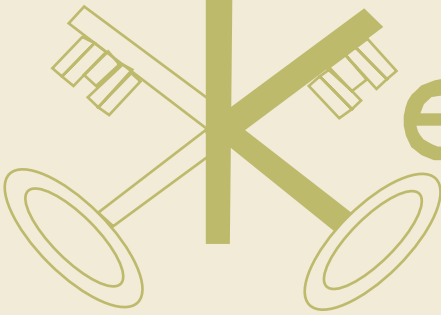


St. Peter's Church, Bandra

Building a Faith Community for Service



Key STONE

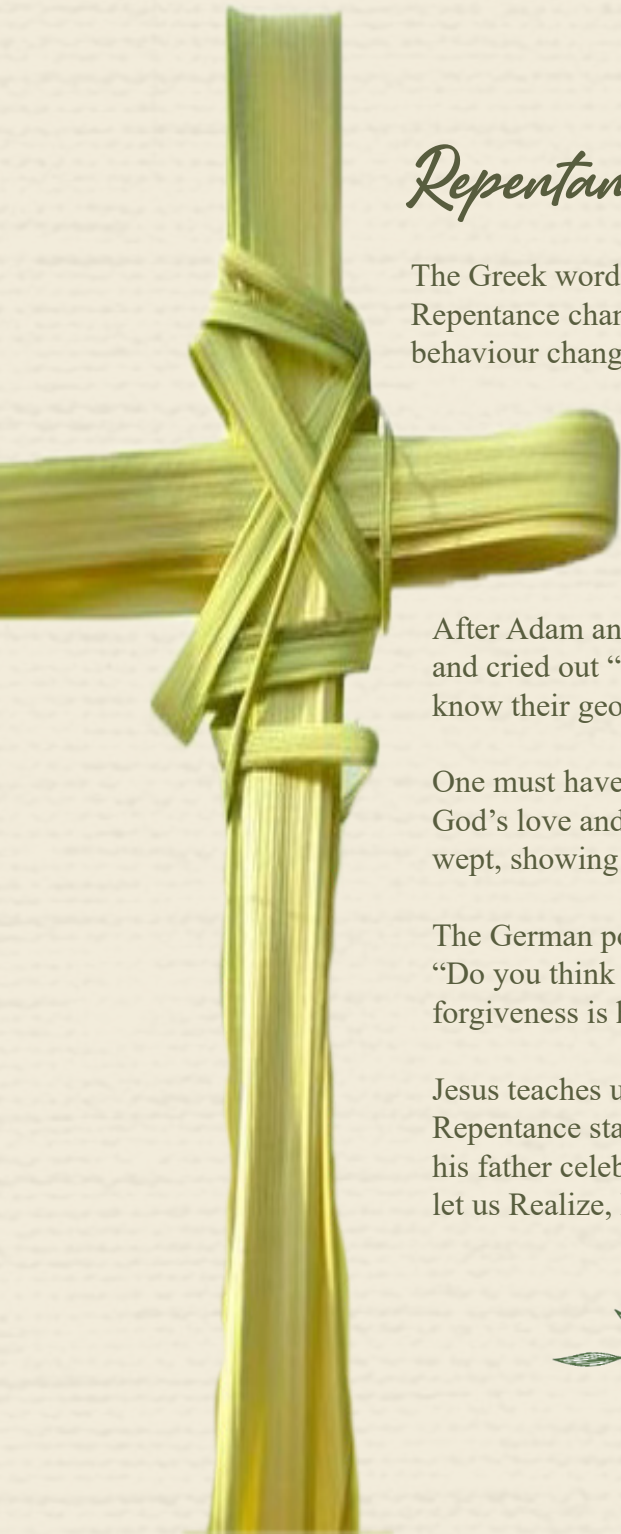
NEWSLETTER



COMMITMENT • LIVING FAITH • INTEGRITY • CONCERN • (CLIC)

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March 2024



Repentance is the key to the door of heaven.

The Greek word for repentance is Metanoia which means a change of mind. Repentance changes a person's thoughts, and when thoughts change, behaviour changes, leading to a change in the relationship with God and others.

Repentance is a turning point in a person's life.
Sin turns us away from God, but repentance turns us back to Him.

After Adam and Eve sinned, they hid behind a tree. God came looking for them and cried out "Where are you, Adam?" God asked this question not because he didn't know their geographical location, but to reconnect their relationship with Him.

One must have faith in God's love. Judas, even after repenting, didn't believe in God's love and committed suicide, while Peter, after denying Jesus, repented and wept, showing his belief in God's love.

The German poet Heinrich Heine (an atheist) was on his deathbed. He was asked "Do you think God will forgive you?" He replied "Of course He will forgive me for forgiveness is his profession" Every repentant person must have faith in God's love!

Jesus teaches us that repentance and transformation are to be celebrated. Repentance starts with self-realization. When the prodigal son repents and returns, his father celebrates his changed life extravagantly. During this season of Lent, let us Realize, Repent, Return and Rejoice in the Lord.

-Fr. Assis Rodrigues

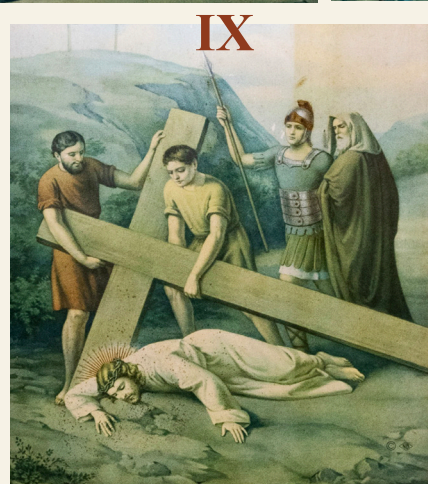




Lent is symbolic with the Stations of the Cross, taking us through the passion and death of Jesus. To help us to be fully immersed in His pain and suffering, there are a series of 14 most poignant visuals.

Praying before each of these visuals or 'Stations', stems from the practice of early Christian pilgrims who visited Jerusalem and walked the route from Pilate's house to Calvary.

Tradition holds that Mother Mary set up stone markers at her home outside Jerusalem to prayerfully retrace the steps of her Son's passion.



We reproduce these framed pictures which are in our church. In your private time and space, let these pictures help you on your own journey of reflection and forgiveness.

X



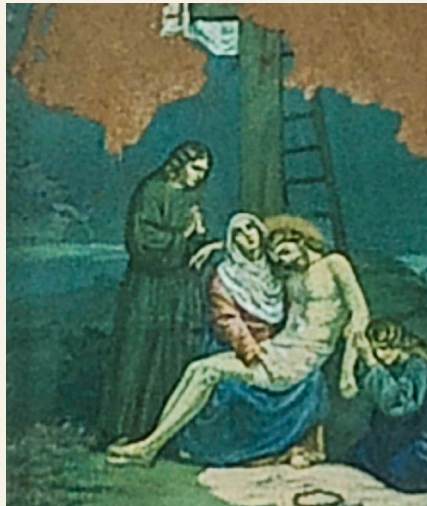
XI



**DID YOU
KNOW?**

These Stations of the Cross
are prints of paintings
by an Italian painter
C. SECCHI (1876 - 1950)

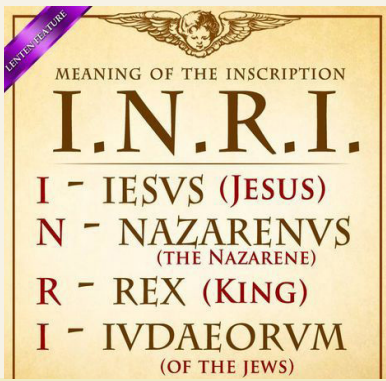
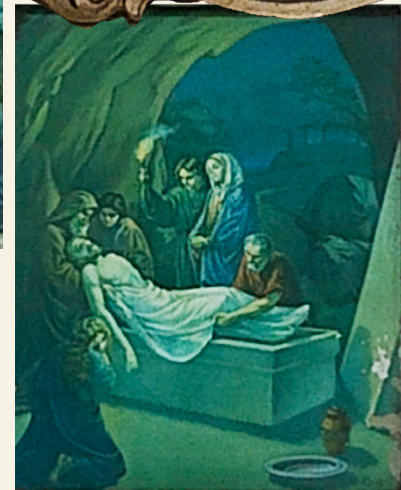
XIII



Photographs of
The Stations of the Cross
by Gabriella D'souza
and Riya Pereira



XIV



It is heartening to witness the Stations of the Cross being conducted by our various zonal communities.

What can be more rewarding than seeing our young ones join in wholeheartedly.

Leading the way at St. Peter's colony...





An iconic convent in the heart of Bandra

-Inputs from Sr. Munira Khan f.c. , Genny Martins and Bunny Cardoz

If you were born and brought up in Bandra, chances are that your grandmothers, mothers, and aunts would have all passed through the portals of our St. Joseph's Convent - the red bricked building, set in a beautiful garden diagonally across from St. Peter's Church.

What do we know about the Congregation of the Daughters of the Cross who run St. Joseph's Convent?

The Congregation of the Daughters of the Cross (fille de la croix) was founded in 1833 in Liege (Belgium) by Mother Marie Therese. In 1862, they came to India via Karachi, which was then a part of India. They were the second religious Congregation that established themselves in the Archdiocese of Bombay, and they worked in the Bombay Province, the Calcutta province and the Orissa province. Their charism is service to those around with a preferential love for the poor.



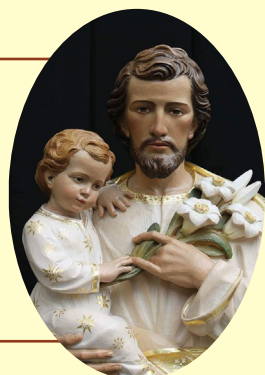
In our parish, the Sisters are affectionately called the "St. Joseph's nuns"

They make their presence felt in the field of education. They have also helped in the care of orphans, day scholars and have reached out to the under privileged as well. Every community in our parish has a religious Sister guiding them. They are a part of our choirs, lectors and youth groups.

19th March is the feast of St. Joseph.

Why have our nuns chosen St. Joseph as their patron saint?

The Daughters of the Cross believe St. Joseph to be their protector. In Liege, there is a large statue of St. Joseph erected on a hill and he is entrusted with the task of guarding their property.





A Thank You in action!

- David Cardoz

Members of various parish groups and associations gathered on St. Peter's square for...SHUKRIYA!

But Shukriya to whom and for what?

Ultimately as members of parish groups aren't we all, volunteers, doing our work without expectations of any kind? Of course! That's what we are, what we do, and will continue to do regardless...

And yet, it feels really good when the parish team decides that we have to celebrate the fact that the work is done well and hence should be appreciated through an evening of celebration.

And what a fun filled celebration it turned out to be! From community quizzes and games, to crazy spot prizes and even a special singing item by our church Fathers - it was truly an evening to remember!

But more than the food and the fun, the joy and appreciation for work well done, It brought us all together as one big family Inspiring us to build community.

So Thank You Parish team and organizers of Shukriya. May it continue to inspire us and spur us on to do even better to build a faith community for service.

We visited. We saw. We were bowled over! Our visit to the Ashagad Mission station.

- Berna Mascarenhas

Down the years, the tribals in the Ashagad area had been divested of their ancestral lands. They had been exploited by money lenders and were driven deep into the hills and forests which had become their only haven of security. Hemmed in on all sides by oppressive forces, theirs seemed to be a condition of sheer hopelessness.

This was the situation when, in 1967, Fr. Stanny Miranda started a Mission station here. A small church, Our Lady of the Forsaken, was built. Hectic efforts were made to solve the numerous problems faced by the tribals. Training in agriculture, animal husbandry, horticulture, poultry was organized to help them become self reliant. Self help saving groups were formed. Legal education programmes were started to help them fight for their rights.

But their liberation would remain an uphill task unless they were educated. And so in 1992, the first primary school was set up. Balwadis were started in villages situated too far from the schools. Loyola Ashram School (started by Fr. Adrian D'Cruz) was opened in 1996.



Last month a few of us parishioners visited this Ashagad Mission Station which is "twinning" with our parish. Frs. Sanjeev Gonsalves, Tony Toscano, Joe Pithekar and Anacleto Fernandes patiently took us around and answered our many questions.



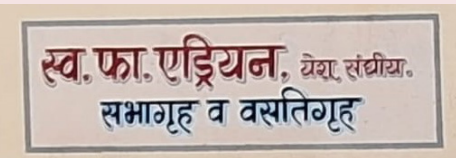
A warm welcome with a traditional aarti awaited us at the Loyola Ashram School



We interacted with the dedicated staff and bright-eyed, curious students.

Learnt that government funding has been obtained for "ashram shalas" (boarding schools)





The study hall doubles up as sleeping quarters for the boarders, with the students' belongings neatly stacked on shelves.

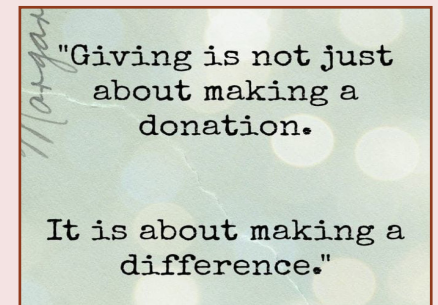


Mass was celebrated for us in a vast hall that serves as a chapel. Masses are held here weekly or fortnightly.

Left the Mission station with our minds in a whirl. Marveled at the zeal, courage and foresight of the Fathers who had dared to venture into the "wild" and start the Mission station. We had met the staff, some of whom had studied in the school, had gone out to the "big city" to further educate themselves and then had come back to contribute to the Adivasi society.

Had seen the fruits of education multiply!

Glad that we at St. Peter's are doing our bit to help out. But the feeling persisted and grew...what MORE can WE do?



Brave Heart - The Unbreakable "Face of the Faceless"



Ekatvam, the Singles Group, proudly partnered with The Face of the Faceless team to bring you the unbelievable yet true story of the selflessness and forgiveness of Sr. Rani Maria.

Sr. Rani Maria was a valiant woman who fearlessly fought for the rights of tribals in rural India. The film delves into her remarkable journey, shedding light on modern-day bondage that still persists around us today. Affectionately known as "Indore Ki Rani" by the people of Madhya Pradesh, her story is one of inspiration and courage.

For more details, please contact Caroline at 77159 85478 from The Face of the Faceless team

- Miss Deanne Rodrigues.



Community Outreach



This center cares for 41 children, under the age of 5 years, whose parents are domestic workers. They belong to different faiths, and are taken care of by three staff members.

A few points from an enlightening and inspiring session

- Seek to strengthen the spiritual welfare of your child
- Parents be a good example to your children. They will automatically follow your footsteps
- Ask your child what he/she learnt at Sunday School, just as you would check on what was done in their academic classes.



Challenger Trophy in challenging times

The Bombay Catholic Sabha had its Annual Sabha Day with the Annual Awards Ceremony. In the Bandra Deanery, St Peter's picked up the Challenger Trophy - the equivalent of a runners-up prize. Last year we won the Star Trophy for the best performing unit. The unit didn't work as hard as last year - they worked harder. Performance is based on various criteria and judged on the relevance and number of activities carried out throughout the year. St Peter's scored well in all areas - civic, political, social and others. So hats off to the small but dedicated band of managing committee members.



Sabha Day 2024 was held at St Andrew's Auditorium, followed by dinner. BCS members came from as far off as Belapur, Navi Mumbai. What was special was that the entire event was organised entirely by women members - and they did a 'beautiful' job. Needless to say the food was excellent too.

In these challenging times we need more than just trophies and awards - we need growing membership. Sign up if you aren't already a member. Don't worry about not being able and not being active. Numbers count. Make sure you can be counted on.

-BCS Mng Committee, St Peter's unit

Our 25 Confirmands - Soldiers of Christ



25 of our adult youth were confirmed by Bishop Allwyn D'silva.

They were likened to being the "Light of the world", powered and enlightened by the Holy Spirit.

I have now received confirmation,
The last sacrament of initiation.
Let's all join in the celebration,
It was worth the preparation.
All the sessions and time spent in reflection..
Has spiritually deepened our connection.
Thanks to all who gave us the direction,
Their time, support, love and affection!
~Joylyn Gonsalves

A spiritual journey that is filled
with fun and love, teaches you
the value and ways to go about
life and guides you to having a
better connection with God and
people around us
- Lyle Vaz



*The Medical Cell
had an action packed day
at St. Stanislaus Villa, Lonavala.*

What do we know about the St. Peter's Medical Cell?

In 1947, a small skin clinic was started by Dr. A.C. Rebello with the cooperation of Fr. Ribot s.j. This clinic used to be open only on Thursdays. Later Dr. D.R. Rebello took over the clinic.

Around the 1980s, Dr. Lawrence D'Souza offered General Medicine to all, especially to the members of the St. Vincent de Paul of our parish. He then brought in Dr. Bosco Pereira.

Today a vibrant team of volunteers (lead by Ms. Maggie Mascarenhas) and physicians, homeopaths, physiotherapists, a skin specialist...all pass on the spirit of obtaining a sound and healthy body, mind and soul to all.

The Medical Cell acknowledges the generous assistance given by Pharma Franco India.

-Dr. Bosco Pereira

Doctor's Schedule

Day	Doctor	Speciality	Timing
Monday	Dr Bosco Pereira	Physician & Surgeon	5. 30pm - 6:30pm
	Dr Nigel Gonsalves	Physiotherapy	6:00pm - 7:00pm
Tuesday	Dr Nigel Gonsalves	Physiotherapy	6:00pm - 7:00pm
Wednesday	Dr Leela D'Souza Francisco	Homeopathy	5:00pm - 6:00pm
	Dr Pascal DeNiese	Physiotherapy	5:00pm - 6:00pm (second wednesday)
	Dr Nigel Gonsalves	Physiotherapy	6:00pm - 7:00pm
Thursday	Dr Rashmi Durve	Dermatologist	8. 30am - 9:30am
	Dr Bosco Pereira	Physician & Surgeon	5. 30pm - 6:30pm
	Dr Nigel Gonsalves	Physiotherapy	6:00pm - 7:00pm
Friday	Dr Nigel Gonsalves	Physiotherapy	6:00pm - 7:00pm
Saturday	Dr Nigel Gonsalves	Physiotherapy	6:00pm - 7:00pm
	Dr Deepika Lobo	Psychologist & Counsellor	On Appointment

Traditional Practises in Lent

at St. Peter's Church (inputs from Bunny Cardoz and Paul Fishery)

In the liturgical calendar, we have commenced the holy season of Lent.

This 40 day period is "lent" to us to prepare for the resurrection of our Lord. We are encouraged to focus on inner reflection, repentance, fasting and abstinence. We take a deep dive into spiritual cleansing and healing

Here at St. Peter's, our Confraternity have been practising some interesting and age old traditions. A few snippets...

The Passo

This programme begins on the first Sunday in Lent and continues till Palm Sunday. A theme is chosen for each Sunday and a homily (in English and Marathi) is preached on the theme. A rosary is prayed and the evening ends with a benediction.

After the Good Friday service, there's the traditional Passo - taking down from the cross. This is followed by the statue of Mother Mary being carried on to the grounds on a palanquin and kept near the bier of Jesus. Nowadays this is accompanied by a fantastic sound and light show which adds to the pathos of the tableau.



Papiyas

During Lent, at midnight, the Papiyas or the hooded mourners (the hooded capes are called Ope) walk to various crosses in the neighborhood reciting prayers from a book called the 'Puran'. These are prayers of repentance and forgiveness said in the local Marathi dialect. At each cross they reflect on the 14 stations and sing the dirges.



A papiya group at a gaothan. Pic/Walter Murzello

The Last Supper Tableau

On Holy Thursday, a tableau of the Last Supper is set up, the priest blesses the bread and fruit on the table and this is then sold to the gathered faithful. For children, it is an awesome experience seeing life-sized statues of Jesus and the apostles.



Veronica Service

After the evening mass on Palm Sunday, the Veronica service is conducted. The statues of Christ and Mother Mary on palanquins are carried on to the church grounds. A young girl (Veronica) makes her way through the crowd, wipes the face of the statue of Jesus and then sings a hymn in Latin. This is followed by a homily in Marathi about the courage of Veronica and facing challenges in today's world.



In addition, the Friday 'Way of the Cross' is conducted by various cells/groups of the parish.

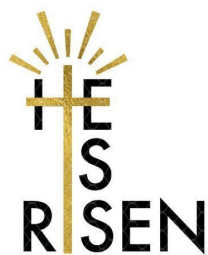
A total community involvement!

Parish Pastoral Council Happenings

Our Annual Pilgrimage to the Mount will be on Friday, 8th March. We leave from St. Peter's Square at 7:45 am for Mass at the Mount at 8:30 am.

The Redemptorist Fathers will preach a Lenten Mission in our Parish. They will visit families from 10 - 16 March, and the Preaching will be in the evenings from 17 - 23 March.

A progressive step in building an eco-friendly environment is doing away with all unnecessary disposable waste i.e. boxes, paper cups, straws, etc. Effective 1st March 2024, kindly instruct your caterer to serve snacks in trays only. Let's take this collective step to save our planet.



The Jesuit Team
at St. Peter's
wishes you
a joyous Easter!

Did you know there's a prayer called the "I don't know" prayer? It's very spiritual. You just go off somewhere quiet and hidden and you walk right up to the heart of God and you say, "I don't know."

I don't know where to go from here. I don't know what is happening. I don't know how to process this. I don't know what to do with these emotions. I don't know how to handle this situation.

It covers a lot of I don't knows.

And then with whatever dusty little sand grain of faith you have, you say, "But You know."

And you leave it there.

God most certainly hears that prayer.

Milestones

BORN IN CHRIST

Ivana D'souza

D/o Ignatius & Sangita D'souza

Von Azai Pinto

S/o Lyndon Pinto & Shruti Padwal

UNITED IN CHRIST

Jason Lobo & Judaline D'souza

Rizvi Mahal, Jain Mandir Road

REST IN CHRIST (all shroud burials)

Helen Anthony Barnes

93

Chinchpokli Road

Marie Faria

80

Dejavu, Hill Road

Doreen Pereira

72

D'monte Street

Maggi Francis Lobo

60

D'monte Street

Please email your articles for the Keystone to the editorial team at

stpeterschurchkeystone@gmail.com

on/by the
15th of each month