On February 14, 1867, the surviving member of the de Ga family, Anthony C. de Ga, handed over the administration of the chapel and two pieces of chapel land to Bishop Walter Steins, the Vicar Apostolic of Bombay. In 1912 the chapel was completely renovated by Msgr. J. dos Remedios who had been appointed its chaplain in 1904. The chapel was raised to the status of a parish church when the new parish of St. Teresa was created on March 12, 1941. Though the church is woefully inadequate for the needs of its parishioners, there is no room for any expansion, as the church lies at the intersection of two main roads and is hemmed in by buildings at its rear. At present, internal renovations of the church are in progress.

Mention must also be made of the chapel of St. Philomena which falls within the boundary of this parish. This chapel was built in 1912 primarily to serve the needs of the parish school which was, and still is, some distance away from St. Teresa's. The blessing of this chapel and school hall by the Archbishop of Bombay took place on November 13, 1912. The chapel was replaced by a new one which was blessed on October 22, 1939.

**OUR LADY OF DOLOURS, Wadala (1941)**

The origin of this parish goes back to 1853 when the Vicar of Salvacao Church, Fr. Braz Fernandes, built a chapel for the Catholics who lived at the far eastern end of the parish in Wadala, (presently close to the Wadala Railway Station). This chapel was
dedicated to the Nossa Senhora das Dores (Our Lady of Dolours) and was filial to the Salvacao Church, Dadar.

On November 1, 1936, the foundation stone of a new church was laid and about a year later, the new church was blessed by Fr. Charles Ghezzi SJ, Administrator Apostolic of Bombay, on October 17, 1937. This sub-centre of the Salvacao church was raised to the status of an independent parish on March 12, 1941.

In 1948 the care of the parish was entrusted to the Salesians of Don Bosco, thereby becoming their first parish in the Archdiocese. Out of this parish was created the latest parish of the Archdiocese, St. Dominic Savio, on August 22, 1981.

ST. JOSEPH, Umerkhadi (1941)

Before the church of St. Joseph was built on its present site close to the Sandhurst Road Railway Station (Central Railway), there was a chapel, also dedicated to St. Joseph, built on a plot of ground donated for the purpose by Annie Mary da Gama Silva in 1853. The original congregation consisted of a small colony of Catholic fisherfolk and agriculturists who had migrated there from Uran across the Bombay harbour (Hull, II:258). A resident chaplain was appointed by the Vicar-Apostolic of Bombay in 1870 and a small house was built for him at the back of the chapel.

In course of time, lack of accommodation and the unsuitability of the surroundings made it desirable to transfer the chapel to more spacious grounds on the Nowroji Hill Estate. The foun-
dation stone of the new chapel was laid by Archbishop Lima on March 19, 1930 and the new chapel was blessed by him on January 24, 1932. This new chapel was only some 100 feet away from the old chapel building which still stands today, though it has been converted into the Primary section of the Parish School. The chapel was built by the Fabrica of the Esperanca Cathedral, Bhuleshwar, to which it was filial. St. Joseph at Umerkhadi became an independent parish on March 12, 1941 when it was separated from the Bhuleshwar Cathedral parish. The parish exists in a predominantly Muslim environment.

ST. PAUL, Dadar East (1941)

In 1865 the Sisters of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary settled at the old Villa house of the Vicar-Apostolic of Bombay where they started a school and a convent. This property at Parel (today, Dadar) was known as “The Lord Bishop’s Villa” and had been bought as far back as 1841 by Bishop Fortini, the Carmelite Vicar-Apostolic at that time. For the Sisters and the girl-boarders a chapel was founded under the name of St. Joseph. The Jesuit Fathers of St. Mary’s, Mazagaon celebrated Mass there daily, and according to the Diary of St. Mary’s the blessing of the chapel took place on April 22, 1877.

The chapel remained as the chapel of the Convent until 1934 when Archbishop Lima informed the Sisters that the premises of the old convent-school were needed for the future Diocesan Seminary. On January 1, 1936 Fr. Chrysanthus Zurbitut SJ became the first resident chaplain of the chapel. On May 2, 1936 the Seminary was formally erected and its inauguration took place on June 13, 1936. From 1936 to 1941 the chapel was used both for public and seminary worship.

On March 12, 1941 the parish of St. Paul was carved out of the parish of Our Lady of Salvation, Dadar, and
was entrusted to the Fathers of the Society of Jesus. It was then
that the chapel of St. Joseph was renamed as the church of St. Paul.
From June 1960, when the Seminary was transferred to Goregaon,
the parish of St. Paul was handed over to the pastoral care of the
secular clergy. On January 17, 1975, Auxiliary Bishop Simon
Pimenta blessed the new church of St. Paul, which was built
during the Vicarship of Fr. Benjamin Sequeira.

**ST. STEPHEN, Cumballa Hill (1948)**

On March 12, 1941 Archbishop Roberts issued a Decree
according to which territorial adjustments of several parishes were
brought into effect. One
of the new parishes created
as a result of this reorga-
nization was the parish
of St. Stephen at Cumb-
alla Hill. In this Decree it
was stated: “The area west
of a line along Harvey
Road, Grant Road, the
B.B. and C.I. Railway,
Falkland Road and
Tardeo Road, known as
Malabar Hill and Cumballa
Hill, is intended to become
the new parish of St.
Stephen as soon as the
necessary arrangements
can be made.” After
seven years, owing to the
increase in the Catholic
population and also because of the necessary arrangements
referred to in the above Decree, the parish of St. Stephen was
created on December 26, 1948. The new church was put up in
1967 during the Vicarship of Fr. Frank E. Lobo. A flight of
steps leads up to the church, which is in effect at first floor level
and above the church is the parish hall. The church is still not
fully completed, nor is there a proper parish house — these are
now in the process of being constructed.
ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST, Fort, (1949)

What is today the parish of St. John the Evangelist was till 1949 part of the parish of the Holy Name, Fort. A school for poor children was started in June 1939 on Green Street. Fr. Ligoury D’Souza took up residence on Green Street in 1943, said Mass and conducted the school in the same building. The parish was erected in 1949 under Fr. Alexander Noronha, with a temporary chapel and residence in the school building.

In 1954 the building was declared unfit for use and the children of the Primary section were shifted to Convent Street behind the Pro-Cathedral in August 1954. In December of the same year the Parish priest and his Assistant unable to find a residence anywhere, shifted to Regent Hotel at Ballard Estate, saying Mass in the hall of the Hotel and keeping the Blessed Sacrament in a rented room in the Hotel premises.

Fr. A. Noronha, who for nine years made valiant efforts to secure a place for a new church, was transferred to Valsad in February 1959, and Fr. Francis A. Mascarenhas was appointed Vicar in his place. The search for a site went on unceasingly and just when everything seemed hopeless, almost miraculously, a plot of 450 sq. yards was secured on lease from the Bombay Port Trust on Goa Street, just opposite the Alexandra Docks at Ballard Estate. The construction of the church began on June 1, 1961 and was completed in December 1962; the church was blessed on December 27, 1962.

Today the church serves not only its parishioners but also the hundreds of seamen from all over the world whose ships dock at
Bombay, as well as the office-goers who attend office in and around Ballard Estate.

**OUR LADY OF GOOD COUNSEL, Sion (1950)**

The early origins of the chapel of Our Lady of Good Counsel at Sion (Shiva, Syva, Siam, Siao, Sion), which was built at the northeastern point of the island of Bombay, is shrouded in obscurity. Some fix the date of the chapel as early as the beginning of the 17th century, others rather opt for a date as late as the beginning of the 19th century. Fr. Hull too appears unsure. In Vol. I:434 he writes: "The chapel of NS de Bom Conselho, Sion, had in Portuguese times been filial to the Jesuit church at Parel. But when Parel was confiscated by Government in 1719 Sion became filial to St. Michael's, Mahim." Since the Parel property came into the hands of the Jesuits around 1620 and on it stood the Franciscan chapel, so Fr. Hull conjectures (Vol. II:281), it would appear that the Sion chapel was built by the Franciscans before 1620. At the time of the division of the churches of Bombay (1794), Fr. Hull states (I:129): "The church at Sion also went to the Vicar-Apostolic as filial to St. Michael's, Mahim."

In Volume II, however, Fr. Hull is less categorical. He finds Fryer's reference to Sion in 1675 as not clearly pointing to the existence of a chapel, and he finds no mention made of a Sion chapel in Tieffentaller's (1750) list of Bombay churches. Further "the Carmelite archives and Government papers are alike silent down to an official report dated 1841, which first mentions a chapel at Sion." (II:275). Thus, according to this evidence, Fr. Hull cannot definitely fix a date for the chapel beyond this: that it must have been built sometime before 1841. This seems to be the only sure date that we have about the Sion chapel. This is Fr. Meersman's view too (1957:75-76): "Hence according to available historical evidence, it seems that the Sion-Chapel was not founded during the Portuguese period and that therefore the Franciscans were in no way responsible for its erection ... It was most probably founded at the end of the 18th or the beginning of the 17th century."

There was an attempt made by Bishop Whelan in 1849 to make Sion an independent parish with the appointment of a secular priest as Vicar, but the parishioners of St. Michael's protested and the Sion chapel continued to remain
filial to St. Michael’s, Mahim. When St. Michael’s transferred its allegiance to Padroado in 1854, the chapel at Sion went along with it through the instrumentality of its priest-in-charge, Fr. Gabriel de Silva, then Assistant at Mahim.

In 1949 the Franciscans of the English Province were given charge of Sion, and in April 1950 they transferred Sion to the Friars of the Commissariat of St. Thomas the Apostle. Our Lady of Good Counsel was made an independent parish on July 8, 1950 when Fr. Damian Brady OFM was appointed its first Parish Priest.

**ST. IGNATIUS, Mandvi (1955)**

There existed from ancient times a community of fisherfolk (Kolis) who lived opposite Carnac Bunder and who had their fishing boats in the harbour. With the construction of the dock and the godowns along the east coast of the island, their occupation was greatly injured; some of the original inhabitants of the area migrated elsewhere, while others were reduced to fetching the fish ashore from the larger fishing boats and selling it at the Crawford Market (today, the Mahatma Phule Market). During the period of the Double Jurisdiction in Bombay, the Catholics among the Kolis belonged to the parish of Esperancea. Whether on the Esplanade or at Bulleshwar, the Esperancea church was some distance away for them and they felt that their spiritual needs were inadequately cared for.

In 1874 a prominent member of the Koli Catholic community, Simao Gomes “made a bequest of a house to the Cathedral, to be used for the Christian Koli boys for learning prayers and catechism.” This house, situated in Mandvi, was soon converted into a chapel by the Vicar of the Cathedral, Fr. Fonseca. Mass was offered there on Sundays and later on instructions were given by the Jesuit
priests of St. Xavier’s School close by on Carnac Road (now renamed Tilak Marg). The chapel was pitifully small and the need was felt of enlarging it. But to do so meant displacing an old woman who lived at the back of the chapel and who was extremely attached to her house. There was nothing to do but wait till she died. When she finally died, she left her heirs so many debts that they were forced to sell the house.

The foundation stone of the new chapel was blessed in 1898 by Fr. Hoene SJ, the Vicar General of Bombay. From the foundation stone to the last tile on the roof, the material and the money came entirely from the contributions of the Kolis themselves. On April 23, 1899 the chapel was blessed by Archbishop Dalhoff and opened for public worship. An upper storey was added in 1923 to house a primary school for the Kolis.

There was no resident priest at Mandvi in the beginning years. From the available records, it appears that Fr. Ayres Fernandes was the first resident priest from June 1947. In 1951 Mandvi was offered to the Capuchins to be developed into a full-fledged parish. This marked the return of the Capuchins to Bombay since their departure from it in 1858 (see Milestones). The parish of St. Ignatius was erected on July 28, 1955 with Fr. Diogo OFM (Cap) as its first Parish Priest. The parish population was by then composed not only of Kolis but also of immigrant workers, a large number of whom lived in “clubs” (kurds). During the last 25 years, St. Ignatius has been one of the parishes in South Bombay that has most experienced the phenomenon of out-migration, as its parishioners have moved out and settled down in other parts of the Archdiocese. It is the smallest parish in Bombay city with a Catholic population of about 500 persons. On May 1, 1962 the extension of the church and school was blessed by Auxiliary Bishop William Gomes.
OUR LADY OF FATIMA, Sewri (1959)

The spiritual needs of the Catholics of Sewri were looked after for many years by the priests of Salvacao Church, Dadar, for Sewri fell within the limits of that parish. Mass on Sundays used to be offered for them in the Sewri Cemetery chapel (built around 1872). With the erection of St. Paul’s parish in 1941 on the eastern side of the Central Railway lines (Salvacao is on the western side), the care of the Sewri Catholics fell to the priests of St. Paul’s. In 1944, a house was rented and used partly as a chapel-cum-school and partly as a residence for the priest.

This arrangement continued until January 29, 1959 when Sewri was formally erected into an independent parish. Appointed to Sewri in June 1959, Fr. Francis de Sales Pimenta devoted all his energies to putting up a new church-cum-school which was blessed by His Eminence Valerian Cardinal Gracias on February 2, 1963. The church is on the ground floor of the building, while the school is on the floors above it. Originally dedicated to St. Philomena, the title of the church was changed to the present one on the occasion of the visit of the Statue of the Pilgrim Virgin of Fatima to the Archdiocese.

SACRED HEART, Worli (1961)

In the second half of the 19th century, the fishing village of Worli, lying in the western part of the Bombay group of islands, had about 350 Catholics attached to the parish of Our Lady of Salvation, Dadar. For them the Vicar of Dadar, Fr. Braz Fernandes (who had earlier set up chapels at Wadala and Lower Parel) started building a filial chapel in 1886.
The chapel was finished in March 1888 when, because of the provisions of the Concordat of 1886, the Bishop of Damaun asked the Delegate Apostolic whether he could bless it. The Delegate replied on March 28, 1888 that the Bishop could not proceed to bless the chapel nor regard it as filial to Salvacao Church. The matter was referred to Rome, “whether the Chapel of Varolim should be under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Damaun or under that of the Archbishop of Bombay?” The answer arrived on September 25, 1888: “Considering the particular circumstances, it may be granted to the Bishop of Damaun.” The chapel was thus blessed by the Bishop of Damaun on December 31, 1888, and made filial to Salvacao, Dadar. It continued as such until it was raised to the status of a parish church when the parish of the Sacred Heart, Worli was separated from its mother parish of Dadar on August 17, 1961.

Plans for the construction of a new church were approved in 1977 and the foundation stone laid on January 26, 1978.

OUR LADY OF LOURDES, Sion (1976)

On May 10, 1973 an agreement was struck between the Archdiocese of Bombay and the Manjummel Province of the Carmelite Fathers, according to which the emerging parish of Sion-Dharavi was entrusted to the Carmelite Fathers “semi pleno iure.” The Carmelites took full charge when the new parish of Our Lady of Lourdes at Sion-Dharavi was erected on June 13, 1976. This new parish was carved out of the existing parish of OL of Good Counsel, Sion to the north, and the Mahim parishes of St. Michael and OL of Victories to the southwest.

Attached to the parish is the Catholic Cemetery of Dharavi which formed part of the Cemetery Trust that is administered by the
Vicar of Gloria Church, Byculla. On April 24, 1974, a portion of the land, about 6000 sq. yards, was put by the Trust at the disposal of the Carmelites for a Monastery-cum-Retreat House of St. Theresa of Avila. The foundation stone of this edifice was laid on May 1, 1974, and blessed by His Eminence Valerian Cardinal Gracias on April 7, 1978. The Carmelite Fathers became Custodians of the Cemetery from October 3, 1977. Within the boundaries of this parish lie the sprawling Dharavi slum which has the shameful distinction of being Asia’s largest slum.

ST. DOMINIC SAVIO, Antop Hill (1981)

The origins of this newest parish of the Archdiocese goes back to 1962 and the pioneering work of Fr. Mathew Thalanany SDB at Antop Hill which lies to the east of the Wadala Railway Station (Harbour Branch)—an area which had become a synonym for smuggling, wagon-looting, goondaism, and other social evils. The birth of the parish is linked with the story of four constructions. In 1962, while an Assistant at OL of Dolours, Wadala (west of Wadala Station), Fr. Mathew chanced upon a large masonry cross standing in an area of Antop Hill which had been converted into an open lavatory. Further investigation revealed that the cross was part of the former chapel of an old, abandoned Christian cemetery, now covered by hutments, whose residents had been enterprising enough to sell off the tombstones, thus destroying every sign of the former cemetery.

There Fr. Mathew first put up a small shed which was burnt down by miscreants; then in 1966 he built another shed of tile and tin and opened a free dispensary. This construction was blessed by Auxiliary Bishop William Gomes. In this shed Mass was provided for the hutment dwellers who were too poor to frequent the Wadala parish church. In 1974, with the help of the people of the place,
the shed was replaced by a small, but more durable chapel of brick, dedicated to St. Anthony. This chapel continues to be used for prayer and worship.

In the meantime, a little more than half a furlong south of the chapel, Fr. Mathew acquired a small piece of land, admeasuring some 1800 sq. yards, in the midst of a slum—the site of the present church. On it he put up a shed, which served not only as a Mass centre, but also as a study-hall for the slum children and a dispensary. From 1968 to 1978 Fr. Mathew attended to the needs of the people of this slum though he continued to reside at Wadala. Around the slum grew Housing Societies—Margaret, EUGRESS, Dolours and Auxilium—which brought into the future parish a large number of Catholic families. Other large Housing Colonies within the parish are the Bombay Port Trust Quarters to the South, and the Central Government Servant Quarters (reputedly the largest in Asia) to the north.

On December 8, 1978, Archbishop Pimenta laid the foundation stone of the church which took less than three years to be completed. Auxiliary Bishop Longinus Pereira blessed this church on August 22, 1981 and on that day the new parish of St. Dominic Savio was born with Fr. Mathew Thalanany as its first Parish Priest. The L-shaped building, rising in the midst of the slum, has a Community Hall with an attached Dispensary on the ground floor, the church on the first floor, and the priests' residence on the second floor.

The church is also the centre of worship for the Syro-Malankara Catholics in Bombay.
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