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**DEAN OF STUDIES**

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## **REPORT OF THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2016 - 2017**

Oriens Theological College is the Inter-Diocesan Regional Seminary for Northeast India. The Seminary imparts theological formation to candidates to priesthood from the fifteen dioceses of Northeast India and some dioceses outside the region, and the Religious Congregations of Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales (MSFS), Claretians (CMF), Society of the Divine Saviour (Salvatorians/SDS), Order of Discalced Carmelites (OCD), the Missionary Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament (MCBS) Oblates of St. Joseph (OSJ), Congregation of the Mission (CM) and Order of Friars Minor Capuchin (OFM Cap).

The Seminary was started in 1979 as a study house for the students from the dioceses of Northeast India who attended theology classes at Sacred Theological College, Mawlai. In 1986, the College began to hold theology courses on its own premises and the Sacred Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples raised it to the status of an Inter-Diocesan Theologate, with all the Bishops of Northeast India as members of the Governing Board. In 1990, it became a full-fledged Seminary offering the four-year theology course. Its statutes were approved by the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples on 4 December 1990. On 7 December 1993, Oriens Theological College was formally affiliated to the Pontifical Urbaniana University, Rome, through the decree (vide No. 442/93/7) of the Congregation for Catholic Education. Since then, the B. Th. (Bachelor of Theology) degree has been awarded to students, who fulfil the requirements of the four-year Theology programme. More than 700 alumni priests of the College are working in the various dioceses of the region and outside

### **A Brief Report of the Activities of the Academic Year 2016-2017**

The Academic Year 2016-17 began with a solemn Eucharistic celebration presided over by Most Rev. Dominic Lumon, Archbishop of Imphal, on Monday, 1 August, 2016. After the Eucharistic celebration, the inaugural function was held in the auditorium in the presence of staff, students and invited guests to mark the formal beginning of the new Academic Year. His Grace, Most Rev. Dominic Jala, SDB, the Archbishop of Shillong, was the Chief Guest and His Grace, Most Rev. Dominic Lumon, Archbishop of Imphal was the Guest of Honour at the function. After the words of welcome by Fr. Linus, Neli, the Rector, the Head of the Department, Fr. Isaac Padinjarekuttu, presented a report of the Academic Year 2015-2016. Dr. R.R. Graviour Augustine, Professor of Catechetics and Homiletics at OTC gave the inaugural lecture on the topic: "*Communicating the Faith in the Modern World: the Challenge of Catechesis in Northeast India.*" The newly published book of Fr. R.R. Graviour Augustine, *Sharing the Gospel* was formally released on the occasion by the Chief Guest. Fr. James Anderson Syiemlieh of Nogsstoin diocese who secured the highest percentage in the 2011-2015 batch with 96.04% marks was awarded the Hubert D'Rosario Award for the best student.

### **Staff and Students**

In the academic year 2016-17, Oriens had 160 students and 10 Resident Staff. 30 Visiting Professors rendered their valuable service to the College. The students hailed from 23 Dioceses, 15 of Northeast India and 6 outside, and 9 Religious Congregations.

### **Academic Council**

The Academic Council held five meetings during the academic year 2016-2017. As the highest academic body of the college, it gave efficient direction to the curricular and co-curricular activities of the College. It tried to implement to the best of its ability the various suggestions of the staff and students pertaining to the curricular and co-curricular activities of the college.

### **Teaching Staff Meeting**

The yearly meeting of the Teaching Staff was held on 1 June 2017 where a number of suggestions were offered for the improvement of the various programmes of the College, particularly connected with teaching and evaluation.

### **Students' Council**

The Students' Council, which facilitates effective communication between the students and the Academic Council was elected on 6<sup>th</sup> August, 2016, with Bro. Saneesh Thomas as President and Br. Savari Anantha Prabhu, MSFS as Secretary and had five meetings during the course of the year. The College is grateful to the Students' Council for its help in the smooth conduct of the academic programme and the examinations and in the effective organization of the various co-curricular activities of the college.

### **Academic Performance**

The academic programme of the college was conducted smoothly with four regular examination sessions during the year. The performance of the students was satisfactory. 30 students appeared for the B.Th. Comprehensive Examinations and were awarded the Degree of Bachelor of Theology (B.Th.) by the Pontifical Urbaniana University, Rome, to which Oriens is affiliated. Jaimon Thadathil MSFS of the Northeast Province of the Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales secured the highest marks with 95.24%. 11 students passed in the First Division, 14 students in the High Second Division, 3 students in the Second Division and two students in the Simple Pass Division.

### **Archbishop Hubert D'Rosario Award**

The award was instituted on the occasion of the Silver Jubilee of Oriens Theological College in 2004, in loving memory of Archbishop Hubert D'Rosario, the late Archbishop of Shillong-Guwahati, who was the dynamic force behind the founding of Oriens Theological College. The award is given to the student who obtains the highest percentage in every B.Th. batch. The awardee of the 2012-2016 batch is Fr. Isaac Matesou of Imphal Archdiocese who secured 93.83 % overall average who will receive the award during this function.

### **College Day Cum Teachers' Day Celebrations**

On 5<sup>th</sup> September 2016, the Students' Council organized a colourful function to mark the celebration of Teachers' Day cum College Day. The day began with a solemn Eucharistic celebration presided over by Rev. Fr. Marcel Fernandes, OCD. It was followed by a

felicitation programme for the teachers and a basket ball match between the freshers and the rest of the students.

### **NITS Conference**

Three students from the college, Bros. Anthony Baruah, MSFS, Henry Laldinmawia and Anil Kumar, SDS took part in the 54<sup>th</sup> North India Theology Students (NITS) Conference held at Aizawl, Mizoram, from 18<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> October, 2016 on the theme “Re-imagining Theological Studies.”

### **Extension Lecture**

The College organized an Extension Lecture on the theme “Project-Vision Northeast” given by Rev. Dr. Joseph Mappilaparampil CMF on 8<sup>th</sup> April, 2017 to highlight the plight of the blind in India and in the region and to create awareness about eye donation.

### **Seminar on *Amoris Laetitia*.**

On October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2016, the college organized the annual staff-student seminar on the Apostolic Exhortation, *Amoris Laetitia*. The students in groups studies the document chapter by chapter and made presentations, followed by discussion. It was a very good way of coming to know the document in depth.

### **Staff Seminar**

As part of the effort of the staff members to come together occasionally to reflect on contemporary events in the church and society, the teaching staff of Oriens and Sacred Heart Theological College held a discussion on the theme “The Impact of the Pontificate of Pope Francis on the Church and the World” on 24 October, 2017. Fr. Linus Neli and Fr. Graviour Augustine animated the discussion. It was a very fruitful exchange.

### **Student Activities**

The Students’ Council organized the following activities in order to foster unity and cooperation among the students and to help them develop their talents:

1. Drawing Competition
2. Inter-class Basket Ball Tournament.
3. Solo Competition
4. Ex-tempore Speech Competition
5. Quiz Competition
6. It also organized a farewell for the fourth years to thank them for their contributions to the college and to wish them good luck in their final examinations.
7. It organized a friendly football match between Oriens Theological college and Sacred Heart Theological college in which Oriens Theological college came out victorious.
8. The Students’ Council also brought out the second volume of the College Annual magazine, Oriens with contributions from staff and students

### **Publications**

In the Academic Year 2016-17 the Publications Department of the College brought out the following publications:

1. *Re-visioning Pastoral Care: A Memorial Volume for Thomas Macheril and Christudhas Madhavadian*, edited by Isaac Padinjarekuttu and R.R. Graviour Augustine, Oriens Publications, Shillong, 2017. It will be released at a function to be held on 14<sup>th</sup> August, 2017.
2. Volume VIII of *Oriens Journal for Contextual Theology* on the theme "Pastoral Vision of Amoris Laetitia." Edited by Fr. Kuriakose Poovathumkudy.

### **Staff Activities**

The staff members published several articles, participated in Seminars and Conferences and presented papers, besides teaching in various theological institutions and animating various programmes of pastoral import in Northeast India and outside. The resident staff have 24 publications and 20 presentations at various fora to their credit in the academic year 2016-2017. A complete list of these is on our college website.

### **Fr. R.R. Graviour Augustine**

#### **Publications**

1. *Mercy Catechism*, Shillong, Oriens Theological College, 2017.
2. *Re-visioning Pastoral Care*, ed. By Isaac Padinjarekuttu and R.R. Graviour Augustine, Shillong, Oriens Publications, 2017
3. "Indian Challenges of Catechesis Towards Fostering Communities", written for the Indian Catechetical Association meeting held at NESTT, Muvattupuzha, Kerala, from 8-10 Feb. 2017.
4. "Word of God in Catechesis" in Varickasseril Jose, SDB and Paul Vadakumpadam, SDB (eds.), *In the Service of God and His People: Essays in Honour of Fr. Sylvanus Sngi Lyngdoh SDB*, (Vendrame Institute Publications: 2017) 161-175.
5. "Homily that Inspires" In Isaac Padinjarekuttu and R.R, Graviour Augustine, eds., *Re-visioning Pastoral Care*, Shillong, Oriens Publications, 2017, 260-272.

#### **Production**

1. "The Passionate Flower – Life of St. Alphonsa in Songs", a Catechetical Audio-Visual DVD, 2017.

#### **Presentations**

1. Delivered the inaugural lecture at the Inauguration of the new academic year 2016-2017 at Oriens Theological College, Shillong, Meghalaya on the theme "Catechetical Enterprise of the Catholic Church in Northeast India, 1962-1965: A Historical-Critical Study, on 1 Aug. 2016.
2. Made a presentation on the "Impact of the Pontificate of Pope Francis on the World", at the staff seminar at Theological College, Shillong, Meghalaya on 21 Nov. 2016.
3. Animated a session for the CMC sisters of Northeast and Hazaribagh provinces during their Mission Meet held at Carmel Bhavan, 4th Mile, Dimapur from 15 to 16 Oct. 2016 and gave talk on "Religious Women in Evangelisation".

### **Fr. Kuriakose Poovathumkudy**

## **Publications**

1. "Pastoral Imperative of Laudato Sii", *Mission Today* (2016)
2. "Celebration of Family Love", *Vidyajyoti* (December 2016)
3. "Amoris Laetitia and Christian Families", *Oriens Journal for Contextual Theology* (June 2017) 50-68.
4. "Psycho-Sexual Maturity in Ministry", in *Re-visioning Pastoral Care*, eds., Isaac Padinjarekuttu and R.R. Graviour Augustine (Shillong: Oriens Publications, 2017) 448-462.

## **Presentations**

1. Regional Pastoral Conference (September 2016) – "Pastoral Vision of Amoris Laetitia."
2. Animation Programme for Priests and Religious of Bongaigaon Diocese (November 2016) – "Implementing the Pastoral Vision of Pope Francis."
3. Fr. A. Gabriel Memorial Lecture – Suvidya College, Bangalore (December 2016) – "The Imperative of Laudato Sii."
4. Animation Programme for Priests and Religious of Dibrugarh Diocese (2017) – "The Demands and Challenges of of Amoris Laetitia."
5. Animation programme for Senior Priests in Bethel (Shillong – May 2017) – "Aging Gracefully and Cheerfully."

## **Fr. Linus Neli**

### **Publications**

1. "Divine Mercy: Bible, Saints, Naga Traditions" in *NCTD*, Nov 2016.
2. "Church Law on Sexual Abuse of Minors and Divorce and Remarried: A Gospel Perspective" in Varickasseril Jose, SDB and Paul Vadakumpadam, SDB (eds.), *In the Service of God and His People: Essays in Honour of Fr. Sylvanus Sngi Lyngdoh SDB*, (Vendrame Institute Publications: 2017) 195-211.
3. "New Ratio Fundamentalibus on Priestly Formation" in Padinjarekuttu I. and R.R. Graviour Augustinte, (eds.), *Re-Visioning Pastoral Care*, (Oriens Theological College: 2017) 377-400.

### **Presentations**

1. Animated One day Seminar on "Burnout and Creative Missionary" in Inter-Regional Ongoing Formation Course for Missionaries, Don Bosco Provincial House, Shillong, August 2016.
2. Presentation of a publication paper on "Mercy in Canon Law: Historical Overview and New Perspective" organized by Sacred Heart Theological College, Shillong, September 2016.
3. "*Amoris Laetitia*: Pastoral Challenges and New Perspective" during DFNEI Convention, October 2016, Nongstoin.
4. Presentation of two Papers on "Tribal ways of relating to the earth" and "Tribal response to ecological changes" in Network Pastoral in Asia, 5th Meeting (26-29 October 2016) SVD House, Guwahati, on "*Laudato Si*" organized by Missio Aachen. (Delegates from Germany, South Korea, Philippines, Fiji, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Vietnam, India);

5. Presented a paper in the national seminar on “Human Formation in the Documents of the Church” at Dharmaram College, Bangalore (February 9-13, 2017).

### **Fr. Isaac Padinjarekuttu**

#### **Publications**

1. *Re-visioning Pastoral Care*, ed. by Isaac Padinjarekuttu and R.R. Graviour Augustine, Oriens Publications, Shillong, 2017.
2. “The Causes of the Reformation”, *Jnanadeepa: Pune Journal of Religious Studies*, vol. 21/6 July December 2017, 13-34.
3. “Captive to the Word of God: Martin Luther and the Bible”, in J. Varickasseril SDB and Paul Vadakumpadam SDB (eds.), *In the Service of God and His People: Essays in Honour of Fr. Sylvanus Sngi Lyngdoh SDB*, (Vendrame Institute Publications: 2017) 184-194.
4. “Rediscovering the Diocesan Charism” in Isaac Padinjarekuttu and R.R. Graviour Augustine (eds.), *Re-visioning Pastoral Care*, (Shillong, Oriens Publications, 2017) 335-347.

### **Fr. Peter Haokip**

#### **Publication**

1. “Prophetic Dimension of Pastoral Care”, in Isaac Padinjarekuttu and R.R. Graviour Augustine (eds.), *Re-visioning Pastoral Care*, (Shillong, Oriens Publications, 2017) 190-204.

#### **Presentation**

1. Took part in the Decennial Conference conducted by Sanskriti, NEICR - North Eastern Institute of cultural Research, Guwahati, 18-20 November 2016 on the theme of “Re-Imagining Social Science Researches: Global Context, National Perspectives and Regional Priorities” and presented a paper: “Quo Vadis, Northeast India?”

### **Fr. Thomas Manjaly**

#### **Publications**

1. “Paul as a Model of Transformative Leadership,” *Oriens Journal for Contextual Theology*, 7 (2016) 38-64.
2. “‘Boat-Encounter’ as Exclusive Space for ‘Jesus-Disciples’ Relationship,” in *Like a Watered Garden*, Vol II, Savarimuthu, S. et al. (eds.) Bengaluru: Theological Publications in India, 2017, 17-37.
3. “Feed my Lambs, Tend my Sheep’: Commissioning of Peter according to John 21” in *In the Service of God and His People: Essays in Honour of Fr. Sylvanus Sngi Lyngdoh SDB*,” eds., Paul Vadakumpadan and Jose Varickasseril (Shillong: Vendrame Institute, 2017) 34-57  
“Word of God – ‘Soul’ of Pastoral Ministry” Isaac Padinjarekuttu and R.R. Graviour Augustine (eds.) *RE-visioning Pastoral Care*, Shillong, Oriens Publications, 2017, 171-189.

## **Presentations**

1. "From *Sedeqah* to *Dikaio syne*: Translation or Creative Interpretation?" Presented at the English workgroup during the Seminar on Pauline Letters (Rom-Gal) organized by Pontifical Biblical Institute, Rome: 23-27 January 2017.
2. "Word of God in the Renewal of Family Life" Keynote presentation at the Meeting of Bible Animation Teams of Northeast India, Social Forum, 22-23 March 2017.
3. "Emmaus Walk: A Paradigm for Re-Visioning," Keynote Address to the Members of the Inter Provincial Council Teams of MSMHC, Bethel, Shillong, 26 March 2017.
4. Presentations at the Plenary Session of the Pontifical Biblical Commission (21-29 April 2017):
  - "Paul's Understanding of Women in the Church"
  - "Understanding of Human Sexuality in 1 Cor 5-7"
  - "Use of Marriage Image in the NT"
5. "Translating of the Bible: its Pastoral Implications" Presented at the English workgroup during the Study Week on "Issues of Bible Translation" organized by Catholic Biblical Federation, in St. Ottilien, Germany 10-13 May, 2017.
6. "Word of God and Building Up Parish Communities": Talk given to a Study Group of Pastoral Assistants (62 participants) organized by the Formation and Information Department of Missio, Munich, 17 May 2017.

## **Fr. Samuel Kapani**

### **Publication**

1. "Jesus the Healer", in *In the Service of God and His People: Essays in Honour of Fr. Sylvanus Sngi Lyngdoh SDB,* eds., Paul Vadakumpadan and Jose Varickasseril (Shillong: Vendrame Institute, 2017) 58-66.

## **Fr. Teiborlang Lyngdoh**

### **Publications**

1. "Perennial Values for Youth in Wisdom Literature", *In the Service of God and His People: Essays in Honour of Fr. Sylvanus Sngi Lyngdoh SDB,* eds., Paul Vadakumpadan and Jose Varickasseril (Shillong: Vendrame Institute, 2017) 94-105.
2. "Praying the Psalms", in *Re-visioning Pastoral Care,* eds., Isaac Padinjarekuttu and R.R. Graviour Augustine (Shillong: Oriens Publications, 2017) 205-216.

### **Other Events**

- The Governing Board of Oriens Theological College consisting of all the Bishops of the region met at Oriens for their annual meetings on 16 September 2016.
- The college was deeply saddened at start of the new academic year at the passing away of Fr. Christudhas Madhavadian on August 3, 2016, who was Professor of Sacred Scripture and was also the Rector of the College.
- Fr. Samuel Kapani of Imphal Archdiocese who completed his Doctorate in Biblical Theology from the Leopold Franzens University Innsbruck, Austria and

Fr. Raj Kapoor of Guwahati Archdiocese who completed his Licentiate in Moral Theology from the Pontifical Urbaniana University, Rome joined as full time staff of the college. Fr. Mathew Chanikuzhy joined the staff as Spiritual Director.

In the academic year 2017-18, the college will have 158 students enrolled, hailing from 22 dioceses and 9 religious congregations and 10 resident staff members. The latest religious congregation to send students to the college is the Order of the Most Holy Trinity (Trinitarians – OSST). One student from this congregation has joined the college this year. Fr. Satyajit Basumatary of Tezpur Diocese will be joining the staff in the course of the first semester. He has completed his Licentiate in Sacred Scripture from the Pontifical Biblical Institute, Rome.

We would also like to place on record our sincere gratitude to Fr. Linus Neli and Fr. Teiborlang Lyngdoh who have completed their term in the college and will be leaving us shortly. Fr. Linus served the college as Rector and Professor of Canon Law and Fr. Teiborlang Lyngdoh served the college as Professor of Scripture. The college wishes them God's blessings in all their future endeavours. As no ship can sail without a captain, Fr. Kuriakose Poovathumkudy, an experienced hand has jumped in to fill the vacuum. We welcome him as the new Rector of the college and wish him a successful tenure.

We would like to welcome Fr. Athnas Kerketta MSFS who has taken charge as the new Rector of the MSFS Study House and Fr. Francis Valiyakunnel OFM Cap who has taken over as the Rector of the Capuchin Study House. We thank Fr. Johny Kuttikottayil MSFS the outgoing Rector of the MSFS Study House for his contributions to the welfare of the college in various ways and wish him all the best in his future ministry.

### **Conclusion**

We are grateful to all those who have helped us in various ways during the last academic year. In a special way, we thank the bishops and provincial superiors who send their students to Oriens, the superiors of the study houses, and our visiting staff, especially, the Fathers from Sacred Heart Theological College, Mawlai. We are grateful to His Grace Most Rev. Dominic Jala, the Archbishop of Shillong and the Chairman of the Governing Board, for his constant support and encouragement. We are grateful to the Episcopal Delegate to the College, Most Rev. James Thoppil for his solicitude and concern for the well being of the college. We acknowledge with gratitude the help and cooperation given by all the institutions in and around Shillong and all our benefactors for their constant and generous support in various ways. We are especially indebted to the Pontifical Urbaniana University for all the help we receive in conducting the academic programme smoothly and for granting the degree of Bachelor of Theology to our students. We are hopeful that with God's help and the cooperation of all, we will be able to achieve the goals of our institution, namely, to provide an integral priestly formation and promote theological reflection and research in the region. I wish all the staff and students, but in a special way, the new students to the college a fruitful academic year.



I remain,

Fr. Isaac Padinjarekuttu  
(Head of the Department)

1 August, 2017