



— OUR LADY —
QUEEN OF PEACE

The Peaceful Voice

30th March 2025

FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT

Surrendering & trusting God in the midst of Challenges

Life was comfortable, safe, and prestigious within the walls of our well-established school. The security of routine, the respect of the community, and the structured environment provided a sense of fulfillment. However, when the CMI congregation decided to focus more on global missions, especially in developing regions, I was given a new calling—an opportunity to serve in the Amazon region of the Archdiocese of Santarém, Brazil.



Accepting this mission wholeheartedly, I prepared myself for a journey into the unknown. Reaching my assigned parish in Almeirim was no easy feat. From Kochi, it took four flights to reach Santarém, and a 16-hour ship journey along the vast, untamed rivers of the Amazon to reach my parish, Almeirim. The transition from a structured institution to the heart of a remote mission was a challenge—one that required faith, resilience, and an open heart.

Looking back, the decision to step beyond my comfort zone has been transformative. The long journey was not just physical; it was a spiritual transition into a new way of serving, embracing the raw beauty and struggles of missionary life. The past now stands as a foundation, shaping my commitment to this new mission and the people I am called to serve.



The Amazon region, with its vast rivers and dense forests, was unlike anywhere else. Almeirim, a quiet, serene town on the banks of the mighty Amazon River, offered a deep connection to nature, but the rural setting also brought its own set of challenges. As a priest, I did not just minister to a congregation that lived close by. I was often tasked with the mission of serving communities scattered across the vast waterways of the Amazon, some accessible only by boat.

Once every two months, I embarked on a journey through the river to visit remote Catholic communities that relied on the Church for spiritual guidance. These communities were deeply rooted in their faith yet were sometimes isolated, with minimal access to modern amenities or transportation. The boat journeys were long and demanding, sometimes taking days, with the weather and river conditions dictating the schedule. It was a challenging form of ministry, but also a rewarding one.

During these visits, I celebrated Mass in small chapels, sometimes even in people's homes. The faithful were often humble and devout, holding onto their faith despite the hardships they faced in such a remote area. The sense of community in these small villages was palpable, and the joy of coming together for Mass, for prayer, and for fellowship, was truly a beautiful experience.



Living far from my homeland of India, I also navigated cultural and linguistic differences. In Almeirim and other parts of the Amazon, Brazilian Portuguese was the language of communication. I had no proficiency in the language when I arrived, over a time, I came to appreciate how language became more than just a means of communication. It became a bridge between hearts and minds. Additionally, the cultural exchange taught me much about resilience, resourcefulness, and the beauty of simplicity in life.



Continue reading on page 2

Faith B4U...

The cover piece continues....

In the Amazon, I was constantly reminded of the vastness and vulnerability of God's creation. The river that wove through the region was a metaphor for life—constantly flowing, sometimes turbulent, sometimes calm, but always moving forward. It taught me to surrender, to trust in God's guidance, and to find beauty in the midst of challenges.



Daily life in Almeirim, though simple, was deeply fulfilling. There was a lot of walking, a lot of listening, and a lot of learning from the people who had lived in harmony with the land for generations. There were moments of isolation, but also a deep sense of connection with the people I served and the mission I was part of. The rhythm of life there was slower, but it offered opportunities to be still, to reflect, and to find God in all things.



I also found joy in the little things—the vibrant celebrations of local festivals, the generosity of the people, and the humility that filled the air. The people there had little by worldly standards, but their faith was rich and abundant. The food was another aspect of the experience that I fully embraced. I ate everything they offered, from local Amazonian fish to exotic fruits and traditional dishes. The generosity of the people extended to their hospitality, and sharing meals with them was a way of deepening our bond and experiencing their culture firsthand.

That life was about being present, being available, and being a companion to those on the journey of faith. It was not always easy, but it was an experience that deepened my understanding of God's love and of the universal nature of the Catholic faith, no matter where in the world I was.

Fr Sebastian CMI

Photos supplied by Fr Sebastian

Stations of the Cross for Lent

With Rosary, Adoration, Benediction.

Stations will continue over the following Fridays

7.00pm - FRIDAY 4th April, 11th April

Following Stations, each time, **at 7.30pm**, there will be Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, plus Rosary and Benediction, concluding by just after 8pm.

Reconciliation (one to one)

Every Saturday, 4pm - 4:45pm (excluding the days listed below)

Extra Reconciliation (one to one)

5 April, 3pm - 4:30pm | 9 April, 7pm - 8:30pm |

12 April, 3pm - 4:30pm | 15 April, 7pm - 8:30pm |

Good Friday 18 April, after Stations until 12pm

April Volunteer Roster AND Triduum availability forms

IS NOW AVAILABLE

Please check your emails (including junk / spam) alternatively, a copy can be found in the sacristy and the foyer section of the church. Thank you.

Lenten Reflection Groups

Spend time with others reflecting on scripture this Lent with the theme of hope in this Jubilee Year. Each week we will reflect on the Gospel for the following Sunday.

Tuesdays 10am - 11am 1st & 8th April

Wednesdays 7pm - 8pm 2nd & 9th April

In the Youth Room next to the Church.

Reflection guides available for purchase at the Parish Office - \$5. All welcome.

Let us pray...

FOR OUR SICK, that they will be nourished with hope & recognise the loving presence of God in their lives.

Elie Aboumelhem, Mary Anjoul, John Attard, Rita Attard, Amara Bewert, Ellen Boissett, Frank Borg, Haryono Budiono, Ann Bugaya, Karl Croning, Kathleen Davies, Nerida Fabri, Solonge Faddoul, Margaret John, Margaret Jones, Rachel Karbic, Tulla Kavich, Tyler Kenedy, Peter Kennedy, Maxine Kroebel, Michelle Makin, Joyce Mifsud, Elsie Moran, Joseph Moses, Alex Noble, Brendon Onorato, Delma Ryan, Benjie Santiago, Carmel Thompson, Connie Tudman, Eddie Vella, Horace Westwood, Grace Widjaya, Maureen Zarb

FOR DEATH ANNIVERSARIES, that they now know the fullness of life & delight in God - may they pray for our active purpose in God's Mission.

John Bigeni, Armando D'Amico, Leonardo Mastrodomenico, Augusto Taccone, Palmina Taccone

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Our Mission: To grow as a community in the likeness of Christ.

Caritas Australia - Project Compassion

Irene lives in the Kongolo Region in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and faced immense challenges after losing her father to war and raising her children in poverty. With support from Caritas Australia, Irene received vocational training in sewing and farming and can now support her whole family

You can support through donation boxes or by scanning the QR code.



Photo credit: Arlette Bashizi/Caritas Australia

Hospitality Ministry

After many of our Masses, we have a wonderful ministry of gathering and hospitality, where our community share conversation and a cuppa.

To help us continue this ministry of hospitality, it would be great to have some people to join our teams.

Can you help?

Maybe you are able to help out once a month? Please contact the Parish Office to leave your details.

If there are other ways you would like to help, please let us know.

For our current teams

Can all ministers for hospitality please complete the sign-in and sign-out sheet in the kitchen. This helps us in our commitment to ensure safe and responsible places for all.

Could you also please complete the roster sheet that is with the sign in sheet.

And if you haven't been to hospitality after Mass before, come along as together we continue to grow as a community in the likeness of Christ.

Be part of the Children's Liturgy Team

Share the joy of celebrating our faith with the children of our parish!

Children's Liturgy is celebrated at 8.30am and 10.30am Sunday Masses during the school term.

Call the Parish Office on 9631 8135 for more information to become a leader or helper for this enriching ministry.

A small gift makes a BIG DIFFERENCE

Over the next few weeks of Lent, you can support refugees and people seeking asylum by donating these essential items.

WEEK 4: Dishwashing Detergent

All donations support JRS (Jesuit Refugee Services Australia). Donated food can be placed into the JRS basket located in the Narthex (main church entrance) OR brought to the Parish Office.

This Sunday's Readings

1st Reading

Joshua
5:9-12

2nd Reading

2 Corinthians
5:17-21

Gospel

Luke
15:1-3, 11-32

Next Sunday's Readings

1st Reading

Isaiah
43:16-21

2nd Reading

Philippians
3:8-14

Gospel

John
8:1-11

Mass Times

Monday - 9:15am

Tuesday - 9:15am

Wednesday - 6:30am | 9:15am

Thursday - 9:15am

Friday - 6:30am | 9:15am

Saturday - Vigil 5:00pm (live streamed)

Sunday - 7:00am | 8:30am | 10:30am | 6:00pm

Memorial Mass - Last Tuesday night of each month (except December) at 7:00pm

Mass for Peace with anointing of the sick - First Saturday of each month (except January) at 10:30am

Reconciliation:

Saturday - 4:00pm - 4.45pm

Please join us via Facebook or Website, olqp.org.au, every Saturday Vigil Mass at 5:00pm

Rosary in the church: Weekdays at 8:30am & Friday nights at 7:30pm

ZOOM option available Friday night for those who cannot travel to the church for rosary.

Meeting ID: 896 7944 2594 | Passcode: rosary

P: 9631 8135 | E: parishoffice@olqp.org.au

Emergency Contact Only 0447 509 207

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Parish Office hours: 9am - 1pm, 2pm - 4pm Monday to Friday

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