishes or institutions with adequate resources for online learning.

A SEMINARIAN'S PERSPECTIVE:



August 31st marked the beginning of the academic year 2020-2021. There was an immense change concerning our academic formation which had to be done online because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Keeping this in mind the seminary staff appointed two of us seminarians per batch to play the challenging role of online beadles for their respective batches. We, the online beadles, were given a detailed brief about the interface of Zoom and Google Meet to accomplish the tasks assigned to us.

It was a challenge in the beginning because this was a new venture for us students but with proper coordination, we were able to identify issues and problems and tackle them accordingly.

Online learning comes with its distinctive challenges: professors had to adapt to new technology and teaching methods, students had to battle “Zoom-fatigue” and cope with limited access to libraries and reference material. A major challenge was conducting the Comprehensive exams for the B.Th. – the first-ever after our affiliation to Jnana Deepa, Pune. We were able to link up with panellists in Pune and our seminarians located in different cities, and conduct the exams online with hardly a hitch. This successful experience gave us the confidence to conduct the “Ad Auds” (confession exams) online a month later.

At the start of the year, we had some apprehensions about how the year would unfold. In retrospect, things have gone much better than we expected. Despite the constraints of the lockdown, there is an overall sense of satisfaction among students and staff. Kudos to our community for its spirit of sacrifice and generosity which ensured that the impact of the pandemic on academics was kept to a minimum.

Fr Andrew Aranha (Director of Theology)

One of our important objectives was to help the other students, who were attending online classes from their respective parishes and dioceses, to get used to this new way of learning. To serve this objective well, a detailed survey was conducted to find out various details about the students – their study environment, information regarding their study device, connectivity issues and any other obstacles that they face, and so on. On receiving this data, the team of staff and students were able to come up with creative solutions to tackle these issues.

All the lectures were recorded and saved to help those students who may have missed out on anything due to connectivity issues. That’s not all, class notes and reference materials for various courses were regularly uploaded on the respective class drives.

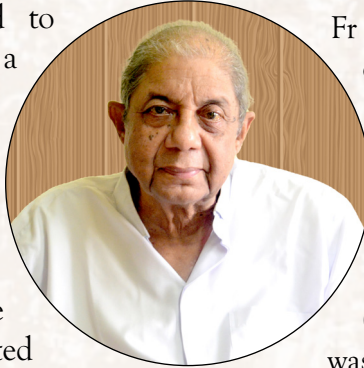
Overall, the work of the online beadles was challenging but it brought out the pastoral dimension within us i.e., how to stay connected with our fellow brethren and reach out to those in need.

Br Ivan Kamble (2nd Year Philosophy)

THE *Spiritual* DIMENSION OF *Formation* DURING THE *Pandemic*

During the past two years, we lost two Spiritual Directors who were much loved and respected; Frs. Jerome D'Souza SJ and Roland Fialho. The seminary was lucky to welcome Fr Lisbert D'Souza SJ, who had been the Provincial of the Bombay province and Assistant to the General for several years. We were also glad to have Fr Michael D'Cunha, who was a co-pastor in three parishes and also the Spiritual Director of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal of Bombay.

On account of the lockdown, the seminary could only start online classes towards the end of August. The newcomers to the seminary were invited to choose a Spiritual Director. Each of the Spiritual Directors had around 20 seminarians to guide. We got in touch with the seminarians we were spiritually directing through the telephone and video calls. Online spiritual direction was quite a challenge as there were connectivity issues. Some of the brothers



were at home, some in a parish and some in a common room. In general, the brothers were happy to have someone to listen to them, empathize with them and also guide and help them discover what God was saying to them.

For the Spiritual Conferences and the Recollection, we had to arrange for the preachers to speak online. Fr Glenford Lowe SDB, drawing on his varied experiences, shared some wonderful insights with the community.

Since the retreats at the beginning of the academic year were cancelled it was decided to have a mini-retreat beginning on 13th February and ending on 17th (Ash Wednesday). Bishop John Rodrigues was kind enough to agree to give the retreat to the whole house. His talks were much appreciated by the brothers. The retreat ended with the Eucharist and the imposition of ashes.

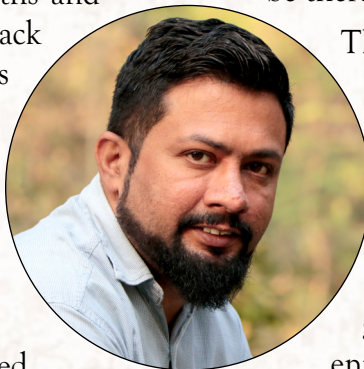
Fr Caesar D'Mello

(Coordinator of the Spirituality Programme,
Spiritual Director)

THE *Pandemic* EXPERIENCE FROM THE *Perspective* OF THE WORKING STAFF

As the complete lockdown began in March 2020, we were clueless about how should we deal with this strange life situation as working staff in the seminary. Our jobs, our families were deeply affected. Should we remain here in the seminary for 2 months and then be at home for 15 days? Come back to the seminary again for 2-3 months and then be at home again for 2 weeks? Under prudent guidance, we made a cycle of rotation assigning 2-3 workers from each department viz. watchmen, gardening, house-keeping to come and stay in the seminary in turns.

Slowly the struggle began. Being concerned with our job, being concerned about family, being concerned about the seminary; we tried to balance these three concerns in our life. We continued the same for 6-7 months making sacrifices and being away from home and our neighbourhood



for the good of our family and the good of our seminary. Being away from home at a stretch and being with our families for a brief moment was a new experience for some of us. However, we struggled to be there for our families when needed.

The New Year 2021 has begun and we still are living in fear and concern. Throughout the pandemic, we are indeed grateful to the priests and seminarians here in the seminary for they have supported us, shared their love with us in making us feel comfortable and loved. They have given us our space for staying and for some entertainment which gave us a home-like experience. We find joy in our work because of these concrete experiences and we happily believe that the seminary is our second home.

Mr Ivan D'Cunha (Admin Supervisor)

DIAMOND JUBILEE YEAR – *The Curtain Falls*

St Pius X Seminary celebrated the 60th anniversary of its inauguration on 5th October 2020. Many Bishops, Priests, Religious and Laity proudly call St Pius X Seminary their Alma Mater and they have gone on to play important role in the Church in India and the Universal Church at large. All this was only made possible through the pioneering zeal and vision of the late Cardinal Valerian Gracias, the first Cardinal of Bombay and India. This great soul planted the seed that has taken deeper and stronger roots that have eventually bloomed into a great tree that produces richness and abundance.

For the closing of the Jubilee celebrations, Cardinal Oswald Gracias celebrated the Holy Eucharist in the Seminary chapel which was streamed online. Owing to the pandemic, the celebrations were a private affair. In his homily, the Cardinal drew inspiration from the new Encyclical, 'Fratelli Tutti' and preached about the pressing need for solidarity with all humankind especially during these present times.



After the Eucharistic celebration, during the festive meal, the Rector of seminary, Fr Aniceto Pereira, spoke of how the COVID-19 pandemic had interrupted the entire world order and also disrupted our Diamond Jubilee plans. However, it also presented opportunities for deeper reflections and transformation. The Jubilee closing was not a grand affair as it promised to be but it was a blessed one.

We thank Almighty God for the blessed and fruitful 60 years of our Seminary. Through the intercession of our beloved patron, St Pius X, we pray that the Lord continues his blessing on the Seminary so that it continues to nurture holy priests, religious and lay faithful. We also thank God for all our benefactors, supporters and families who through their prayers and support have made this day possible.

Br Santan Fernandes
(1st Year Theology)

A HEARTY *Welcome*



FR LISBERT D'SOUZA SJ

joins the staff this year as a Spiritual Director and a Professor of Philosophy. He has recently returned to India from Rome where he served as Counsellor to the Jesuit Superior General.



FR MICHAEL D'CUNHA

joins the staff this year as a Spiritual Director and a Professor of Sacred Scripture. He is also Spiritual Director of the Bombay Service of Communion and English Council in the Catholic Charismatic Renewal of Bombay and also part of the Healing and Deliverance ministry of the Archdiocese of Bombay.



FR GAVIN LOPES

joins the staff this year as a Moderator and a Professor of Systematic Theology after being deputed for higher studies. He has completed his Licentiate and Doctorate in Systematic Theology at the Pontificia Università Urbaniana in Rome.

ORDINATIONS TO THE *Diaconate* 2020

Amidst the uncertain pandemic, St Pius X seminary brought a ray of joy especially in the lives of Br Denvel Nunes and Br Cliffy Fernandes as they received their Diaconate Ordination on 1st November 2020, on the feast day of all Saints. These most blessed moments were a joy even for their family members and for the whole Archdiocese of Bombay.

In preparation for their diaconate, the 3rd year theology students organized a prayer service a day prior, to pray for them and also for all those who were once part of their journey towards priesthood. That evening was special not only for the two candidates but also for all of us as they made their profession of faith which means to be faithful to the teachings of the Catholic Church and her magisterium. They took the oath of fidelity to their Bishop and the promise of perpetual celibacy. Fr Aniceto, the Rector of the seminary also addressed



to all present especially to the Ordinandi about the significance of this step in their lives.

The mass for the ordination of the Diaconate was celebrated by Bishop Emeritus Percival Fernandez along with the concelebrants Bishop Emeritus Bosco Penha and the seminary staff. The theme for the diaconate mass was “Here I am, send me” to indicate their zeal for Jesus and the Holy Mother Church. Just as they were called out of love, so too, they are now sent to spread the love in which they were called.

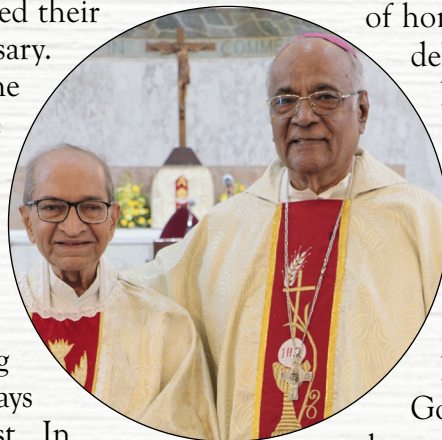
We wish hearty congratulations to our newly ordained Deacons as they continue their ministry and prepare for their sacerdotal ordinations. We ask the intercession of St Pius X and all the Saints as we pray that they may become the radiance of God’s light to all the people they encounter in their life.

Br Ambrose Haruk (1st Year Philosophy)

be kind, be kind, be kind! (60TH SACERDOTAL ORDINATION ANNIVERSARY)

“*The priesthood is the love of the heart of Jesus*”. Reflecting on these words by St John Vianney, on 21st December 2020, Rev. Bp Percival Fernandez along with Fr Bento Cardozo celebrated their 60th Sacerdotal Ordination Anniversary. Remarkably, they were among the very first group of priests who were ordained in St Pius X Seminary sixty years ago by then-Cardinal Valerian Gracias.

To commemorate this special event, a solemn mass was held in the main chapel of St Pius X Seminary. During the mass, Bp Percy reminisced the days gone by as a seminarian and priest. In his eloquent and edifying sermon, he stressed the need for us as Ambassadors of Christ to infuse more ‘kindness’ in our ministry. “*The gospels,*” he said, “*overflow with acts of kindness performed by Jesus. Therefore, we as priests and seminarians, should not just preach the Gospel, but live it through acts of kindness*”.



After the Eucharist, there was a fellowship meal that was attended by the seminary staff and students along with Bp Percy and Fr Bento being the guest of honour. The speech at this gathering was delivered by resident professor Fr John Barretto who felicitated the two senior alumni by highlighting their personal qualities which exemplify unceasing pastoral zeal and commitment. He observed that God gives each one of us the gift of life and what we do with that life is our gift back to Him. Therefore, he especially thanked God for the contributions of the two honourees to the Archdioceses of Bombay and the people of God. We pray that the light of Christ may continue to shine through them so that they may inspire enthusiasm and enhance our lives as Ambassadors for Christ.

Br Sunil Godinho (2nd Year Theology)

Deacons SHARE ABOUT THEIR Diaconate experience AND THEIR Ordination logos

My diaconate ministry at St Pius X Church, Mulund has been an enjoyable and fruitful experience. Even though I had only 2.5 months of diaconate ministry, I have learned a lot from my parish team and the ministries that were given to me. The administration of sacraments - Baptism, Matrimony, and the catechesis to various groups with the support and assistance of the entire parish team has been an experience of Holiness and has shown me what a true Shepherd should be. I have chosen 'The Lord is my Shepherd' (Ps 23:1) as my motto as I have experienced Jesus as my Shepherd at various points of my life. Throughout my life, He has been my Shepherd in the form of my parents bringing me in faith and helping me to have a good moral life, and in seminary formation, he has been my Shepherd in the form of the priests as staff



members and especially the brothers in the seminary with whom I have shared most of my memorable time; my brothers have been guiding and protecting me and being the comforting shoulder where I can pour out my whole self. I have had a wonderful experience of watching my fellow brothers being ordained as priests, some fellowship meal, singing and enjoying to the core of our hearts thanking God for the gift of brotherhood and the Christ experience through my fellow brothers.

As I venture out in my priestly ministry, I too want to imitate Jesus and try to be a Shepherd to my people remembering the words of my mom- 'Remember who you were and who has called you; to be always available to the poor and the needy just as Jesus the Good shepherd has been to you'.

Deacon Denvel Nunes

Ever since I have joined the seminary, I have only seen myself grow personally, spiritually, academically and pastorally. These past few months have been a culmination of all that I have learnt and experienced these past 8 years. After my diaconate ordination, I continued my ministry at St Blaise Church, Amboli. I was familiar with the Parish team and few parishioners who were part of various associations, so I felt very comfortable involving myself in various parish ministries. Though there were limited parish activities and participation due to the COVID-19 pandemic, I was still able to administer sacraments in the parish. It has been a humbling experience to be part of the families receiving the sacraments through pre-baptismal catechesis, pre-nuptial enquires and confirmation classes. At each step, I was accompanied and supported by my parish team, who were truly instrumental in preparing me for my priesthood by



allowing me to be a part of their portfolios. My interactions with people during the novenas to St Blaise, parish feast program, mission trip and after every mass has also been enriching.

While the experience was inspiring, I did realise I was not spending enough time on personal reflection. That's how I took time to reflect on what I have been doing and what kind of priest I would want to be. That's when the image of Jesus calming the storms popped up in my mind. Being the hyperactive person that I am, I could find peace only in Jesus' calming presence.

Therefore, the motto I chose for my priesthood is 'Be Still' (Mk 4:39) with the logo of Jesus calming my restless heart. As a priest, I would always strive to experience this stillness in my ministry and also allow people to experience this stillness through our interactions.

Deacon Cliffy Fernandes

You shall be missed, FR JEROME

The reason I chose Fr Jerome as my Spiritual director was that I saw in him prophetic zeal, a fire that was visible in his words. His speech was fearless and he spoke with an innate authority. From my orientation year, till I last met him during Regency, I have found a great mentor in him. He helped me to look within and his guidance motivated me to bring about some



major reforms in my lifestyle and thought process. He taught me how to handle my personality and how to live a life rooted in Christ. Although he has departed from this earth, his teachings will accompany me throughout my life. Thank you, Fr Jerome.

Br Alton Extros (1st Year Theology)

Taking the first steps towards Priesthood



Angelo Carlos Silveira
Archdiocese of Bombay



"You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last." John 15:16

My parents often told me that when I was born, a nun (who was also a doctor) gave me to my Dad and said "See that he becomes a priest". This was the first sign that God had given. My vision of the Priesthood is to work for the poorest of the poor.

Dashiell Fonseca

Our Lady of Remedy Church,
Poinsur, Kandivli (W)
Archdiocese of Bombay



When Jesus turned and saw them following He said to them "What are you looking for?" ... He said to them, "Come and See." John 1:38-39

The completion of studies in Physiotherapy and progression into professional practice had life settled. It's through the discernment of God's Love and Graces in my life was a step taken towards formation in the priesthood.

Alwyn Correa

St Francis Xavier Church,
Panvel
Archdiocese of Bombay



You did not choose me but I chose you. John 15:16

There was a desire to become a priest since childhood. As I completed my B. Com, and started working the desire for priesthood faded away. However, at every Eucharist during elevation, there was a feeling that one day I would raise the host and chalice. I admit I still don't know the road forward, but God knows it and that is sufficient.

Angel Silva Patil

Our Lady of The Sea Church,
Uttan
Archdiocese of Bombay



"I am with you always." Matthew 28:20

I always wanted to do something for my people. From helping in the Church and working at the House of Charity I felt in my heart that Jesus is calling me to be a priest and so I said Yes to His call.

Aldin Koli

Our Lady of Sea Parish,
Madh Island
Archdiocese of Bombay



"Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching people." Luke 5:10

As a child, I had a desire to become a priest. As a youth, I was active in various associations of our parish like PPC, SSVP, SCC, Choir, etc. As a priest, I would like to bring people especially youth closer to God by getting involved in their lives.

Albi Jastin
Diocese of Mysore



“Abide in me” John 15:5

My vocation began within my family. Then, as an altar server was the fortuity, that sowed the seed of call. And one charismatic retreat prospected me to join the Diocese of Mysore, after my S.S.L.C. My vision for the priesthood is – “To be sensitive in sustaining the faith formation of self and others.”

Praveen Kumar. S
Diocese of Mysore



*“Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons. You received without paying; give without pay”
Matthew 10:8*

Since childhood, I had a desire to become a priest. The Lord has chosen me not despite my weakness, but because of my weakness.

CALLED IN GRACE, FORMED IN LOVE, SENT TO SERVE

(Ordinations to the Priesthood 2020)

On December 3rd, 2020, after a long wait of about 8 months, His Eminence Oswald Cardinal Gracias ordained six of our deacons as priests for the Archdiocese of Bombay. This year was special since they were ordained in the Chapel which incidentally was only the second ordination ceremony held there, the first being exactly 60 years back – the first batch to be ordained in 1960. On account of the pandemic, only close family members could witness the ordinations; however, it was streamed online for the benefit of others. Those ordained were Frs Clifton Mendonca, Cedric Rosario, Godfrey Malu, Joseph David, Kelvin Santis and Frankie Crasto and their motto for the day was *“Called in Grace, Formed in Love, Sent to Serve”*.

During the mass, the Cardinal spoke on the new facet of ministry that the newly ordained will now be

exposed to due to the pandemic. He referred to them as ‘COVID-19 priests’ and stressed the words of Pope Francis i.e. ‘to have the smell of the sheep’, emphasizing the need to visit parishioners and keep in touch with them. Before their ordination, during the prayer service for the Ordinandis, Fr Aniceto Pereira, the Rector of the seminary, addressed the Ordinandis and asked them to embrace this moment of the pandemic to help them become better persons so that they can serve the people in their ministry to the fullest.

Though it was not a very grand ceremony, yet for the newly ordained priests, it was a moment of joy. We pray that God may bless them in their ministry so that they may use their talents for the service of all whom they encounter in their lives, thus being true Ambassadors for Christ.

Br Conrad Pereira (1st Year Theology)





A day before the complete lockdown announced, I had begun my journey to my hometown Bangalore. The local police in anticipation of the lockdown had closed the borders 10 hours early and restricted the entry of vehicles. Our bus ended its journey at Pune, and I was stranded in an unfamiliar place with no transportation. With no help at hand, our next option was to look for trains and to my surprise, there was the last train running from Chandigarh to Bangalore which had begun its journey the previous day and would be stopping at Pune station for few minutes. A government bus was passing by, which helped me to reach the railway station and I got a train ticket and journeyed home safe and sound. As I reflect on this experience, I am reminded of words from Prophet Isaiah 41:10–Do not fear, for I am with you. God guided me home safe and sound.

Br Edward Harris
(2nd Year Philosophy)



Not having the boys of Our Lady's Home on campus, meaning that the regent's outreach to them required a fresh approach and adoption of novel techniques. Thankfully, various communication mediums such as voice and video calls, WhatsApp, and YouTube provided a means to interact with the boys' families; extending to them a listening ear in the face of their challenges and motivating them to stay-put, with the hope of a better tomorrow.

A healthy environment of camaraderie shared with the residential-staff at Our Lady's Home and neighbours at the parish and convent, made for smooth sailing in these testing times. The regency year offered glimpses of not only pastoral, institutional and spiritual challenges but also the immense joys and fulfilment of ministerial priesthood awaiting me. This experience has taught me to be thankful in every circumstance because all things work together for good, to them that love God.

Br Kenneth Pinto
(Regent)



When the lockdown was announced, I was at the seminary trying to go back home but unfortunately, I couldn't go back. I was stuck in the seminary along with a few other brothers. Initially, we would talk, discuss and have fun and during that difficult period, we supported each other and shared each other's sufferings. Eventually, with much difficulty, I reached home safe and sound. I experienced back home that the people who fulfil their basic needs on daily labour work were badly affected. It was also really challenging for me to attend classes from home. But by the grace of God, everything fell in a right place. This pandemic has helped me to maintain my faith at all times in God. It changed my perspective towards one another, to be kind, compassionate and merciful to others.

Br Lawrence Murmu
(3rd Year Theology)

Stories of Faith and Hope



My entire family was at home during the lockdown. The first few days, we felt like prisoners not allowed to move about. The biggest challenge was the Wi-Fi, as my son and daughter had to use it for their respective office work and we had to use it for our own needs; It taught us to forgive each other for our frailties, As a family, we started to have more meals together, praying the virtual family rosary together. We took care of the needs of our maids even of those maids who had worked for us earlier by providing them rations and some finance as well to take care of some of their overhead expenses. Along with the ushers from our parish, we referred some families including families of other faith who had lost their jobs and required finance and groceries. This was funded by various members of our small Christian communities.

Mr Glenn Saldanha
2nd Year Theology
(Candidate for
Permanent Diaconate)



The COVID-19 Pandemic will be remembered over generations. Life has not yet been back to normal since March 2020, when a sudden lockdown was announced and everything came to a standstill. The once berserk Bombay went into a dead calm. The honking of crazy cars was replaced by the sound of chirping birds. Life changed overnight!

There was no more running around, all my activities came to a standstill. Amidst all the uncertainties; I saw the hand of God in all this. Maybe God wanted that sometimes, somewhere, we slow down. I could devote more of my time to reading and relaxing as this had occupied a back-seat. Though the churches were closed, God never seemed far away. My pensive time was spent penning down poems and lines of lyrics. The lockdown also made me more tech-savvy. The lockdown was indeed a blessing in disguise!

Ms Josephine Fernandes
3rd Year Theology
(Lay Student)



The awareness of COVID-19 was resounding in the background, but the sudden announcement of the lockdown awakened me to this pandemic reality, taking away my peace, serenity while distorting my ordinary rhythm of life and work. Each day uncertainties, fear, and insecurities crept in. Confinement left us with no Sacraments; no goods and no work; with minimum means to manage our mission and apostolate. At the same time, God was close at hand for we could discover new means to meet our needs and also to reach out to others.

We saw and experienced the pain and suffering of people as well as God at work in those persons who put themselves at risk for saving others. Amidst the disaster, we felt called to recognize, accept reality, practice solidarity, and live in hope that is capable of transmitting strength, courage, and meaning to those under our care.

Sr Jean Sonia D'souza
1st Year Theology
(Religious of Mary Immaculate)



1. Crib inauguration on 21st December 2020
2. Conferral of the Ministry of Acolyte by Bp Bosco Penha on 6th February 2021
3. Conferral of the Ministry of Lectors by Bp Bosco Penha on 6th February 2021
4. Newcomers' Day celebration on 7th February 2021
5. Rite of Candidacy conferred by Bp Percival Fernandes on 13th February 2021
6. Blood donation drive held on 16th March 2021

IN FOND Remembrance



FR OSCAR ROZARIO served in the Seminary from 1996 to 2004, as Spiritual Director, Minister of the House, Director of the month's retreat for priestly candidates.



BR DESMOND DIAS served in the Seminary from 1967 to 1973. Among other duties, he planted scores of fruit trees and others.



FR ANICETO NAZARETH served in the Seminary from 1972 to 2002 as Liturgy and Music co-ordinator. As a professor, he taught courses on Liturgy, Music and Human Sexuality.



We wish to express our gratitude to Br Michael Einstein & Br Anish Devasia the outgoing editors and to the Archdiocese of Bombay -  **AMCF** • CATHOLIC COMMUNICATION CENTRE for designing all the issues of Semachar.

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