

# KEYSTONE

ST. PETER'S CHURCH BANDRA  
NEWSLETTER

COMMITMENT LIVING FAITH INTEGRITY CONCERN (CLIC)



<http://stpetersbandra.com>

AUGUST - SEPTEMBER 2025

## Building a Connected Community

*"Brothers and sisters, I would like that our first great desire be for a united Church, a sign of unity and communion, which becomes a leaven for a reconciled world.*

*In this our time, we still see too much discord, too many wounds ...*

*For our part, we want to be a small leaven of unity, communion and fraternity within the world."*

(Pope Leo IV, 18 May 2025)

These words of Pope Leo, delivered at the inauguration Mass of his Pontificate, reflect the desire and the mission of any Christian community – the desire to remain united, the mission to be a sign of harmony in a divided world. That is true of St. Peter's parish as well.

In this issue of Keystone, we take a look at different ways in which we build up community.

Celebration brings in energy and good cheer, vital elements in community building. We saw this energy and good cheer in ample measure at our celebration of the Parish Feast on 29<sup>th</sup> June. The photos featured in this issue capture some of the fun and bonding we experienced that day. It left us feeling grateful to be part of this community and eager to do all we can to build it up.

Every community has its wisdom figures, and in this issue, we pay tribute to our centenarians and nonagenarians. Over the years, they have nurtured their families in love and passed on precious values from an age gone by. Going beyond the confines of family, they played stellar roles in shaping the lives of many others as well. We salute their contributions and remain open to the wisdom and guidance they impart.

Our commitment to Christ forms the focal point of our life as community, the glue that keeps us all together. The Jubilee Cross making its way through the parish reminds us that Christ is our anchor, the One in whom all our hope is grounded. May we continue to deepen our encounter with Him as we strive to build up a faith community for service.

Fr. Luke Rodrigues s.j.



The excitement was palpable! Activity-frenzied!  
Decibel levels- high, higher, highest!

It was the Pedro Fiesta- a thrilling celebration of community  
and togetherness.

Come 29<sup>th</sup> June, all roads led to the Pedro Fiesta, the much-awaited celebration  
of St. Peter's Parish feast, joyfully revived after a long hiatus under the inspiration  
of our Parish Priest, Fr. Luke Rodrigues.

The St Peter's confraternity band joyfully  
brought in the priests for the eucharistic celebration.

It was a relaxed Sunday filled with entertainment  
shared over yummylicious delights enthusiastically  
prepared by our parishoners.



There was active participation, helping all  
to bond and discover new talent.  
From creative collages and vegetable  
carvings, to tattoo art, hairstyling, and  
a delightful fancy dress contest, there was  
something for everyone!





Darryl Loyola known for his dynamic and entertaining avataars brought infectious energy to the event. The telegames were meticulously spearheaded by Neil Pais. Four spirited teams - Britto, Loyola, Xavier and Kostka competed in vibrant jerseys for the coveted trophy.



The Pedro Fiesta wasn't just an event. It was a joyful reminder of the strength, warmth and togetherness that helps us build a connected community.



# Celebrating our 90+ year old parishioners

## Lives well lived

It is a pleasure to honour the lives of our remarkable parishioners who have reached the milestone of 90 years and beyond. We're reminded of the wealth of wisdom, experience and love they've shared with the world.

We'd like to celebrate them, acknowledge their contributions, and express our gratitude for the impact they've had.

They have inspired us to live fully and to cherish every moment.



**Irwin and Irene Almeida**, both nonagenarians! Irwin, a journalist and wordsmith, now spends his time doing crosswords, reading and staying on top of events around the world. He enjoys meeting people and sharing knowledge of the East Indian community, family connections and the history of Bandra.

Irene, a devoted wife, mother and homemaker, has a passion for sewing and has a keen eye for fashion, detail and perfection. She was always adventurous in the kitchen and delighted her children with different cuisines.



**Charles Gonsalves** is a gifted sportsman who represented his school and college in hockey and went on to play for Bombay State. He served our parish and community as a Eucharistic Minister and as a member of the Family Cell. He remains a devoted lover of sports and stays up to date with sports related activities. "Age is no barrier to movement, vitality or purpose" he says.



A "tom boy" in her youth, **Hewlitt Theresa Gonsalves** from Ranwar village, is a good seamstress and sweetmaker. She passed her SSC examination from St. Andrew's High School, which was co-ed at that time.



Now 91, **Sybil Netto** worked in May & Baker Private Limited. She was widowed at the young age of 37 and single handedly brought up 3 children.

97 year old **Aylma Curry** is an excellent cook and sweet maker. Her stories about "old Bandra" can hold you spellbound!



**Tessa D'Souza** has celebrated 100 glorious years! She was born at the end of WW 1 and after the Spanish flu. Fast forward to her marriage to Francis DeSouza on the day of the Bombay dock explosion (April 14, 1944). After marriage, she spent the next 20 years in Chennai where she broke down barriers - she was one of the few lady drivers in the city! She has been involved in Christian work, starting many Legion of Mary chapters. She also helped to start an AA programme at Bandstand. She started the daily rosary at Rebello House and continues to go to daily mass. She keeps in touch with family and friends on Whatsapp. Her faith and optimism is an inspiration to us all.



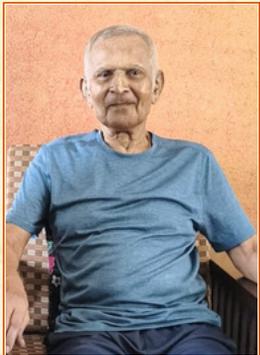


Almost 67 years ago, **Esther** (nee D'Monte) and Chief Marine Engineer **Jeff D'Mello**, walked down the aisle of St. Peter's Church.

They enjoy a content life listening to online mass, watching musical programmes and "hanging out" with close knit family and friends at home, continuing the family tradition of East Indian hospitality, great food and camaraderie, thanking God for each new day.



96 year old **Charlotte Gomes** is always cheerful, full of life and ever ready to attend social gatherings, out of town spiritual retreats, picnics... She recently won first place in the fancy dress competition at the Pedro Fiesta.



**Aloysius Cutinha** is a disciplinarian!  
He went to mass daily.  
Eats his meals on time.  
Even now, he makes an attempt to walk around the house.



94 year old **Carmen Vaz** is the wife of Robert, the dedicated and fondly remembered sacristan of our church for close to 5 decades!

A devoted wife and mother, she taught by example, encouraging her children to stay grounded in face of any adversity.

Her clean and tidy home is always open to all who pass by. She is blessed with the love and presence of family. May god grant her his peace and joy all the days of her life.



A nurse by profession, **Anna Fonseca** has helped innumerable people and priests of the parish with her nursing experience. She has efficiently managed the church book stall for 15 long years. She sang in the parish Marathi choir. May she be blessed abundantly with good health and happiness.



**Theresa Pereira** who has written a book on her life, has helped many people to complete the paperwork, apply for and get their pensions. Bless you, Theresa!

**Pia Simoes** is now 103!  
She is a self made person, a good seamstress and cook. She was also an involved animator in the Archangel Raphael community. May she receive abundant blessings.



Warm, kind, **Bella Lobo** loves meeting people! She has worked as a secretary in Siemens and has also served as the secretary in her Building Society.



# 90+ and still counting our blessings



Dynamic **Sybil Mendonca** is a powerhouse of talent! She is the founder member of the Dadar Senior Citizens association, the ex prefect of the ladies sodality; she was a lector at her parish and was secretary to the director of Grindwell Norton. She completed her post graduation in literature at the age of 40! Her faith in God is an inspiration to us all.



96 year old **Celine John** is a role model to her daughter Lumina, instilling in her religious and moral values, providing for her needs with selfless love and sacrifice. She was a secondary school teacher whose unwavering faith and resilience helped her to face life's challenges and struggles.

Cheerful, petite **Louisa Ferreira**, an ex parishioner, makes exquisite flowers from paper and left over ribbon. She donates these to the Sasta Sale that is held in our church compound. She used to teach tailoring and flower making; she also served the marginalized. Her dedication to church activities, especially the Legion of Mary can never be forgotten. May she receive abundant blessings.



**Clotilda D'Cruz** was born in Goa in 1932. She and her husband Manuel are both tailors-- the D'Cruz tailors. She is the proud mother of 3 children.



Our evergreen **Roland Cardoz** in his own words:  
I am 94 years and still going strong thanks to an active life. There are many glorious and beautiful memories, but these are in the past and I move forward with every birthday! Here are some of my goals till I complete 100 years.  
1. Complete writing and publish a mini Bible. 2. Write a tribute to the greatest western novelist Louis L'Amour 3. Nourish my spiritual life 4. Participate in a marathon when I reach 100. I thank God for my life, family and the church activities that help me remain forever young.

**Emma Gonsalves** is 90 years old...and counting! In her heyday, she cooked, cross stitched, knitted and made beautiful greeting cards too! She has unwavering faith and a great devotion to Mother Mary.



On July 6th this year, our much loved **Sr. Munira Khan** celebrated her 91<sup>st</sup> birthday. Her magnetic personality draws children, youth and seniors alike. Her cheerful demeanor and infectious joy makes her a treasured presence in the community.





With his positive, never-say-die spirit, **Albert Lobo** lives his life with energy and enthusiasm. Gifted with a sharp intellect, he solves sudoku puzzles, recalls treasured historical anecdotes and keeps himself abreast of current affairs. A dedicated family man, he is a shining example of resilience, strength and simplicity.



**Teresa Pereira** graduated from the Sir J.J. School of Art and was a teacher at St. Xavier's High School, Fort. She was an active member of the SVP in our parish.

**Rose Teresa Gonsalves** loves reading, watching TV, solving puzzles and keeping in touch with all on Whatsapp. She was a member of the Charismatic group and an active and enthusiastic captain of her zone during the St. Peter's zonals.



**Xavier Remedios** is always positive! He was a technician with Air Works and still owns a garment business. He enjoys discussing politics and is a fan of the TV programme Crime Patrol.



**Alice Saldanha** taught for over 40 years and retired as Headmistress of the Primary in Fr. Agnel School. She strives to bring education to all through her connections with various schools. She was an animator in her zone and her interaction with priests in our parish deepened her faith. Her one fond memory is that of attending the Eucharist Congress in 1964.



Wife of the legendary saxophonist Jazzy Joe, **Matilda Pereira** has three children she is proud of. She worked for an engineering company. Today, she is housebound and is grateful for the Eucharist Ministers who come by every Sunday.

A person of deep faith, **Bruno D'Souza's** life is a testimony to kindness, integrity and devotion. He is a dedicated sportsman and has had a commendable career both in football and hockey. He earned recognition for his talent, discipline and sportsmanship. He efficiently served in the private sector in administrative roles.



A much loved ex-teacher of St. Stanislaus High School, **Daphne Gabriel**, has fostered growth and development in her students. She is their guiding light not only imparting knowledge, but instilling in them lifetime values. Her unmatched legacy lives on in her students!



Wisdom  
from the Ages...

Leave a legacy of love! Let go! Be kind!

# The Jubilee Cross Journey (August-September)



Mary of Nazareth (Elco Arcade)

3<sup>rd</sup> - 14<sup>th</sup> August

Archangel Raphael (Almeida Park)

15<sup>th</sup> August - 3<sup>rd</sup> September

St Peter (St Peter's Colony)

4<sup>th</sup> - 15<sup>th</sup> September

Maria Goretti (Somnath Lane)

16<sup>th</sup> September - 30<sup>th</sup> September

ARCHANGEL RAPHAEL



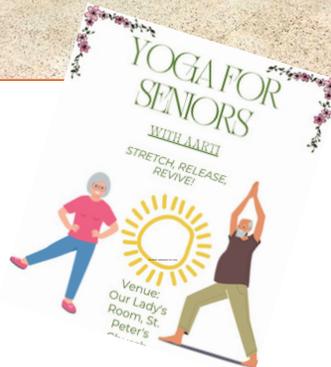
## Senior citizens - staying active, staying happy



Overnight picnic to Stanislaus Villa



Monthly housie sessions



## Be with us Mary...

The month of May is dedicated to Our Lady and the rosary was recited every evening at the church grotto. Members of various zones prayed, invoking Mother Mary's powerful intercession.



Go-Nidhi celebrates Our Lady

## Church takes lead to set environment goals for community

Times of India, 8<sup>th</sup> July 2025

Fr. Luke Rodrigues

Francis in 2015, that highlights material and moral implications of climate change

timelines, categorised under the following headers: Response to the cry of the earth;

rainwater harvesting facilities, achieve 100% shroud burials, and discontinue use

vendors and nonprofits that provide environmental services and will urge parishioners to patronise them. On



A gathering was held to chalk out an environmental action plan for parishes in the Bombay Archdiocese. Organized by the Archdiocesan Office for Environment, the consultation called "implementing the vision of Laudato Si", highlighted material and moral implications of climate change and biodiversity loss and emphasises care for the environment and people - it's guidance anchored in Christian theology and doctrine.

Actions proposed towards reaching these goals would be implemented by electing "model parishes" and training them in good practices.



## We need YOU!

The parish stands in need of more altar servers. We invite school children from Std. 5 onwards to come forward and join the Altar Servers Group.



Forty Extra Ordinary Ministers were commissioned on the feast of Corpus Christi. The sick and housebound of our parish are truly blessed to have these dedicated Eucharistic Ministers.

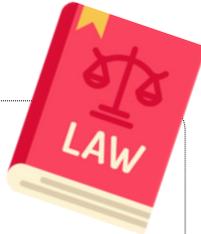


## A Smashing Weekend

The inter parish badminton tournament was a resounding success, bringing together players from parishes across Mumbai. Ours was the only team with players across 20 - 60 years and we gave the youngsters a brilliant fight, playing exceptionally well and securing the 3rd place. A fantastic weekend of sport, bonding and parish pride!

## Plan your tomorrow, today

We are happy to announce the re-starting of the Legal Aid cell. Join us for a session on "Writing of wills and property nomination". Details later.



# hey!

It's time for change at the Keystone desk!

**Janet D'Souza**, a sincere thank you! Your articles brought our bulletin to life and your proof reading kept us on track. Appreciation also for your attention to detail. **Jude Gomes** who was with us for two years, thank you.

## In harmony with nature

Veniska Barrow

The Confraternity of St. Peter's parish visited Janhit Vikas Trust at Tara in Raigad. Fr. Wendell D'Cruz explained the significance of the work the Jesuits are doing in the villages and their focus on environmental harmony.

Walking through lush greenery with Fr. Frankie Nunes, they discovered medicinal plants, trees and herbs. All returned spiritually refreshed and connected with nature.

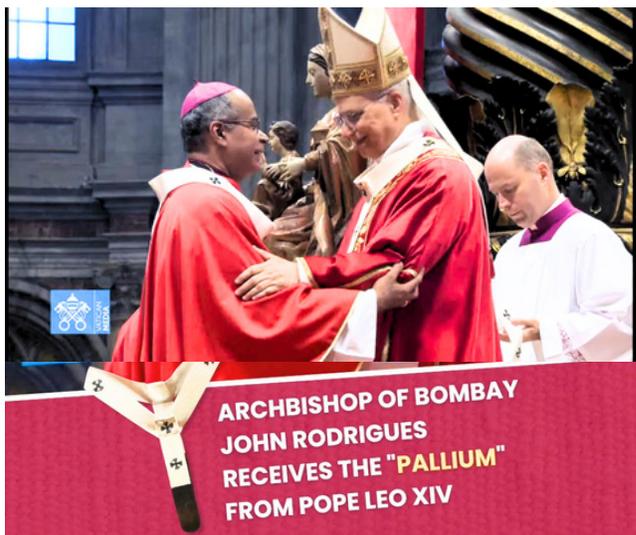




## What is a Pallium ?

The “pallium” is a liturgical vestment made of white lamb’s wool. It serves as the official insignia of a metropolitan archbishop- an archbishop who leads a metropolitan archdiocese.

It symbolizes the archbishop’s communion with the Bishop of Rome and his pastoral mission, carried out cum Petro et sub Petro (with Peter and under Peter), in his metropolitan see.



Archbishop John shared that the ceremony with the Pope on 29th June was a moment to experience the unity in diversity that characterizes the Church. There were Archbishops from every continent in the world, representing diverse ways in which the faith is expressed. At the same time, he was deeply aware of the unity that comes from our one faith in Christ; a unity that is best symbolized in the person of the Pope, the Vicar of Christ.

### A personal anecdote ...

Several years ago, I witnessed something unique at the Basilica of St Agnes in Rome. It was the feast of St. Agnes, and two white lambs were brought there to be blessed. This was not a general blessing for all pets or animals, but was meant only for these two lambs. The commentator mentioned that the wool from these lambs would go towards making the pallium given to new Archbishops.

Unique though it was, I did not think much about this ceremony until my own brother received his pallium from the hands of Pope Leo. I wondered about the lambs whose wool had gone into making that pallium. Little did they know that they were now connected to a city in far-away India!

Fr. Luke Rodrigues s.j.

### Pope’s Intention Aug 2025



#### 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’s Intention Sep 2025



For our relationship with all of creation. Let us pray that, inspired by St. Francis, we might experience our independence with all creatures who are loved by God and worthy of love and respect

# Renewing a legacy - Restoring Mount Mary's Basilica

Come September and devotees throng the Mount Mary's Basilica invoking Mother Mary's powerful intercession. But for a while now, many would have noticed that services are being held under a canopy on the grounds. Why? Because the inside of the Church is being restored. Restoration actually began several years ago and the first phase involved repairing and restoring the clay tiled roofs, to ensure the Church is free from leakage. Once this major task was complete, attention shifted to the interiors.



## Did you know ?

One major discovery we made when scraping down the thick layers of accumulated paint, was that the church columns, balcony beams and false ceiling were all made of solid teak wood. It was decided to thoroughly scrape down all the paint work to expose and polish up the hidden wooden surfaces beneath. The same was done for all the painted over stone work and cast-iron railings which had to be blasted with tiny pellets of copper slag to remove the paint work without destroying the delicate carved surfaces beneath. Once cleaned up, these decorative surfaces are being touched up with actual gold leaf gilding.

The sanctuary has a magnificent painted frieze over the chancel arch, that separates the hall of the church from the sanctuary. Not many know that the original canvas painting, depicting Mother Mary as Queen of heaven and earth, was painted by a then young girl, Lourdes Netto, from Bandra whose daughter Marie was later an art teacher here at St. Stanislaus school.

Since the original painting had been badly disfigured, it was replaced by a fibre glass replica in bright colours. The original canvas is being restored to its original glory and will be reinstated.

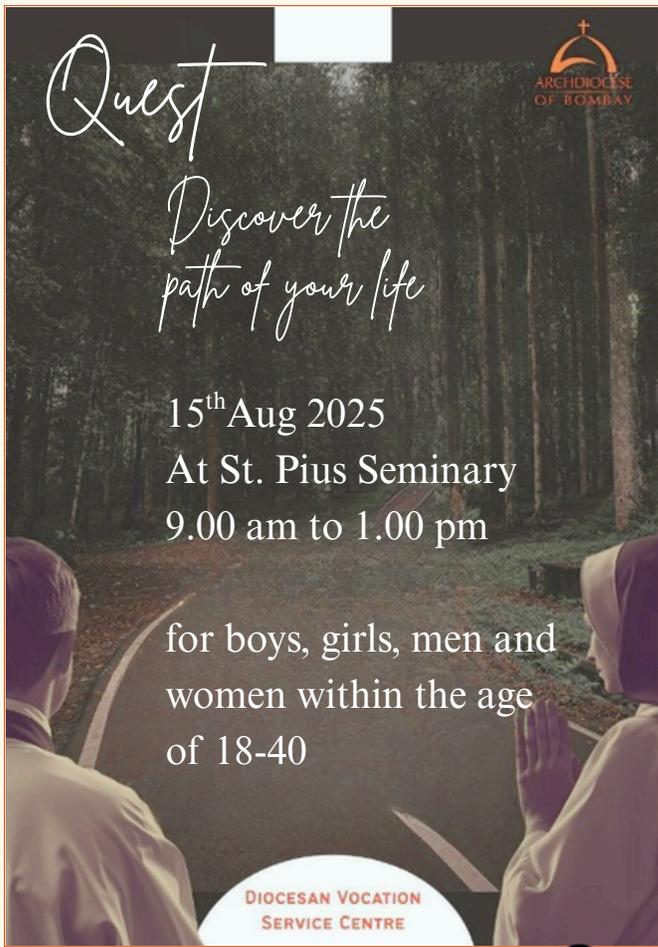


Another interesting find in the compound of the campus was thick marble panels, with deep carvings, most probably the original panels at the base of the high altar, that were replaced by a carved marble panel of the Last Supper. We propose to reinsert these original panels in the front of the present altar, as a reminder of its past history.

We eagerly await the re-opening of the restored Basilica, where Mother Mary continues to be enshrined and pours out her blessings, on the people of Bandra and every pilgrim who visits this historic iconic shrine.

- David Cardoz





**Quest**  
*Discover the path of your life*

15<sup>th</sup> Aug 2025  
 At St. Pius Seminary  
 9.00 am to 1.00 pm

for boys, girls, men and women within the age of 18-40

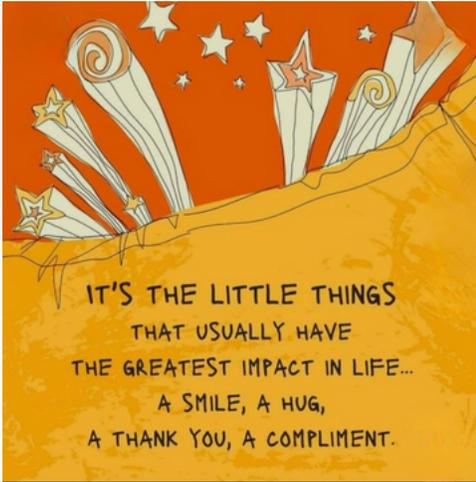
ARCHDIOCESE OF BOMBAY

DIOCESAN VOCATION SERVICE CENTRE



A Training Program for SCC Animators & Coordinators  
 Theme: Discipleship, Anger & Stress Management  
 Venue : St. Anne's School Hall, Pali Hill, Bandra  
 Date: Thursday, 7 August 2025  
 Time: 6:40 PM – 9:00 PM  
 Resource Person: Fr. Luke Rodrigues s.j

An evening of appreciation!  
 The SOC will be celebrating Dhanyavaad, an evening of fun and masti for our domestic workers at the end of August. Details to follow.

IT'S THE LITTLE THINGS THAT USUALLY HAVE THE GREATEST IMPACT IN LIFE...  
 A SMILE, A HUG, A THANK YOU, A COMPLIMENT.



**Welcome little one**

Ezekiel Asher Mendes	S/o Terence Mendes & Nezvila Saldanha
Idan D'silva	S/o Noel D'silva & Shora Dias

**Returned to the Lord**

Martina Alloysious D'souza	31.05.2025	Rozada Villa, Bazar Cross Lane
Joseph Martins	09.06.2025	Gilbert Palace, Boran Road
Albert Fernandes	11.07.2025	Baba Nagar, St Peter's Road



We welcome your suggestions, if any.  
 Reach us on email at [stpeterschurchkeystone@gmail.com](mailto:stpeterschurchkeystone@gmail.com) by the 15th of the month.