

Ubi Deus, Ibi Spes
 जहाँ प्रभु, वहाँ आशा
 Is 40:31; Rom 8:5

SPARKLIGHT

THE BARODA DIOCESE NEWSLETTER



April 2026

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PICTURE OF THE MONTH



THE LUCCA CRUCIFIX

A revered crucifix in the Cathedral of Saint Martin in Lucca, Italy, the Volto Santo (Holy Face) di Lucca is a monumental sculpture more than eight feet long depicting Christ on the cross. Rather than emphasizing his pain and suffering on the cross, this image presents Christ in glory, alive, eyes wide open. He wears a full-length robe connoting his kingly and priestly rank. This type of crucifix is known as the Volto Santo (Holy Face)

Tradition asserts that the relic was carved by Nicodemus, soon after the death of Jesus. In 2020, however, radiocarbon dating of the wood and the thin canvas layer between it and the pigments revealed that the crucifix was carved and painted in the first half of the ninth century, making it the oldest wooden sculpture preserved in Europe.

I carried you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself.
 તમને ગરુડની પાંખ ઉપર ઉપાડીને મારી પાસે આણ્યા છે. (Ex 19:4)

EASTER: HOPE DESPITE ABJECT DESPAIR REACHING BEYOND ONESELF

+Seby Mascarenhas

I wish I could feel the wings of the eagle under me just now. The world seems to be in a strange place. The wars do not seem to end. If anything, we are becoming more and more polarised than ever before. The judgements of the courts on the position of the SC Christians, the FCRA amendment bill, the case of our school appointments, the various property issues – the path on Calvary touches us very much to the bone. The fate of the Israelites in Egypt seems to be ours as well in these times.

And in the circumstances, like the Israelites, do we complain and clamour for manna in the desert and water from the rock and turn to the golden calf for a solution?

In their volatile situation, this beautiful text from Exodus struck me. There is nothing more beautiful than watching an eagle swoop with lightning speed and soar back into the sky with its prey. God has swooped down to Israel, diving down like an eagle and carrying them on the wings out of Egypt, parting the waters, protecting them with the pillar of cloud, despite their doubts in abject despair. He promises to make them a holy nation and a kingdom of priests in the verses following the wonderful verse quoted above.

The journey of our diocese has been like that of the people of Israel when I listen to the stories of the stalwarts and titans of old. Doubts, challenges and even violence (I would not like to elaborate more) has caused stutters but not stopped us: we have been lifted on eagles wings to Him who is really the Alpha and the Omega. We have been enabled to Reach Beyond Ourselves.

In our difficult situations today, I wish us two important **emotions**. I say emotions because it is our heart – compassion, forgiveness, reaching out – that should lead us. First, let our trust in the Lord be unflinching. God dwells in us and walks with us and talks through us. Let us pray even more firmly. God opens windows when the doors are shut on us. He died and rose. Secondly, it is important to synergise among ourselves, not merely for efficiency but as a mode of being one body of Christ. We need to rise beyond ourselves, our egos, our groups, our configurations. We are a holy nation; we need to live like one. Our mission draws from our own way of being as followers of the Risen Lord – Reaching Beyond oneself.

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PRAYER INTENTIONS OF THE POPE

APRIL: For priests in crisis

Let us pray for priests going through moments of crisis in their vocation, that they may find the accompaniment they need and that communities may support them with understanding and prayer.

MAY: That everyone might have food

Let us pray that everyone, from large producers to small consumers, be committed to avoid wasting food, and to ensure that everyone has access to quality food.



OFFICIAL - APRIL 2026

COMMITMENTS OF THE BISHOP APRIL - MAY 2026

April 2	Maundy Thursday – Rosary Cathedral
April 3	Good Friday – Pilgrimage to Daman with people from Sagbara, Dediapada and Umarpada
April 5	Easter Sunday – Infant Jesus Church, Gorwa
APRIL 7-24	Conference
April 26	Priestly Ordination in Dudhni
May 1 -7	Holiday break..
May 10	Confirmation in Don Bosco Makarpura
May 12	Blessing of Community Hall in Zankhvav (tentative)
May 13	Blessing of Community Hall in Vyara
May 17	Visit and Confirmation in Netrang
May 24	Blessing of Zaroli Church
May 29	Reflection for Jesuit Scholastics at Saputara

COLLECTIONS

APRIL 3: GOOD FRIDAY COLLECTION

Please send your collections (Cheques) in favour of

"Dakshin Gujarat Seva Kendra",

Bank: Indian Overseas Bank,

A/C no: 019501000011894,

IFSC: IOBA0000195,

Branch: Alkapuri, Baroda.

Please contact Fr Vincent Macwan, (Finance Administrator) for any clarifications.

PLEASE PRAY

BIRTHDAYS

01-04-1980	Fr. John Raju
11-04-1969	Fr. Fernandes Duarte
11-04-1988	Fr. Vasava Kaushik
25-04-1974	Fr. D'Souza Mark
27-04-1974	Fr. Praveen Viegas

DEATH ANNIVERSARIES

03-04-2023	Fr. Pereira Richard
17-04-2021	Fr. Paul Raj Napoleon
20-04-2021	Fr. Ninama Pascal
25-04-2021	Fr. Barreto Oscar

APPOINTMENTS

Fr. Raman Dalvi SJ — APP to the PP of Shamgahan
Fr. Raymond Chauhan SJ — APP to the PP of Subir
Fr. Reji Madathikunnel — SJ APP to the PP of Vyara
Mr Joseph Bose, Chairman of the Commission for Basic Ecclesial Communities

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It might not end the war, it might not give us our rights, it might not alleviate the problems of our schools. Not in the short term. But let us not be **cynics** like the Israelites who complained about food and water and comforts but let us be **trusting** like the centurion who **saw a dead body** but **encountered true Life**: *Surely he was the Son of God* (Mk 15:39).

REFLECTION ON THE OCCASION OF CHRISM MASS 26.03.26

What do I appreciate of priests and how can we be more synodal



L to R: Sr Rekha MSCJ, Mennaxibhen, Fr Robert SJ, Sr Asha CCV, Mr Joseph



ORDINATION ANNIVERSARIES

06-04-2013	Fr. Ravi Kumar
10-04-1988	Fr. Pais Joel R.
12-04-2012	Fr. Bijendra James
16-04-2010	Fr. Borsa Navsa
07-04-1979	Fr. Macwan Jayanti
17-04-1994	Fr. Machado Robert
21-04-2009	Fr. Brijendra Kumar
21-04-2018	Fr. Balu Madhanu
21-04-2018	Fr. Vasava Kaushik
23-04-1989	Fr. Vasava Kanti
23-04-2022	Fr. Anish Devasia
24-04-1988	Fr. Lemos Saby
25-04-1993	Fr. Macwan Manu
27-04-2002	Fr. Macwan Rakesh
27-04-2005	Fr. Praveen Viegas
28-04-1973	Fr. Fernandes Joao M.
28-04-2005	Fr. Paul D'Silva
27-04-2006	Fr. Anthony Swamy
29-04-1995	Fr. Macwan Vincent
29-04-2021	Fr. Ohariya Anand
30-04-2008	Fr. Lobo Vincent
30-04-2011	Fr. John Raju

THE INTERIOR DISCOVERY OF GOD'S GIFT

Excerpts from the Message of Pope Leo XIV
World Day of Vocations – April 26, 2026

Dear brothers and sisters, dear young people! Guided and protected by the Risen Jesus, we celebrate on the fourth Sunday of Easter – also called “Good Shepherd Sunday” – the 63rd World Day of Prayer for Vocations. Let us explore together the truly beautiful path of life along which the Shepherd guides us.

THE WAY OF BEAUTY

In the Gospel of John, Jesus describes himself as the “good shepherd” (Jn 10:11). This expression refers to a shepherd who is perfect, authentic and exemplary, inasmuch as he is ready to give his life for his sheep, thus revealing God’s love. He is the Shepherd who draws us to himself, whose gaze reveals that life is truly beautiful when one follows him. **Only the one who pauses, listens, prays and welcomes the Shepherd’s gaze can say with confidence: “I trust him; life with him can truly be beautiful. I want to walk this path of beauty.”** As the theologian Pavel Florenskij wrote, *asceticism does not produce a merely “good” person, but a “beautiful” one.* [1] **Indeed, more than goodness, the distinctive trait of the saint is the luminous spiritual beauty that radiates from his or her life in Christ. In this way, the Christian vocation reveals itself in all its depth as a participation in the life of Jesus, by sharing in his mission and reflecting his beauty.**

MUTUAL AWARENESS

“The Lord of life knows us and enlightens our hearts with his loving gaze.” [3] Indeed, every vocation begins with the awareness and experience of a God who is love (cf. 1 Jn 4:16). He knows us profoundly; he has counted the hairs of our head (cf. Mt 10:30) and has envisaged for each person a unique path of holiness and service. Yet this awareness must always be reciprocal. We are invited to know God through prayer, listening to the Word, the Sacraments, the life of the Church and works of charity for our brothers and sisters.. This is not a matter of lofty ideas or scholarly learning, but of a personal encounter that transforms one’s life. [4] **God dwells in our hearts. A vocation entails an intimate dialogue with the One who calls and invites us to respond, despite the deafening noise of the world, with true joy and generosity.**

Dear young people, listen to this voice!. Make time, then, for Eucharistic adoration; meditate faithfully on the word of God, so that you may put it into practice each day; and participate actively and fully in the sacramental and ecclesial life of the Church. In this way, you will come to know the Lord. **Through the intimacy of his friendship, you will discover how to give of yourselves, whether through marriage, the priesthood, the permanent diaconate, or consecrated life.**

TRUST

Knowledge leads to confidence, a mind set that arises from faith and is essential both for welcoming one’s vocation



and for persevering in it. Indeed, life reveals itself as a continual act of trusting in the Lord and abandoning ourselves to him, even when his plans unsettle our own.

Let us consider Saint Joseph, who, despite the mysterious and unexpected pregnancy of the Virgin, trusted the divine message revealed in a dream and welcomed Mary and her child with an obedient heart (cf. Mt 1:18-25; 2:13-15). Joseph of Nazareth is an example of complete trust in God’s designs. He trusted even when everything around him seemed shrouded in darkness and uncertainty, when events appeared to diverge from his own plans. He trusted and abandoned himself to God, certain about the goodness and fidelity of the Lord. “In every situation, Joseph declared his own ‘fiat’, like those of Mary at the Annunciation and Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane.” [6]

MATURATION

Indeed, a vocation is not a fixed point, but a dynamic process of maturation sustained by intimacy with our Lord. To grow in one’s vocation means being with Jesus, allowing the Holy Spirit to act in our hearts and in the circumstances of life, and reinterpreting everything in light of this gift.

A vocation, therefore, is not an immediate possession – something “given” once and for all. Instead, it is a path that unfolds much like life itself. The gift we have received must not only be protected but also nourished by a daily relationship with God in order to grow and bear fruit.

Dear brothers and sisters, dear young people, I encourage you to cultivate your personal relationship with God through daily prayer and meditation on the Word. Pause, listen and entrust yourselves. In this way, the gift of your vocation will mature, bringing you happiness and yielding abundant fruit for the Church and the world.

May the Virgin Mary, model of the interior acceptance of divine gifts and expert in prayerful listening, always accompany you on this journey!

*From the Vatican, 16 March 2026
LEO PP. XIV*

For full message please refer to: <https://www.vatican.va/content/leo-xiv/en/messages/vocations/documents/20260316-messaggio-vocazioni.html>

ARCHDIOCESE OF GANDHINAGAR

Dharmacharya Nivas, Shantivan, Pethapur, Gandhinagar – 382 610, Gujarat State (India)
Tel. 94094 40152. email : thomas_macwan@yahoo.co.in

25 March 2026

COMMISSION FOR LITURGY FOR THE GUJARAT METROPOLITAN AREA

LETTER OF APPOINTMENT

Whereas “*the liturgy is the summit toward which the activity of the Church is directed; at the same time it is the font from which all her power flows*”. (SC 10)

Whereas it is to be noted that

1. “*Regulation of the sacred liturgy depends solely on the authority of the Church, that is, on the Apostolic See and, as laws may determine, on the bishop.*”
2. *In virtue of power conceded by the law, the regulation of the liturgy within certain defined limits belongs also to various kinds of competent territorial bodies of bishops legitimately established.*
3. *Therefore no other person, even if he be a priest, may add, remove, or change anything in the liturgy on his own authority*”. (SC 22)

Whereas the Catholic Conference of Bishops (CCBI) and the Western Region Bishops Council (WRBC) has advised that the Gujarat Region under the Metropolitan (CIC 435, 436) appoints its own Liturgical Commission for the Gujarat Region for the regulation of liturgical and devotional texts, rituals and allied matters and for recommending it for further action to the WRBC or CCBI as needed;

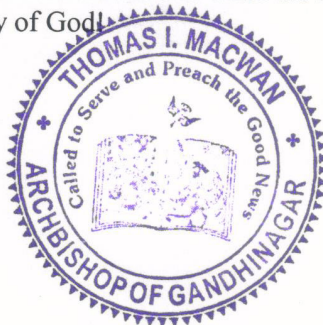
In consultation with Bishop Rethnaswamy of the Diocese of Ahmedabad and Bishop Sebastiao Mascarenhas sfx, of the Diocese of Baroda and after having consulted the respective Provincials for the members proposed from their congregation, we hereby appoint the following Liturgical Commission for the Metropolitan area of the Archdiocese of Gandhinagar and the suffragan dioceses of Ahmedabad and Baroda:

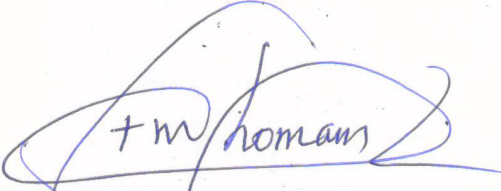
Chairperson: Archbishop Thomas Macwan

Secretary: Fr. Kiran Gohil (Archdiocese of Gandhinagar)

Members: Rev. Fr. Francis Parmar SJ and Fr. Simon Thomas SJ (Society of Jesus); Fr. Vincent D'Souza (Junior) and Fr. Nilesh Parmar (Diocese of Ahmedabad); Fr. Jacob V.C, svd, Fr. Jignesh Solanki ocd, Fr. Ashwin Macwan sdb, and Fr. Vincent Macwan (Diocese of Baroda) and Fr. Dominic Shabio (Archdiocese of Gandhinagar)

The Liturgical Commission will be called upon to advise the Bishops of the Region on all liturgical and devotional matters in their dioceses as and when the Metropolitan calls for a meeting. Let us work together for the Greater Glory of God!




+Archbishop Thomas Macwan
Metropolitan Archbishop of Gandhinagar

Given on 25th March, The Solemnity of The Annunciation of the Lord, in the Year two Thousand Twenty Six of Our Lord Jesus Christ

CHRISM MASS AT THE ROSARY CATHEDRAL: 26.03.2026

About 120 priests and 90 sisters with 200 faithful attended the Chrism Mass at the Rosary Cathedral. This was perhaps the largest gathering for a Chrism Mass ever in our diocese. Fr Iswan Gamit notes that he has participated in Chrism Masses since 1992 and he had never experienced so many priests together.

The day began with a question to be reflected on by Ms Meenakshi Vasava (Dediapada), Mr Joseph Bose (Vapi), Sr. Christie (Provincial Superior, MSCJ, Surat) and Sr Asha D'Monte CCV (Unai): What do I appreciate about our priests from my personal experiences and how can we more synodal in the future? Each person spoke for ten minutes to a rapt audience of priests and religious in the auditorium of Rosary School. Fr. Robert Mascarenhas moderated the hour long session. A priest asked a question: Could you tell us some of our negative points so that we could improve. Sr Rekha put it succinctly: Today is a day of joy. We would like to appreciate you on this day. Of course we can always do better. We could have mutual respect, share responsibilities and Listen to one another in a deeper way. Mr Bose lauded the priest and highlighted the challenges that they would be facing. This was perhaps the first time that lay persons and women religious addressed the priests at the Chrism Mass.

The Chrism Mass began with a solemn procession led by 25 altar servers. In the packed Church, the Bishop explained the Anointing of all Christians which led to all sharing the priesthood of Christ. Reflecting on the readings which spoke of the "anointed"m, he explained the Common Priesthood of all the baptised: that all baptised share in the priesthood of Christ and therefore they share the threefold office of Christ 1) called to praise and worship (Priestly), 2) discern and proclaim the Word (Prophet) and serve all peoples, especially the poor and the marginalised (King). He then explained the role of the Ministerial Priesthood at the service of the Common Priesthood, especially stressing the sacramental nature of the Church. He briefly explained the growth of the office of the Bishop and that of the priesthood.

The Sacred Oils were solemnly blessed. At the end 2 sisters celebrating 50 years of their profession, 9 sisters celebrating 25 years, 1 priest celebrating 50 years of his ordination and 2 priests celebrating 25 years were felicitated. In the spirit of the theme of Common Priesthood and Ministerial Priesthood, 4 couples celebrating their golden jubilees and 21 couples celebrating Silver Jubilee were also honoured. It was a devout and joyful celebration which ended with a sumptuous meal. The seeds of walking together might have been sown in such celebrations.





SILVER AND GOLDEN JUBILEE OF HOLY MATRIMONY

	HUSBAND	WIFE	TYPE OF JUBILEE	PARISH
1	Rajanikant Chauhan	Leena Rajanikant	Silver	Rosary
2	Savio Rodrigues	Dominica Rodrigues	Silver	Rosary
3	Nilesh Gregor	Stella Gregor	Silver	Rosary
4	Marshall Almeida	Hyacintha Almeida	Silver	Rosary
5	Joseph Noronha	Anita Noronha	Silver	Rosary
6	Elwin Lobo	Lynn Ann Collaco	Silver	Rosary
7	Martin Macwan	Snehal Macwan	Silver	Rosary
8	Maxy Barreto	Stella Barreto	Silver	Rosary
9	Anthony Joseph	Meghna Anthony	Silver	Rosary
10	Santan Dixon	Janet Rosary	Silver	Rosary
11	Kaushik Kumar	Parmar Jainy	Silver	Infant Jesus
12	Gilbert Nazareth	Elizabeth Nazareth	Golden	Sacred Hear
13	Joseph Devasia	Nisha Joseph	Silver	Don Bosco
14	Mario Rodrigues	Clara Rodrigues	Silver	Don Bosco
15	Christopher Parvez	Dean Shirley Ann	Golden	Don Bosco
16	Rajan Varghese	Valasama Rajan	Golden	Don Bosco
17	Rajesh Parmar	Sangeeta Pateia	Silver	St. Joseph
18	Rajendra Macwan	Hasumati Macwan	Silver	St. Joseph
19	Mahesh Makwana	Sneha Mahida	Silver	St. Joseph
20	Pankajbhai Macwan	Ranjanben Parmar	Silver	St. Joseph
21	Samir Macwan	Rohini Parmar	Silver	St. Joseph
22	Sanjay Macwan	Kiran Parmar	Silver	St. Joseph
23	Sailesh Parmar	Lataben Macwan	Silver	St. Joseph
24	Vinoobhai Makwana	Chandrikaben	Silver	St. Joseph
25	Paul Chauhan	Madhuben Mackwana	Golden	St. Joseph

SILVER AND GOLDEN JUBILEES

PRIESTLY ORDINATION AND RELIGIOUS PROFESSION

	NAME	CONG	PLACE	JUBILEE
1.	Fr. Brian Moras	SDB	Vadodara	Priestly Silver Jubilee
2.	Fr. Duarte Fernandes	DoB	Gothada	Priestly Silver Jubilee
3.	Fr. P.D Mathew	SJ	Rosary	Priestly Golden Jubilee
4.	Sr. Anita Vaz	FHIC	Valsad	Silver Jubilee of Profession
5.	Sr. Bhavana Fernandes	FHIC	Bilimora	Silver Jubilee of Profession
6.	Sr. Maria Gonsalves	CM	Dediapada	Silver Jubilee of Profession
7.	Sr. Pratixa Parmar	MCJ	Tanakhala	Silver Jubilee of Profession
8.	Sr. Queenie Fernandes	FHIC	Valsad	Silver Jubilee of Profession
9.	Sr. Ranjan Macwan	SA	Bharuch	Silver Jubilee of Profession
10.	Sr. Rosemary Susai	MSA	Godhra	Silver Jubilee of Profession
11.	Sr Sheetal Rathod	FC	Dadhwada	Silver Jubilee of Profession
12.	Sr. Silvana	MC	Vadodara	Silver Jubilee of Profession
13.	Sr. Nirmala Macwan	CM	Sagbara	Golden Jubilee of Profession
14.	Sr Lalita Macwan	CM	Umarpada	Golden Jubilee of Profession
15	Sr. Helen Gonsalves	FHIC	Navsari	Golden Jubilee of Profession

BARODA DIOCESE CRI LENTEN RECOLLECTION AT GODHRA



The Local CRI gathering of Panchmahal and Vadodara deaneries was held on 19th March 2026 at the Catholic Church, Godhra. The recollection session was animated by His Lordship Bishop Sebastião Mascarenhas, who led the participants into a deep spiritual reflection based on the documents “Dilexi te” (I Have Loved You) and “Dilexit Nos” (He Loved Us). In his insightful talk, the Bishop emphasized the importance of moving from mere intellectual engagement to a heartfelt experience of faith. He highlighted that religious life should flow from the heart—the core of our being—leading to a life that is more loving, less judgmental, and truly Synodal in mission. The recollection concluded with the Sacrament of Reconciliation and the celebration of the Holy Eucharist. .

The vote of thanks was proposed by Sr. Babli, RMI, who expressed sincere gratitude to the host community, especially the Superior and Parish Priest Fr. Anup George, along with his community and the MSA Sisters, for their generous hospitality and meticulous arrangements.

The gathering was truly enriching and synodal in spirit. It was noteworthy that many religious, who have been serving in Gujarat for several years, had the opportunity to visit Godhra for the first time. Participants appreciated the initiative and expressed the desire for more such gatherings, which enable them to connect with fellow missionaries and experience different mission areas.

Fr. Raja Masilamani, SVD
CRI President – Diocese of Baroda

DIOCESAN LENTEN RECOLLECTION – MARCH 12, 2026



The Diocesan Lenten Recollection was an unique person to person experience animated by Fr. Isaac Arackaparambil. Dwelling on the theme of the Prayer of Jesus for Priests (John 17) he highlighted the sanctification that the Priests needed to be truly in persona Christi. After the talk, seven questions were posed to the Diocesan clergy which they reflected upon before the Blessed Sacrament. Later the questions given were discussed by one on one dialogue for each questions changing the dialogue partner after each question. It sometimes happens that we hardly have an interaction with each other except friends. This helped in interaction randomly with each other.

1. **“Protect them in your name... that they may be**

one” (v. 11) How am I, as a pastor, a protector of the unity in my parish, school, or diocese? Are there factions or cliques I am tolerating or, God forbid, fostering? How does my preaching and personal example foster communion (being “one”) among a diverse flock?

2. **“I guarded them, and not one was lost”** (v. 12) In regard to those entrusted to my care, is there one who is “lost” or wandering that I am being called to seek out with greater intentionality? In relation to myself, do I find myself wandering, getting lost myself?

3. **“I speak these things... so that they may have my joy made complete in themselves”** (v. 13) In the midst of Lenten sacrifices and ministerial burdens, where is Christ’s joy in my life? Is my witness to my people one of dutiful obligation or of deep, abiding joy? Do my people see a man who is being sanctified - being made whole and holy - or do they see a man who is merely busy and burdened? Is my face a source of sanctification for them, reflecting the joy of being set apart for God?

4. **“I have given them your word, and the world has hated them”** (v. 14) In teaching the faith (the Word) and value education in schools, religious education, and



homilies do I shy away from the “hard sayings” of the Gospel for fear of rejection? How can I present the truth with both clarity and charity, even when it is unpopular?

5. “I am not asking you to take them out of the world... As you have sent me into the world, so I have sent them” (v. 15, 18) Am I present to the poor, the immigrant, the marginalized? Do I see my presence in the civic arena as a continuation of Christ’s mission, or a distraction from it? Am I truly “in the world” with my people, sharing their burdens, joys, and struggles, or have I built a protective barrier around my presbytery and my time?

6. “Sanctify them in the truth... And for their sakes I sanctify myself” (v. 17, 19) When I pray or when I celebrate the Eucharist or the Sacraments, do I rush? Do I consider that my careful, reverent celebration - my “setting apart” of this time - is a gift of sanctification to them? How might my people be holier if I were more recollected at the altar?

NARMADA DEANERY PASTORAL COUNCIL



Deanery Pastoral Council (DePC) Meeting held on February 26, 2026, in Dediapada parish under the leadership of Dean Fr. Paul D’Silva. Around 41 members (12 Fathers, 12 Sisters, and 17 Laity) attended the meeting. It began with 20 minutes of prayer and meditation on challenges facing the Church.

DISCUSSION:

- Need to revitalize liturgy and strengthen youth ministry.
- Greater emphasis on faith formation for children (ages 6–14) and adults.
- Addressing migration issues and retention of faithful.
- Encouragement of family prayers and laity collaboration.

COMMISSION REPORTS

- Women’s Commission: TOT training, prayer meetings, pilgrimage to Vailankanni, monthly gatherings, and CLS training.
- Youth Commission: Active participation in Zankhvav; challenges in mobilizing youth elsewhere.

EVENT EVALUATION

- PPC Training & MahaSammellan: Highly appreciated; suggested grassroots expansion and not limiting to one major annual program.
- Closing of Jubilee Year: Well-organized liturgy; symbolic distribution of plants to children.

FUTURE GOALS (THREE-YEAR PLAN)

- Focus on family, ecology, and faith formation.
- Promote Bible conventions and quizzes online.
- Strengthen Eucharistic devotion and family faith practices.
- Enhance youth & laity involvement in prayer groups.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- President: Dean
 - Vice President: Tawarsing (Dediapada)
 - Assistant Vice President: Jayeshbhai (Umarpada)
 - Secretary: Geetaben (Sagbara)
 - Assistant Secretary: Geetaben Mathurbhai (Relva)
- Conclusion: Fr. Paul D’Silva thanked all participants.

The meeting ended with prayer and fellowship over a shared meal.

Reported by: Sr. Shiny CM

PARISH-LEVEL WOMEN'S DAY CELEBRATIONS REPORT

The Women's Commission of the Baroda Diocese organized Women's Day celebrations at the parish level through the parish women leaders. Various spiritual and awareness programs, along with joyful celebrations, were conducted in different parishes, making it an inspiring and enjoyable day for all.

The celebrations were held in the following parishes: Bhestan, Dadhwada, Dediapada, Don Bosco Makarpura, Gothda, Nanpura, Netrang, Vyara, Rosary, Sama, Dahod, Godhra, Halol, Relva, and St. Joseph's Parish, Baroda.

These celebrations brought together women from different communities, encouraging participation, unity, and spiritual growth.



DAHOD



DEDIAPADA



SURAT



ROSARY



DON BOSCO MAKARPURA



VYARA



BHESTAN



DON BOSCO MAKARPURA



GOTHDA



ROSARY, VADODARA



VYARA



NETRANG

WOMENS DAY CELEBRATION – BHARUCH DEANERY

The Women's Commission of the Baroda Diocese, Bharuch Deanery, organized a Women's Day celebration on 22nd March 2026 under the leadership of Sr. Anita Parmar and the Bharuch Deanery team. Around 300 women & religious sisters of the deanery participated in the event. The theme of the celebration was "Women - the Life Giver and the Builder of Society." It was a wonderful and enriching experience for everyone present.

The program began with the Holy Mass, cultural activities, group discussions, and sharing of real-life experiences. An inspiring talk was delivered by the resource person, Michael Paul, which motivated and encouraged all the participants. A meaningful skit was presented by the Jhagadia group on the theme "One Only Solution for Modern Life Stress," with reference to the passage from Luke 10:38-42.

The group discussion was one of the most engaging activities of the day. All the participants actively took part, and the session was effectively concluded by the 12 leaders along with Sr. Shanta.

All the women came dressed in beautiful and colorful attire, adding joy and vibrancy to the celebration. During the program, special appreciation was given to different categories of women, including mothers, widows, working women, and all others, recognizing their unique contributions to society.

At the end of the program, a very inspiring exercise was conducted. All the women took a meaningful pledge by lighting candles and repeating the sentences together. This was followed by a fellowship meal. The entire day was inspiring, and the women truly enjoyed and appreciated the celebration.



PANCHMAHALS DEANERY CHILDREN'S FAITH FORMATION DAY

Panchmahal Deanery organized 'Faith Formation Day' at Don Bosco Chottaudaipur on 22nd of February 2026. The Theme of the day was: 'Faith and Identity'. The resource persons for the day were- Sr. Nirmala, Mrs. Jasmine, Mr. Suresh, Mr. Jitu and Kulsing. Children from Halol, Godhra, Jhalod, Muvaliya, Chottaudaipur, Kawant, Dahod and Kadana (Tiki) Parishes participated. All together ninety three Catholic and protestant boys and girls studying 6th to 9th class and fifteen fathers, sisters and volunteers participated in this Faith Formation Program.

The day began with prayer by Ravjibhai a veteran Catechist from Kawant. Sr. Nirmala and Mrs. Jasmine with the help of a PowerPoint presentation and videos explained the subtle aspect of good Christian Faith. The day was filled with well animated interactions, quizzes, puzzles and discussions on personal and community faith

and personal identity as followers of Christ and our status in the Church.

All the participants actively participated and enjoyed the day. Program was fruitful and well appreciated. The day ended with the Holy Eucharist celebration. Dean, Fr. Rajendra Toppo SVD after the Holy Eucharist, thanked everyone and expressed his desire that this event on Faith Formation is important and crucial and should be made an annual feature in the deanery. Children parted with a good amount of knowledge on the Christian Faith. All the participants' received prizes and gifts (bags, study materials, tooth paste, brush etc) from the Don Bosco Chottaudaipur community. Delicious food, tea and biscuits were provided. Big thanks to Fr. George Carlos SDB and his community members and staff who meticulously planned and implemented the program. Thanks to all the Parish priests who encouraged and made all the arrangements for this Faith Formation Day.



DADHWADA PARISH LENTEN FAITH NOURISHMENT

SPIRITUAL NOURISHMENT

St Francis Xavier parish, Dadhwada organized a three-day Lenten Retreat for its faithful on 27, 28th Feb. and 1st March, inviting Mrs. Falguni Mehta from the Divine Retreat Centre, Kerala to lead the charismatic retreat. The laity played a vital role in coordinating the event, generously contributing in both cash and kind to meet its needs. Since the retreat was held in a village setting, it drew local crowds, including participants from other denominations, making it a truly enriching spiritual experience at the beginning of the Lenten season.

KATKUVA MELO

The annual fair of Vedanamoorti Mata Mariam was celebrated with deep devotion on the fourth Sunday of Lent (14th and 15th March) at Katkuva Hill. Local leaders and parishioners took the lead in organizing the two-day program, which included Aaradhana, the Way of the Cross, and the Eucharist. The shrine continues to attract groups from within the state and neighboring regions throughout the Lenten season.

MISSIONARY FAMILIES FOR CHRIST (MFC)

On the 21st and 22nd of March, an MFC program was held in the Katkuva zone of Dadhwada to encourage families to pray together and engage with the Word of God in small groups. It was inspiring to witness many couples actively participating. Leaders from Daman, Selvasa, Vapi, and neighboring parishes such as Mandal and Pimpri joined to

support the initiative. The faithful took full responsibility for the arrangements and expenses, reflecting their strong commitment to the mission.

NATURAL / ORGANIC FARMING

During the parish PPC meeting, a small but meaningful initiative was launched to revive traditional farming practices by rejecting chemical fertilizers and pesticides. Fr. Suresh Antony SJ from St. Xavier's College addressed the leaders, highlighting the harmful effects of modern cultivation methods and presenting healthier alternatives for farmers and communities. As a follow-up, participants visited Singhpur on 25th March to study natural farming techniques firsthand, gaining valuable insights into sustainable agriculture. Thanks to Sr. Vandana FC for encouraging women in this initiative.

Fr Harry Martis SJ



LENTEN FAITH ENRICHING EXPERIENCES IN UMARPADA PARISH

VILLAGE CATECHISM

The catechism program across Umarpada Parish was a successful venture to revise and revisit the faith instilled in the people of God. Being a vast parish with 23 villages, our pastoral team reached every community, ensuring constant contact with the faithful. This effort kept our people active in their faith and strengthened their bond with the parish.

RETREAT FOR THE FAITHFUL

In preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation and as part of the Lenten renewal of faith, a special retreat was organized on 21st and 22nd February 2026. The retreat was well attended by all those preparing to receive Confirmation. Through prayer, reflection, and catechetical sessions, the faithful were guided to deepen their commitment to Christ and His Church.

PILGRIMAGE TO BOMBAY

A faith-uplifting pilgrimage was undertaken to various shrines and churches in Bombay. Along the journey, the faithful prayed the Stations of the Cross, engaging in moments of reflection and devotion. A highlight of the pilgrimage was the visit to St. Catherine's Home, where participants encountered the reality of abandoned children cared for lovingly by the sisters. Witnessing the sisters' dedicated service to these underprivileged children was a deeply moving experience, leaving a lasting impression on all who participated.

CONCLUSION:

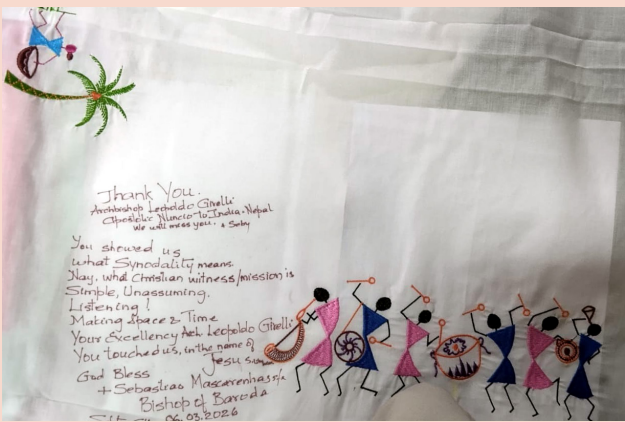
Through catechism, retreat, and pilgrimage, Umarpada Parish continues to nurture and strengthen the faith of its people. These initiatives reflect the parish's commitment to walking with its 23 villages, ensuring that the flame of faith remains alive and vibrant in every household.

Fr. John Raju

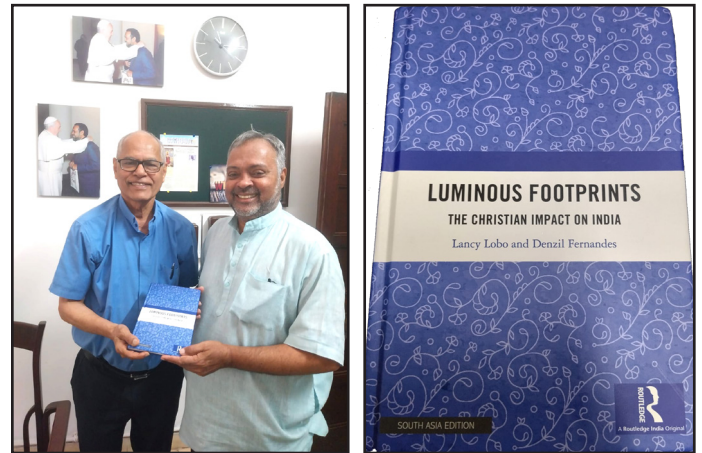


FAREWELL TO THE NUNCIO

Archbishop Leopoldo Girelli, the Apostolic Nuncio to India has been transferred to Croatia after five years of loving service in India. He leaves India on April 23, 2026. Msgr Girelli touched the heart of all Indians with his simple and open personality. He was always available to the people and has visited most dioceses of India over the last five years. He visited the diocese of Baroda three times. His unique visit was at the Mahila sammelan of 2025. He was especially considerate to our diocese in many areas. I personally met him in Delhi to wish him well and offered a shawl as our gratefulness to him. We wish him all the best in Croatia.



FR LANCY LOBO PUBLISHES NEW BOOK - LUMINOUS FOOTPRINTS



MEMBERS OF PRIEST COUNCIL AT LUNCH



MARRIAGE PREPARATION COURSE AT NETRANG



The Family Commission of the Diocese of Baroda organised a marriage preparation course at Jagruti animation Centre, Netrang on the 27th of February to the 1st of March, 2026. Seven couples participated in the course. Another course was also organised in Subir Parish.

By Fr. Praveen Veigus

NEWS FROM THE HEALTH DESK

THE CATHOLIC NURSES GUILD OF INDIA - BARODA chapter, held a meet at Jeevan Darshan, Fatehgunj, Baroda, on March 24. It included the Lenten observance of meditating on the 'WAY OF THE CROSS' on the premises. After the way of the cross we had a short sharing by Sr. Dr. Shiny Thomas, the Health Secretary, Diocese of Baroda she spoke to us on the Catholic mental health ministry of India under the CBCI of India.



HAPPY EASTER



The late 6th-century [Rabbula Gospel book](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rabbula_Gospel_book) which includes one of the earliest Crucifixion sequences in a manuscript also depicts an empty tomb under the Crucifixion panel, with an angel seated there who greets two women. Rays of light strike down Roman soldiers, and Jesus greets the two women, who kneel to adore him. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Resurrection_of_Jesus_in_Christian_art)

For if God is With Us Who can be against us (Rom 8:31)