



Sambachar

Newsletter of St Pius X College - Archdiocesan Seminary

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Let us work and pray for an
entirely Synodal Church



Synod
2021
2024

For a synodal Church
communion | participation | mission

FROM THE RECTOR'S DESK

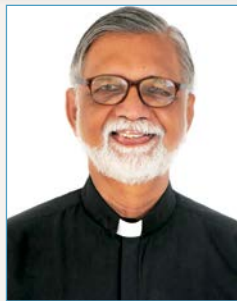
SEMINARY FORMATION FOR A SYNODAL CHURCH

The Church universal is eagerly awaiting the first phase of the Synod on Synodality to take place in the Vatican this October. Its *Instrumentum Laboris (IL)* indicates a rich reflection emerging from the preceding continental stage, which calls for a thorough review of every realm of ecclesial life, including its institutions. Concerning Seminaries, the *IL* states: “The promotion of a culture of synodality implies the renewal of the current seminary curriculum and the formation of teachers and professors of theology, so that there is a clearer and more decisive orientation towards formation for a life of communion, mission and participation. Formation for a more genuinely synodal spirituality is at the heart of the renewal of the Church.” (*IL* 59)

I dare say that the heart of formation in a diocese is a diocesan seminary wherever there is one, like in our Archdiocese. It is an institution in which those who are to be shepherds after God’s own heart are formed, in order to lead the building up of the kingdom of God in the diocese, along with the religious and the lay faithful. Thus, it is this very heart of formation that is called to renew itself in the light of the synodal priorities of communion, participation and mission that the *Instrumentum Laboris* is pointedly highlighting. It attempts to broaden our global outlook on formation in general, and to lead us to explore specific implications for seminary formation.

In No. 58, the *IL* further explains that the “need for formation is not limited to the updating of content, but has an integral scope, affecting all the abilities and dispositions of the person, including mission orientation, the ability to relate and build community, willingness to listen spiritually, and familiarity with personal and community discernment”. In other words, as against the traditional understanding of Seminaries as institutions established “far from the madding crowd”, they are being challenged to open the doors and windows in order to permit the integration of positive energies from all around to enrich the dynamic of its formation itinerary, as well as to permit a more efficacious mission of the trainees to the environment outside. This vision of a profound reciprocity challenges Seminaries to allow for a better osmosis between the Seminary and the society that surrounds it.

The first level at which this osmosis could be made operative in a seminary is at the level of the community



of teachers, which traditionally is made up of priests. Could we consider possible advantages in opening up the group of teachers in the Seminary to a wider circle? Without lowering the bar with respect to the required academic qualifications, there may be a great advantage in recruiting teachers who are religious women, as well as men and women from among the lay members of Christ’s faithful. Students

who have been guided by teachers from such a variety of backgrounds will surely learn to respect and interact healthily with a wide variety of persons in order to create bonds of friendship that will contribute to greater success in their synodal mission.

The second level at which this osmosis can be fruitfully operative is that of the community of students. Traditionally, all the students are candidates for the priesthood. For many years, St Pius College has opened its portals to day scholars greatly interested in the study of theology, namely, religious women, Candidates for the Permanent Diaconate, and lay men and women. The presence of day scholars has had a very salutary effect on the seminarians, and day scholars studying alongside the seminarians have been helped to have a better understanding of the personalities of seminarians, making future collaboration between priests, religious and the lay faithful far easier. This interaction, though laced with challenging experiences on both sides, has been appreciated as one of the unique features of our Seminary. Perhaps we need to find ways in which St Pius College, situated in a diocese with a very large population, can accommodate the seminary time table to facilitate a greater intake of day scholars who will contribute efficaciously to the mission of the Church.

These challenges may seem daunting, but the more difficult they may seem, the greater will be the level of faith in the Holy Spirit that we need to muster, so that He who is the protagonist of the synodal journey may lead the Church in the direction in which it must move in the contemporary world. As the *IL* in No. 17 explains: “The experience (of synodality) is that of a horizon of hope opening up for the Church, a clear sign of the presence and action of the Spirit that guides it through history on its path towards the Kingdom (cf. LG 5)”.

Fr. Aniceto Pereira
Rector, St Pius X College



THE BEGINNING OF A NEW ACADEMIC YEAR

MASS OF HOLY SPIRIT & LECTIO BREVIS

The new academic year 2023-2024 at St Pius X Seminary commenced with the Mass of the Holy Spirit on 03rd June. The theme chosen for this year is, 'Made Salt and Light by the Spirit.' The mass was celebrated by Cardinal Oswald Gracias and concelebrated by the priests of the seminary. The Cardinal spoke on the importance of the seminary formation in the life of a future priest and urged the seminarians to have a clear vision of what God wants of them. He also reminded them that we are the Church and at the same time Co-builders of the church. The homily was followed by the Oath of Office taken by the Rector and the staff promising fidelity to the teachings of Christ, His Church and its Magisterium. A pledge was then taken by the students to remain faithful to the Gospel values. The program also included the Lectio Brevis given by Fr Frazer Mascarenhas, SJ, the former principal of St Xavier's College and a much sought after speaker. Fr Frazer spoke on 'Christian



Discipleship: Lessons from the life and death of Fr Stan Swamy'. Fr Frazer was a close associate of Fr Stan Swamy. Fr Frazer recounted his experience with Fr Stan, shared the vocation of Fr. Stan towards the welfare of tribals. The speaker highlighted the need to focus on the works of justice and to work for a better understanding of the doctrines of the Church, so that we are more tolerant toward people of other faiths.

Br. Joywin Thadavious
2nd Year Philosophy

FIRST STEPS TOWARDS PRIESTHOOD

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My vision of priesthood is to die to myself and live in Jesus to build up the Body of Christ; uniting the People of God in love and service.

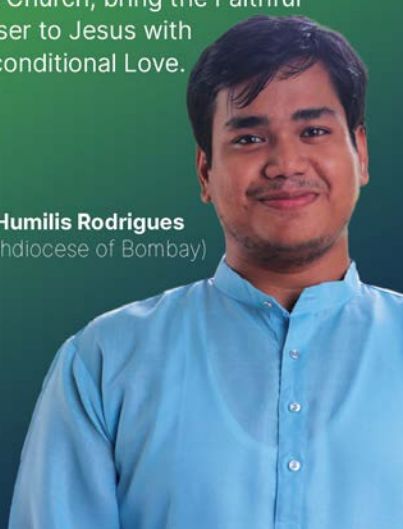
Br. Austin Mathews
(Diocese of Poona)



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Be a gentle, humble shepherd of Christ to serve His flock, through Jesus' ministry in communion with the Church; bring the Faithful closer to Jesus with unconditional Love.

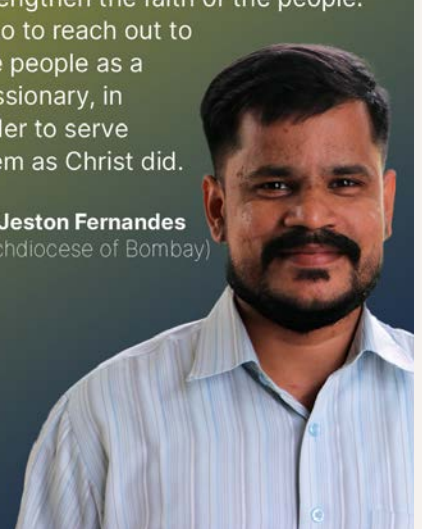
Br. Humilis Rodrigues
(Archdiocese of Bombay)



“

My vision of Priesthood is to have full knowledge of scriptures and magisterium so as to preach and strengthen the faith of the people. Also to reach out to the people as a missionary, in order to serve them as Christ did.

Br. Jeston Fernandes
(Archdiocese of Bombay)



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My vision of priesthood is to teach, preach and reach out to People of God. Romans 10:13
– For “whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved.”

Br. Lawrence D’Cunha
(Archdiocese of Bombay)



“

My vision of priesthood is to serve the people of God with my whole heart and soul and so bring them closer to God.

Br. Lawrence D’Souza
(Diocese of Vasai)



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My vision of priesthood is to inspire and encourage others to lead a life of faith and purpose.

Br. Rainel Lobo
(Archdiocese of Bombay)



THE IGNATIAN RETREAT A TRANSFORMATIVE EXPERIENCE

The Ignatian retreat, renowned for its variety of Spiritual Exercises, provided a profound opportunity for ten of us, Third Year theologians, to embark on a journey of spiritual growth and self-discovery. It commenced on 19th April 2023, under the compassionate guidance of Fr. James Dabhi SJ, within the tranquil beauty of Kotagiri, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, adorned with trekking trails and valleys that encouraged contemplation.

The retreat, spread over the course of thirty days, was divided into three parts, involving silent meditative prayer that challenged the participants to spend five hours in prayer each day. The time spent in the celebration of the Eucharist is not included in these five hours.

During the initial phase, Father James skilfully directed us to explore our past, leading us to a deeper understanding of ourselves as individuals. Through this profound process, we discovered our unique identities and experienced healing of long-held inner wounds.

In the second and third parts of the retreat, the ten of us, were presented with the sacred task of encountering Jesus Christ through His Infancy,



public life and ministry, and His passion, death, and resurrection. These reflective contemplations allowed us to develop a profound understanding of the life of Jesus, drawing us closer to Him and fortifying our spiritual connection throughout our faith journey.

The retreat proved to be an enriching and truthful experience, laying a strong foundation for our priestly journey. The peaceful environment, united with the Spiritual Exercises, served as a transformative experience, guiding us towards a deeper understanding of ourselves, God, and God’s divine will.

Br. Anand Patil
3rd Year Theology



WELCOMING THE NEWBIES

NEW COMERS DAY



The St. Pius X family gave a warm welcome to the new members through an event called “Make a difference RRR,” which represents being Real, Radical, and Revolutionary. Making a difference requires being authentic and standing out from the ordinary, embodying a radical mindset. To be revolutionary means initiating a significant change within and beyond. The program kicked off with a short prayer led by Dn. Jins, followed by an icebreaker activity centered around inspiring individuals who have positively impacted lives. The newcomers

expressed their talents through meaningful skits and mimes. The cultural department arranged various enjoyable activities for both newcomers and the rest of the community. Fr. Aniceto Pereira, the guiding figure of the St. Pius X Family, extended another warm welcome to the newcomers at this special gathering. Finally, the event came to a close with a concluding prayer led by Dn. Siljo.

Br. Anald

1st Year Philosophy

WELCOMING OUR NEW NON-TEACHING STAFF

We gladly welcome Sr. Esther Anthony to St. Pius X community. She belongs to the Poor Sisters of Our Lady congregation. As of today, completes 38yrs of religious life and has rendered her service at various areas and levels. She had been a Superior, Teacher, Caretaker etc. She will be part of the non-teaching



staff and will be helping us with the arrangements for the liturgical celebrations. All the best. Wishing you our prayers and best wishes. Welcome to St. Pius X Community.



LOOK GOOD, FEEL GREAT, SPORTS AT ANY RATE

SPORTS INAUGURATION DAY



The awaited day of the sports inauguration ceremony finally arrived at St. Pius X seminary on June 30 at 4 p.m. The program began with a march past of all four teams from the porch, which was followed by a short prayer by Br. Sanjay. Rector Fr. Aniceto lighted the torch and handed it over to the team captains, and they relayed it. Then Fr. Anthony, the sports moderator, broke the suspense and announced the theme for this year, “Look Good, Feel Great, Sports at Any Rate”, the sports board’s name, ‘Sportify’, and four team names for the current year: Red Pandas, Yellow

Sea Horses, Green Turtles, and Blue Whales. MCs of the day, Brs. Ashwin and Edward, and DJ of the day, Br. Clinton, entertained everyone with their witty performances and music respectively. Finally, the judge of the day, Fr. Andrew, revealed the results of the various competitions held. The winners of the Name and Fame competition were also announced. The program came to an end with our seminary anthem.

Br. Rejith
1st Year Philosophy

ARISE, GO PROCLAIM AND SERVE!

MINISTRY OF LECTOR & ACOLYTE:

Lector means reader and through this ministry the candidates are called to grow in love for the word of God and proclaim the word from the Altar with faithfulness and conviction; while the

ministry of the Acolytes calls one to serve at the altar by assisting the celebrants. The ministries of Lector and Acolyte, though once called ‘minor ministries’, are considered very important in the





Church, specially for those who are aspiring to become priests.

On 13th July, Bishop Percival Fernandez installed seven of our seminarians from the 1st year Theology in the ministry of Lector; and eight 2nd year Theology students, including one candidate for the permanent diaconate, in the ministry of Acolytes.

The theme was **“Arise, go proclaim and serve.”** This theme calls us to arise from whatever situation we are in, to go out into the world and proclaim Christ’s merciful love, to all whom we meet. Bishop Percival in his homily wonderfully elaborated on

the theme and specially stressed the importance of being a man of prayer.

Pope Francis constantly reminds us that all ministries in the church are ministries of service. Our brothers who received this ministry, though belonging to different dioceses, yet are united by one mission of Christ. St Pius seminary rejoices as this event gives a hope for priests who will serve the church as its ministers in future.

Br. David D’Souza
1st Year Theology

CALLED TO BE THE INSTRUMENTS OF HIS LOVE

CANDIDATES TO THE PRIESTHOOD



The 20th of July, 2023 was indeed a momentous day at St. Pius X College, Mumbai. Thirteen seminarians studying in the 3rd Year of Theology were accepted as candidates to the priesthood through the solemn rite of candidacy. The rite was administered by Bishop Percival Fernandez in the early hours of the day during the celebration of the Holy Eucharist.

The theme for the day chosen by the candidates was, **“To be instruments of His love”**.

On the eve of this service, the seminarians were vested in their cassocks. The vesting was carried out at a contemplative prayer service aimed at preparing them spiritually for the rite. The service was aptly prepared, drawing parallels of the cassocks presented



with the passing on of the cloak of prophet Elijah to the prophet Elisha, moments before the former was taken up in the skies in chariots of fire. The candidates were led to pray for an outpouring of similar graces that were bestowed on prophet Elisha in the said event.

The ceremony offered a two-fold joy to the candidates. It marked, not only their achievement of the final milestone before Diaconate (scheduled

next year) but also celebrated completion of several years of formation, inching closer to their ordination. This joy was fittingly encapsulated in the vote of thanks proposed by Br. Ashton Pinto where he expressed the gratitude of the batch to all who played a role in forming the candidates.

Kennet Pinto
3rd Year Theology

TO BE A WITNESS OF HIS LOVE

DIACONATE



As baptized Catholics, we are called to be a witness of Christ's love in our daily lives. This is the theme that we have chosen not only as a theme but also as a vision statement. On August 6, 2023, the Archdiocese of Bombay witnessed the ordination of eleven Deacons i.e. Anthony Rodrigues, Alton Extros, Ashley Vaz, Cajetan Mendes, Christi Gonsalves, Christopher Fernandes, Clinton Rayar, Conrad Pereira, Joyous Koreth, Melborn Poshapir, and Santan Fernandes.

The word Deacon (*diakonos*) means a minister or servant: a Minister in serving the people of God. A prayer service was conducted the previous evening during which the eleven Deacons made their profession of Faith, vow of fidelity, and promise of celibacy. The Diaconate Mass was celebrated by Bp Alwyn D'Silva - Emeritus Auxiliary Bishop of Bombay.

Bp Alwyn in his homily emphasized love and the meaning of love by reaching out to others especially the marginalized and specially-abled. He then connected the theme with Jesus and how he transformed the lives of others not only through his word but also by deeds. After the Diaconate mass, we had a felicitation programme with our family members and St Pius Family. Fr Aniceto Pereira our Rector happily spoke about the big number present from many deaneries. He thanked and also encouraged the family members and relatives to foster the vocation to the Priesthood and religious life.

We thank God for the gracious gift of a vocation to the priesthood and all who journeyed with us and supported us through their prayers and blessings.

Dn. Clinton Rayar



QUEST 2023 – A PROGRAM FOR THOSE DISCERNING



On 15th August, the feast of the Assumption of Mary and our country's Independence Day, the Diocesan Vocation Service Center (DVSC) organized a QUEST Program for the youth of the Archdiocese who were keen on discerning their call to the Priesthood and religious life. The program was held at St Pius X Seminary and was attended by more than 50 girls and boys from various parishes.

Two sessions were given by Fr Michael D'Cunha and Fr Walter D'Souza, both professors at the seminary. Fr Michael dealt on 'The importance of discernment

of spirits in Vocation' and Fr Walter spoke on 'Hearing the Voice in the noise'. Many the participants replied positively to the sessions and have expressed their desire to continue the journey of vocational discernment. The program culminated with the celebration of the Eucharist by Fr Byron Mendonca, the Vocation Promoter, Fr Aniceto Pereira, the Rector and some staff members.

Br. Dorson D. D'Mello
2nd Year Theology

DONATING BLOOD TO SAVE LIVES

BLOOD DONATION DRIVE

On 22.08.2023, the seminary successfully organized a Blood Donation camp within its premises in collaboration with the Holy Spirit Hospital, Andheri. The camp was organized on the occasion of the feast of the patron of the seminary St. Pius X and aimed to address any requirements/emergency need of blood supply in local hospitals while fostering a spirit of community service among the seminarians, staff and non-teaching staff. Fr. Aniceto Pereira, Rector of the seminary inaugurated the camp with a prayer and

blessing of the equipments, donors and staff present for the blood donation.

The camp received a good response from the community with a decent number of volunteers registering to donate blood. The staff and paramedical staff of the Holy Spirit hospital along with the Infirmary team of the Seminary ensured the smooth execution of the event. Rigorous health and safety protocols were adhered to, guaranteeing the well-being of donors.





The collected blood will serve as a lifeline for patients in need and contribute significantly to saving lives. The success of this blood donation camp serves as a testament to the commitment and compassion of students and staff of the seminary, embodying the institution's dedication to making a positive impact on society and being true "Ambassadors for Christ"

Br. Julius Kendi
1st Year Philosophy

THE APOSTLES RETURNED TO JESUS ... MARK 6:30

ORDINATI DAY



The Ordinati Day is one of the most anticipated celebrations in our seminary. Newly Ordained Priests and Deacons along with Lay students return to the seminary for a day's celebration. Seventeen batchmates came to relive their seminary days. The batch consisted of the nine priests

(including two from the Syro-Malabar rite and one from the Society of Jesus), three permanent deacons of the Archdiocese of Bombay, three transitional deacons from different dioceses (they will be ordained priests in the near future), and two lay women.



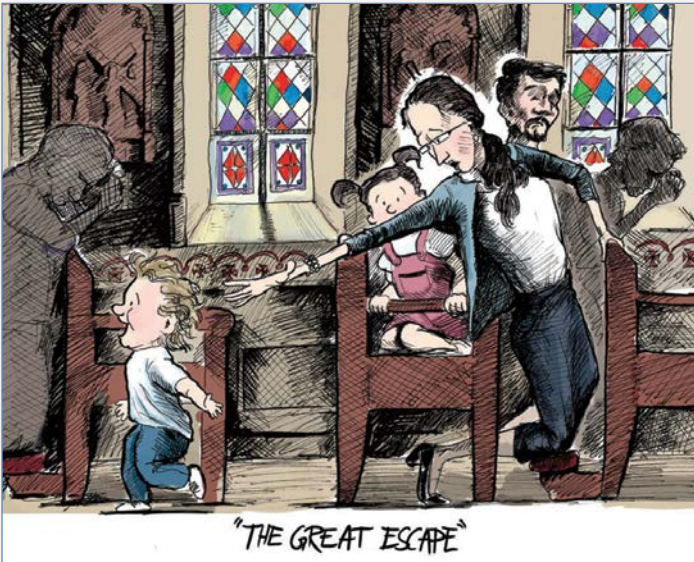
It was joyful to interact with such a multifarious batch because they shared their experiences after being launched from the seminary. Each one's experience was unique and provided profound insights about various ministries. The excitement was similar to the apostles who returned to Jesus after completing their first assignment (Mark 6:7-13). Like the apostles, the Ordinati told us what they had done and taught (Mark 6:30). The Ordinati Day began with the Holy Eucharist, celebrated by the newly ordained priests.

It was then followed by a light-hearted program where some of the memories made us feel nostalgic.

Lastly, an honourable mention to the Propaedeutic batch for decorating the seminary with a life size painting of St. Pius X and old photographs of the seminary. It was beautiful to witness an evocative gesture from the freshers to the seniors.

Br. Noel Dsouza
3rd Year Theology

MEMES CORNER





Blessing of renovated football ground



New Comers day glimpses



Cyber Security session by Dr. Harold D'Costa



Diaconate Celebrations



Book Sale

The editorial team wishes to express its gratitude to Br. Anthony Rodrigues & Br. Ashton Pinto, the outgoing editors and to the AMCF, Catholic Communication Center for designing all the issues of Semachar.

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