OCTOBER 2026

YTU SRC Newsletter

Fig. 1. Image generated by ChatGPT on October 1, 2026, from the prompt "Culture".

# More Than the Lecture Room: YTU's Cultural Night

**by Shenal Perera, CSsR.**

When the lecture rooms empty and the evening begins, Yarra Theological Union shows another side of its life. The cultural night is not an extra on the calendar. It is where the community's diversity can be seen, heard, tasted and celebrated.

Walk into the hall and you meet the world in one room. Colourful traditional dress, songs in many languages, dances passed down through generations, and tables heavy with food from every corner of the globe. A student who spends the week debating doctrine with you in class might now be teaching you the steps of a folk dance from their homeland or sharing a dish their mother used to make. These moments say as much about faith and belonging as any lecture does.

What makes YTU special is the variety of people who study here. Members of different religious congregations bring their own charisms, traditions and ways of praying. Lay students bring the experience of family, work and parish life. Together, they form a community where theology is not studied in isolation but lived in friendship. Each person adds a different flavour to the shared table, and the learning is richer for it.

The cultural night reminds us that diversity is not something to tolerate but something to treasure. When we listen to each other's stories and honour each other's customs, we practise what we study: that the Spirit speaks in many tongues and works through many cultures.

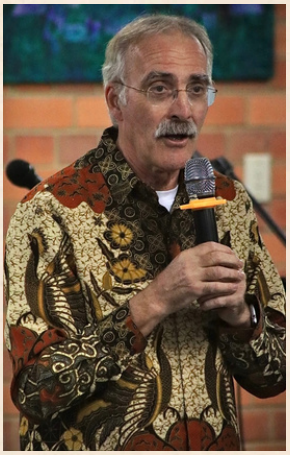
Laughter, music and shared meals build bonds that carry back into the classroom. Conversations become warmer, questions become kinder, and strangers become companions on the journey.

To everyone who performed, cooked, organised, set up or simply came to celebrate, thank you. You made our differences a gift to one another.

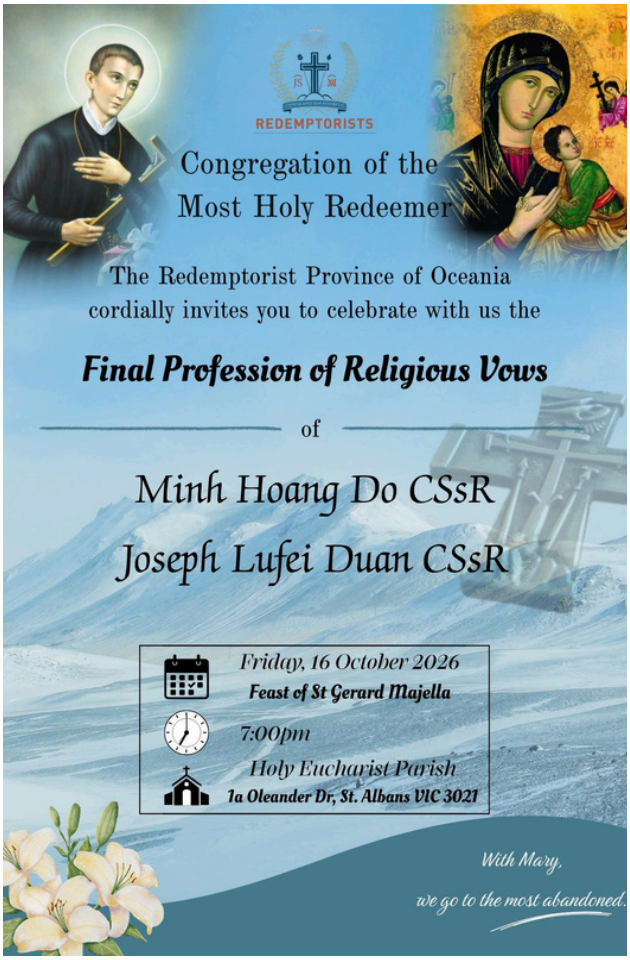
May we keep bringing that same spirit of welcome into every lecture, every prayer and every encounter at YTU.

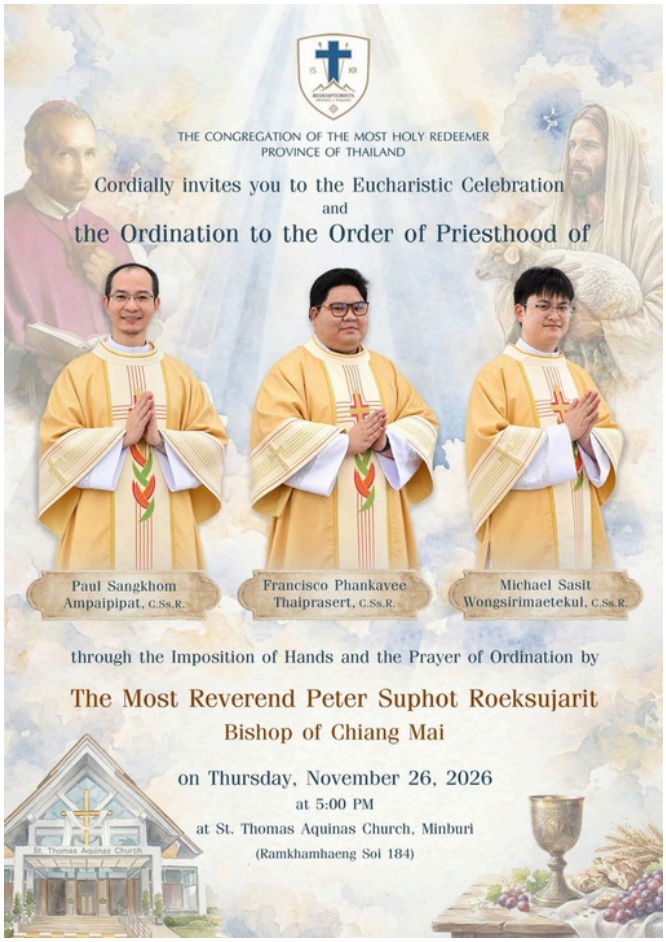
Shenal Perera belongs to the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer. He is an undergraduate student, studying Theology at YTU and the Secretary of the SRC.

# Captured Moments from the Cultural Night



# Announcements




## SRC Appeal

We humbly request student donations to stock our Common Room weekly with coffee/tea, fresh milk, biscuits, and cup noodles.

We suggest a donation of $20 per student, per semester. That said, we welcome any amount you feel comfortable contributing; no amount is too little.

Envelopes are available in the Common Room, the YTU Office, and classrooms. if you'd like to contribute by EFT (Electronic Funds Transfer), contact Mengjie, our SRC Treasurer, at mengjie0107@gmail.com

The SRC wishes to thank the lecturers, students, formators, family and friends of YTU for joining us on a night of cultural presentations, dance and food at this year's Cultural Night. We look forward to seeing you again in 2027.