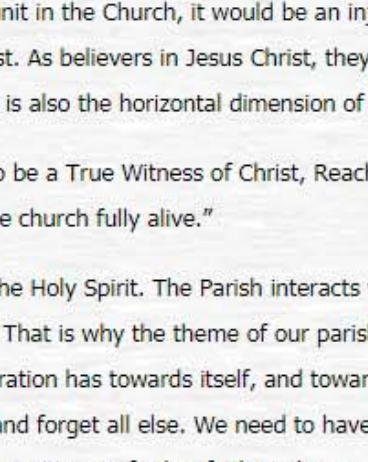


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Editorial What is a Parish



While a parish can be defined as a geographical unit in the Church, it would be an injustice to think that is all to a parish. A parish is first of all, a community of believers in Jesus Christ. As believers in Jesus Christ, they follow His teachings. Following Jesus Christ is only the vertical dimension of God and me. There is also the horizontal dimension of my brothers and me.

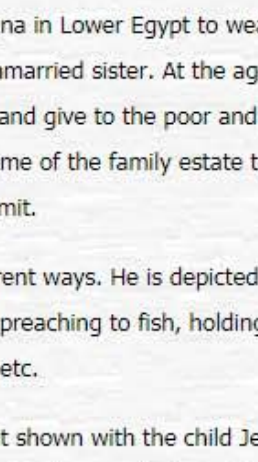
As our parish vision mission statement puts it, "To be a True Witness of Christ, Reaching Out in faith, love and service, living Bible values, to build family and community, making the church fully alive."

The parish is a living body with a soul or spirit – the Holy Spirit. The Parish interacts within itself and also with the environment. All of this has to be done in a spirit of love and service. That is why the theme of our parish Novena is our Ecological interaction with the environment. It is a responsibility the whole generation has towards itself, and towards the future generations as well. The environment is not something we just have, use and forget all else. We need to have a responsible attitude towards it. We owe it to ourselves, and future generations, and to our fellow citizens of other faiths in love and concern for God's gifts to mankind.

- Fr. Joe Fernandes

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DO YOU KNOW ?????



The galaxy of the saints in the Catholic Church includes people from all walks of life – martyrs, popes, priests, abbots, nuns, mystics, scholars as well as ordinary men and women.

Our parish has adopted St. Anthony to be the patron. Do we know sufficiently about the life and significance of this great soul, in the heart of the church? Let us know him....

St. Anthony was born in Coma near Herakleopolis, Magna in Lower Egypt to wealthy landowner parents. When he was about 18 years old his parents died and left him with the care of his unmarried sister. At the age of 34, he decided to follow the words of Jesus, who said, "if you want to be perfect, go sell what you have and give to the poor and you will have treasures in heaven and come and follow me. Taking these words literally Anthony gave away some of the family estate to the neighbors, sold the remaining property and gave it to the poor and he became the disciple of a local hermit.

Artists and sculptors have pictured St. Anthony in different ways. He is depicted with a book in his hand, St. Anthony and Child Jesus, St. Anthony with a lily or a torch. He has been painted preaching to fish, holding a monstrance with the Blessed Sacrament in front of a mule or preaching in the public square from a nut tree etc.

But since the 17th century, we most often find the saint shown with the child Jesus in His arm. The legend says, Anthony was praying far into the night when suddenly the room was filled with light more brilliant than the sun. Jesus then appeared to St. Anthony in the form of a little child. Let us imitate him as we go through life to carry an imaginary God child in our arms and holding Him up to the world.

St. Anthony with the Child Jesus standing on a book the saint holds. This indicates the importance of the Word of God in the life of the saint and his zeal in sharing this life giving and hope filled message to the world. This image inspires us to go through life clinging to the wonderful mystery of the humble, self-emptying Christ who accompanies us as a servant of our humanity and of the world's healing.

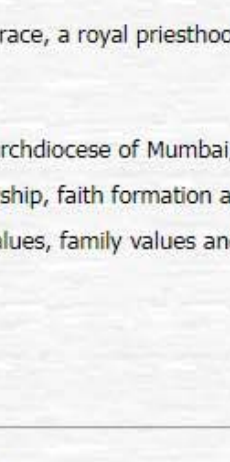
St. Anthony and the lily. The lily symbolizes purity, innocence and integrity. How important are these virtues in the personal life of each of us to-day?

After having learnt a bit more about our patron, who had an intimate relationship with Jesus and who is also such a wonder worker aren't we happy and proud to belong to a parish that is dedicated to his care? As we celebrate his feast this year may St. Anthony intercede for each of our families and sent down God's blessings on each of us. HAPPY FEAST.

- Sr.Chantal.SCB.

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THE 'PARISH' – AS GOD'S PEOPLE



Let us get into the crux of 'what is a parish?' To some a parish would mean a territorial subdivision of a diocese, within the Roman Catholic Church with a collection of people who attend a particular church headed by a parish priest. To some it would mean as a place where they can fulfill their Sunday obligation and receive their share of graces for the week.

Traditionally, there is Mass daily and on Sundays according to pastoral need, normally celebrated by priests resident in the parish. There is offered confessions, as well as other forms of prayer and social events. This is just the prima facie, there is a deeper meaning associated with the word 'Parish', it is a dwelling of 'God's own people' wherein there is interaction with 'God' through prayer.

The Church as a whole is God's family, with Christ as the head. The Church has been divided into dioceses under the leadership of the Bishop who delegates his power and responsibility to a team of priests (with one as the parish priest) who takes charge of the 'local Church' – these are the parishes. In addition to the Parish Priest, it is common for the Parish to have a group of staff; lay, consecrated religious, and ordained. Often, parishes also have a parish council, appointed by the Parish Priest.

The parish is thus a community of God's people build on fellowship –in –love. The celebration of the Eucharistic Sacrifice and meal is the source from which the parishes draw their strength and energy to build the parish as a community of love. Christ is present to his Church in the most sublime way in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar. The priest acting in persona Christi celebrates the Sacrifice of the Mass and administers the Sacraments. The presence of Christ, which thus takes place in a daily and ordinary way, makes the parish an authentic community of the faithful.

The parish is the centre of most Catholics' spiritual life; since it is there that they receive the sacraments. The seven sacraments are the centre of parish life and an effective source of grace. There are also always social events; their nature depends on culture and circumstances.

Moreover, the parish is a privileged place to announce the Word of God. It includes a variety of forms and each of the faithful is called to take an active part, especially with the witness of a Christian life and the explicit proclamation of the word of God to non-believers to lead them to the faith, or to believers to instruct them, confirm them and encourage them to a more fervent life.

Another important aspect of spiritual union in the parish community is the promotion of forms of association, whether of the more traditional kind or the newer ecclesial movements, which continue to give the Church a vitality that is God's gift and a true 'springtime of the Spirit'.

Experiencing Jesus through the 'word' and the sacraments and involvement in the struggles of the people leads to building a community that listens, shares cares and loves.

As it is stated in the bible 1Peter 2:9, 'You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people...' so we are called to be and thereby enter into His marvelous light.

Being part of one of the second largest parishes of the archdiocese of Mumbai, we at St. Anthony's parish are called to be 'God's people' and build a community based on fostering fellowship, faith formation and service. Our parish vision is to familiarize ourselves with the Bible and live in a manner that stresses Bible values, family values and participative and collaborative service.

- Valerie Mendes

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CONGREGATION OF 'THE QUEEN OF THE APOSTLES'

The congregation of the Queen of the Apostles was established on 1st July, 1923 by Fr. Antonius Maria Bodewig. He said, "I have compassion on the plight of the poor, the Indian women and children and we bring to them the living and life giving bread of the soul in the Word and Sacred Host." To serve the poor was his motto, thereby giving testimony to the love of God for mankind.

Empowerment of women and the marginalized is the mission of the congregation inspired by the founder. Thus involved in the ministry that uplifts the women, WIN Home is an extension of this.

The congregation has set up 'WIN (Women In Need) Home' at Vakola with an objective to provide confidential shelter, support and advocacy to women in crisis on a twenty –four hours basis. True to its name it has been home for the homeless. It has given shelter to many women in need, in crises; women battered, abused, abandoned and faced with domestic violence.

Moved like Jesus with compassion for the crowds, Sr. Vinayalata Rebello, SRA was moved to promote, uphold and protect the dignity of every woman. This initiative demonstrated the genuine humanitarian concern. With dedicated, hard – working and professional service and committed leadership the centre has achieved very good outcomes over past five years. The vision is to have an integrated human society living in freedom, justice and peace.

WIN home is a home away from home for the women being troubled. It gives these women a choice to change and improve their lives for the future. WIN home have women irrespective of religion and state they come from. It furnishes a roof to these girls referred by NGO's, Church and individuals.

Over the last years WIN home has been able to fulfill their mission as follows : Is to witness and proclaim the compassionate love of God to all especially the women, the marginalized and the vulnerable people in society, empowering them to create a new world order.

Their Goals are empowering women by capacity building through various activities and livelihood programs, which will enable them to become self reliant and lead respectful and dignified lives.

WIN Home also runs a small family healthcare centre where 8000 poor patients have been treated and availed of free medicines during the past five years. Other activities include Amala outreach program with women of the fisher folk community to impart functional literacy, conduct medical camps and conduct summer camps for children on personality development.

- Jennifer Mendes

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Children's Corner

About St Anthony:

Why does St. Anthony hold the Child Jesus?

It is interesting to note that, although Anthony was frequently portrayed in art since his death in 1231, images of him with the Christ child did not become popular until the 17th century.

According to one version of the legend—and there are many—there was a Count Tiso who had a castle about 11 miles from Padua, Italy. On the grounds of the castle the count had provided a chapel and a hermitage for the friars.

Anthony often went there toward the end of his life and spent time praying in one of the hermit cells. One night, his little cell suddenly filled up with light. Jesus appeared to Anthony in the form of a tiny child. Passing by the hermitage, the count saw the light shining from the room and St. Anthony holding and communicating with the infant.

The count fell to his knees upon seeing this wonderful sight. And when the vision ended, Anthony saw the count kneeling at the open door. Anthony begged Count Tiso not to reveal what he had seen until after his death.

Whether this story be legend or fact, the image of Anthony with the child Jesus has important truths to teach us.

God, very often the subject of preaching, the real, historical Anthony was holding and communicating to a world of the Incarnate Word of God. Very infrequently the infant in Anthony's arms is portrayed as standing on the holy Bible. Can there be a more obvious symbol and cue that the Christ child in Anthony's arms represents the very embodiment of the Word of God? Often, the child stands on the Bible's open pages as if rising out of the printed word itself.

St. Anthony and the Lily

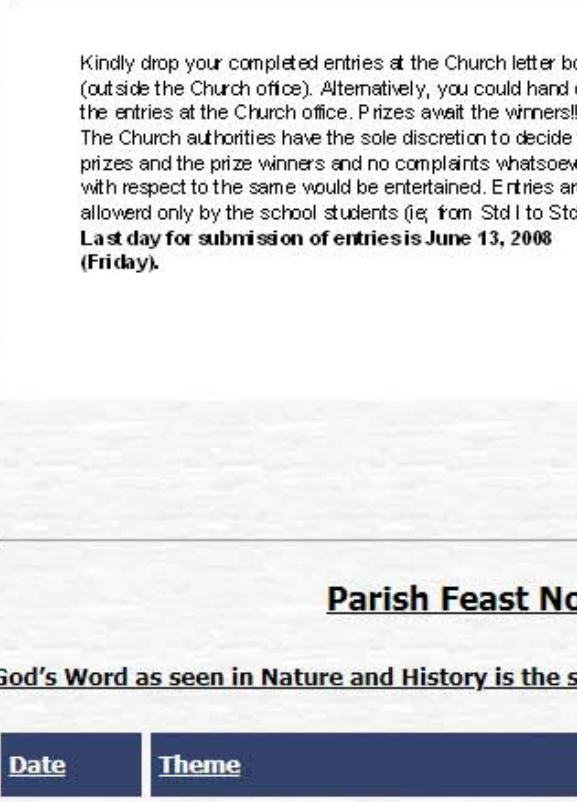
Besides holding the Christ child, St. Anthony is often shown with a lily. Obviously, the lily is a symbol of the Virgin Mary. The real Anthony would probably not have wanted to walk through life with a lily in his hand—especially if he was preaching to a group of construction workers!

But the lily symbolizes purity, innocence, integrity. This symbol has been especially associated with the Virgin Mary and other virgin saints. In Annunciation scenes, for example, the Archangel Gabriel is often portrayed as arriving with a lily to symbolize Mary's purity. St. Joseph, too, is frequently shown with the same flower. Images of St. Cecilia, St. Clare, St. Francis of Assisi and St. Dominic often include lilies.

- Roshal D'sa

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Children's Challenge!!! (Quiz)



Down:

- 1) St Anthony became a part of the _____ order
- 2) St Anthony was canonized by Pope _____
- 3) He is buried at the _____ of St. Anthony at Padua
- 4) Which convent did he die at
- 5) He is also called the _____ of the Church
- 6) His feast is celebrated on which day
- 7) Place where St Anthony was born
- 8) His m other's first name

Across:

- 1) What was his initial first name
- 2) In the earlier portraits he usually carries a book, symbolic of his knowledge of the Bible, or a _____
- 3) Place where St Anthony died
- 4) He was known to be a very good _____
- 5) He died at the age of _____
- 6) In which year was he born
- 7) He is the patron saint of _____articles/things

Kindly drop your completed entries at the Church letter box (outside the Church office). Alternatively, you could hand over the entries at the Church office. Prizes await the winners!!!

The Church authorities have the sole discretion to decide the prizes and the prize winners and no complaints whatsoever with respect to the same would be entertained. Entries are allowed only by the school students (ie. from Std I to Std X)

Last day for submission of entries is June 13, 2008 (Friday)

Name : _____
Std : _____
School : _____
Age : _____
Address : _____

Tel No : _____
Kindly assure all the details have been properly filled as incomplete forms would be subject to rejection.

- Roshal and Rima D'sa

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Parish Feast Novena- The Ecological Christian

God's Word as seen in Nature and History is the source of life

Date	Theme	Priest
06/06/2008	E – Environment/ Earth: Creation is a Word-Thing which is heard even though it does not speak because it is the Word uttered by the Creator. The Book of Nature Reveals the wisdom and power of God. We are called to protect the earth and not abuse it	Fr. Savio de Sales
07/05/2008	C – Comforts: A Solace to us When we are in distress	Fr. Keith D'Souza
08/06/2008	H – Heals: History is the Word of Yahweh: The reality that fulfills His utterance in us	Fr. Cajetan Menezes
09/06/2008	R – Reproves: (Konkani)	Fr. Joe D'Souza
10/06/2008	I – Inspires: (One could also refer to Saints Anthony, Ignatius, Francis of Assisi, etc.)	Fr. Reuben Tellis
11/06/2008	S – Sanctifies: (Marathi)	Fr. Joseph Gonsalves
12/06/2008	T – Teaches: Doctrine, Dogma, Apologetics, truths of the faith	Fr. Joe D'Souza
13/06/2008	I – Instructs: Practices, Precepts, Ethics	Fr. Allwyn D'Souza
14/06/2008	A – Appeals: A Divine call to be heard and needs a response	Fr. Reuben Tellis
15/06/2008	N – Nourishes:	His Eminence, Oswald Cardinal Gracias

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Thank you Sisters



We would like to express our gratitude and thank the sisters belonging to various congregations of the parish. They have been very supportive and co-operative in various Church activities. They have always extended a helping hand towards the parishioners. We bid farewell to the following sisters:

Sr. Mini, Sr. Claire, Sr. Sylvie and Sr. Bisin (Congregation of St. Charles) and Sr. Abhaya (Congregation of Helpers of Mary) and Sr. Minisha and Sr. Beena of the St. Anne of Bangalore..

We pray for them in their future endeavors to serve in the vineyard of our Lord.

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Farewell Fr. Sylvester D'Souza sj



It was indeed the Lord's call and his mission of service that brought Fr. Sylvester to 'Saint Anthony's Church' for his first parish experience in the city which was an enriching one. He describes his experience in three words, growthful, fruitful and blissful.

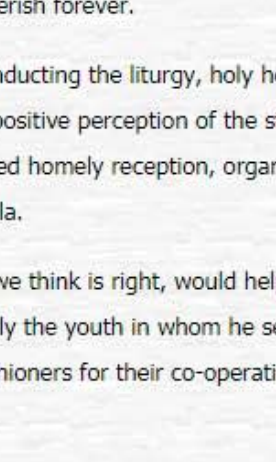
During his short tenure of a year, he found the parishioners very loving, affectionate, simple, religious, generous and full of devotion. He thus was quite comfortable and felt at home. The most striking about the parishioners was the sense of responsibility towards the parish work be it altar service, lectors, baptism classes, choir all were very well managed. His experience in the parish gave him an opportunity to discover qualities like preaching the word of God, relating to people, communicating to them and listening to them.

He was involved in the youth group, catechism, conformation and altar service. He expresses his gratitude and thanks God, the people and parish team for this unique opportunity to work and serve in the parish. His message to the parishioners of Vakola is, "Be independent, don't get influenced by what is happening around you." We all pray and wish him success to continue his apostolate at 'St. Roque Church', Gokhivare, Vasai.

- Valerie Mendes

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Farewell Br. Anthony



Br. Anthony's mission in Vakola was indeed a very memorable one with a lot of learning. As he bids farewell to our parish, he shall be taking home all the sweet memories that he would cherish forever.

He gained immense experience in the parish while conducting the liturgy, holy hour, bible study and conformation classes. This whole approach was a first hand experience. He has a very positive perception of the students stating that they were flexible and cooperative. He attended SSC meetings, visited families, experienced homely reception, organized games and get together for altar servers. He sensed a positive initiative taken by the youth of Vakola.

Br. Anthony clearly states "To persevere in whatever we think is right, would help us move forward in life". He appreciates the enormous talent in the parishioners of Vakola especially the youth in whom he sees the future. He has extended his gratitude to the youth for their active participation as well as the parishioners for their co-operation. We all pray for his future endeavors in his pastoral mission.

- Jennifer Mendes