



SPOTLIGHT

THE BARODA DIOCESE NEWSLETTER

For Private Circulation only

JULY 2025

www.dioceseofbaroda.org

Pilgrims of Hope
2025



POPE LEO XIV
ELECTED MAY 8, 2025
THE CONTEMPLATIVE MISSIONARY



In a world marked by growing tensions, even within families and ecclesial communities, **PRIESTS ARE CALLED TO PROMOTE RECONCILIATION AND FOSTER COMMUNION.** Building unity and peace demands that we be pastors capable of wise discernment, skilled in the art of piecing together the fragments of the lives entrusted to our care, so that we can enable people to see the light of the Gospel in the midst of life's trials. It calls for the ability to understand and interpret complex situations, and to rise above immediate emotions, fears and the pressure of passing fashions. It means providing pastoral solutions that generate and regenerate faith by building good relationships, bonds of solidarity and communities in which the style of communion shines forth. **BEING BUILDERS OF UNITY AND PEACE MEANS SERVING AND NOT DOMINEERING.** Priestly fraternity becomes a credible sign of the presence of the Risen Lord in our midst precisely when it is the hallmark of our shared journey as priests.

+Pope Leo XIV

PRAYER INTENTIONS OF THE POPE JULY

FOR FORMATION IN DISCERNMENT

Let us pray that we might again learn how to discern, to know how to choose paths of life, and reject everything that leads us away from Christ and the Gospel.

JUNE

FOR MUTUAL COEXISTENCE

Let us pray that societies where coexistence seems more difficult might not succumb to the temptation of confrontation for ethnic, political, religious, or ideological reasons

POPE LEO XIV INTERIORITY, RELATIONSHIPS, SERVICE

+Seby



I guess you have heard enough of Pope Leo XIV over the last 55 days as this issue comes out. But I cannot but help write my few words! And be effusive!

What strikes me most is his face. It is the weather-worn face of a **missionary** who has felt the heat and the wind and the dust, not the smooth manicured face of some diplomat or ornate bishop. Pope Francis asked us to dirty our hands and smell the sheep. I guess we found someone to fit the bill right at the top! It is the true authenticity of the Catholic Church that one finds a person from the richest country in the world who muddied his hands with the poorest to be Pope. And all of us of the missionary diocese of Baroda can definitely identify with him (check your faces, please!).

The election itself was an assertion of "The Mystery of the Church". In the Pilar Seminary, where I taught Ecclesiology, the students called me the Mystery Professor (behind my back of course). I wonder if they thought my lectures were mysterious or they were referring to my insistence on the word Mystery (Sacrament) as the key to understanding the Church and Theology. Simply expressed (cf Col 1:26), it refers to the invisible but real/living presence of God among/ within us. This union of God and Humans in a community is the Church.

The concrete modern manifestations of the Divine-Human intemignling was this election. No American could be Pope, said the Americans themselves, rather arrogantly, in their sense of entitlement as a Superpower. By the ways of the



Diocesan Priest
Recollection

POPE LEO IV INTERIORITY, RELATIONSHIPS, SERVICE

world it was a given. Others calculated the geopolitical needs (that included me!). Given 133 Cardinals from 72 countries, some shocked to be Cardinals themselves and barely knowing each other, one expected a slightly longer conclave (of bartering and horse trading?). The Conclave was being looked on as a fight between conservatives and liberals and some who are hangers on! And it was said that it would take a long time for them to come to a conclusion.

But the Spirit does move. Sometimes we doubt it, and then become *practical and pragmatic*. It happens to all of us. We keep our prayer in the Church and work like the world outside. Our strategies are designed by business and economic models, not always above board. The intermingling of the Divine-Human does not actually take place and we are not Church. Frankly I was myself a bit upset and sceptical over certain happenings as the magnificent events unfolded in Rome.

The simple, serene and stately liturgies in Rome a true manifestation and tribute to the Mystery, where time almost stood still. We could learn a lot for our diocese.

It took the Cardinals just five sessions in a day and a half. And the pure joy in the crowd was a sight to behold. You did not know who, you did not know what and yet you were happy. The whole world felt that there was something special going on, something beyond human explanation - A MYSTERY. Even the most sceptical and cynical (could be me as well) were engulfed. And when Pope Leo (Robert, Bob) walked to the balcony, with his slight limp and apologetic smile, Joy exploded.

Unbridled Joy about something of which we have no control and which we have not influenced is perhaps one of the key signs of Spiritual Discernment. In our elections, generally there is pleasure for one and disappointment for the other for we have either proposed or controlled or influenced!

However we must remember that this discernment was not based on the random call of a fisherman or disclosed in a dream to be interpreted. It was a well



The first diocesan priests of Baroda to encounter the Pope: Fr Mark and Fr Abhay (far right)

researched discernment to choose a MISSIONARY of 20 years in a poor country away from his rich motherland, an ERUDITE INTELLECTUAL with a Doctorate in Canon Law who was also Judicial Vicar, a SUPERIOR GENERAL for 12 years of a large congregation with presence in 50 countries, a POLYGLOT who speaks seven languages fluently, a HEAD OF DICASTERY with experience in the Curia for four years, an AUGUSTINIAN with a spirituality of interiority, community and service. What more would you need in a CV to apply to be Pope! But he did not apply. As one Cardinal said: *We knew God had chosen the Pope. We only had to be docile to the Spirit to find who.* The Thomistic principle obviously applies to this Augustinian: **Grace perfects nature!**

Frankly, the manner and dignity in which the Church went about was the counter culture to in a fragile world of rabid leaders of today. The whole world was spell bound. For a day or so Gaza and Iran and Sudan went to the background. **And there was Joy in the manner of the Magnificat!**

I felt it too. And you as well, I think. We realised that the Divine does work in the Human, if it is really aware of its nature and abides by it. ***It did manifest on 8th May 2025 and it gives us HOPE.***

LAITY COMMISSION TRAINING FOR SPIRITUAL CONVERSATIONS

"Synodality is a style, an attitude

that helps us to be Church by promoting authentic experiences of participation and communion," Pope Leo.

Pope Leo clearly affirms what Pope Francis and the final document of the Synod (October 2024) have said. Our very being as Christians is based on our faith that God dwells in us (Baptism) through the Holy Spirit (Rom 5:5). Consequently 'walking in the Spirit' (Gal 5:16) is our 'style' or 'attitude' in life. Every step of ours is guided by the Spirit.

How does it really happen? How do we recognise it? **Pope Francis has suggested the method of Spiritual Conversations.** Most of us are bad listeners. Listening to the Spirit needs even more spiritual discipline. Spiritual Conversation is a method that is proposed **at all levels** to cultivate Synodality.

. I have participated in many of these, even at CCBI/CBCI level. Frankly I find it difficult for myself; and I have noticed that most in the group were in the same boat. These end up as mere discussions. Of course, we publish the final statements as results of Spiritual Conclusion. In many cases, I think that such claims are exaggerated. Sometimes Spiritual Discernment becomes an alibi to justify our own views, when questioned. It is also not a panacea for all issues

Contd on Pg 3

THE MAGISTERIUM - JUBILEE OF PRIESTS

Priests: "...being formed in the relationship, not only in skills".

The priest, in fact, is a friend of the Lord, called to live with Him a personal and trusting relationship

Pope Leo addresses Priests

A Must Read Reflection for All

Pope Leo has been giving gems of spiritual wisdom in his brief addresses, combining the compassion of Pope Francis with his own Augustinian spirituality of interiority and relationships. We reproduce an extract from his address to the priests. Frs Manu, Duarte, Anish and Robert were graced to be present

The words of Jesus "I have called you friends" (Jn 15:15) are not only an affectionate declaration towards the disciples, but a true key to understanding the priestly ministry. The priest, in fact, is a friend of the Lord, called to live with Him a personal and trusting relationship, nourished by the Word, by the celebration of the Sacraments, by daily prayer. This friendship with Christ is the spiritual foundation of the ordained ministry, the meaning of our celibacy and the energy of the ecclesial service to which we dedicate our lives. It sustains us in moments of trial and allows us to renew every day the "yes" pronounced at the beginning of our vocation...

First of all, formation is a journey of relationship . **Becoming friends of Christ means being formed in the relationship, not only in skills.** Priestly formation, therefore, cannot be reduced to the acquisition of notions, but is a journey of familiarity with the Lord that involves the whole person, heart, intelligence, freedom, and shapes him in the image of the Good Shepherd. Only those who live in friendship with Christ and are permeated by his Spirit can proclaim with authenticity, console with compassion and guide with wisdom. This requires deep listening, meditation, and a rich and ordered interior life.

Secondly, fraternity is an essential style of priestly life . **Becoming friends of Christ involves living as brothers among priests and bishops, not as competitors or individualists.** Formation must therefore help build solid bonds in the presbytery as an expression of a synodal Church, in which we grow together by sharing the toils and joys of the ministry. How, in fact, could we ministers be builders of living communities if there did not reign among



**Frs. Duarte, Anish, Manu & Robert
at the Jubilee for Priests**

us first of all an effective and sincere fraternity?

Furthermore, forming priests who are friends of Christ means forming men capable of loving, listening, praying and serving together. For this reason, great care must be taken in the preparation of the formators, because the effectiveness of their work depends first of all on the example of their lives and on the communion between them. The institution of the Seminaries itself reminds us that the formation of future ordained ministers cannot be carried out in isolation, but requires the involvement of all the friends of the Lord who live as mission

Contd from Pg 2 → TRAINING FOR SPIRITUAL CONVERSATIONS

of the Church as is sometimes suggested. **Though, taken seriously and properly/rigorously followed, it can be.** The election of the Pope is an illustration.

In this light we are proposing training for Spiritual Conversation at all levels as the Key Pastoral Initiative for 2025-26. **It has to be disciplined and rigorous. Or else it will be counterproductive. It is also not a one time training. It is just sowing of the seed to begin nurturing it patiently.** Our resource persons will help the participants to realise where they fail and how they should move ahead as they train them. I believe, as Pope Francis insisted and Pope Leo confirms, without genuinely listening to the Spirit and to each other, there is no Church

Parish Level Training Initiative

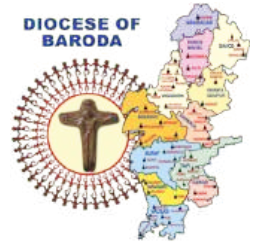
RESOURCE PERSONS: FR. WILLIAM CARVALHO, FR. FRANCIS D'SA SJ, FR. SIMON THOMAS S.J

From each parish: The Parish Priest, A Sister, A Man & a Woman, (also a Youth if possible)

These persons must be capable of training people at all levels (at least initiate) : children, youth, seniors, PPCs etc

DATE AND DAY	DEANERY	TIME	PLACE
19th July, Saturday	Surat	10 am	Navsari
0th July Sunday	Tapi and Dangs	3 pm	Saputara
26th July Saturday	Baroda and Panchmahal	10 am	Rosary
27th July Sunday	Narmada n Bharuch	3 pm	Netrang

OFFICIAL JULY - AUGUST 2025



COMMITMENTS OF THE BISHOP

JULY AUGUST 2025

July 4	Meeting with Priest Council, College of Consultors and Finance Council
July 5	GEBCI Meeting, Ahmedabad
July 6	Installation of PP - Ankleshwar Mass for Catechism Children, Baroda
July 7-10	WRBC Meeting, Chanda
July 13	Quasi PP Installation - Pardi Surat Deanery Pastoral Council Installation
July 20	Deanery Pastoral Council, Tapi Deanery Collection for Seminaries (ROME)
July 24	DEANERY MEETING 1 IN ALL DEANERIES
July 27	Meeting with Leaders of Lay Groups
July 31	St Ignatius Loyola, Rosary School
Aug 02-03	Visitation - Rosary Parish
Aug 03	Pastors Day - In each Parish
Aug 09	Day of Indigenous Peoples Ahmedabad Diocese CRI Meeting, Nadiad
Aug 9-10	Visitation at Chote Udaipur
Aug 15	Silver Jubilee of CMs Relva
Aug 16	Baroda Diocese CRI Meeting
Aug 17	Installation of PP - Shamgahan
Aug 17-23	Annual Retreat 1 for Diocesan Priests, Saputara
Aug 27	ANNUAL MISSIONARY MEETING (GANESH)
Aug 28 - Oct 04--	Mission Preaching

PLEASE PRAY

BIRTHDAYS

05th July	Fr. Patel Julius
06th July	Fr. Valerian Fargose
29th July	Fr. Anthony Swamy
29th July	Bp. Seby Mascarenhas

DEATH ANNIVERSARIES

27-07-2019	FR. RAMAN VASAVA
20-08-2012	Fr. John D' Mello

ORDINATIONS

22-08-2020	Fr. Kadam Sachin
22-08-2020	Fr. Karketta Raymond
24-08-2020	Fr. Nakre Akash

This Month Collection **July 20, 2025**

SEMINARIES (Universal)

Please send your collections (Cheques) in favour

"Dakshin Gujarat Seva Kendra",

Bank: Indian Overseas Bank,

A/C no: 019501000011894,

IFSC: IOBA0000195, Branch: Alkapuri, Baroda.

APPOINTMENTS - 2025

017 Fr Brian Moras sdb,	PP	Don Bosco Baroda
019 Fr Shaun D'Lima sdb	APP	Don Bosco Baroda
020 Fr. Jesu Chikkala,	Chaplain	Jesus Youth Gujarat Council
023 Fr. Hasamukh Parmar sj	APP	Shrustigan, Unai
024 Fr. Kirit Patelia sj	PP	Mother of Perpetual Help, Ankleshwar
028 Fr. Dalsukh Vasava	APP	Param Kripa, Dediapada
031 Fr. John Paul Lobo sj	APP	Isunath, Zankkhvav
032 Fr. Jacob Kulangara sj	APP	St. Joseph, Baroda
033 Fr. Fidelis Parmar sj	APP	Our Lady of Health, Bharuch
034 Fr. Harry Martis sj	APP	St. Joseph, Vyara
035 Fr. Sundar Vasava sj	APP	Mother of Perpetual Help, Ankleshwar
036 Fr. Aubrey D'Souza sj	APP	Christ the King, Paraspada
037 Fr. Andrew D'Abreo sj	APP	St. Francis Xavier, Pimpri
038 Fr. Robert Mascarehns sj	APP	St. Joseph, Baroda
039 Fr. Peter Kozhikkadan sj	APP	St. Joseph, Nanisingloti
040 Fr. Abraham Kallarangatt sj	APP	St. Francis Xavier, Dadhwada
041 Fr. Joaquin Castiella sj,	PP	St. Joseph, Baroda
043 Fr. James Vas sj,	PP	St. Peter and Paul, Fulwadi
046 Fr. Sunil Solanki sj,	PP	Sacred Heart of Jesus, Shamgahan
049 Fr. Sanjay Rodrigues sj	APP	Isunath, Zankhvav
052 Fr. Anil Tandi svd,	APP	Christ the King, Jhalod
054 Fr. Akash Nakre	APP	Jesus the Saviour, Umarpada
055 Fr. Susheel Kumar	APP	Mount Carmel, Surat
056 Fr Anthony Cardozo sfx	Priest in charge	Our Lady of Pilar Quasi Parish Pardi
057 Fr. Remedios Gonsalves sfx	To assist in	Quasi Parish, Pardi
058 Fr Jegan Franklin sfx	APP	Our Lady of Velankanni, Vap
059 Fr Joel Pais	PP	Divine Mercy, Umergaon
063 Fr. Francis Randive	Director	Netrang Pastoral Centre
064 Fr. James Bijendra	Administrator	Netrang Pastoral Centre
071 Fr. John Toppo	APP	St. Francis Xavier Church, Zaroli
072 Fr Mark D'Souza	APP	Param Kripa, Dediapada
073 Fr. Rakesh Macwan	Spiritual Director,	Missionaries for Christ

DIOCESAN RECOLLECTION TALK

Priests: "...being formed in the relationship, not only in skills".

Indwelling of the Spirit as the essential of Christian Life. "Abide in Me" – John 15:4

Fr. Nitesh Rodrigues OCD

The indwelling of the Holy Spirit is the action by which God takes up permanent residence in the body of a believer in Jesus Christ. In the Old Testament, the Spirit would come and go, empowering them for service but not necessarily remaining with them (Judges 15:14; 1 Chronicles 12:18; Psalm 51:11; Ezekiel 11:5). In the New Testament, Jesus revealed to His disciples the new role the Spirit of Truth would play in their lives: "He lives with you and will be in you" (John 14:17). The apostle Paul wrote, "Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God?"

St. Elizabeth's spirituality centres on the profound experience of the Trinity's presence within her soul. She believed that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit dwell within every believer, not as separate entities, but as one divine reality. This indwelling is a gift, a grace received through baptism and sustained by living in a state of grace. It's a mystery, a reality that transcends human understanding but can be experienced through faith, prayer, and a contemplative life.

The indwelling of the Holy Spirit is crucial for believers because it signifies a permanent and transformative presence of God within us, empowering us to live a life pleasing to God and to fulfil their purpose as Christians. It's the basis for our spiritual life, providing us with power, guidance, and assurance of their salvation.

Here's why the indwelling of the Holy Spirit is so important:

1} Transformation and Sanctification:

1.1 Transformation:

The Holy Spirit works to confirm believers to the image of Christ, changing their character and desires to align with God's will.

- a) **Renewing the Mind:** The Holy Spirit reshapes our thinking patterns, replacing worldly perspectives with God's truth. This involves aligning our thoughts with Christ's, allowing us to discern God's will and purpose.
- b) **God's Nature:** we are soaked in God's nature, contributing to our transformation.
- c) **Producing Spiritual Fruit:** He cultivates virtues like love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. This fruit is a tangible expression of a transformed life.

- d) **Providing Supernatural Power:** The Spirit empowers us with supernatural abilities, not just for personal growth but also for ministry and service.

Eg: Peter was transformed, and he was one of the most influential apostles. He transformed from this self-motivated, impulsive, inconsistent follower of Jesus to one of the most charismatic leaders of the church.

1.2 Sanctification:

- a) **A Lifelong Process:** Progressive Change: Sanctification is not a one-time event but a lifelong journey of growth and change.

- b) **Imitating Christ:** Through sanctification, we are progressively conformed to the image of Christ, developing Christ-like qualities and becoming more holy.

- c) **Submission to Christ:** This involves submitting to Christ's Lordship and allowing him to reign in all areas of our life.

Many saints throughout history are revered for having lives sanctified by the Holy Spirit, demonstrating holiness through their actions and virtues. One notable example is Saint Therese of Lisieux, known for her "Little Way" of spiritual childhood and trust in God, which she developed under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

In essence, the disciples' transformation was a

combination of initial commitment to Jesus, empowerment by the Holy Spirit, and a lifelong process of becoming more like Christ, resulting in a change in their character and behaviour. Sanctification is secured by Jesus; it is given to us and worked in us by his Spirit (Rom. 6:1-11; Gal. 5:16).

2) Empowerment for Service:

The Spirit equips us with gifts and abilities to serve God and others effectively, enabling us to fulfil their unique roles in the church and the world. Jesus empowered his disciples for service by first teaching them through his words and actions, then by commissioning them with authority to heal and cast out demons, and finally by sending the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, empowering the disciples with supernatural gifts and boldness to witness to Jesus's resurrection and teachings.

The Holy Spirit's Empowerment: This empowerment was not a one-time event but an on-going process, as they



St. Elizabeth of the Trinity ocd 1880-1906

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From being Self-centred to God-centred and other-centred

continued to rely on the Spirit's power to serve and witness. The disciples' actions in the early church demonstrated the transformative power of the Holy Spirit, leading to the growth of the church and the spread of the gospel.

When a disciple matures into a spiritual adult, the Holy Spirit brings them through a heart change:

They move from self-centered to others-centered

They become God-centered in motivation

They have the desire to serve and lead

3) Guidance and Wisdom:

The Spirit acts as a guide, leading us into truth, helping us understand Scripture, and providing wisdom for directing life's challenges.

The Holy Spirit guides and imparts wisdom by illuminating God's Word, providing inner peace, speaking through prudent counsel, and directing through circumstances. This guidance can manifest as a gentle prompting, a sense of conviction, or a clear understanding of God's will.

a) Through God's Word: The Holy Spirit uses the Bible to reveal God's truth and principles, helping us discern right from wrong and make wise decisions. It is impossible to understand the Bible without the Holy Spirit. 2 Timothy 3:16 says that "All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. The Holy Spirit teaches and reveals the meaning of Scripture to us the way Jesus would. "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you" (John 14:26).

b) Through Inner Peace: When a decision aligns with God's will, the Holy Spirit often provides a sense of peace and assurance. Equally, a lack of peace or a feeling of discomfort can indicate a direction that is not in line with God's plan.

c) Through Wise Counsel: The Holy Spirit can speak through trusted individuals, offering godly wisdom and guidance in specific situations. This can involve seeking advice from spiritual mentors or respected leaders in the community. We have people around us who can guide us in different circumstances. Are we open to listen to them?

d) Through Circumstances: The Holy Spirit can orchestrate events and circumstances to guide us, sometimes opening doors or creating obstacles that lead us towards or away from certain paths.

e) Through Dreams and Visions: In some cases, the Holy Spirit can communicate through dreams or visions,

providing specific direction or insights.

Gen: Joseph- his dreams and the outcome is a sign that God was with him. Gen: Pharaoh- God spoke to Pharaoh in dreams to tell of the 7 years of plenty and the 7 years of famine that were to come.

Matt: Joseph- take the child and his mother and go to the land of Israel. God was protecting them.

The purpose of dreams and visions

- 1) To keep us humble and from being destroyed by his own pride and sin. Job 33: 14-18
- 2) To restrain us from evil. Gen 20: 3-8
- 3) To reveal God's will and answer. Gen 28:11-22
- 4) To encourage. Judges 7: 13-15
- 5) To reveal the future. Gen 37: 5-10
- 6) To instruct. Matt 1:20
- 7) To warn: Matt 2:12.
- 8) To glorify God: Dan 2:47.

The Gift of Wisdom is Seeing Things from God's Perspective. Ultimately, the Holy Spirit's guidance is a personal and dynamic process that requires a willingness to listen, discern, and trust in God's leading.

4) Assurance of Salvation:

As the Agent of Salvation, the Holy Spirit gives Christ and all the redemptive blessings he has secured to the people of God. The Spirit applies to the church what Christ has accomplished for the church. Salvation is purposed by the Father, accomplished by the Son, and applied by the Holy Spirit. Without the Spirit's agency in salvation, all that Christ has accomplished brings no value to us. As Scripture uniformly presents, the Spirit graciously, effectively, and permanently gives us Christ Jesus and every blessing he has secured. Our salvation is in Christ alone. Our salvation is by his Spirit alone.

a) Regeneration: rebirth

Regeneration is the new birth or being "born again" by the Holy Spirit. In regeneration, we, once formerly dead in sin (Ephesians 2:1-3), are made alive and now able and willing to trust in Christ. The new birth is a spiritual, holy, and heavenly birth that results in our being made alive spiritually. Jesus ascribes this action to the Holy Spirit in John 3:3-8 when He tells Nicodemus that he must be born again. The Holy Spirit regenerates believers to be "made alive together with Christ" and makes them "new creations," no longer dead but raised to new life (Ephesians 2:5, 2 Corinthians 5:17).

b) Conversion

Though regeneration is totally the work of God, it is met by a corresponding human response: conversion. Conversion includes two major elements: repentance and faith. Repentance occurs when the Holy Spirit

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Prayer, Lectio Divina, Forgiveness

convicts people of sin and leads them to acknowledge their lives as displeasing to God so that they turn from it (John 16:8). Faith occurs when sorrow for sin leads to a deep need for forgiveness, and subsequently one's embrace of salvation through a personal trust in the person and work of Jesus Christ.

Jesus's encounter with the Samaritan woman at the well in John 4. Jesus promised the Samaritan woman that he will give a superabundance of living water forever for all those who recognize him as a Son sent by the Father to save us. She eventually acknowledged him as the Messiah. This conversation is significant because it shows Jesus:

Breaking down barriers: He engaged with someone considered an outcast in society.

Focusing on spiritual truth: He moved beyond surface-level conversation to address the woman's deepest needs.

encounter." John 14: 4 remain in me.

It's a spiritual union with God. As the branch can't bear fruit by itself, unless it remains in the vine, so neither can you, unless you remain in me" (v. 4b). As long as we are in his presence, his strength becomes ours. As soon as we turn our back on him, our strength begins to drain away.

2) Immerse Yourself in God's Word:

- a) **Read and Study Scripture:** Meditate on God's word, allowing it to dwell richly within you. The word of God has a power to transform the sinner into saints. Eg: St. Augustine.
- b) **Believe What You Read:** Embrace the truth of scripture with faith and allow it to transform your thinking.
- c) **Apply Scripture to Your Life:** Reflect on how the principles of God's word apply to daily experiences.



Offering a life-changing message: He presented the gospel in a relatable and compelling way, leading to her personal transformation and the conversion of others.

To cultivate the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in daily life, focus on cultivating a close relationship with God through prayer, studying the Word, and seeking His guidance in all decisions, while also striving for obedience and humility. This involves intentionally inviting the Spirit into your life, yielding to His promptings, and allowing Him to transform you from the inside out.

Cultivate a Relationship with God through

1) Prayer:

Engage in regular, personal prayer, expressing your thoughts, needs, and desires to God. According to St. Teresa of Avila, "is nothing else than a Close sharing between friends; it means taking time frequently to be alone with Him who we know loves us." "One does not undertake contemplative prayer only when one has time: one makes time for the Lord, with the firm determination not to give up, no matter what trials and dryness one may

3) Forgiving heart

Vita Consecrata 42 (1994) states 3fold requirements for the unity of the fraternity:

- 1. Readiness to serve others generously
- 2. A willingness to welcome them as they are, without judging them (Mt.7:12)
- 3. An ability to forgive, up to "seventy times seven" (Mt.18:22)

What is forgiveness?

Forgiving is not a feeling. It is a decision.

It is unconditional, not demanding the other to change.

Forgiveness is not asking the other person to change.

"I forgive but I cannot forget" = can be "I cannot forgive".

If we pray without ceasing, read the word of God frequently, ponder on it, apply it to our day to day life and forgive all those who hurt us which will lead is to cultivate the virtues like love, compassion, kindness, we will see the Spirit's presence in us, helping us to imbibe the gifts of the Spirit for the greater glory of God.

PASTORAL PLANNING DIOCESE OF BARODA 2025-26

Listen to the Spirit within You, Listen to the Spirit as spoken through Others

MEETING OF PARISH PRIESTS, RELIGIOUS SUPERIORS AND COMMISSION HEADS BARODA, 26 JUNE 2025

Over hundred Parish Priests, Religious Superiors and Commission Chairpersons (Baroda has 50 parishes/missions and 65 religious communities) met at the Bishop's House in Vadodara to plan for action on the Pastoral Goals for 2025-26 (already presented earlier and published in Spotlight).

Many sent messages at five in the morning that they would not be able to make it because of heavy rains and flooding. Others got stuck in the traffic on the highway but did make it. We appreciate the enthusiasm of all and we did have large numbers regularly despite the distances in our diocese.

The meeting, presided over by Bishop Seby, began with the explanation of the agenda which was already sent earlier. It was followed by a half hour of silent adoration, reflecting on the same, before the Blessed Sacrament

After a long discussion on the challenges of evangelisation in the current situation and our response to it, each of the commissions presented their plans.

FR. WILLIAM Carvalho (Laity) presented the plan for training for Spiritual Conversations and meetings of teachers at Deanery levels. **The MahaSammelan this year would be for ALL Members of the PPC. A new date is to be proposed.**

SR MAGGIE dhm (Migrants) deliberated on the urgent need for a survey of the diocese with a view to helping Migrants; it was stressed that the survey should be done personally by the priests and nuns. it should be informally in the family visits.

FR. KAUSHIK VASAVA (Youth) presented a plan for forming Youth Leadership Teams at every level as well as the Roundtable for confirmation youth,;

FR. JIGNESH SOLANKI OCD (liturgy) proposed the training of Lectors and Liturgical Animators in Surat and Vadodara as also making Liturgy the Key topic for the Missionary Meeting this year;

SR ANITA PARMAR FC (Women) presented a plan to team up with the Bible Commission to have courses for reading the Bible in the Families;

FR. VINCENT MACWAN (Catechetics) proposed meetings of

catechism formators and a plan for common evaluation of catechism children;

SR. SHINY CM (Health) has proposed a meeting of all Catholic Health Workers in January 2026;

FR. VINCENT LOBO (Ecumenism & Dialogue) spoke about Ecumenism and Dialogue meetings in select parishes instead of just a program at the Centre;

FR. JOEL PAIS (THEOLOGY & DOCTRINE) will organise sessions on the Nicene Creed as part of renewal of Theology;

FR. MAYANK PARMAR SDB (Liturgy) proposed a Bible Quiz for VIII and IX classes beside collaborating with the Women and Liturgy Commissions.

The Bishop asked the Fathers and Sisters to meet and share in order to lead the people in Synodality. Our witness is essential or else we will be counterproductive.

The Bishop highlighted lay organisations as concrete signs of corresponsibility. PPCs are already taking shape. Deanery Pastoral Councils have been formed and are scheduled for two more Deaneries. On Chrism Mass Day, the Diocesan Pastoral Council would be inaugurated.

The Bishop also stressed on Lay Groups like the Missionaries for Christ and the Jesus Youth. He stressed that they should be integrated in the Church pastoral planning. A meeting of such groups has been convened on July 27, 2025.

Commenting on Prayers and Vigils, the Bishop appreciated the initiative but stressed that these should also be opportunities for deeper faith formation. **There will be adoration at Korvi every Full Moon day.**

A plan of collections for the Universal Church and the Church of India was then distributed to one and all. While there are 8 collections marked in the year, some parishes and religious were exempted from contributing for some collections, given their size and capacity.

Coming together in our diocese is a challenge because of the distances and our work loads. Still we are always surprised to see most of us making Space and Time for each other. It is a genuine expression of Synodality.



PASTORAL ACTION REACHING OUT TO WOMEN IN NEED

Jesus at the Periphery: Pastoral Approaches to the Periphery

HUMAN TRAFFICKING: FROM NEGLECT TO NURTURE

Dr. Shiny Thomas cm



A three days workshop was held at the Nadiad pastoral centre from 5th to 7th May 2025, for those religious sisters working with Anti- Human trafficking for their Psycho- social, spiritual challenges and rejuvenation, with the theme “FROM NEGLECT TO NURTURE”.

The resource persons were Dr. Tony Sam George and Dr. Niranjana, both psychologists working at the Neuro pathways institute, Bangalore.

It aimed at empowering religious sisters with wellness from a trauma – informed perspective. The workshop combining psycho- social and spiritual frameworks covered essential topics like trauma understanding, resilience building, vicarious trauma management, brain and cognitive reserve and gender specific challenges.

Different approaches were used by the resource- persons like interactive sessions, practical strategies, and spiritual practices, through which we learned to foster personal and community wellbeing, build supportive networks, and enhance their capacity to serve those affected by human trafficking with compassion and strength.

The three days journey enhanced our reflection on our inner selves, deepening our relationships with one another, God and environment.

It gave us the opportunity to enable ourselves to understand ourselves more deeply, to heal the wounds of our minds and hearts and to renew our mission as consecrated persons committed to restoring human dignity through an integrated approach that honors the psychological, social, and spiritual dimensions of life.

On the whole the group discussions and case studies let an indelible mark in the itinerary of our lives towards wholeness.



PASTORAL PLANNING CCBI THEOLOGY COMMISSION

Theology is discernment with the Spirit on how God, as revealed in Jesus, affects our day to day life

MEETING OF CCBI THEOLOGY AND DOCTRINE COMMISSION GOREGAON, MUMBAI 23-25 JUNE 2025



Fr. Gilbert D'Lima, the Secretary of the CCBI Commission for Theology and Doctrine, organised a meeting of the Regional Secretaries. CCBI has 14 Regions. 12 Regional Secretaries attended. On behalf of the Western Region, Fr. Jel Pais attended. Bishop Seby Mascarenhas, Chairman of this commission for the Western Region, also attended the sessions.

Mr. Vincent D'Silva, an engineer, a Management Consultant and a committed Catholic was the main resource person. He gave very interesting insights in leadership and future challenges in the World. The Secretaries then got down to identifying the specific task of the Commission at the Local Level as there could be overlaps with other commissions. Fr. Christopher Vimalraj, Deputy Secretary General of the CCBI gave inputs on the Closing Document of the Synod on Synodality. About 30 Diocesan Secretaries also joined the group on the Second Day. The Group agreed that the Commission should offer some programs on the Nicene Creed as it is the 1700th Anniversary of the Nicene Creed in every diocese. The Western Region Diocesan Secretaries agreed to meet in person every year and also have online meetings.

50 YEARS OF THE PRIESTHOOD CELEBRATED - FR. JAMES KAPPAMOOTIL SJ



Ordained on 25th April 1975, Fr. James Kappamootil sj celebrated 50 years of his ordination at Paraspada with the people with whom he lives and serves. Earlier, he had gone to his beloved home in Kerala to celebrate with his family and relatives. Hats off to a great missionary!



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PICSWORDS OUR SEMINARIANS

The Joy of Being Missionary experienced in encounters with Joyous Missionaries



Bro. Anil Gamit is conferred the Ministry of Acolyte



Dudhni Church



At Daman

They are precious and rare - seminarians!

The Director for Seminarians and Vocations, Fr. Paul D'Silva organised a three day tour of the mission of South Gujarat and Nagar Haveli for the seminarians of the diocese. Bishop Seby also accompanied them.

Beginning with a Mass at Korvi, the seminarians moved to Zankhvav and then for lunch at Mandal. On the way they visited the home of Bro. Anil Gamit. After visiting Unai, they spent the night in Bardipada. The next day they travelled to Subir, Saputara, Shamgahan (lunch) and halted for the night at Fulwadi. The next day they moved to Dudhni (sadly they could not climb the Dongar Mauli as it was destroyed) and went to Daman for lunch. On the way back they prayed at the relics of St. Anthony in Valsad and returned to Baroda after burgers at Macdonalds!

The beautiful churches, adapting to various cultures impressed the seminarians. But more than that, they were totally taken up by the warm welcome and the generous spirit of all the fathers. Wherever they went, they saw joyous spirits who spent time speaking to them and inquiring about them. *I am sure there could be no better assertion for their vocation than encountering missionaries who are alive and joyful to proclaim Jesus!*



At Korvi



Bardipada

Dahod, Zankhvav, Korvi, Relva



**ST JOSEPH CHURCH, DAHOD
FEAST DAY MAYT 1, 2025**

St. Joseph Parish Dahod, now in its 92nd year celebrated its feast in traditional style and devotion. We wish Fr. Rajesh D'Souza, fathers, sisters and all the parishioners.



ZANKHVAV, MAY 8, 2025

The Annual Convention of MAGIS, the Jesuit Organisation for Youth was held a under the able coordination of the Director Fr. George Victor sj.



**KORVI, DEDIAPPADA
EVERY FULL MOON NIGHT**

The popular pilgrimage place of Korvi in the parish of Dediapada has started regularly monthly night vigil and adoration on every Full Moon night. Hundreds of people joined the devotion. It is an initiative to enable our people to pray and to deepen their faith.



**YOUTH CAMP RELVA,
MASS AT KORVI**

The Coordinator for Vocations and Seminarians Fr. Paul D'Silva conducted a camp for young boys and girls at Relva. On that occasion, the children and the mentors went to the pilgrim shrine of Korvi for Mass and prayers.

PICSWORDS

PASTORAL EVENTS AND HAPPENINGS

Rosary, Hingoria, Fulwadi, Paraspada, Narukott

ANIMATION FOR WIDOWS VADODARA DEANERY, ROSARY, JUNE 28, 2025 ,



There is a strong tradition of caring for widows in Baroda, perhaps following the letters of Paul. The Baroda Deanery and the Women Commission joined to animate the Widows in Baroda Deanery

YOUTH CAMP, HINGORIA BY FHIC SISTERS



Catechists of Fulwadi and Paraspada



Agewans of Fulwadi and Paraspada



FEAST OF SACRED HEART, NARUKOTT 22ND JUNE 2025

You do feel you are in a pristine faith community as well as a pristine natural ambience when you visit Narukott. The turtles and ducks and geese in the campus are soothing. The small community was joined by faithful and religious from nearby parishes as well. We appreciate Fr Elson Barreto sdb and his community for their service in such areas.



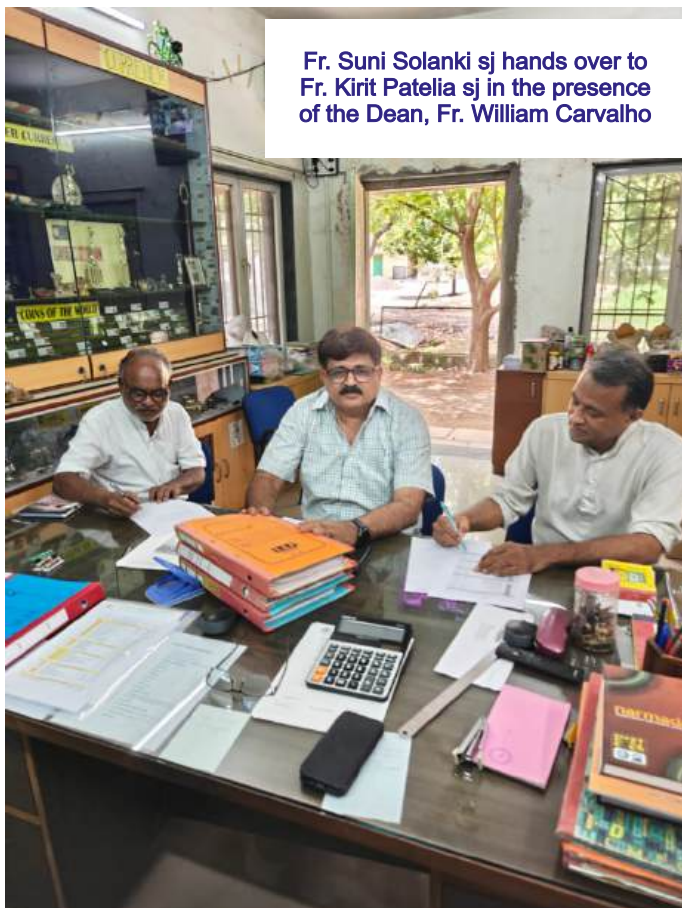
PICSWORDS

HANDING OVERS AND INSTALLATIONS OF PARISH PRIESTS



Diligent Handing Over of Properties, Monies and Records is an act of integrity and conscientiousness of the Parish Priest. It gives continuity to the parish structures and assures the stability of the community of the faithful.

The Parish Priest is a full time canonical post. The PP collaborates with the Bishop in nurturing the faith of the people, in caring for the flock and in leading/enabling them to mission. The rite of installation, involving the Profession of Faith and Oath of Fidelity, points to the sacred character of the post and the communion with the Diocesan/Universal Church





ST PAUL CHURCH, SUBIR
SANS MOTS, NO WORDS NEEDED

03.06.2025