

The Antonian – October 09

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Editorial

The Year of the Priest

The task of the priest today, is so multifaceted, as to make one wonder at the whole broad field that the priest has to work in. While some try to restrict the priest's work to only the ministerial role, we all know that this is not possible. The ministerial role may be the main role, but in today's world it involves so many associated fields, as be almost innumerable. If a priest is ignorant of some secular fields, he gets classified as an outdated priest, who has not been able to keep up with the times.

The sanctification of the people as to their field of witnessing to Christ, in today's world with its vast complexities, which have developed in the last few decades is mind-boggling. A knowledge of the thinking of the people on today's situation is not enough, given the complexities of today's world and thinking. And unless the priest is aware of modern life in its complexities, he runs the risk of being called irrelevant. The days of simplistic answers or solutions, is past.

This brings us to the need to pray for, to support and help our priests with our prayers. One of the best ways we can do this is to pray to Our Lady and put priests under her protection.

At the cross, Jesus committed His Mother to John the priest and John to His Mother with the words, "mother behold your son" and "son behold your mother". As she is the mother of the physical Christ, she is now the mother of the whole Christ. Who can help better than her who is now in heaven. As the mother of the whole Christ, she is very interested in priests, and also all her children in the world. That makes her the ideal mother to care for all of us.

This being the month of October, the month of the rosary, it is time for us to keep priests in mind, both priests throughout the world and also our own priests. Let us pray for them in a special way, as this is the year of all priests.

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The Beautiful Hands of a Priest

We need them in life's early morning,
 We need them again at its close;
 We feel their warm clasp of true friendship,
 We seek it while tasting life's woes.
 When we come to this world we are sinful,
 The greatest as well as the least.
 And the hands that make us pure as angels
 Are the beautiful hands of a priest.
 At the altar each day we behold them,
 And the hands of a king on his throne
 Are not equal to them in their greatness
 Their dignity stands alone.
 For there in the stillness of morning
 Ere the sun has emerged from the east,
 There God rests between the pure fingers
 Of the beautiful hands of a priest.
 When we are tempted and wander
 To pathways of shame and sin
 'Tis the hand of a priest that absolve us.
 Not once but again and again.
 And when we are taking life's partner
 Other hands may prepare us a feast
 But the hands that will bless and unite us,
 Are the beautiful hands of a priest.
 God blessed them and keep them all holy,
 For the Host which their fingers caress,
 What can a poor sinner do better
 Than to ask Him who chose them to bless
 When the death dew on our lids are falling,
 May our courage and strength be increased
 By seeing raised o'er us in blessing
 The beautiful hands of a priest.

-Author Unknown

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October – Month of the Rosary

The Church recognizes October as the month of the Rosary. It's a special month dedicated to promoting and rediscovering this venerable prayer. The Holy Rosary is considered a perfect reflective prayer because within it lies the awesome story of our salvation. With the Rosary in fact we meditate the mysteries of Joy, of sorrow, of luminous and the glory of Jesus and Mary. It's a simple prayer, humble so much like Mary.

It's a prayer we can all say together with Her, the Mother of God. With the Hall Mary we invite Her to pray for us. Our Lady always grants our request. She joins Her prayer to ours. Therefore it becomes ever more useful, because what Mary asks She always receives, Jesus can never say no to whatever His Mother asks for.

The rosary is a means given by the Virgin for contemplating Jesus and, meditating on his life, for loving and following him always more faithfully. In every apparition, the heavenly Mother has invited us to say the Rosary as a powerful weapon against evil, to bring us to true peace. With your prayer made together with Your heavenly Mother, you can obtain the great gift of bringing about a change of hearts and conversion. Each day, through prayer you can drive away from yourselves and from your homeland many dangers and many evils.

O Mary, help us to remember that every Christian is called to be a proclaimer of the Gospel by his word and by his life. In this month of October, dedicated to the holy rosary, we ponder with Mary the mysteries of our salvation, and we ask the Lord to help us grow in our understanding of the marvelous things he has done for us.

-Jennifer Mendes

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DIACONATE – A STEP TOWARDS PRIESTHOOD

The word Diaconia is from the Greek Language, and means service. The diaconate is the lower level of the hierarchy. It can be looked on as an end by itself (e.g. the lay deacons that we have in Mumbai) and as a step towards the priesthood.

The historical origin of this is in Acts 6, 1 – 6. The apostles found themselves spending time on material needs of the people, which time could be better spent in preaching and spreading the Word of God. So deacons were chosen and appointed to assist the apostles, and relieve them of seeing to the material needs of the people.

Deacons serve at the altar, can read the gospel at the Eucharist, preach God's word, distribute Holy Communion to the faithful, baptise, and conduct funerals

-Sucorrine Dias

DEACONS IN OUR PARISH

This year we have three brothers in our parish who are going to be blessed by this gift of entering into the stage of Diaconate: Bro. Dominic Adams (of Pune) who has already been ordained a deacon in the month of September. Bro. Daniel Fernandes of Yeshwant Nagar has been ordained a deacon. Bro. Lawrence D'Souza who has been in our parish will be ordained a deacon in the month of October. Bro. Dominic Adams will be ordained a priest in Pune towards the end of December. Bros Daniel and Lawrence will be ordained in April 2010 to the priesthood in Mumbai.

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5th and 6th Std. FAITH CELEBRATION DAY

Central Suburbs Deanery

On the 30th August 2009, 300 Sunday School Children of Std. V & VI, from six different parishes, namely; Our Lady of Egypt, Kalina, St. Anthony's Church, Vakola; Sacred Heart, Santa Cruz [West]; St. Joseph's Church, Juhu; Holy Cross, Juhu Tara; St. Francis Xavier, Vile Parle, braved the ongoing pandemic and met together at St. Anthony's School Hall, Vakola; accompanied by 30 Catechist at 0830hrs to actively participate in the programme of the day.

The theme of the programme was "Nutritious Food opposed to Junk Food" leading up to the Food for Eternal Life; "The Eucharist". Our compe for the event was our Deacon Dominic Adams and without much ado had the children under control; inviting Sister Lata, to lead the Children in Prayer.

The ice-breaker was a devout to the eye; (conducted by the catechists of St. Anthony's) to see all children participate as one team to accomplish the objective of identifying and putting together a picture of a "Fruit" shred into recognizable sizes. Intelligence was at its best and before long the winning team was declared.

The First Session was Presented by Sacred Heart parish: The theme of the presentation was: Nutritious Food v/s Junk Food. The Children reciprocated with much fervor and it was overwhelming to see their enthusiasm on the subject being discussed.

The Second Session was a presentation by: Br. Clifford D'Souza, a seminarian the theme being Eucharist as Meal. Both sessions were well prepared and presented with simplicity by our Brothers; this made it interactive and Children's participation was at its crest.

The Children of St. Joseph's Church, Juhu Tara; enhanced the Eucharist with their harmonious voices.

Rev. Fr. Gavin D'Souza the deanery Catechetical Co-coordinator; was the Main Celebrant .

A Summary of the event; its purpose and relation to the Eucharist were explained to the Children.

We were honored by the presence of our Diocesan Catechetical Centre, Examinators Mr. Ivor D'Cruz and Sr. Sophie Frank.

The objective of "FAITH" stands for the sum of truths revealed by God in Scripture and Tradition and which the Church presents to us in a brief form in her creeds, subjectively, Faith stands for the habit or virtue by which we assent to those truths.

The Faith Celebration Program is a source of recognition that much has been achieved; a realization of what God had worked in and through us and also try to project into the future where God might be leading us as His people in this part of the Church.

All of this is to give positive recognition to growth in the Deanery and Diocese and also an opportunity to clear mindsets of the young amonging them with the truth that the Spirit of God has worked wonders and that the church is very much alive and therefore look to the future with great hope and confidence.

This is what we are about:

We plant seeds that one day will grow.
 We water seeds already planted, knowing that they hold future promise.
 We lay foundations that will need further development.
 We provide yeast that produces effects beyond our capabilities.

We cannot do everything, and there is no sense of liberation in realizing it.

This enables us to do something,

And do it very well.

... Archbishop Oscar Romero

- Peter M. Rodricks

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"Happy Teachers Day – Dear Catechists"

The students of standard 7th, 8th and 9th of the Students Faith Academy organized a get together on Sunday, September 13, 2009, for Catechists, to mark Teachers' Day. They planned an evening of fun with a dinner, at St. Charles school Hall. The celebrations began early at 6: 30 p.m. Since it was the first day of Bandra fair, the children, had worked on the theme and had the lab organised into stalls in a fair like fashion. The stalls included various kinds of games like lighting candles 25 at one go, basket the ball, juggle with the monkey (a spoof off on talling the donkey), feed the bee (with the ball), etc.

The evening saw nearly 70 catechists including a few children, having a nice time. The look on their faces and attitude with which they were playing the games made us feel that it is an evening they really enjoyed. Each game they played had lovely prizes and encouraged them to play on till late. The group team organized had the Catechists excitedly searching others with parts of the same Nursery rhymes, before excitedly and with great gusto, reciting the nursery rhyme to grow they had found their respective teams. The snacks were efficiently served by the volunteers (students) who were working on high energy levels to ensure that their catechists were well taken care of. The evening was rounded up with a game of house and distribution of gifts won by the catechist at the various game stalls. On behalf of the Catechist of the Students Faith Academy, here's a warm and heartfelt Thank You going out to all the students who planned and organized and the Parish Team for making it possible.

-Students Faith Academy

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Mary – The Mother of Priests

We are in the context of the Year for Priests and hence it is essential to understand the link between Our Lady and the priesthood. This connection is deeply rooted in the Mystery of the Incarnation. When God decided to become man in His Son, he needed the freely-spoken "yes" of one of his creatures. Mary's "yes" was therefore the door through which God was able to enter the world, to become man. So it is that Mary is truly and profoundly involved in the Mystery of the Incarnation, of our salvation. And the Incarnation, the Son's becoming man, was the beginning that prepared the ground for the gift of himself; for giving himself with great love on the Cross to become Bread for the life of the world. Hence sacred, priesthood and Incarnation go together and Mary is at the heart of this mystery.

Let us revisit what happened at the Cross. Before dying, Jesus sees His Mother beneath the Cross and he sees the beloved son. This beloved son is a prefiguration of all beloved disciples, of all the people called by the Lord to be the "beloved disciple" and thus also particularly of priests. Jesus says to Mary: "Woman, behold, your son" (Jn 19: 26). It is a sort of testament: he entrusts his Mother to the care of the son, of the disciple. But he also says to the disciple: "behold, your mother!" (Jn 19: 27). The Gospel tells us that from that hour St. John, the beloved son, took his mother Mary "to his own home".

Jesus Christ, after giving us all that he could give us, wanted further to make us heirs to his most precious possession, that is, his Holy Mother. This applies for every Christian, for all of us, but in a special way for priests. This explains the special relationship of motherhood that exists between Mary and priests and her special love for each one of them. Like Mary, the priests are committed to the mission of proclaiming, bearing witness to and giving Christ to the world.

Fifty days after the Resurrection of Jesus Christ and ten days after His Ascension to Heaven, the disciples of Jesus, together with the Blessed Virgin Mary, gathered in a room called "Zion chamber" in Jerusalem. "And there appeared to them tongues as of fire, distributed and resting on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts 2:1-4). These apostles and their disciples immediately became heralds and preachers of the Gospel of Christ. Mary was in their midst and she prayed to the Spirit for the apostles.

Mary is the perfect model for their existence, often being invoked as "Mother of the supreme and eternal Priest, as Queen of Apostles, and as Protectress of their ministry". Because of their identification with and sacramental conformation to Jesus, Son of God and Son of Mary, every priest can and must feel that he really is a specially beloved son of this humblest of Mothers.

Let us pray that all priests will make a special place for the Blessed Virgin in their lives, and seek her assistance daily as they bear witness to the Gospel of Jesus. We also pray that they may be worthy representatives of Christ the Good Shepherd. May they wholeheartedly devote themselves to prayer and penance; be examples of humility and poverty; shining models of holiness; tireless and powerful preachers of the Word of God; zealous dispensers of God's Grace in the sacraments. May their loving devotion to Jesus in the Eucharist and to Mary His Mother be the Twin Fountains of fruitfulness for their ministry. Amen.

-Valerie Mendes

Academic Excellence

The following are the winners of the academic excellence in the Std. X and XII in our Parish. The following are the winners of the academic excellence in the Std. X and XII in our parish.

S.C.C.

Whitney Fernandes with 90.15%

Alvita Sequeira with 88.92 %

Elvita D'Souza with 87.84%

H.S.C.

Dylan Fernandes with 90.83%

Rasika Goveas with 88.33%

Mariah Fernandes with 85.33%

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A perspective on the Community fund (St. Anthony's parish)

In this fast paced life of ours, we often come across people of our community who are the poorest of the poor unable to meet their daily needs of food, shelter, education of children, high medical costs and finances. Very often we want to reach out to them and are unable to do so since it is practically difficult to meet the needs of each and every needy person. The best way to reach out to them is by contributing towards the community fund.

The Community fund was started with an objective to help the poor and downtrodden catholic communities in the parish. Inherently, we catholics believe in helping each other and are always there to reach out to the needy. Just as Christ has taught us to love our neighbour as ourselves, so we must continue to abide by his teachings.

The fund is raised through the collections of each earning member of the parish contributing 1% of their total salary every month. The funds collected are used to help the needy and poor.

The poor catholic children of the parish are provided with food, books and fees for primary education. Patients with chronic life-threatening diseases like HIV are given medical aid on a short term basis (2-3 years) till the time they can manage to pay on their own. In case of death of a poor person, and the family is unable to bear the funeral expenses the coffin is provided through the community fund expenses.

The parish counsellor and co-ordinator of the area help through their services in reaching out to the needy in their respective areas as well as collect the funds as well as make the parishioners aware of the need towards the contribution.

We express our sincere gratitude towards all those who have actively contributed towards the community fund. We invite many others to contribute generously. Let us all join in being of service to the poorest of the poor through our contribution towards the community fund regularly.

-Valerie Mendes

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Pilgrimage to the Mount

On the 17th September 2009 nearly a sizeable number of parishioners met up at the church at 5:00 a.m. to be part of the pilgrimage to the Mount. The morning began with tea and a briefing of the pilgrimage by Fr. Gavin, the pilgrims started their journey to the Mount at 5:15 a.m..

The pilgrims walked in groups of 3-4 while reciting the Divine Mercy chaplet, rosaries in devotion of Mother Mary and others sung Hymns like Ave Maria in veneration to the mother. They reached the mount at 6:45 a.m. We found place to sit comfortably as there was already place reserved for us. They attended the 7 a.m. mass with Fr. Gavin concelebrating along with 5 other priests. Fr. Gavin proclaimed the gospel and preached for the mass.

The Pilgrims had a wonderful fellowship with snacks and tea served by our Louis at Diocesan Pastoral Centre, Bandra, after which the pilgrims dispersed either to the fair or for home / work. They left with the grace of Mother Mary to live a life pleasing to her son Jesus.

-Mark Fernandes

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CATHOLIC CHARISMATIC RENEWAL

The Catholic Charismatic Renewal began in Mumbai in 1972. Originally called the Catholic Pentecostal Movement, it was later called the Catholic Charismatic Renewal to distinguish it from the Protestant Movement. Within two years about 25 Prayer Groups were in existence in the city. Individuals and teams from these groups were invited to other places for retreats. In this way the C.C.R. (Catholic Charismatic Renewal) began spreading in other places also. A National office was started in Mumbai in 1974. It organized the first National Convention in Mumbai and started the magazine CHARISINDIA. The second National Convention was held also in Mumbai which led to the first National Leaders Conference and the formation of the National Service team in May 1977 at Bangalore. Thereafter many National Conventions have been held in India and very soon we will be having the XIV National Catholic Charismatic Convention at Vasai from 27th December to 30th December 2009.

The main goals of the CCR are:-

- To help Catholics experience a "baptism in the Holy Spirit" which means the personal experience of the graces of Christian discipleship namely intense love for and commitment to Jesus as ones personal Saviour and Lord, a childlike trust in God the Father, an openness to the guidance and gifts of the Holy Spirit, and a warm commitment to the Body of Christ the Church.
- To help Catholics understand and use the Charismatic gifts which are a source of strength for Christians in carrying out of their mission and in the pilgrimage towards holiness.
- To help Catholics rediscover the beauty and the power of prayer, both collective and personal with special emphasis on the prayer of praise, faith filled intercession, and participation in a weekly prayer meeting with fellow believers.
- To promote evangelizing in the power of the Holy Spirit, by proclaiming the Gospel in word and deed, and by bearing witness to Jesus Christ through personal testimony and those works of faith and justice to which each one is called.
- To foster an ongoing growth in holiness through the proper integration of the Charismatic emphasis with the full life of the Church, through participation in a rich sacramental and liturgical life, appreciation of the tradition of Catholic prayer and spirituality, ongoing formation in the Catholic doctrine and participation in the pastoral plan of the local church

Many lives have undergone a deep conversion and have radically reoriented themselves towards God. Many have rediscovered the meaning of Church, Eucharistic life, Mary's role and the ancient discipline of fasting Many too have rediscovered the centrality of the cross, which remains at the heart of Christian disciples even after the glory of the resurrection and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. The Prayer Meeting is the weekly gathering of disciples who are trying to live an intense Christian life in the modern world. The primary purpose of the Prayer Meeting is to Praise & Worship God, following the advice of Paul "Be filled with the Spirit and speak to one another in Psalms hymns and Spiritual songs, sing and make music in your hearts to the lord and give thanks every day in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ to our God and Father" (Eph 5:18) At Prayer Meetings one receives glory give glory to God with personal testimonies of God's blessings, grace and mercy in their lives. At Prayer Meetings one receives nourishment from the word of God from Charisms like prophecy and the word of knowledge and of wisdom and from a teaching. One can grow spiritually through a teaching. Towards the end of the Prayer Meeting there is usually a time for petitions and for intercessory prayer ministering to those in need etc. The Prayer meeting itself is a marvelous means of growing in the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit (2 Cor. 13:14)

Every Monday we have the Prayer Meeting in Our Parish St. Anthony's Church, Vakola from 7:40pm to 9:15pm. Come and experience the Love, Joy, Peace, of the Risen Christ and Fellowship.

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PROPOSED PARISH PROGRAMME FOR 2009-2010

OCT 1: Vigil in the SCC in preparation of 1st Communion & Confirmation Rite of Our Father; Rosary for the month of October begins organized by Liturgical Team/Animators

OCT 2: Presentation of the Our Father to the children of 1st Communion & Confirmation; Pre-Baptismal Catechesis – I begins

OCT 4: Day of Thanksgiving; PPC Meeting; 2nd Session for VII & VIII Faith Celebration

OCT 10: 16th Anniversary of the SCCs in our Parish: by Steering Committee

OCT 11: Monthly Catechists Meeting at 11.15 a.m.

OCT 12: AREA MASSES BEGIN: Core Committee [from Oct 12 – Dec 11 09' & Jan 4-Feb 12 10']

OCT 18: MISSION SUNDAY: Diwali Vacation begins for Sunday School

OCT 25: Catechists Picnic

NOV 1: PPC Meeting

NOV 6: Pre-Baptismal Catechesis – II begins

NOV 8: Monthly Catechists Meeting at 11.15 a.m.

NOV 14: Children's Day: Area communities – Parent's involvement

NOV 15: World Communications Day; 3rd Session for 7 & 8 Faith celebration

NOV 22: Solemnity of Christ the King; Adoration: Liturgical Team /Co-ordinators

NOV 29: ADVENT: Liturgical year, Cycle II begins: Advent wreath service; Reflection for catechists at St. Theresa's School Hall from 5pm-8pm (with dinner)

DEC 4: Pre-Baptismal Catechesis – I begins

DEC 6: PPC Meeting; 4th Session for 7 & 8 Faith Celebration

DEC 13: Monthly Catechists Mtg at 11.15am/Plan for Christmas tree & Choir festival

DEC 20: Choir Festival

DEC 26: Children's Christmas Tree

DEC 27: Deanery Choir Festival/Choral Recitation

Jan 3: PPC Meeting

Jan 8: Pre-Baptismal Catechesis – II begins

Jan 9: Awareness Programme: SCCs

Jan 10: Monthly Catechists Meeting at 11.15 am.

Jan 17: Fire Drill and Safety training

Jan 24: Gathering of 1st Communion & Confirmation Catechists (Diocesan level); 5th Session for 7 & 8 Faith Celebration

Jan 31: Faith Celebration of 7 & 8

Feb 1: Vigil Prayer Service in the SCC

Feb 2: Presentation of the Creed/ 7p.m. Mass with Candlemas procession

Feb : Lenten Programme – Community wise

Feb 5: Faith Celebration Day for STD 9 (reg. school – Tentative)

Feb 6: Pre-Baptismal Catechesis – I begins

Feb 7: PPC Meeting

Feb 14: Monthly catechists' mtg at 11.15pm; Reflection at St. Theresa's 5pm-8pm.

FEB 17: ASH WEDNESDAY: Day of Fast & Abstinence (Lenten practices begin)

FEB 21: PASSO SERVICE (after 5pm. Mass during all Sundays in Lent)

Mar 5: Pre-Baptismal Catechesis – II begins

Mar 7: PPC Meeting; 1st Scrutiny; Passo

Mar 14: Passo/2nd Scrutiny; Closing of Sunday School (tentative); Monthly Catechists Mtg

Mar 21: Passo/3rd Scrutiny

Mar 25: Annunciation of the Lord: Pro-Life Day; Confession for 1st Communicants (tentative)

Mar 27: Confession for Confirmands (Tentative)

PALM SUNDAY: Procession with Palms at 7.45 AM. Mass; Evening: Passo Service with Veronica's singing, Procession & Sermon.

Apr 1: Maundy Thursday

Apr 2: Good Friday

Apr 3: Holy Saturday

Apr 4: Easter Sunday

Apr 17: FIRST HOLY COMMUNION DAY

Apr 24: CONFIRMATION DAY

Apr 25: PARISH FAMILY DAY

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Children's Corner

Theme: Word Search

Identify the below mentioned words in the given grid.

N	S	H	A	R	A	N	O	I	T	E	A	C	G	I	M
A	U	A	L	E	A	M	H	S	I	E	R	C	S	A	A
H	C	R	A	I	R	T	A	P	B	M	O	J	U	R	
N	S	U	I	B	L	C	B	E	E	S	V	A	O	R	
S	A	T	R	O	R	L	K	S	S	R	E	C	E	I	
I	M	E	T	I	E	A	O	T	P	E	N	O	T	A	
S	A	K	F	S	D										