



SILVER JUBILEE



REV. FR. GEORGE RAJ OP

FAITHFUL JOURNEY

CELEBRATING FAITH, SERVICE, AND 25 YEARS OF PRIESTLY DEDICATION
A SPECIAL TRIBUTE FROM

OUR LADY OF FORSAKEN CHURCH

HOUSE NO. 446, OPPOSITE ANANT PALACE, NEAR DMART, GHANSOLI, NAVI MUMBAI.

*The parishioners of
Our Lady of Forsaken Church
joyfully extends our
heartfelt wishes to
Fr. George Raj on the
25th anniversary of his priesthood.*



The OLFC Family





OLFCGHANSOLI



CONTENTS

01	Memories	02
02	Biography of Fr. George Raj OP	03
03	Greetings by Provincial	04
04	Greetings by Mother Teresa Sisters	04
05	Spiritual Note from Fr. William Vincent	05
06	Wishes from Fr. K.C Joseph OP	05
07	Warm Wishes by Sr. Rubina	06
08	Cheers and Good Luck from Fr. Aquin Noronha OP	07
09	Greetings from OLFC PPC Team	08
10	Happy Thoughts from OLFC Youth	09
11	OLFC Pictures	10
12	OLFC Pictures	11
13	Best Wishes by Shri. Sanjeev Ganesh Naik	12
14	Best Wishes by Shri. Dwarkanath B. Bhoir	13
15	Blessings by Fr. Maxim D'Silva OP	14
16	Heartfelt Lines by Fr. Arul Manickam & Fr. Prem	14
17	Gratitude from Women Cell	15
18	The Sisters of the Helpers of Jesus, Ghansoli	15
19	Warm Wishes from Keith, Althea & Family	16
20	Congratulations from the Catechism Teachers & Children	17
21	Wishes from Bansode, Vaz, Almeida Family	18
22	Gratitude from Family	18
23	Lenten Pilgrimage 2025	19
24	OLFC History	20





02

Memories





Biography



On December 16, 1968, I was born into a devout Catholic family in Ahmednagar, Maharashtra. My parents, the Late Joseph Raj and RoseMary Raj, instilled in us a strong foundation of faith and values. As the youngest of six siblings— one sister and four brothers—I was blessed to grow up in a home deeply rooted in Catholic traditions.

In 1971, due to my father's service in the defense sector, our family relocated to Itarsi. It was here that my spiritual journey began to take shape. As a child, I was profoundly influenced by Fr. Amirtharaj OP from Pachmarhi, who frequently visited our parish in Itarsi for spiritual activities. His dedication and devotion ignited a deep desire within me to follow in his footsteps and dedicate my life to God's service.

This calling led me to join the Dominican Order in 1990. My initial postulancy took place in Mangalore, followed by a year-long novitiate in Goa from 1991 to 1992. Thereafter, I pursued my major seminary studies at St. Charles in Nagpur from 1992 to 1995, completing my philosophy along with a Bachelor of Arts degree. My regency period in 1995-1996 was spent in the Diocese of Varanasi, enriching my understanding of pastoral service. I then returned to Nagpur to undertake four years of theological studies from 1996 to 2000.

The pinnacle of my spiritual journey was on April 23, 2000, when I was ordained as a priest in Itarsi. It was the most joyful day of my life—a moment filled with immense gratitude and devotion. My heart overflows with appreciation for my family, my formators, and all those who have supported and guided me throughout my journey to the priesthood. Their unwavering faith and encouragement have been instrumental in shaping my mission and commitment to serving the Church and the community.





In the words of St. John Mary Vianney “the Priesthood is the love of the Heart of Jesus”.

Dear Fr. George,

My heartiest congratulations, best wishes and prayers to you, as you celebrate the Silver Jubilee of your Ordination. Priesthood is a precious gift of God. 25 years serving the Lord and his people is an achievement and the credit goes to the Lord. We read in the letter to the Hebrews, “every high priest chosen from among men is appointed to act on behalf of people in relation to God”, “he does not take the honor upon himself, but he is called by God’ (Heb. 5:1,4).



In the words of St. John Mary Vianney “the Priesthood is the love of the Heart of Jesus”. We participate in the Priesthood of Christ. When our Priesthood is bonded with Christ’s Priesthood, we bear fruits in abundance. As Priest and minister of Jesus Christ, you are called to journey with Him. The recent Synod emphasized our walking or journeying together with Christ. In walking together, we embrace all people in our fold including the sinners and the saints. The end goal is to continue to do the work of Christ. And work of Christ is best summarized by Henri Dominique Lacordaire, a French Dominican, (his often quoted text), as “to be a member of each family, yet belonging to none; to share all sufferings, to penetrate all secrets, to heal all wounds, to go from God to man, to bring pardon and hope, to have a heart of fire for charity, a heart of bronze for chastity, to teach and to pardon, to console and to bless always; what a glorious life and that is yours, O, Priest of Christ”.

Fr. Peter Mendonsa, OP

**Prior Provincial
Province of India**

Twenty-five years as a priest of Christ, you dedicated your life joyfully to the Lord and his people. May God continue to bless you to remain faithful to him. May you serve the Lord and his people with joy and love. I offer my humble prayers to the Lord.



Dear Fr. George Raj,

All praise and glory be to God for His boundless goodness—to you, to the Dominican family, and to Holy Mother Church—for the priceless gift of your priesthood. We thank Him for your unwavering faithfulness in following His call wholeheartedly for the past 25 years, and for all the graces and blessings you have received—and shared with us. Thank you, Jesus!

We at Prem Daan, Missionaries of Charity, remain deeply grateful to God and to you for bringing Jesus into our midst. Your life echoes a profound message:

“Yesterday is gone; today is the only day to make Jesus known and loved.”

Thank you, Father, for offering the Holy Mass for us. When priests were not available, you willingly stepped in—what a blessing that was for us! Your well-prepared homilies have always been a source of strength and inspiration.

We thank you for anointing our sick, giving them peace and a renewed will to live—or to depart with a smile and the name of Jesus on their lips.

We are especially grateful for the many blessings and graces you have brought to us through the Sacrament of Reconciliation, removing barriers to love and helping us rise above our limitations, allowing the spirit of love to fill our hearts.



St. Teresa of Calcutta once said, “How great is your vocation, that the Son of God comes to the altar at your word. How sacred must be your life, and how holy your hands, to hold Jesus within your fingers.”

That humble Mother, who recognized the greatness of the priesthood, surely prays for you. We rejoice with you and pray:

May Jesus live in you, through you, and with you. May you be all for Jesus, through Mary our Mother.

With love and gratitude,
Prem Daan – Missionaries of Charity
Plot no. 5, Sector 18, Airoli, Navi Mumbai





एक संदेश माननीय फादर जार्ज राज के नाम



Fr. William Vincent

**Sacred Heart of Jesus
Roman Catholic Church
Itarsi, Madhya Pradesh.**

“Native Parish of Fr. George Raj”

हमारे प्रिय फादर जी,

सेक्रेट हार्ट ऑफ़ जीसस चर्च इटारसी के पल्ली पुरोहित, सहायक पल्ली पुरोहित एवं सभी पल्ली वासियों की ओर से आपको हार्दिक हार्दिक बधाई एवं शुभकामनाएं।

इटारसी कलीसिया, आपके पुरोहिताई की रजत जयंती के शुभ अवसर पर आपको हृदय से बधाई देती है एवं अनेक शुभकामनाएं भेजती है। यह हम सबों के लिए एक खुशी का अवसर है कि आपने अपनी पुरोहिताई के 25 वर्ष प्रभु की अनुग्रह में सफलतापूर्वक पूर्ण किये हैं। प्रभु की कृपा सदा आप पर बनी रही और पवित्र आत्मा का मार्गदर्शन आपको मिलता रहा। यह हमारा सौभाग्य है कि इटारसी की इस छोटी सी कलीसिया में से प्रभु ने आपको चुना। इस शुभ अवसर के लिए हम पिता परमेश्वर का कोटि-कोटि धन्यवाद देते हैं। आपके माता-पिता के लिए भी धन्यवाद करते हैं कि उन्होंने प्रभु की इच्छा को स्वीकारा और आपको पुरोहिताई की शिक्षा के लिए आगे बढ़ाया। ईश्वर उनकी आत्मा को अनंत शांति प्रदान करें।

आप अवसर पाते ही हमारी पल्ली में आते हैं, हमारे लिए मिस्सा बलिदान चढ़ाते हैं और अपने सरल उपदेशों द्वारा प्रभु की राह पर चलने के लिए हमारा मार्गदर्शन करते हैं। अपने नम्र स्वभाव एवं मृदुभाषिता के कारण आप सभी के प्रिय फादर बन गए हैं। आपके इस सहयोग के लिए हम सदा आपका धन्यवाद करते हैं। आपके अच्छे स्वास्थ्य, पवित्र एवं सुरक्षित जीवन के लिए प्रभु से प्रार्थना करते हैं। पवित्र आत्मा सदा आपके साथ रहे एवं माता मरियम का संरक्षण आपको सदा मिलता रहे। हम सब आपसे विनय करते हैं कि आप अपनी प्रार्थना में हम इटारसी पल्ली वासियों को याद रखें और हमारी कलीसिया के लिए प्रार्थना करते रहे। अंत में पुनः रजत जयंती की बहुत बहुत बधाई एवं भावी जीवन के लिए हार्दिक हार्दिक शुभकामनाएं, ईश्वर आपको सदा आशीषित रखे।

धन्यवाद।

आपके अपने इटारसी पल्लीवासी



It was in 1991 that I first met Fr. George Raj in Moira, Goa, when I had the privilege of serving as his Novice Master. He arrived along with four other novices to begin their novitiate—a year dedicated to intense spiritual and religious formation. This sacred time is also one of deep immersion into Dominican spirituality, as well as an opportunity to grow in the knowledge of the Order’s rich history, charisma, and laws.

Fr. George was always remarkably faithful in observing the obligations of the community. He generously offered his time and talents for the well-being of all. His commitment and dedication were evident even in those early days. He made his first profession in 1992.

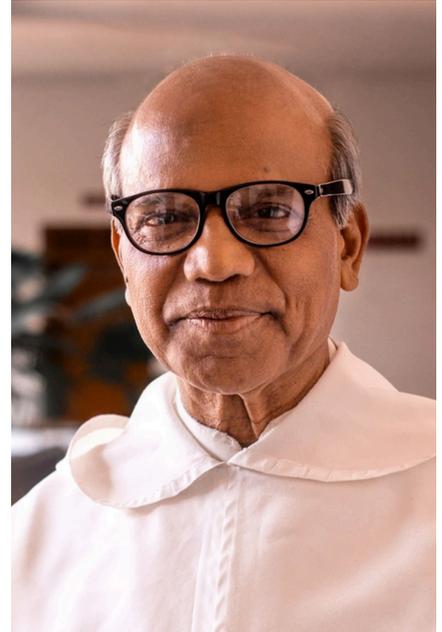
Later, I had the joy of teaching him liturgy during his theological studies. It was a blessing to witness his growth in wisdom and grace.

God continued to bless him abundantly, and he was privileged to be ordained a priest during the Holy Year 2000—a moment of great grace and joy for the Church.

One of the qualities I most admire in Fr. George Raj is his ability to work harmoniously with everyone. He has always shown a generous spirit and a willingness to take up any responsibility entrusted to him, fulfilling each one with dedication and humility.

It is no surprise, then, that the Lord continues to bless him richly, and now, in this Jubilee Year of 2025, he celebrates 25 years of faithful priestly service.

I wholeheartedly wish him good health—of body, mind, and spirit—so that he may continue to serve the Lord and His people for many more years to come.



Fr. K.C Joseph OP

**Dominican Retreat Centre,
Satyagiri, Igatpuri.**





Congratulations on your Silver Jubilee, Dear Uncle!

What an incredible milestone in your life and vocation! I am so proud of everything you have accomplished over the last 25 years, and I pray that God continues to bless you abundantly. Your years of service to God and humanity have touched many hearts, and your journey continues to inspire us all.

Twenty-five years of dedicated service is a remarkable achievement. May your unwavering commitment and love for God continue to shine brightly. It is truly amazing to see how far you have come on this journey. I am deeply thankful for your example of steadfast faith and devotion to the Lord. You are a true embodiment of faith, dedication, and service, and your life has been an inspiration to so many.

This is a moment for all of us to reflect on the profound impact you have had on our lives and the lives of countless others. Your Silver Jubilee marks 25 years of spiritual leadership, sacrifice, and unwavering commitment to the Church and our family. Today, we celebrate you, dear uncle, for your hard work, devotion, and prayers over the past 25 years.

Your journey of faith has been a blessing to us all. We still cherish your valuable instructions, spiritual guidance, timely support, and encouragement. Your presence has been a source of strength in both the joyful and challenging moments of our lives.

I wish you endless joy and blessings as you mark this significant milestone in your priestly journey. May God continue to bless you with good health, wisdom, and strength as you move forward in your beautiful vocation. Your example of faith and love is a beacon for all. May this occasion bring you a renewed sense of joy and purpose in your ministry.

May your Silver Jubilee be filled with love, joy, and the countless blessings that you have so generously shared with others. God bless you always and forever!



**Sr. Rubina
Tanzania**
"Niece to Fr. George"

06





"Silver Threads of Service"

Dear Fr. George Raj OP,

As you celebrate your Silver Jubilee of Priestly Ordination, I am grateful and admire your 25 years of dedicated service to the Lord and His people.

Your journey as a priest has been marked by compassion, wisdom, and generosity. Your commitment to spreading the Gospel, serving the marginalized, and forming future generations has inspired countless lives.

As a companion priest, I have had the privilege of witnessing your growth, your struggles, and your triumphs. Your humility, kindness, and sense of humor have made you a beloved brother and friend.

As you celebrate this milestone, I pray that you may continue to be nourished by the Word, strengthened by the Sacraments, and guided by the Holy Spirit.

Congratulations, dear Fr. George! May your silver jubilee be a joyous celebration of God's faithfulness and your fidelity to His call.

"Cheers and Good Luck"



**Fr. Aquin Noronha, OP
Rector**

St. Charles Seminary
Nagpur

Companion





Celebrating 25 Glorious Years of Fr. George Raj's Ordination



**Leo
Mathildes**



**Priya
D'Souza**



**Cliford
Thomas**



**Neethu
Fernandes**



**Arul
Rattinam**



**Davisraja
Pious**



**Sandra
Lucas**



**Monica
Pinto**



**Surya
Nadar**



**Rupam
Joseph**



**Dorothy
Arsegesri**



**Viven
Menezes**



As we, the Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) members of Our Lady of Forsaken Church, come together to celebrate the Silver Jubilee of Fr. George Raj's ordination, we reflect on the immense dedication, spiritual guidance, and transformative leadership he has provided over the years. It is a moment of great pride and gratitude for our entire parish community.

Fr. George Raj's 25-year journey as a priest has been one of selfless service, unwavering faith, and a deep commitment to the spiritual and infrastructural growth of our church. Under his tenure, we have witnessed remarkable progress, fostering a more vibrant and spiritually enriching environment for all parishioners.

One of the most notable changes has been the significant transformation of our church campus. We have opened our second gate, which is now set to become the primary entrance, offering better accessibility as it is adjacent to the road. Additionally, the interior of the church has been enhanced to provide a more serene and devotional atmosphere. The expansion of the corridor has further added to the comfort and convenience of our congregation, ensuring a welcoming space for prayer and community gatherings.

Fr. George Raj's leadership has also ushered in new traditions that have strengthened our faith and unity. Among these, the initiation of the nine-day grand feast celebration of Our Lady of Forsaken Church, Ghansoli, stands out as a landmark achievement. This spiritual festivity has brought us closer as a community, and we hope to continue this tradition in the years to come, fostering a deeper devotion to Our Lady.

In addition to spiritual growth, Fr. George Raj has also encouraged technological advancements within the church. Under his guidance, we have been able to equip the parish with modern electronic items such as a projector for enhanced liturgical presentations, a musical keyboard to elevate our choir's performances, and a new laptop to support administrative and pastoral activities. These additions have not only improved our worship experience but have also streamlined various church functions.

As we commemorate this milestone, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to Fr. George Raj for his relentless efforts and unwavering support. His devotion and vision have shaped Our Lady of Forsaken Church into a thriving spiritual home for all of us. We pray that God continues to bless him with strength, wisdom, and abundant grace as he continues his priestly mission.

May this Silver Jubilee be a moment of joy and renewal, inspiring us all to work together in faith and love for the greater glory of God.

**With gratitude and prayers,
Parish Pastoral Council Members
Our Lady of Forsaken Church, Ghansoli, Navi Mumbai**





Celebrating 25 Inspiring Years of Fr. George Raj's Priesthood — Happy Thoughts from OLFC Youth

As we celebrate the glorious milestone of 25 years of Fr. George Raj's dedicated priesthood, the youth of our Lady of Forsaken Church (OLFC) feel deeply privileged to express our immense gratitude and admiration for our beloved parish priest.

Fr. George Raj has been more than just a spiritual guide; he has been our unwavering supporter and a true friend to the youth. Under his thoughtful and empowering leadership, the youth of OLFC have flourished remarkably. He has consistently encouraged and backed our initiatives, always granting us the freedom to explore, create, and lead. His trust in our abilities inspired us to strive for excellence and confidently take charge of various parish events.

From organizing vibrant celebrations and spectacular Christmas cribs to dynamic sports events and youth gatherings, Fr. George's support has always been our strongest asset. He handled all the complex responsibilities, including finances, permissions, and logistics, enabling us to focus entirely on planning and executing successful programs. This support allowed us to learn, grow, and develop valuable skills for life.

Beyond providing practical assistance, Fr. George has continuously inspired us through his humility, dedication, and genuine compassion. His approachability and encouraging nature have motivated many young members to participate actively in church activities, creating a lively and spiritually enriching environment.

As we joyously mark this significant occasion, we want to thank Fr. George Raj for his support and leadership. We promise to carry forward his teachings and ideals, enriching our community as he has enriched us.

Thank you, Fr. George, for 25 remarkable years of guiding, empowering, and believing in us.

**With heartfelt love and appreciation,
Youth Members of Our Lady of Forsaken Church, Ghansoli**





Our team secured 7th place at the Deanery Bible Quiz Competition held at Don Bosco School, Nerul. (Dec 01, 2024)



Raffle Ticket Organizing Committee 2025



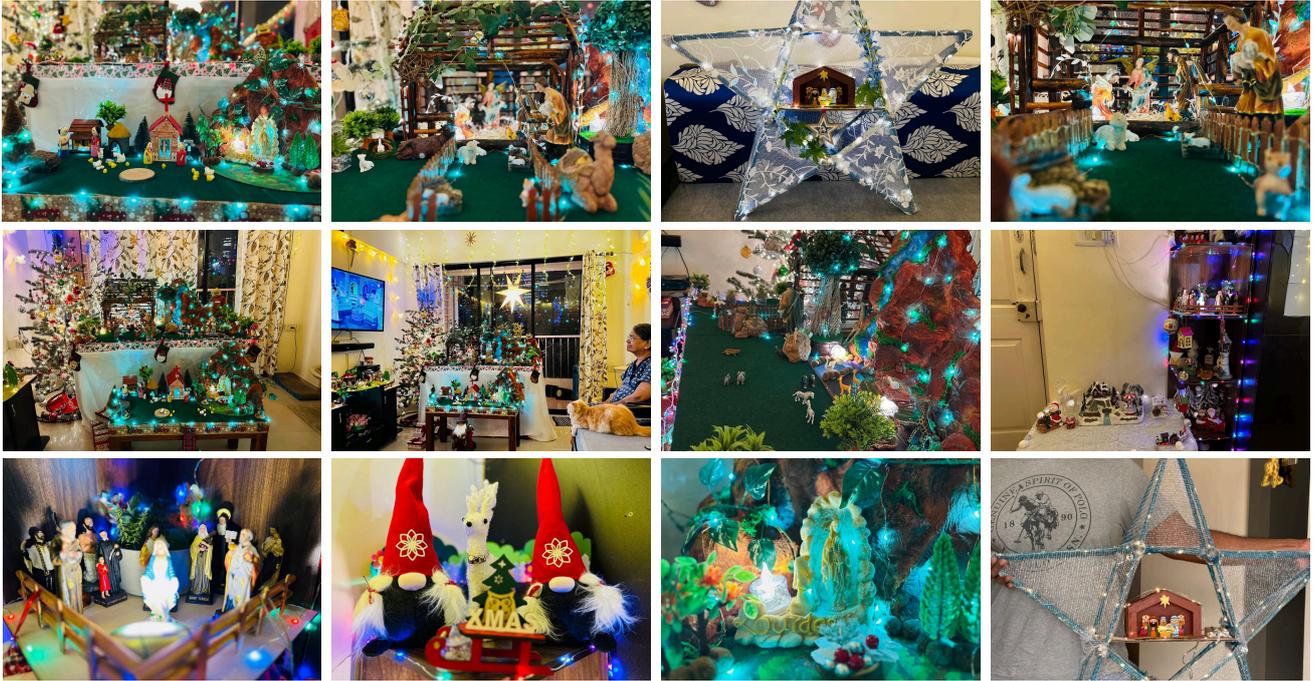
10

OLFC Sports 2024 - Winner's





Crib & Star Competition—Mrs. Gargi & Mr. Arockia from OLFC - Mother Mary Zone secured 1st prize in OLFC Ghansoli & Contest hosted by Madha TV (Tamil Nadu) out of 326 entries



January 26th 2025 - Republic Day



Church Picnic - 2024



First year rally of OLFC Feast 2024





“Remarkable milestone of 25 years of your priesthood”



Sanjeev Ganesh Naik
Former MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT



Office : Ramchandra Niwas, Khairne-Bonkode, Koparkhairne, Navi Mumbai - 400 709 (India)
Tel.: 022-2755 2871 • **Mob.:** 09821522222 / 09820307076 / 09930967474 • **E-mail:** mpdrsanjeevnaik@gamil.com
Web : www.sanjeevnaik.com

Date:27/03/2025

Dear Rev. Fr.George Raj,
Our Lady of Forsaken Church,
Ghansoli, Navi Mumbai.

Congratulations on reaching the remarkable milestone of 25 years of your priesthood! This dedicated service to God and His people is a testament to your unwavering faith, compassion, and commitment.

I've always had a soul connection to the church of "Our Lady of Forsaken Church", Ghansoli for around three decades now, right from the time I became the Mayor of Navi Mumbai till now. I've seen many priest serve during this time but none like yourself who has fully dedicated his life for the Christian Community of Ghansoli and the Church.

For 25 years, you have touched countless lives, offering spiritual guidance, comfort, and strength. Your selfless devotion to the Church has been an inspiration to all who know you. Through your ministry, you have helped to foster hope, build communities, and bring the love of Christ to those in need.

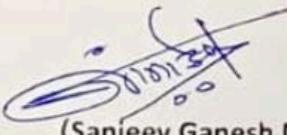
As you reflect on these past years, may you feel an overwhelming sense of gratitude for the many blessings you have received and the countless lives you have impacted. Your journey has been one of faith, sacrifice, and love, and it has been a privilege to witness your ministry.

We all pray that God continues to bless you with strength, wisdom, and peace as you continue to serve His Church. May the Holy Spirit guide you in the years ahead, and may you continue to be a beacon of light to all who seek His love.

With deepest appreciation and heartfelt prayers, we celebrate this milestone with you and look forward to the many blessings yet to come.

Blessings and prayers,

Best wishes from.



(Sanjeev Ganesh Naik)

• **Thane Office :** Sruhud Tower, Near Makhamali Talao, Opp Riskcare Hospital, Thane (W) - 400 601
Tel.: 022- 2541 0005

• **Bhayandar Office :** B-5, Ganesh Darshan, Ground Floor, Behind Balaji Hospital, Golden Nest Circle, Bhayandar (E) - 401 107
Tel.: 022-2813 4444





Congratulations on reaching the extra ordinary milestone of 25 years of priesthood.



श्री. द्वारकानाथ बाबु भोईर

नगरसेवक - प्रभाग क्र. ३० घणसोली

शिल्लेजा वड्ड गटनेता

नवी मुंबई महानगरपालिका

नवी मुंबई महानगरपालिका

कार्यालय : १२६५ / ००२, कोळीवाडा, घणसोली, नवी मुंबई ४०० ७०९. भ्रमणध्वनी : ९८२०००३६७६ / ९३२०००३६७६

दिनांक ०३/०४/२०२५

Dear Rev. Fr. George Raj,

Dear Fr. Since from 1986, I have been connected to this Church, many priest came and they went but, you are the only one priest I have been in touch with friendly and spiritual relation. And I feel proud of your service to our Church in Ghansoli and your contribution to Christian community of our Ghansoli.

Congratulations on reaching the extraordinary milestone of 25 years of priesthood! This momentous occasion is not only a celebration of the years of faithful service you have given to the Lord and His people but also a testament to your steadfast commitment to living out your vocation with love, humility, and grace.

For a quarter of a century, you have been a guiding light in the lives of so many, leading with compassion and wisdom. Your ministry has touched hearts and transformed lives, bringing people closer to Christ and nurturing them in their spiritual journeys. Whether through your words of encouragement, acts of kindness, or your unwavering prayers, you have shown what it truly means to live a life of faith and service.

As you reflect on these 25 years, we celebrate not only your past achievements but also the inspiring example you continue to set for all of us. Your love for God and His people remains an inspiration, and we are deeply grateful for the leadership, dedication, and sacrifices you have made along the way.

May this anniversary be a reminder of the countless lives you have impacted and the enduring legacy you continue to build. May God bless you with continued strength, wisdom, and peace as you carry on this sacred mission for many more years to come.

Best wished from
Mr. Dwarkanath B. Bhoir.
(Former Corporator NMMC, Ghansoli)





Ad Multos Annos!

Dear Fr. George,

I extend my heartiest congratulations to you on this joyful occasion of the Silver Jubilee of your sacerdotal ordination. A Silver Jubilee is not only a milestone of years but also a testimony of perseverance, dedication, and self-giving love. It is a time to rejoice in God's faithfulness and to honor the priest who has responded with generosity to His call.

Your Silver Jubilee coincides with the Jubilee Year 2025 – Pilgrims of Hope. Indeed, you have strived to instill in the hearts of those entrusted to your pastoral care the precious gift of hope.

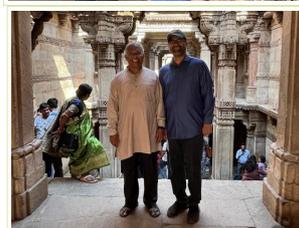
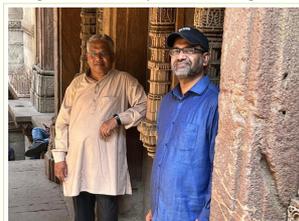
Most of your priestly years have been spent serving as a pastor in various parishes across India. Like a faithful priest after the heart of the Good Shepherd, you have pastored your people with great care, humility, and compassion.

May Our Lady, Mother of Priests, and St. Dominic, our Holy Father, continue to intercede for you and guide you as you journey forward in your priestly ministry.

Ad Multos Annos!



Fr. Maxim D'Silva, OP
Superior
Mary Star of Evangelization,
Ghansoli, Mumbai



Dear Rev. Fr. George,

It is truly an honor and privilege to pen down these few lines as you cross a significant milestone in your sacred vocation to the priesthood.

As Hugh of Fosse beautifully expressed, "It marks the year of God's graciousness, gratuitousness, and divine qualification of your being holistically." Your journey, especially as a priest in the esteemed Order of Preachers (Dominicans), is a testimony to how God lovingly orchestrates every moment, placing everything in its rightful place, so that your path to priesthood would be guided and graced with divine ease.

Dear Father, the day of ordination is not merely a ceremony—it is a sacred threshold where deep faith, surrender, and unwavering commitment converge into a lifelong journey of service, sacrifice, and love. As you celebrate this momentous occasion, we extend our heartfelt congratulations and warm wishes to you.

On this sacred anniversary of your ordination, we pray that your path continues to be illuminated by divine light, and that your life of spirit-filled service remains a source of inspiration to all who encounter you. May the grace of God continue to guide your every step, strengthen your mission, and bless all those who are touched by your ministry.

We, along with the faithful congregations whose lives you have enriched, extend our deepest prayers and God's choicest blessings as you continue forward on your priestly journey.

May God bless you abundantly, now and always.



Fr. Arul Manickam
O.Praem.



Fr. Prem
O.Praem





"I will give you shepherds after my own heart, who will lead you with knowledge and understanding." – Jeremiah 3:15

Dear Rev. Fr. George Raj,

With immense joy and gratitude, the Women's Cell of Our Lady of Forsaken Church, Ghansoli, extends our warmest wishes to you on the blessed occasion of your Priestly Silver Jubilee.

Your 25 years of priestly service have been a beautiful testament to faith, humility, and dedication to the mission of Christ. At OLFC, we have been truly blessed by your presence, your guidance, and your pastoral care. Your support for the various parish groups, including the Women's Cell, has empowered us to grow in faith and service. Whether it was through your encouragement of our spiritual initiatives, your presence during our outreach efforts, or the simple way you made time to listen and guide, you have left a lasting impact on all of us.

You have led with compassion, served with humility, and inspired with your words and actions. Your tireless commitment to building a prayerful, united community has strengthened our parish family and deepened our relationship with God.

As you celebrate this remarkable milestone, we thank the Lord for the gift of your priesthood and pray that He continues to bless you with good health, strength, and an ever-deepening joy in your ministry. May Our Lady of Forsaken, under whose care our parish is placed, continue to intercede for you and guide you always.

**With love, prayers, and gratitude,
The Women's Cell
Our Lady of Forsaken Church, Ghansoli**

Congratulations once again, Fr. George Raj, on your Silver Jubilee!



Dear Father George Raj,

On the joyful occasion of your Silver Jubilee of Priestly Ordination, we, the Sisters of the Helpers of Jesus, extend our heartfelt congratulations and prayerful wishes.

Twenty-five years of faithful service in the Lord's vineyard is a beautiful witness to God's grace at work in you. Your dedication, compassion, and pastoral care have touched many hearts and inspired countless souls. We thank the Lord for the gift of your priesthood and for the guidance and support you have shown to our parish community.

As you celebrate this special milestone, we pray that the Lord continues to bless you abundantly with good health, deep joy, and renewed strength in your ministry. May the Holy Spirit continue to lead you, and may Mary, the Mother of Priests, keep you under her loving protection.

**With prayerful affection and gratitude,
The Sisters of the Helpers of Jesus**





**The Lord made a solemn promise and
He will not take it back, You will be a priest forever.”
Heb:- 7:21**



Dear Rev. Fr. George Raj OP
Our Lady of Forsaken Church, Ghansoli, Navi Mumbai

Hearty Congratulations on the Silver Jubilee of Your Holy Priesthood!

Warmest greetings and heartfelt wishes from Keith, Althea Pereira and family, along with extended blessings from the staff and students of Wonderland High School and Jr. College, Igatpuri, and New Wonderland High School, Kasara.

Our journey with you, Rev. Father, spans many cherished years—first as Parish Priest of Sacred Heart Church, Igatpuri, and always as a sincere friend and well-wisher. As you celebrate this glorious milestone of 25 years in priestly service, we fondly recall your unwavering support and constant encouragement that pushed us to aim higher in all our endeavors.

You have always identified with the progress of our schools, taking joy in our achievements, especially in attaining 100% pass results. Your inspiring messages and thoughtful advice at our Annual Thanksgiving Prayer Services deeply motivated both our students and staff. You lit a fire of commitment and sincere dedication in our educators, reminding them of the true mission of nurturing young minds.

The legacy of your kindness, love, and generosity—especially towards the poor and the needy in the parish—remains commendable. At Sacred Heart Church, children and youth flourished under your pastoral care. You taught them the value of being a good Christian by first being a good human being. Senior parishioners found in you a compassionate and trustworthy friend, someone they could confide in, and whose presence brought healing and hope.

Today, the Parish of Our Lady of Forsaken Church, Ghansoli, is indeed blessed to have a shepherd like you. This celebration of 25 years of priesthood is not only a personal milestone but also a collective moment of joy, gratitude, and unity for priests, families, and friends—giving thanks to God for the gift of your priesthood.

May the Holy Spirit continue to dwell within you, filling you with wisdom, counsel, and fortitude. May the Lord richly bless your Silver Jubilee and transform it into a golden chapter of continued grace and service in His vineyard.

“It was not you who chose Me, but I who chose you and appointed you.
May you continue to be sustained by His grace, and may your life in God’s service always be blessed.”
— John 15:16

**Best Wishes from
Keith, Althea & family
Igatpuri**





Guiding Light of Faith – A Tribute from the Catechism Teachers & Children

Congratulations, Rev. Fr. George Raj, on your 25th Year of Faithful Service!

You are a shining example of what it truly means to be a dedicated servant of the Lord. Your unwavering commitment, humility, and spiritual guidance have left a lasting impression on us all.

As Catechism teachers, we are deeply grateful for your encouragement, your faith-filled leadership, and the nurturing presence you have brought to our spiritual journey. Your ministry has been a beacon of Christ's love, inspiring us to teach with passion, lead with purpose, and serve with joy.

Your years with us, though few, have been richly meaningful. You have touched hearts through the Eucharist, uplifted souls through the sacraments, and offered strength through your compassionate presence. Every step of your journey has been marked by grace, kindness, and tireless dedication.

This Silver Jubilee is not only a celebration of your past achievements but also a hopeful look toward a future filled with continued blessings. May God shower you with abundant grace as you carry forward His mission.

**With heartfelt thanks and prayers,
Catechism Teachers & Children of
Our Lady Forsaken Church**





**Happy Silver Jubilee, Father George.
 Sending you love from Canada as well as USA.
 Please continue to pray and bless our family.
 God bless you.
 From Bansode, Vaz, Almeida Family**



Dear beloved Father,

On this momentous occasion of your Silver Jubilee, I write to you with a heart full of joy, gratitude, and admiration. Completing 25 years of priestly service is no small feat—it is a testimony to your unwavering faith, your deep devotion, and the countless sacrifices you have made in the service of God and His people.

It brings me immense pride and honor to extend our warmest congratulations to you on behalf of the entire family. Over the years, you have not only been our spiritual guide, but also a part of our lives—sharing in our joys, offering strength during our sorrows, and continuously uplifting us with your wisdom and prayers.

Your presence at every important family milestone—from baptisms and weddings to times of grief and healing—has been a blessing we deeply cherish. Your counsel has always come from a place of compassion, rooted in faith, and filled with the grace of God. You have touched our lives in ways words cannot fully express, and we thank God for the gift of you in our lives.

As you celebrate 25 glorious years in the vineyard of the Lord, we pray that He continues to bless you abundantly with good health, renewed strength, and the continued joy of serving His people. May you find fulfillment in every soul you touch, and may your journey ahead be as fruitful and spirit-filled as the years behind you.

Once again, Father, congratulations on this beautiful milestone. We are privileged to know you and even more blessed to have you as part of our family’s spiritual journey.

With deepest respect, love, and prayers,

Philomena Raj
“Sister-in-law to Fr. George”.
On behalf of the family.





Lenten Pilgrimage 2025

Parishioners of our community recently took part in a deeply moving Lenten pilgrimage, journeying together to three different churches as a way to enter more fully into the spirit of the season. This pilgrimage was not only a physical journey but also a spiritual one, offering time for prayer, reflection, and communal devotion.

At each church, participants paused for Scripture readings, meditations on the Stations of the Cross, and moments of silent prayer. These sacred stops allowed everyone to contemplate Christ's passion and renew their commitment to repentance and renewal during Lent.

The pilgrimage fostered a profound sense of unity among the faithful, as hearts and voices joined together in hymns, prayers, and shared intentions. It was a grace-filled experience that left many feeling spiritually uplifted and more closely united to Christ's journey to the cross.

As we continue through Lent, we carry with us the fruits of this pilgrimage—greater faith, deeper reflection, and a strengthened bond within our parish community.





Short History of Our Lady of Forsaken Church, Ghansoli, Navi Mumbai.

In the mid-1980s, the absence of a church in Navi Mumbai compelled residents to travel to Thane or neighboring cities for religious services. Recognizing this need, a few Catholic families residing in Ghansoli took the initiative to establish a church in their locality. On December 3rd, 1984, a significant step was taken as St. John the Baptist Church in Thane acquired a plot for this purpose. The newly acquired land was christened "OUR LADY OF FORSAKEN CHURCH" in Ghansoli.

The visionary founding priest, Late Reverend Fr. Peter J. Bombacha, bestowed his blessings upon the land and initiated the construction of the church with the invaluable assistance of local residents. This marked the commencement of a journey that would shape the spiritual landscape of the community.

The dedication and contributions of the locals played a pivotal role in the growth of the church, fostering a sense of faith, unity, togetherness, and overall well-being within the community. As construction progressed, the church emerged not just as a physical structure but as a symbol of the collective spirit and determination of the people of Ghansoli to establish a place of worship in their midst.

Until 2006, the spiritual ministry of Our Lady of Forsaken Church was entrusted to the priests of the Archdiocese of Bombay. Thereafter, the Dominic's Fathers undertook the sacred duty of overseeing the spiritual well-being of the congregation.





A Heartfelt Note of Gratitude

My dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As I celebrate 25 years of priesthood, the words of our Blessed Mother echo deeply within me: “My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.” Truly, my heart overflows with joy and thanksgiving. These twenty-five years have flown by like twenty-five days! The Lord has been incredibly gracious to me. Despite my unworthiness, He has called me to serve Him, and for that, I am eternally grateful.

Like the apostles, I too have faced moments of doubt, feelings of inadequacy, and many challenges along the journey. Yet, as St. Paul reminds us, “God’s grace is sufficient,” and indeed, it is His grace that has sustained me all these years. I thank the Lord deeply for the gift of my vocation and continue to pray for His strength and guidance in my ministry.

This is truly a blessed and joyful moment in my life. I’m especially grateful to each one of you who has taken time from your busy schedules to be here today. Your presence means the world to me.

A special word of thanks to Rev. Fr. Peter Mendonca OP, Prior Provincial of the Indian Province, for his presence and encouraging words during the homily. I also thank Rev. Fr. Aquin Noronha OP, Rector of St. Charles Seminary and my dear companion, for his friendship and support. My heartfelt thanks go to Rev. Fr. Maxim D’Silva, my superior, and all my community members, as well as my brother priests, for their valuable presence.

I’m filled with joy to see friends from Nagpur, Igatpuri, Mumbai, and beyond — your presence has made this occasion truly grand. I owe a deep debt of gratitude to all who have been instruments of God in my journey, especially my beloved parents, the Late Mr. Joseph Raj and the Late Mrs. Rosemary Raj, who planted the seed of faith in me and nurtured it. I also remember with love my siblings, the Late Mr. Francis Raj, Mrs. Anthonymma Masih, and Mr. Edward Raj, and all their family members for their unwavering love and support.

I thank my home parish priests, the religious sisters, and my teachers at my village Catholic school, who laid the strong foundation of my faith. I remain ever grateful to the Late Rev. Fr. Amirtharaj OP, my vocation promoter, and to all the priests, friends, and classmates who accompanied me during my seminary formation. A special remembrance and gratitude to the Late Archbishop Pascal Topno SJ, Archbishop of Bhopal, who ordained me to the priesthood.

To the many parish communities I have served, thank you for your love, kindness, and for allowing me to minister among you. Your faith, spirituality, and encouragement have deeply enriched my priestly journey. To the wonderful families and friends here in Ghansoli, thank you for embracing me as one of your own. Since I arrived at Our Lady of Forsaken Church, Ghansoli, in May 2021, your love and support have been a true blessing. You have helped me live my priestly vocation with renewed joy and commitment every single day.

On this momentous day, I express my heartfelt thanks to the Silver Jubilee Planning Committee, especially our PPC members, Finance Committee, Sisters of the Helpers of Jesus, Women’s Cell, and the many volunteers who have worked tirelessly to organize this celebration.

A special thanks and deep appreciation to the entire team who made this Silver Jubilee celebration possible and so grand. I also extend my sincere thanks to all those who contributed their thoughts and articles for this souvenir magazine—your words have added richness and depth to this celebration.

Thank you to the Liturgy Team for creating a spiritually enriching celebration. A special thanks to all the children and artists for their wonderful cultural program. And finally, to anyone I may have inadvertently missed mentioning by name, please know that I am profoundly grateful for your presence, your support, and your love.

Please continue to pray for me as I strive to serve the Lord with faithfulness and joy. Thank you once again for being here today. May God bless you all abundantly.

***Sincerely in Christ,
Rev. Fr. George Raj OP***

WWW.OLFCGHANSOLI.COM



OUR LADY OF FORSAKEN

PRAY FOR US



JUBILEE SOUVENIR TEAM



CONCEPT & DESIGN
CLIFORD THOMAS

EDITORIAL SUPPORT
LEO MATHILDES

CONTENT COORDINATION
ABEL BHASKAR