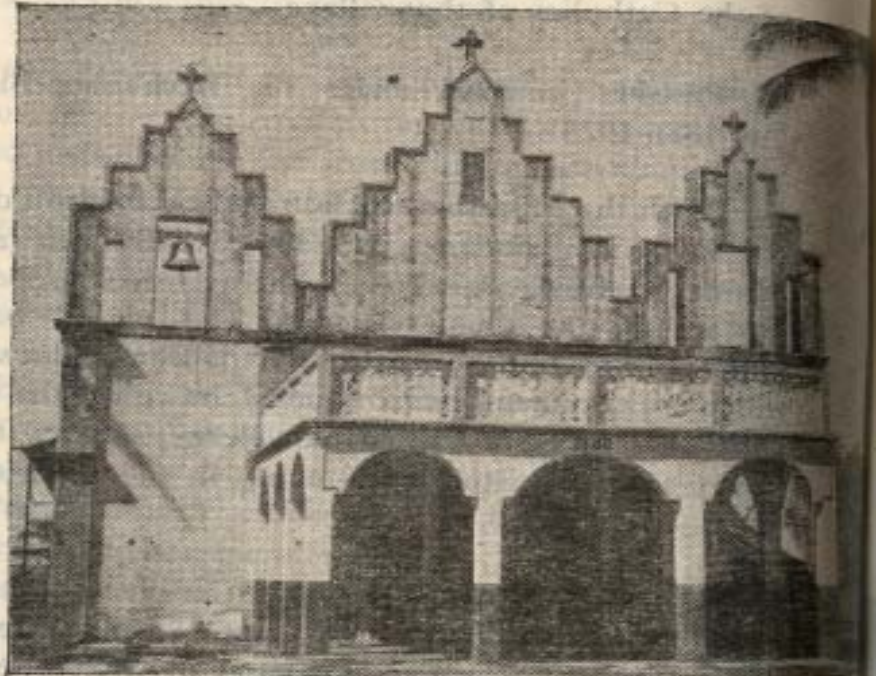


care of the vicar of Remedy.

Our next available information about the parish of Koliwada brings us to the beginning of this century, In 1905, Fr. Joaquim Milagres Pimenta, of Remedy, started catechism classes for the children of the village. With the backing of the local community leaders, he was able to build a makeshift chapel in Koliwada. It was not very long before the villagers desired a more respectable church. Land for the future church was donated by a local fisherman, and both priest & people worked together in building the church which was completed



in 1913. On January 17, 1913, the church was blessed by the Archbishop-Bishop of Damaun, and dedicated to St. Peter the Apostle. In the church was placed a statue of St. Peter, brought all the way from Europe. 1913 also marks the year when the village of Koliwada was separated from the parish of Remedy and established as an independent parish. Fr. J. M. Pimenta was its First Parish Priest.

ST. FRANCIS XAVIER, Giriz (1918)

Giriz formed part of the parish of St. Thomas, Sandor, ever since the latter was established in south Bassein in the early second half of the 16th century. As in the case of the parish of Merces, the development of Giriz into an independent parish was promoted by the fact that its Catholics found it very troublesome, especially during the monsoons, to attend religious services at Sandor.

A request for a church of their own made by the inhabitants of Giriz to the Archbishop-Bishop of Damaun was favourably received and the foundation stone of the church was blessed and laid by him on February 14, 1917. The house of worship was completed in 1918 built entirely by the parishioners without "foreign aid". The first parish priest of the new parish was Fr. Augusto D'Souza who had been entrusted with the building of the church from its very inception.

In 1968, the year of the Golden Jubilee of the church and parish, a porch in front of the church (to accommodate the growing population) and a large Community Hall (The Marshal Pereira Memorial Hall) were constructed during the Vicarship of Fr. Francis Gratian Monteiro. Later constructions have been in the nature of a spacious extension of the church and



a new parochial house on the first floor, completed with German and diocesan aid in 1977 during the Vicarship of Fr. Dominic Pereira. The two spires of the church were completely replaced by new ones in May, 1981.

III Parishes Founded under the Jurisdiction of the Archbishop of Bombay: 1928-1981

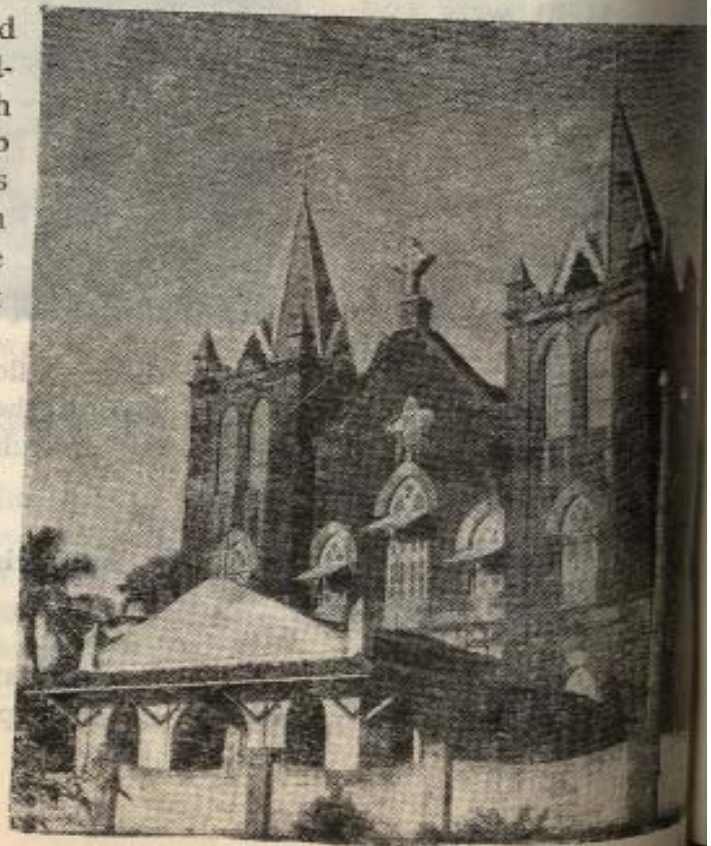
The revival of the Church in Bassein which began under the jurisdiction of the Archbishop-Bishop of Damaun was accelerated

when Bassein came under the jurisdiction of the Archbishop of Bombay from 1928 on. During the administration of Archbishops Lima, Roberts and Gracias, 8 new parishes were founded: one under Lima, four under Roberts, and three under Gracias. This period of 63 years is characterized not only by the creation of new parishes out of existing parishes, but also by the prolific growth of educational, social welfare and health services in Bassein.

ST. PETER, Arnala (1931)

Arnala is a fishing village touching the Arabian Sea some 5 kilometers from the church of Agashi at the northwestern point of Bassein. Since the foundation of the parish of Agashi (first, OL of Light and then St. James) Arnala formed part of that parish. Seeing the inconvenience the fisherfolk community of Arnala were being put to in attending religious services at Agashi, Fr. Ismail D'Costa, then an Assistant Priest at Agashi, first put up a small hut-chapel in 1919, and then, with the help of the Kolis, erected a corrugated iron-shed in 1921. The shed was blessed by the Archbishop-Bishop of Damaun and dedicated to St. Peter the Apostle. Fr. D'Costa then moved into the shed as the priest-in-charge of this incipient parish. In 1926 the parochial house was completed.

Fr. D'Costa then turned his attention to the building of a decent church for Arnala. With the help of local groups, he was able to obtain free of cost an acre of land. But there were some Hindu huts on this plot of ground. It is to the credit of the healthy relations between the Christian Kolis and the Hindus that these hutment dwellers moved to another place in order that the Christian church might be built. Further, to the contributions made by Christians and the Archbishop of Bombay, a Hindu



community association donated Rs. 3,000 towards the building of the church.

The church, whose foundation stone was blessed by the Administrator of Damaun on April 11, 1928 was finally completed in 1930 and blessed by Archbishop Joaquim Lima of Bombay on December 27, 1931. This year therefore marks the date when the parish of St. Peter was formally separated from the parish of Agashi and erected into an independent parish.

To the Kolis of the place it would seem without doubt that Fr. Ismail d'Costa is the true "Apostle of Arnala." Not only did he bend his efforts towards building a church, but he also attended to their educational development. Soon Arnala had Primary school which stands to this day.

ST. GONSALO GARCIA, Ghas (1942)

Because of its distance from the church of the Holy Cross at Nirmal, some four kilometers away and its inaccessibility during the monsoon months the village of Ghas was rather inadequately catered to as far as the spiritual life of the people was concerned. Thus a movement for a separate parish was begun by the people of Ghas in 1941. Their request was favourably received by Archbishop Roberts, who in 1942, separated it from the parish of Nirmal and erected it as an independent parish under the patronage of St. Gonsalo Garcia, India's first and only canonized saint. Fr. Thomas A. Gonsalves was its first Parish Priest.

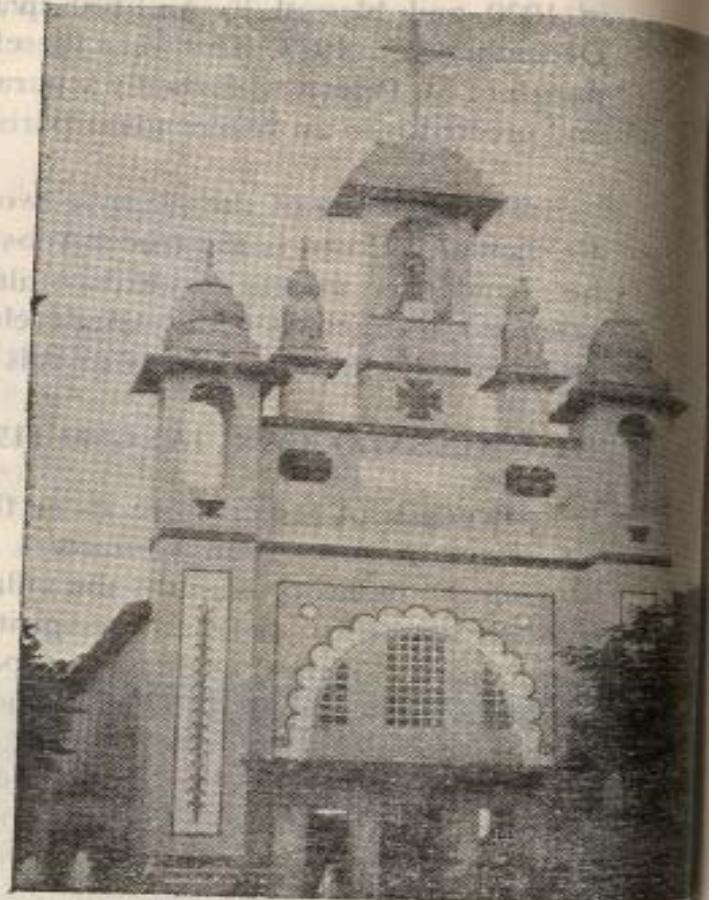
On a plot of land generously contributed by parishioners themselves, a long shed with a wall all around was put up in 1942. Mass and other services were conducted in this shed. But the cyclone of 1946 blew off the roof of the shed and brought down the altar. From 1946 till the building of the church, services were held in the Primary school building of the parish.

As this arrangement was found to be very inadequate, work on constructing a new and spacious church was commenced under the energetic leadership of the Vicar, Fr. Luis C. D'Souza. The foundation stone was blessed on December 26, 1957 by Auxiliary Bishop Longinus Pereira on the solemn occasion of the fourth centenary of the birth of St. Gonsalo Garcia. The church took four

years to be built partly because of the difficulty in transporting material to the village and partly because of the shortage of funds. But the enterprise was successfully terminated in 1962, mainly because of the enthusiasm and hard work of Fr. D'Souza.

The new church was blessed on March 8, 1962 by Cardinal Gracias on the occasion of the centenary of the canonization of its patron saint. The church is an imposing edifice with a façade erected with an Indian motif, surmounted by four Indian-styled domes and an 18-foot cross. The main altar, painted and renewed, belonged to the old Cathedral of Bhuleshwar (closed in 1941), and the life-size statue of the Saint was locally made.

Today, this church has become a pilgrimage spot for thousands of devotees who come to Ghas every year in December.



ST. ROQUE, Gokhivera (1943)

Till the end of the double Jurisdiction in 1928, the village of Gokhivera formed part of the parish of St. Michael, Manickpur. The origin of the parish of Gokhivera can be traced to a cholera epidemic that broke out in 1914 which so affected the Catholics of Gokhivera that they made a vow to build a chapel in honour of St. Roque. The 200 Catholics of Gokhivera kept their vow. By 1930 they had erected a building (40 x 18 ft.) to which Archbishop Lima added a sanctuary (18 x 15 ft.). On June 8, 1930 the chapel was blessed by the Dean of South Bassein. From that day forth, the people of Gokhivera received the spiritual ministrations of the priests of St. Michael's, Manickpur, to which church the chapel was affiliated.

In 1943, St. Roque's church was raised to the status of an independent parish, when Fr. Nubiola, SJ was appointed as the resident parish priest. Since then the Jesuit Fathers have served



this parish as Vicars except during the years 1968-1971, when Fr. Servulo Vaz, a secular priest, was Vicar.

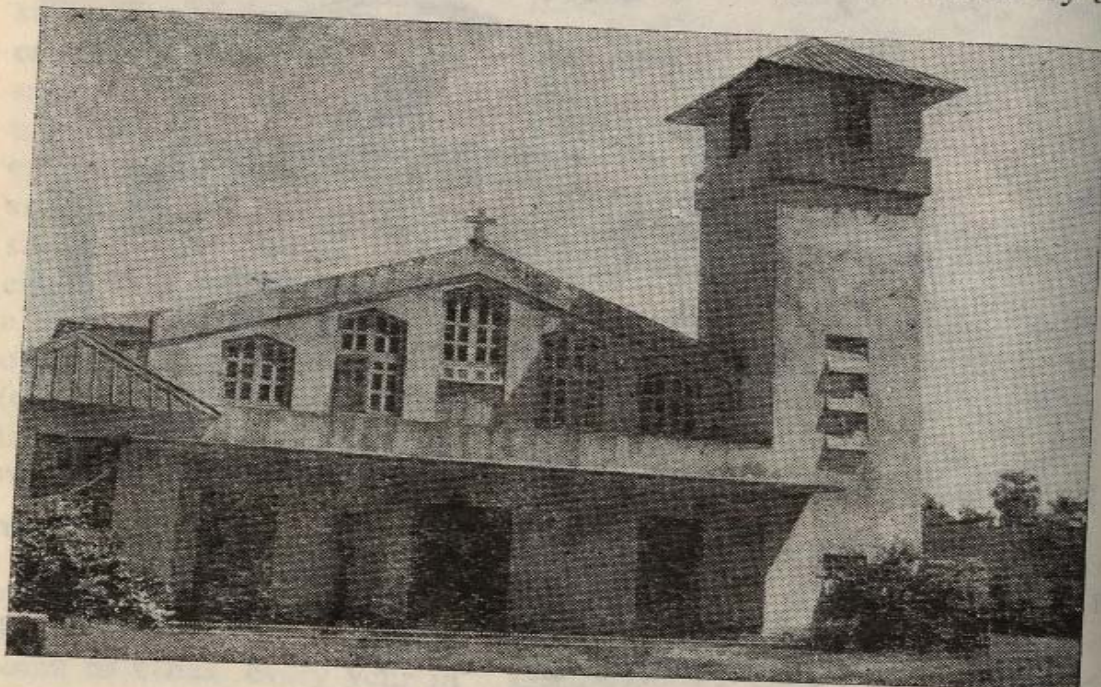
ST. MARY MAGDALENE, Mulgaon (1945)

As in the case of other parishes in Bassein, the birth of the parish of Mulgaon is due to the inconvenience the people of the place experienced in attending religious services at the church of the Mother of God, Palle, whose parishioners they were. Mulgaon is some three kilometers from Palle. Improper roads and poor transportation facilities made travelling to the parish church a difficult business, especially during the monsoons.

The foundation of this parish can be traced back to the efforts of Fr. J. S. Miranda and Fr. Raymond Menezes, Vicars of Palle, who were aided and encouraged by Archbishop Roberts. In 1942, Fr. Miranda bought a small plot of land in Mulgaon, to which a larger piece of land was added in 1944 by Fr. Mendes. In the same year a primary school was started in Nantiwadi. A small shed-chapel was put up and on July 22, 1945, the feast of

St. Mary Magdalene, the Vicar General of Bombay, Rev. Fr. M. M. Balaguer SJ, celebrated the first Mass in it. This date marked the birth of the new parish with Fr. Ayres Fernandes as its first Parish Priest.

From 1945 to 1949 the parish priests of Mulgaon served the people while residing in the parish house of OL of Grace, Papdy. It was only in 1949 that Fr. Vincent D'Souza put up a house by the



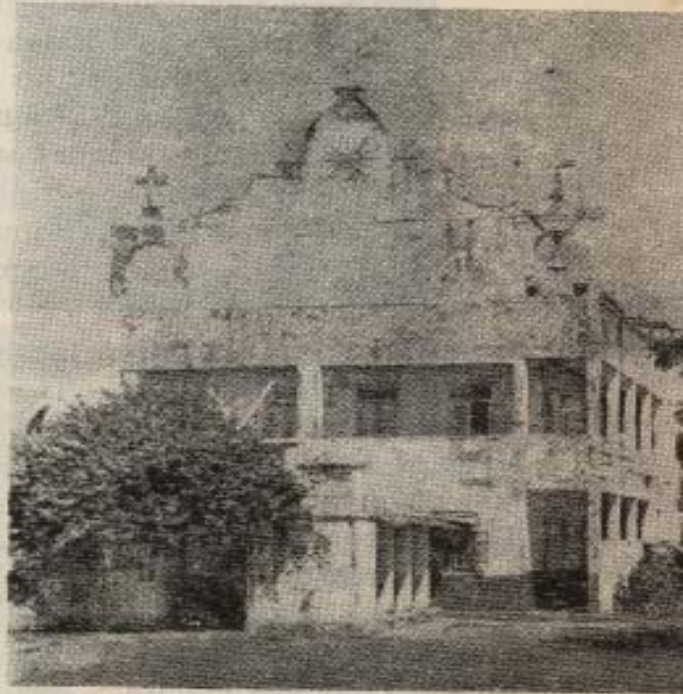
side of the church and began residing there. During the tenure of Fr. Clement de Sa (1956-1967), the Primary school building was built and the foundation stone of a new church building was laid on November 13, 1963. With the help of contributions from parishioners and others, the church rose on its foundations, and, when completed, was blessed by Cardinal Gracias.

HOLY FAMILY, Bhuigaon (1946)

The village of Bhuigaon was the second area to be detached from the mother parish of the Holy Cross, Nirmal (the first being the village of Ghas), during the nine years that Fr. Remedio d'Azavedo (1940-1949) was Vicar of Nirmal. The village of Bhuigaon is situated at a distance of two kilometers to the south-West of Nirmal. Given the great distance

from and the hardships of travel to the parish church, out of the more than thousand Catholics of the village only a handful attended religious services at Nirmal. Though Fr. Raymond Menezes, then Assistant at Nirmal, started gathering the children of the village for catechism classes, this did not meet the larger needs of the villagers.

Through the contributions of land from the poor villagers, and financial help from the Archbishop and the parishes of Bandra, a very simple church was built in 1946. On June 2, 1946, Bhuigaon was separated from the parish of Nirmal and Fr. Acucio Dourado was appointed its first Parish Priest who took up his residence in the village itself. In 1948 work was begun on a new construction, with the villagers contributing their own personal labour. It took seven long years to build and was completed in 1955.



The building is a modest structure of two floors: the ground floor is used for religious services, while the first floor is the residence of the parish priest. Plans are afoot for the construction of a new church.

OUR LADY OF FATIMA, Chulna (1963)

The village of Chulna, whose inhabitants are practically all Catholics, lies about three kilometers from Vasai Station and about the same distance from the church of St. Thomas, Sandor. Till the middle of this century, the villagers of Chulna attended religious services at Sandor, for Chulna fell within the parish of Sandor. Because of the inconvenience and hardships experienced, especially during the monsoons, a petition was successfully made by the villagers to Cardinal Gracias for Sunday Mass to be celebrated for them in the Village Hall. The first mass was celebrated in

Chulna's Village Hall on September 9, 1951 by Fr. Philip Tavares, who was at that time an Assistant to Msgr. Appollinaris D'Souza, Vicar of Sandor.

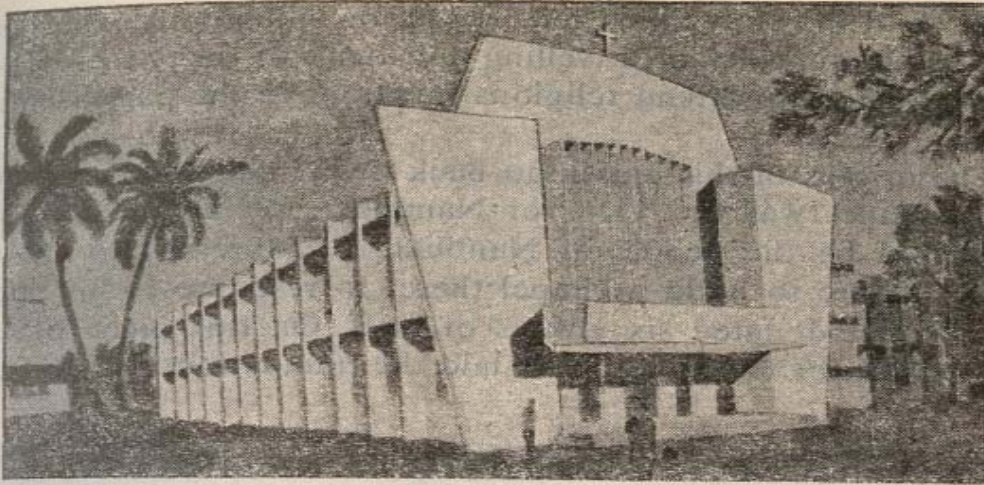
That event signalled the beginning of a concerted effort on the part of the Catholics of Chulna to build a parish church of their own. Fr. Tavares directed this effort in the initial stages, then was transferred, and in 1959 again appointed to Sandor. At this time Mgr. Raymond Mendes was Vicar of Sandor. All along, the priests who served the people of Chulna did so while residing in the parish house of St. Thomas Church, Sandor. The contributions of the villagers were augmented by the generous donations of benefactors so that, ten years after the first Mass had been celebrated in Chulna, the foundation stone of the church was laid on April 22, 1961. Three years later, the new church dedicated to Our Lady of Fatima, was blessed by Auxiliary Bishop Longinus Pereira on May 17, 1964. In the meantime, the parish of Chulna had been officially erected on June 1, 1963, and Fr. Tavares who had played a significant role in its birth was appointed its first parish priest.



ST. JOSEPH, Umralla (1974)

It was only during the last decade that the extensive parish of the Holy Spirit, Nandakal, was divided to give rise to the two youngest parishes of Bassein, one of which is the parish of St. Joseph at Umralla. The village of Umralla is situated to the south-east of Nandakal and lies between Nandakal and Nala Sopara Railway Station.

The origins of this parish are connected with the name of Fr. Raymond Mendes (who was also associated in one way or



another with the beginnings of several other parishes in modern Bassein: Mulgaon, Ghas, Bhuigaon, Chulna and Nanbhat). While an Assistant priest at Nandakal in 1944, he put up a small makeshift chapel, dedicated to St. Joseph at Umralla on three and a half guntas of land, two guntas of which were donated by a couple of parishioners. One of his successors at Nandakal, Fr. Sebastian Vaz, in 1948, started work on the walls of the chapel with the help of the villagers of Umralla. But it appears that the work came to a standstill after Fr. Vaz' transfer from Nandakal in the same year.

We have to wait almost forty years for further developments to occur in Umralla. In 1973 the village of Umralla was entrusted to the Capuchin Fathers. On March 4, 1974 Umralla was cut off from the parish of Nandakal and raised to the status of an independent parish with Fr. Aloysius Fernandes OFM (Cap) as its first Parish Priest. He immediately resumed work on the chapel, and soon the parish had a simple church, modest in dimensions, with a parish house as well. Fr. Fernandes was succeeded by Fr. Evarist Fernandes OFM (Cap) from 1975-78. Fr. Oscar Colaco OFM (Cap) took over in 1978 and he set about the task of providing Umralla with a large modern church. Its foundation stone was laid on March 9, 1980 by Archbishop Simon Pimenta, and the house of worship is expected to be completed by Christmas, 1981.

ST. PAUL, Nanbhat (1975)

This is the youngest parish in Bassein which came into being on June 1, 1975. Before that, the village of Nanbhat belonged to

the parish of the Holy Spirit, Nandakal. Its inhabitants experienced considerable difficulty in travelling a distance of thirty to forty-five minutes on foot to attend religious functions in the parish church.

The origins of this parish go back to the days when Fr. Raymond Mendes was the Vicar of Nandakal. Seeing the hardships experienced by the people of Nanbhat, he expressed to them in 1949 his desire to build a chapel there. In response to his appeal, a parishioner donated six guntas of land. On this piece of land, his successor, Fr. Sebastian Vaz, laid the foundations of the future



chapel in 1953. Nothing more was done in this matter until 1965 when the new Vicar of Nandakal, Fr. Joseph Misquitta, built a chapel in which Sunday Mass began to be regularly celebrated. With the encouragement of the Vicar and the contributions of the people of Nanbhat, financial and otherwise, a church was constructed by 1969. Soon after this a Primary school was opened in the village.

The next step in the birth of the parish came when Fr. Philip Tavares was appointed Vicar of Nandakal in 1974. He worked towards making Nanbhat an independent parish, which came to pass on June 1, 1975. Fr. Michael D'Souza, who was then an Assistant at Nandakal, and had been entrusted with looking after Nanbhat, was appointed its first Parish priest. It was not long afterwards that the need was felt for the complete renovation of the church and by January 1980 an almost entirely new church was built on the old foundations. The new church was blessed by Archbishop Simon Pimenta on January 27, 1980.