July 2026

WE CONNECT

St. Thomas Parish Goregaon East Newsletter

Private Circulation | www.stthomaschurch.in | Volume V | Issue 03

My dear parishioners in the Lord Jesus,

I have been reflecting on the life of our Patron, St. Thomas, over the past couple of days. The questions that arise in my mind are: “Why is the title of 'Doubting Thomas' given to him?”, “Why did only the Evangelist, St. John, record his most profound and personal statement, 'My Lord and my God' (Jn 20:28), in his Gospel?”, and “Why was he not present with the other ten Apostles in the room when the Risen Lord appeared to them on the day of the Resurrection?” (Jn 20:19–23). It is rather good to ask questions and find answers than to follow with blind faith.

Saints for Every Day by R.S. Amalraj, S.J., gives a clue to some of these questions. I quote: “Has history or oral tradition done an irreparable mistake by giving the nickname 'Doubting Thomas'?” But his initial unbelief in Christ's Resurrection has been more than overshadowed by his briefest, yet most scintillating, prayer the Christian world has ever known—a prayer which has been bequeathed to all ages by him: “My Lord and my God.” (Page 170).

The third question raised above cannot find a perfect answer because the Sacred Scripture, as recorded by St. John, cannot be overruled. We have to accept it as it is, and we can find a clue in “Jn 20:24–29,” which strengthens our belief in the Risen Lord. It assures hope for all who follow Christ: “Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.”

Our parish is the only one dedicated to St. Thomas among the Latin Rite churches in the Archdiocese. How blessed we are to celebrate his feast on Faith Formation Sunday. We are also privileged to have the Apostle of India as our patron and to pray to him to intercede for us and for our families.

The feast of our patron has been celebrated with joy and unity, reflecting on the themes of shared baptismal dignity, co-responsible participation of laity and clergy, and missionary discipleship—witnessing Christ through service. These themes were preached by the seminary professors, and the Solemn Feast Mass was celebrated by Bishop Stephen Fernandes. In spite of the rains, the faithful took an active part on all the days to show their love for St. Thomas Church and received blessings and peace.

The unit stalls with their mouth-watering food court, along with the game stalls by our youth, were a display of unity and strength. The brass band, music, lucky draws, and singing by the choir added colour to the celebration. All these forms of entertainment assured the devotees of faith, belief, and solidarity. I would like to conclude with the words of Pope St. Gregory the Great: “What St. Thomas was, was one thing; what he believed was another. A mortal man could not have seen God. Thomas saw a man, but by his words, 'My Lord and my God,' acknowledged His Divinity.”

God bless one and all.

- Fr. Nelson Saldanha

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United Beyond the Storm

Some celebrations are remembered for the events that took place. Others are remembered for the spirit that shone through when things did not go as planned.

The eve of the Feast of St. Thomas was meant to be a night of music, dance and joyful celebration. Weeks of careful planning, countless meetings, creative ideas and tireless efforts had transformed the Church quadrangle into a vibrant venue, beautifully decorated and ready to welcome parishioners for a memorable Disco Night. Every detail reflected the dedication and enthusiasm of the Parish Pastoral Council, the organising committees and the many volunteers who generously gave their time and talents.

Then came the rain, the heavy downpour.

The relentless downpour left the venue waterlogged, making it impossible to proceed safely. The difficult decision to cancel the event was undoubtedly heartbreaking. It meant seeing weeks of hard work disappear in a matter of moments. Yet, even as the rain continued to pour, many volunteers refused to give up. From early morning until late into the night, they worked tirelessly, moving equipment, protecting decorations, clearing water wherever possible, rearranging plans and doing everything within their power to salvage the celebration. Despite their determination and unwavering commitment, the weather proved stronger than their efforts.

While the event could not go on, their service did. Without seeking recognition or applause, they immediately turned their attention to preparing for the Feast Day celebrations, ensuring that the parish would still come together with joy the very next day.

There were no complaints, no giving up, and no loss of hope. Instead, volunteers rolled up their sleeves once again. New plans were adapted, and preparations immediately shifted towards ensuring that the Feast Day celebrations would be a success. What nature interrupted, the parish community answered with unity, determination and



unwavering faith.

On the feast day, the quadrangle was once again filled—not with disappointment, but with smiling faces, fellowship and the joyful spirit of a community that refused to let adversity define its celebration.

Perhaps this was the greatest lesson of our feast. Success is not measured by whether every plan unfolds perfectly, but by how we respond when it does not. True parish life is built not merely on events, but on people who stand together, encourage one another and continue serving with joyful hearts.

As a parish family, we celebrate not only what we accomplished, but who we became through the experience. United in faith, strengthened in hope and inspired by love, we discovered that when hearts stand together, no effort is ever wasted.

This year's feast will be remembered not because everything went according to plan, but because our parish family stood together as one. In the true spirit of our patron, St. Thomas the Apostle, may our faith remain steadfast, our service selfless, and our hearts ever ready to serve our Parish when we receive the call.

- Elaine D’souza

Faith in the Digital Age

A World at Our Fingertips

One evening after dinner, a family sat together in the living room. The grandparents were reading and busy forwarding messages on WhatsApp, the parents were replying to work emails, and the children were watching videos on their phones. They were all in the same room, yet hardly anyone was talking to one another. It was only when there was a power cut that the phones were put aside. What began as a few minutes without electricity soon turned into laughter, stories from the grandparents' childhood, and conversations everyone enjoyed. Sometimes, it takes a quiet moment to remind us that the greatest connections are not made through screens but through the people around us.

Technology has become a part of our everyday lives. It helps us stay in touch with loved ones, learn new things, attend online prayer meetings, and even watch Holy Mass when we are unable to come to church. It is truly a gift when used wisely.



Using Technology with Wisdom

Along with its many benefits, the internet also brings challenges. False information, hurtful comments, cyberbullying, and endless scrolling can affect our thoughts, our relationships, and even our peace of mind.

As Christians, we are called to be the same person online as we are in real life. Before posting a comment or forwarding a message, we can ask ourselves: "Is this true? Is it kind? Will it help someone?" A simple prayer, a Bible verse, or an encouraging message can bring hope to someone who needs it. In the same way, one careless message can cause hurt that we never intended.

Living Our Faith Online

Faith is not only something we practise in church. It is reflected in the choices we make every day, including the way we use technology. Young people have a special opportunity to use social media to spread hope, stand against bullying, and encourage others with positive words. At the same time, children can learn kindness online, adults can set a good example through responsible use of technology, and senior citizens can remind us of the importance of face-to-face conversations and family time.

Finding the Right Balance

Technology should make life better, not take over our lives. We can all take simple steps to create a healthier balance. Keeping phones away during family meals, setting aside some screen-free time each week, making time for prayer and reading the Bible, and choosing conversations over constant scrolling can strengthen both our relationships and our faith.

Jesus said, "You are the light of the world" (Matthew 5:14). Today, that light should shine not only in our homes, schools, workplaces, and parish, but also through every message we send and every post we share. May our digital lives reflect the love, kindness, and truth of Christ, so that wherever people meet us—online or in person—they may experience His presence through us.

- The Media Cell

A Celebration of Faith,

The Feast of St. Thomas the Apostle was celebrated with great devotion, joy and a wonderful spirit of togetherness at St. Thomas Parish, making it a truly memorable occasion for all. The celebrations commenced with a spiritually enriching three-day Triduum, during which the faithful gathered each evening for the Holy Eucharist. The Masses were celebrated by priests from the seminary, whose inspiring homilies invited parishioners to deepen their faith. We were blessed to have Bishop Stephen Fernandes celebrate the Feast Mass whose homily reflected on the life of our patron, St. Thomas the Apostle, whose journey from doubt to unwavering faith continues to inspire Christians around the world.

Although the much-anticipated parish fête planned for Saturday had to be cancelled due to heavy rainfall, the excitement was far from dampened. Determined to celebrate the parish feast in true Thomasian spirit, there were lively mini fêtes after each of the three Masses on The Feast Day, filling the church quadrangle with laughter, fellowship and celebration.

The parish units enthusiastically set up attractive stalls serving a delightful variety of mouth-watering food that was thoroughly enjoyed by parishioners and visitors alike. The youth added to the festive atmosphere by organising fun-filled games for all. A heartfelt word of appreciation to both the comperes for the day, Lorette Silveira and Elaine D'Souza, whose energy and cheerful presence beautifully brought the programme together, making every moment engaging and memorable for all. There were raffles, lucky draws and spot prizes that kept the excitement alive throughout the day. Adding to the joyous ambience was a lively musical interlude featuring songs sung by the choir group and little kids. We also had the lively 'band-walas' who pulled the crowds to the dance floor.

More than just a festive gathering, the Feast of St. Thomas was a beautiful expression of the vibrant faith, unity and generosity that define our parish community. The wholehearted efforts of our clergy, volunteers, parish cells and units, youth, sponsors and every helping hand ensured the success of the celebrations.

As we conclude this year's feast, we thank God for His abundant blessings and seek the intercession of St. Thomas the Apostle. May his profound proclamation, "My Lord and my God!", continue to inspire us to grow in faith and bear joyful witness to Christ in our daily lives.

- The Media Cell



Fellowship and Parish Unity



















HAPPY FEAST!


PRICE BOARD
CHICKEN QUICHE
Rs. 50
SAUSAGE PULAO
Rs. 100


ST. TH
ST. THOMAS






Happy Feast
THOM
"My Lord and my God."
(John 20:28)










Jumpot
PRIZE

From Reels to Real Change

We teenagers are often known for spending hours on our phones, making reels, laughing with friends, and sometimes even forgetting where we kept our own water bottles! But the truth is, we have the power to make a real difference when it comes to protecting the environment. We may not be politicians or scientists, but we can start with simple actions in our daily lives. We can carry reusable bottles, avoid single-use plastics, save electricity by switching off lights and fans, and participate in tree-planting drives. Teenagers are trendsetters! If we can make a dance challenge or a funny meme go viral overnight, we can also make eco-friendly habits popular among our friends. Social media, which adults often blame for distracting us, can actually become a powerful tool to spread awareness about environmental issues. Imagine if every teenager planted just one tree, used less plastic, and encouraged a few friends to do the same. The impact would be huge! We are the generation that will inherit this planet, so protecting it is not just a responsibility but also for our own interest. After all, we want a future with clean air, green parks, and beautiful beaches, not one where we need an app to find the last surviving tree! Environmental change does not always begin with big speeches or expensive projects it starts with small actions taken by ordinary people. And when millions of teenagers take those small actions together, they can create extraordinary change for our planet.



- Pearl

DID YOU KNOW?

Why Are Bells Rung During Mass?

The altar bells are rung during the Consecration to draw everyone's attention to the most sacred moment of the Mass—when Jesus becomes truly present in the Eucharist.

Why Does the Priest Kiss the Altar?

The priest kisses the altar at the beginning and end of Mass because the altar represents Christ Himself. It is also a sign of reverence for the relics of saints traditionally placed beneath the altar.

Why Is the Host Round?

The circular shape has no beginning or end, reminding us of God's eternal love. It is also practical for breaking and distributing during Communion.

Why Does the Priest Wash His Hands?

Before the Eucharistic Prayer, the priest washes his hands while praying quietly:

"Lord, wash away my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin."

This symbolizes the desire for interior purity before offering the Holy Sacrifice.

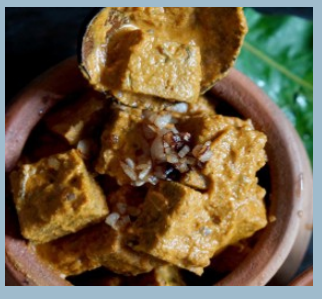
Let's Cook Something!

Pathrade Curry is a traditional Mangalorean Catholic dish where steamed Pathrade slices are simmered in a mildly spicy coconut gravy. It is a comforting monsoon favourite and is best enjoyed with hot steamed rice.

Ingredients for the Pathrade

- 8–10 fresh colocasia (taro) leaves
- 1 cup raw rice (soaked for 4–5 hours)
- ½ cup grated fresh coconut
- 6–8 dried red chillies
- 1 tbsp tamarind pulp
- 1 tsp jaggery
- 1 tsp cumin seeds
- ½ tsp turmeric powder
- Salt to taste





Method

1. Grind the soaked rice, coconut, red chillies, tamarind, jaggery, cumin, turmeric, and salt into a smooth, thick paste.
2. Wash and pat dry the colocasia leaves. Trim the thick stems if necessary.
3. Place one leaf with the smooth side facing down and spread a thin layer of the prepared paste.
4. Place another leaf on top, spread more paste, and repeat until you have a stack of 4–5 leaves.
5. Fold the sides inward and roll tightly from the base to form a log.
6. Repeat with the remaining leaves and batter.
7. Steam the rolls for 30–40 minutes or until fully cooked.
8. Allow them to cool slightly before slicing into rounds.

Ingredients for the gravy

- 1 cup grated fresh coconut
- 5–6 dried red chillies (Byadgi chillies for colour)
- 1 tsp coriander seeds
- ½ tsp cumin seeds
- ¼ tsp turmeric powder
- A small marble-sized ball of tamarind
- 3–4 garlic cloves
- Salt to taste
- 2 cups water



For the Tempering

- 1 tbsp coconut oil
- 1 tsp mustard seeds
- 8–10 curry leaves
- 2 garlic cloves, lightly crushed

Method

1.Dry roast the coriander seeds and cumin until fragrant. Allow them to cool.

2. Grind the roasted spices with the coconut, dried red chillies, garlic, turmeric, tamarind, and a little water to make a smooth paste.

3. Transfer the paste to a pan, add water and salt, and bring to a gentle boil.

4. Carefully add the sliced Pathrade pieces to the gravy.

5. Simmer on low heat for 8–10 minutes so the Pathrade absorbs the flavours.

6. Heat coconut oil in a small pan. Add mustard seeds. Once they splutter, add the garlic and curry leaves. Fry until the garlic turns light golden.

7. Pour the tempering over the curry and cover for a minute to lock in the aroma.

8. This curry tastes even better after resting for 15–20 minutes, allowing the Pathrade to soak up the rich coconut gravy.

