

# THE SAGA OF KIREM PARISH



The Parish of Our Lady of Remedies, Kirem, is situated 30 kilometres to the North-East of Mangalore, 10 kilometres off the Arabian seacoast. It is one of the most ancient parishes of Mangalore diocese. It was the seat of the Goan Vicar Generals till 1886 when the ecclesiastical unit of Mangalore was raised to the status of a diocese.

The Parish of Kirem at the time of its establishment was enveloped in the west by the parishes of Our Lady of Immaculate Conception Ghazni (Mulky), in the north by Our Lady of Health at Shirva, in the north-east by St Lawrence at Karkal, in the east by St Joseph at Pezar, in the south-east by the Holy Cross at Bidrem (Hospet) and in the south by Our Lady of Rosary at Bolar and Our Lady of Milagres in Mangalore.

## **Toponymy and Origin of the Parish:**

One of the popular traditions among the parishioners of Kirem, which is also published in some souvenirs, says that there is a place called Quirem in Goa where a church dedicated to our Lady of Remedies exists, and that a Goan priest from this place was sent here (Quirem) as a missionary, who on his arrival here named this place Quirem and built a church dedicated to Our Lady of Remedies.<sup>1</sup>

Inquiries made in Goa reveal that there is no place in Goa by the name 'Quirem', though there are several toponymies suffixed with the name 'Quirem'.

An interesting etymological meaning of the word 'Quirem' is given in 'The History of the Diocese of Mangalore'.<sup>2</sup> According to its author the word Quirem comes from the word 'KIRANT' which means a blood sucking insect found on animals.

---

<sup>1</sup> Souvenir published in Kirem in 1987

<sup>2</sup> J. Moore, SJ, the History of the Diocese of Mangalore, 1905, p. 255

Some elderly local people opine that the name Quirem might have come from the word KERE or KIRE (= a lake in Tulu language). They say that there was a big lake, the traces of which are visible even today, in the area called Bata, on the eastern side of the church, and that the church came to be called the church of the lake (Kire-da-Ingreji). This explanation seems to be plausible.



The tradition relating to the establishment of the parish by a Goan priest deserves our attention. On enquiry it was found that there are two places in Goa, one with a church and another with a chapel dedicated to our Lady of Remedies. The church is located at a place called Nerul in Bardez (N. Goa). It was founded in 1569 by Franciscan priests. The history of this parish says that some Christian families of this parish migrated in the past to other places due to religio-economic reasons.<sup>3</sup> Perhaps some migrant families from this place came and settled here in Kirem.

The chapel dedicated to Our Lady of Remedies however is found on a hill top in Quelim Vado of Cansaulim Parish founded by Jesuits

In 1581, in Salcette area of South Goa. The hill of the chapel is named after Our Lady of Remedies (Remed Maiecho Dongor) and a feast of great solemnity is celebrated in the chapel on the 6th of January every year.

Besides the above two places, we have one more ancient parish church dedicated to Our Lady of Remedies at Gulmona (Gundubala) near Honnavar ( Uttara Kannada) in Karwar Diocese which was destroyed by Tippu, but later on was rebuilt by local Christians.

The tradition attributing the establishment of Kirem Parish to a Goan priest is also recorded by Rev. Fr Abundius D'Souza (Parish Priest of Kirem 1969-82) in the manuscript book of the history of Kirem parish as narrated to him by one Sri D. C. Fernandes of Arasaraguttu of Kirem parish. According to this manuscript, there was neither a permanent church nor a resident priest at Kirem till 1780, but a Portuguese priest used to visit Kirem, once in three months to administer the sacraments. The manuscript also says that in the beginning, a small shed of 60 feet by 20 feet of thatched roof was put up, and

---

<sup>3</sup> Gleanings, Souvenir of Nerul Parish, Goa, 1987

that subsequently in 1783, a bigger church building with tiled roof was erected ... It further states that in 1784 (during Tippu Sultan's regime) a Goan priest came here accompanied by his beloved sacristan called Gabriel (Shet) Fernandes and resided here permanently. The name of the priest is said to be not known. It also says that the newly built church was demolished by Tippu's men at the time of taking the Christians into captivity; it is said that in 1800, the foundation for a stronger and bigger church (3rd) was laid. The structure was completed and blessed in 1810 and a Goan priest, whose name is not known, resided permanently in Kirem.<sup>4</sup>

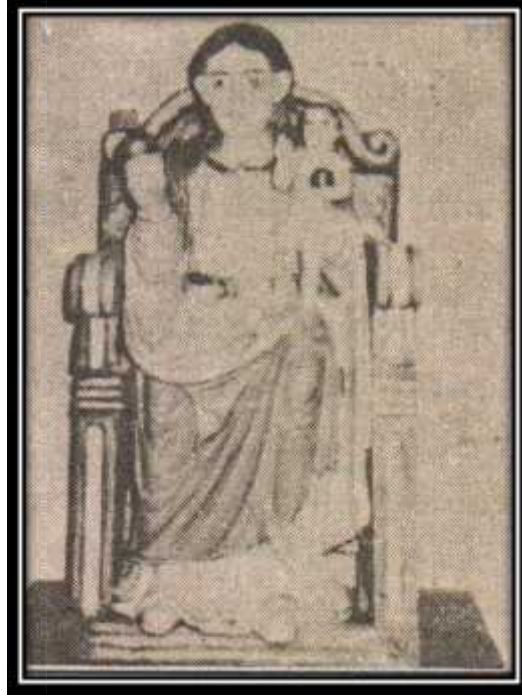


**Our Lady of Remedies Church, Nerul, Goa**

This oral tradition gained credibility among the parishioners, in the absence of any historical evidence. In fact, even now, persons who are in their eighties say, that they can recall the history of the parish, as told by their forefathers, only from the time of the second Anglo-Mysore War (1784} i.e. from the time of the captivity of Christians.

---

<sup>4</sup> Fr D'Souza, Abundius, The History of Kirem Parish, (Manuscript).



### **An ancient wooden statue of Our Lady of Remedies in Gundibala, Karwar**

The origin of Kirem parish is shrouded in the mist of obscurity. But we have here and there some historical glimpses, pointing out to the origin of the parish. Among such materials we have a palm leaf manuscript which states that in 1730 A. D. Chennaraya Samantha, a feudatory of the Nayaks of Keladi and the then Chief of Mulky, at the request of the Christians of this area, permitted the sale of land at Kadukambala of Aikala village for the construction of a church for Santa-Maria.<sup>5</sup> The Text of the palm leaf runs thus in Kannada.

### **Thalegariyallina Pata**

*Sadharna somvathsarada nija jeesta shuddha 5 rallu mulike Channaraya savantharu mulikeyallu iruva Thalipadiyu igaraji santha Mari Devarige baresikotta bhoomi cheetina kramventhendare Aikala gramadalu Anthannana Deuannana vargada paduva kallugudde thudiyalu kadu kambala emba stalauannu praku kiristhana Devuga embauadu gaidu baruthiddalli a sthala ondu igaraji kattauua bagge appane palisabekendu ee seeme kiristhanaru helikonda sambadha a sthalauannu igaraji kattuuudakke kanike thegedukondu kotteuu. A sthalakke mane Talipadi hesarallu varga baresikondu anubhavisabahudu. Adara thagginallu hali thotada volage devudagaidu behagaddege bithuva beja 6 aru mulka sthalakke madisikotta sisthe Aikala gramadallu Batnagramada beelininda ee samuathsaradallu nastadinda sagu barada shisthu:shta gana varada pagudi kanike dasoha munthagi gadyana I ubayam go. 2 eradu varahauannu kala kalanka pratiyallu rasthu kattuvagge kattu guttigeyagi kottu ee sthaladalli igaraji hattikondu anubhavisikondu bahadendu baresikotta bhoomi sthalada cheetu. Channarayaru.<sup>6</sup>*

<sup>5</sup> Madhav, Vasanth: History of Christianity in Canara Vol. I & II, New Delhi.

<sup>6</sup> Palm leaf read by Shri G.G. Manjunathan, Shri Manjappa Shetty, Manasagangothri, Mysore-6



It is said that on the acquisition of land, a shed with thatched roof was erected to serve as a church. Christians from Kinnigoli, Bolakunje, Niddodi, Neerude, Bola (Kelmbet), Mundkur and from parts of Belman and Padubidri used to come to this church on foot to fulfil their spiritual needs.

The next historical reference we come across is in the book "History of Christianity in Canara" by Mr Severine Silva wherein it is stated "Fr Jose Francisco Alvares of Margao was made Vicar of Milagres in Mangalore and by a provision of 5th October 1759, he was transferred to Quirem where he remained till 1761." A footnote in the book says that he was then transferred to Raia in Goa (1761-1762).

Mr Silva also refers to an old inscription of mid 18th century, "wherein it is narrated that the Mission of Canara was divided into 4 Varas, one of which was Mulky comprising of the churches of N. S. de Conceisao at Mulky, N. S. de Saude at Shirva, N. S. de Remedios of Quirem and San Lorenzo at Karkal.<sup>7</sup>

It is evident from the above that the Parish of Kirem was in existence in mid 18th century.

History tells us that when Tippu Sultan led the christians into captivity to Srirangapattanam (near Mysore) on the fateful night of Ash Wednesday (24th Feb.) of 1784, churches were destroyed, properties of churches and Christians were confiscated-etc, and that many were forcibly converted to Islam. When Tippu realised around 1789, that the persecution of christians had an adverse effect on his political survival (the exodus of fugitive christians to the neighbouring kingdoms turned other rulers hostile to Tippu and the British too hardened their stance against Tippu) he invited around 1792, the fugitive christians to his kingdom with the promise of rebuilding their churches and restoring their properties at his cost. But the christians doubted the intentions of the Muslim ruler. Hence it appears to be unlikely that the Parish of Kirem was established in 1794 as mentioned in the diocesan directory of Mangalore, when there was no safety for the life and property of the christians. Further, in the light of what has been narrated above, we can conclude that the parish of Kirem might have been established between 1730 (purchase of land for the church) and 1759 when Fr Alvares came and stayed here for more than two years. Perhaps the Parish had its origin around 1740.<sup>8</sup>

We are in the dark regarding the period from Fr Alvares's departure from Kirem to Raia of Margao in 1761 to the period of the captivity. We have no records to reconstruct the history of the period.

## **Captivity and Kirem Parish:**

Oral tradition and recorded history tell us that many christians of Kirem Parish were taken captives to Srirangapattanam by Tippu in 1784 and that the Kirem church was demolished. When a priest called "Fr Paulinus visited Kirem in 1794, he found the church in ruins?"<sup>9</sup>

It is narrated that when the parishioners of Kirem were being taken into captivity, a boy of Saldanha family was hidden by a Bunt family of Shetties. The boy was looked after by the Bunts as a member of their own family. Even gold rings were put on his ear lobes and he was called Shetty. Later, when the family members of the boy returned from captivity, the boy was restored to his family by the Bunts. The boy's descendants came to be called

---

<sup>7</sup> Silva, Severine, History of Christianity in Canara, Vol. I, p. 79

<sup>8</sup> Ibid. Vol I, p. 107

<sup>9</sup> Directory Diocese of Mangalore, p. 76

Shetties or Shet. There are christians in Kirem Parish who are called by the surname Shet even to this day.<sup>10</sup>

A noteworthy custom in Kirem Parish dating back to the period of captivity of Christians ought to be mentioned here. It is said that when the Christians of Kirem were taken captives, some of Tippu's men ordered the local Hindus to dismantle the building of Kirem church and transport its tiles, timber and even stories of the walls to Ghazni (Mulky) to build a palatial house for a < prominent muslim there. Accordingly, tiles and timber were carried to Ghazni. But the Patel of Talipady village who was a Bunt and a person of importance, and a few other prominent Bunts secretly instructed the men involved in the dismantling of the church to break the stones deliberately while detaching them from the walls. Then they reported the matter to muslims and said that the stones of the church wall couldn't be detached without breaking them. This manipulation was done to save the Hindus from the burden of carrying the stones to Ghazni, which is 10 kms. away from Kirem, and also to save the stone structure of the church. The walls of the church were thus left standing, and the re-roofing of the church, (first a thatched one, and later a tiled one), was done after the return of the christians from the captivity. As a mark of gratitude towards the Bunts for saving the stone structure of the church, even to this day, on the day of Kirem parish feast candles of honour, betel leaves, areca-nuts and a bunch of plantains are given to the Bunt families.<sup>11</sup> They receive them with dignity and pride.

A story narrating the re-roofing of the church in 1810 says that the local Christians of Kirem deputed one Mr Miranda to approach the Collector in Mangalore with an appeal to allot the required timber for re-roofing the church. When Miranda went to the Collector with the appeal and with two citrons as gifts to him, the butler of the Collector, asked Miranda to keep the citrons on the table there, and taking the appeal inside, marked the seal of approval of the Collector and sent him back. Miranda joyfully showed the sanction order to the Patel of the village, who was not well-versed with English but seeing the seal of the Collector released the government stock of timber, which was piled up for some other purpose. The fraud of the butler came to light later, when the government officials noticed that a sizeable quantity of timber was missing from the pile and ordered an inquiry into the matter. Miranda, realizing the seriousness of the matter rushed at, once to the Collector in Mangalore, and on obtaining a promise of pardon from him, narrated the story of obtaining the Collector's sanction order. The Collector was amused to see the cunningness of his butler and the good faith of Miranda. The enquiry then was quashed. Miranda returned home jubilantly.<sup>12</sup>

The re-roofed church of Kirem was also used for sometime by the Christians of Mulky, as their church was demolished by Tippu's men and was not re-erected by then. But the Christians of Mulky kept aloof from Kirem parishioners, as they had their own priest, mass, parish registers, etc. Thus an abnormal arrangement of parish within the parish was created, which gave rise to some frictions, and compelled the Christians of Mulky to build a church of their own at Kinnigoly.<sup>13</sup>

---

<sup>10</sup> Silva, Severine, History of Christianity in Canara, Vol. I, p. 123

<sup>11</sup> Silva, Severine, History of Christianity in Canara, Vol. I, p. 146

<sup>12</sup> J. Moore, SJ, the History of the Diocese of Mangalore, 1905, p. 256

<sup>13</sup> J. Moore, SJ, the History of the Diocese of Mangalore, 1905, p. 256. At this time, Rev. Fr. Nolasco Baretto was the Parish Priest of Kinnigoly Church. He was the brother of Rev. Fr. Narcissus Piadade Baretto who was the Parish Priest of Kirem (1806 – 1812). There two Goan brother priests were attached to each other and wanted to be close to each other. The newly built Kinnigoly Church was placed under an interdict by the Archbishop of Goa, for changing the site of the Church

Apart from the events narrated above, we have hardly any historical information of 18th century relating to Kirem parish.

Coming to the history of 19th century, we have a list of parish priests of Kirem as given by Rev. Moore S.J. in his book 'The History of the Diocese of Mangalore.' The list is 'given at the end of this article.

### **Goan Schism of 1837 and Kirem Parish:**

The occurrence of the Goan schism of 1837 was due to the double jurisdictions of Portuguese Padroado and Propagation of Faith (Propaganda Fide) of Rome on churches in Canara. It had its impact on Kirem Parish.<sup>14</sup>

Padroado means protectorate. In the 16th century the Pope gave to the Crown of Portugal the monopoly of the patronage of Missions in India. Accordingly, the Portuguese got the right to send missionaries, to establish bishoprics (dioceses) and the right to present candidates for bishoprics and benefices. Granting of such powers to the Portuguese kings by the Pope was justified because the Pope was not able to send missionaries to India due to the difficulties in navigation. Besides, the church in India needed some royal protection against the attacks of pagans and heretics.

In 1836, the queen of Portugal, whose legitimacy to the throne was in question, nominated Rev. Antonio Feliciano de Santa Rita Carvalho as the Arch-bishop elect of Goa, the See having been vacant. Carvalho's appointment was not approved by the Pope, because of the internal rivalry in the Royal family to the Crown of Portugal at that time. Yet Carvalho came to Goa and assumed the office of the Archbishop. The then Vicar Capitular of Goa, abdicated the charge of the diocese in favour of Carvalho, though he was not bound to do so legally, out of respect for the Crown of Portugal.

Great confusion arose in the minds of the clergy and the laity both in Goa and Canara, over the legitimacy of the bishopric of Carvalho. Some accepted his authority and adhered to the Padroado of Portugal, whereas others rejected it and showing allegiance to Propaganda (Rome) came under the jurisdiction of the Verapoly Bishop (in Kerala). Christians at Kallianpur and Shirva were split into two groups. This happened also in Kirem.

At this time (1837) there was a Goan priest in Kirem, Fr Joachim E. Mark da Costa, who owed allegiance to Archbishop Carvalho and thereby remained under Padroado, whereas most of the Kirem Parishioners refused to accept- the jurisdiction of Bishop Carvalho and locally, of their parish priest Da Costa and thereby went over to the Propaganda (Verapoly), We have a lengthy letter dated 20th February 1857, of Fr Da Costa, written to Archbishop Carvalho of Goa, wherein he calls the supporters of Propaganda as wolves who are out to destroy him and try to take over Kirem church. He mentions in the letter that the dispute of jurisdiction over Kirem Parish was in the court in Mangalore, etc., and requests the Archbishop of Goa to send him a successor as he is worn out due to this struggle.<sup>15</sup> Fr Da Costa died and was buried at Kirem but he is labelled as schismatic due to his refusal to go over to Verapoly.

---

building from Mulky to Kinnigoly without the prior permission of the Archbishop. The interdict was revoked later on, on certain condition.

<sup>14</sup> The beginning of Padroado dates back to the times of Pope Leo X (during 1514-16) whereas Propaganda Fide was established by Pope Gregory XVth on 22nd June 1622 by the Bull "Inscrutibile Divinae providentiae."

<sup>15</sup> JNO Godinho The Padroado of Portugal in the Orient. (1454-1860) 1924, Bombay.

The problem of Padroado- Propaganda was solved by the Concordat of 1857 between the Holy See and the King of Portugal. As per this concordat, the Kirem Parish in 1863 was brought under Padroado, i.e. Goa, which by this time had a Bishop approved by Rome.<sup>16</sup>

We are again in the dark, regarding the history of Kirem Parish in the second half of 19th century. Though we have the list of the Parish Priests of Kirem, hardly anything is known about the events of this period. Two Goan Vicar Generals viz. Fr Avelino Jose Mark Baretto (1876-1880) and Fr Joseph Lucas dos Reis (1880-1887) . resided at Kirem, and served' Kirem as its Parish Priests.

With the dawning of the twentieth century, we have some reliable information on the history of the Parish.

### **Rev. Fr Aloysius John D'Souza (1903-08), a Devout Priest**



### **Rev. Fr Aloysius John D'Souza**

He was the first Mangalorean Parish Priest at Kirem, the earlier being Goans. Fr A. J. D'Souza was a great devotee of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and of Our Lady of the Rosary. He spread these devotions in the Parish with: great zeal and enthusiasm. He christened the local Parish school as Pompeii Elementary School (in 1903). He had a nice horse to reach the distant places of the parish for the spiritual needs of the people.

---

<sup>16</sup> <sup>16</sup> Silva, Severine, History of Christianity in Canara, Vol. I, p. 196



**Rev. Fr Salvador D'Souza (1908-14), a dynamic priest**



**Rev. Fr Salvadore D'Souza**

Fr A. J. D'Souza was succeeded by Fr Salvador D'Souza. Fr Salvador upgraded the elementary school by opening Std. IV, V, VI and VII classes. He built the new Pompeii Higher Elementary school building and also the presbytery of the church which served its purpose till 1995. He also built the Paladka church as an outstation. He was transferred to Paladka church as its founder Parish Priest.

**Rev. Fr Emmanuel M. Rebello (1914-37), a zealous priest**



**Rev. Fr Immanuel M. Rebello**

Fr Emmanuel M. Rebello came to Kirem in 1914 and spent 23 fruitful years in Kirem as its Parish Priest. He was short and sturdy in stature.

He was a priest of eminent zeal. During his tenure he improved the Pompeii Higher Primary school and started a new Elementary school at Elinje-Patte. He also started two substations (chapels) one at Balakunje and the other at Niddodi. He was transferred in 1937 to Pezar as its Parish Priest and Vicar Forane.

**Rev. Fr George Menezes D.D. (1937-51), the architect of the present Church edifice**



**Rev.Fr George Menezes**

Fr George was popularly known as D. D. Menezes because he had a doctorate in Divinity a rare distinction in those days. His term as parish priest is called the golden age in the history of Kirem Parish. During the 14 years of his regime, he did many memorable works. He built the present magnificent (4th) church of Kirem which was blessed in 1943. It was he who with great difficulties obtained permission from the government of Madras and started the Pompeii High School of Kirem Parish in 1945 which is renowned for its academic excellence. The Elinje Higher Primary school, which was owned and managed by some local people was taken over by Fr Menezes after skillful negotiations. Thereafter this Hr. Primary School at Elinje, under the Management of the Catholic Board of Education - Mangalore and the correspondent of Fr Menezes, made steady progress.

Fr Menezes spared no efforts to improve the spiritual tone of Kirem Parish. Retreats, devotions and the administration of sacraments were duly taken care of. Owing to stress and strain, his health deteriorated. His ill health forced him to relinquish the charge of the Parish in 1951 and to go on leave for treatment. He was then appointed the Parish Priest of Niddodi Church. He passed away on 8th February 1954 due to a massive cardiac arrest and his mortal remains were brought to Kirem and laid to rest in the church built by him.

**Rev. Fr P. D. G. Rego (1951-55)**



**Rev. Fr P. D. G. Rego**

Fr P. D. G. Rego took charge of Kirem Parish as its Parish priest on 17th June 1951. Though his tenure of office was only for four years, he carried out some important works at Kirem. He affixed glass shutters to all the window frames of the church. He also constructed the two side altars in the church which raised a controversy between the diocesan authority and Fr Rego. He was transferred to Paladka church in 1955 where he remained till 1967.

**Rev. Fr Basil A. D'Souza (1955-69), an academician par excellence**



**Rev. Fr Basil A. D'Souza**



Fr Basil A. D'Souza spent 14 years of priestly life at Kirem as its Parish Priest and the headmaster of Pompeii High School. His ministry at Kirem was quite eventful.

He renovated the church building by mobilising local resources. The flooring of the church with bricks, and the white washing and painting of the entire church were done. He built the magnificent belfry of the church and installed on it the three huge sonorous bells imported by him. He invited the Bethany Sisters to Kirem parish and established their convent here.

Fr Basil was a great devotee of the Blessed Virgin Mary and a man of prayer and austerity. He improved the spiritual life of the parishioners.

Fr Basil was an academician too. He was nicknamed as Shakespeare for his knowledge of English and love for the language. As a headmaster and educationist he strove for the all round development of students and the institution. He extended the high school building to accommodate the growing number of students. He upgraded the high school into the Junior college. It was during his headmastership that Mr Ambrose D'Souza a student of Pompeii P. U. College secured the first rank in S.S.L.C. Public Examinations of March 1960.

### **Rev. Fr Abundius F. D'Souza (1969-82), a Silent Worker.**



**Rev. Fr Abundius F. D'Souza**

Fr Abundius succeeded Fr Basil A. D'Souza in 1969 and served the parish for 13 years. He was calm and quiet by nature. He was an unostentatious worker. He built the present strong and spacious building of Pompeii Higher Primary School near the church. He also acquired the land in front of the church and enclosed the huge church compound with a strong wall of laterite stones.

. But for Fr Abundius, the church compound would not have been what it is today.

To make the parish church self-sufficient Fr Abundius converted the land in the rear side of the presbytery into a coconut farm. He also installed a pumpset to irrigate the coconut garden.

To uplift the economically backward people he introduced Food for Work project in the parish. Both Catholics and non-Catholics of the locality greatly benefitted from this project.

Fr Abundius also added a new block to the Elinje Little Flower school. The school celebrated its Diamond Jubilee during his tenure as correspondent of the school.

Realising the importance of history in the life of an institution, Fr Abundius made a maiden attempt to write the history of Kirem parish by contacting the elderly people in the parish. His manuscript is the only recorded history found in the archives of Kirem parish church.

Fr Abundius, by his polite and humane ways, endeared himself to his flock. His tenure was a period of harmonious relationship between the pastor and the flock.

### **Rev. Fr Aloysius Alvares (1969-81) A Dedicated Teacher**



**Rev. Fr Aloysius Alvares**

Though not a Parish Priest of Kirem, the services of Fr Aloysius Alvares to the educational apostolate of the parish do find an honourable place in the history of Kirem Parish. He came to Kirem in 1969 as the Principal of Pompeii Pre-University College and served the institution in that capacity for 12 years. During his principalship Mr Valerian Peter Rodrigues secured the first rank in science in P.U.C. public examinations of October 1970. Initially, in addition to his responsibilities in the College, he rendered his services to the Parish as its assistant Parish Priest (1969-71).



On shifting his residence to the campus of Pompeii P. U. College, Fr Alvares dedicated himself to the all round development of the institution. He removed the wooden planks of the first floor of the high school block and replaced them with concrete slabs, at a cost of over a lakh of rupees. He then undertook the task of putting up a two storied science block. On completing it, he equipped the laboratories with modern equipment. To accommodate the increasing number of students, he also put up another block of building on the western side of the existing college building. All these projects involved huge expenditure of several lakhs of rupees, which he collected by mobilising local resources and by his personal contacts with his friends and well wishers. Fr Alvares left Kirem in 1981 and thereafter retired from the teaching apostolate. He expired in the Church of St Lawrence-Attur, Karkal due to a fatal cardiac arrest while offering the Mass there on 28th December 1996.

### **Rev. Fr Bernard L. D'Souza (1982-83), a Dauntless Priest**



**Rev. Fr Bernard L. D'Souza**

Fr Bernard, strong and sturdy, both in mind and physique, was sent to Kirem for a specific task. Though he was the Parish Priest of Kirem just for a year, he spent 14 years (1981-95) in Kirem in the educational apostolate of the Parish. By residing in the Pompeii P. U. College campus, with his retired paternal uncle Fr Joseph D'Souza, Fr Bernard spent himself to build up the existing educational institutions and to start new ones. As the Principal of Pompeii P. U. College for 14 years, he extended the building of this college by the addition of several class rooms and an auditorium. The high school section of Pompeii P. U. College which till then was admitting only boys, was turned into a co-education school for the benefit of the local girls. He also set up a Computer centre with 25 computers and an efficient staff to impart the knowledge of computer science to all the PUC students and also to outsiders.

The specific task for which Fr Bernard was sent to Kirem was to fulfil the long-felt need of establishing a First Grade College for the youth of the Parish and of the vicinity.

Simultaneously while discharging his responsibilities, as the Principal of Pompeii P. U. College, he strove for the establishment of the First Grade College.

Problems were many. Obtaining government's permission to start the college, acquisition of land, putting up buildings, equipping them with furniture and other amenities such as electricity and water supply, levelling of play grounds, depositing the security amount with the government, payment of staff-salary, construction of staff-quarters and above all the financial constraints appeared to be insurmountable hurdles. But Fr Bernard was a match to all these. He achieved his goal within a record time, brought the new college under govt. grants and turned Kirem into a reputed centre of higher education. He retired from service in 1995 and left Kirem to take charge of Bijai Parish.

### **Rev. Fr Simon D'Souza (1983-84)**



**Rev. Fr Simon D'Souza**

Fr Simon was the parish priest of Kirem only for a year. Though the year he spent in Kirem appears to be an uneventful one, he looked after the spiritual needs of the people without any reservation. On account of his ill-health he had to leave Kirem within a year of his arrival.

## **Rev. Fr Victor Saldanha (1984-87)**



### **Rev. Fr Victor Saldanha**

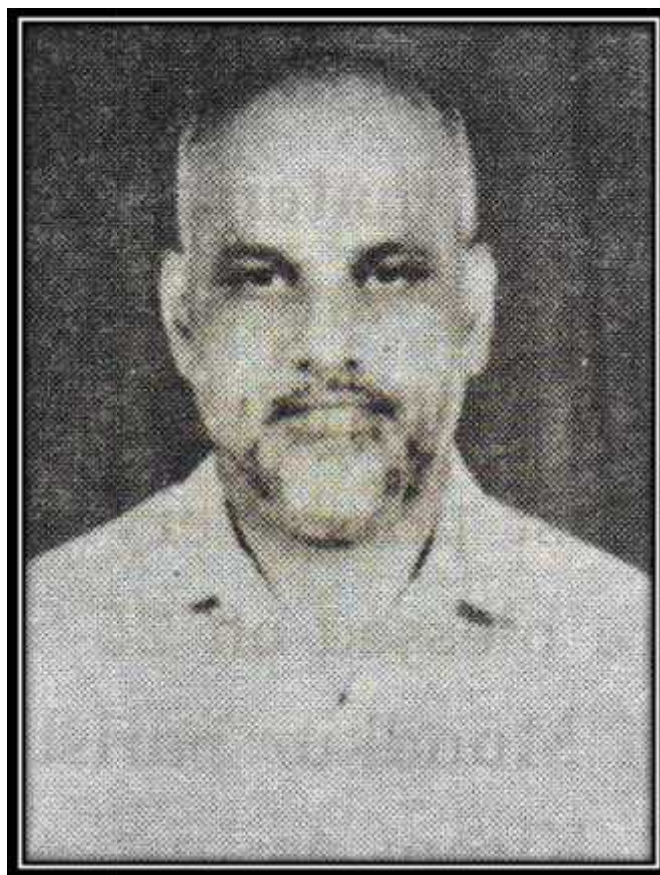
Fr Saldanha, who came from Bantwal parish, took charge of Kirem parish in early April 1984. During his comparatively short stay here, he executed a number of works. He repaired the entire roof of the church, restructured the side wings of the church, making their stability and appearance better. He painted the sanctuary and the altar, installed a new sound system in the church. He also rebuilt the dilapidated Pompeii Pry. School at Patte.

Fr Saldanha had an ambitious plan to buy a piece of land and put up a church at Mundkur. Though he was faced with many problems in this venture, he succeeded in purchasing land for the church. However, he could not build the church as he was transferred to Kallianpur church in 1987. He died at Kallianpur of a massive heart attack in 1991.

Fr Saldanha, while leaving Kirem on transfer to Kallianpur, handed over the charge of the parish on 30.5.1987 as per the direction of the Bishop to Rev. Fr John Alfred Barboza, the Principal of Pompeii College. Fr Barboza looked after the parish administration till the arrival of Fr Vincent Martis the new Parish Priest.



## **Rev. Fr Vincent Martis (1987-94) - A True Pastor**



**Rev. Fr Vincent Martis**

Fr Martis took charge of Kirem Parish on 1st July 1987. He was loved by the parishioners for his pastoral outlook in his dealings with them. Children were his favourites. Often he would organise picnics and outings for them. He would not allow any child to be deprived of education for lack of finances. He had a soft corner in his heart for the underprivileged of his parish. When the sick and invalid needed hospitalization and were unable to foot the heavy hospital bills for operations like open-heart surgeries, Fr Martis would mobilise the parish to come to the help of hapless patients in the hour of their need. His concern and solicitude for the poor people of the parish moved him to start (1) the revolving housing fund (2) medical relief fund and (3) the poor students' educational relief fund for the benefit of Kirem parishioners.

Fr Martis bought an organ for the church to encourage the choir of the church. Seeing the erratic power supply, he also bought a big generator for the church.

Fr Martis animated the parish with many training programmes. With a view of increasing the revenue of parish church, he evinced great interest in the cultivation of the coconut garden.

The greatest achievement of Fr Martis, in material terms, is the construction of an artistic, spacious and well ventilated church building and a modest presbytery at Mundkur. These were blessed on 25-5-1994. The creation of Mundkur parish, as a filial Parish of Kirem as just awaiting the nod of the diocesan authorities.

Fr Martis, handing over the charge of Kirem Parish to his successor Fr Valerian Pinto, went on transfer to Trasi Parish in early June 1994.

## **Rev. Fr Valerian Pinto (1994 -2001 )**



**Rev. Fr Valerian Pinto**

Fr Valerian Pinto came from Nakre Parish and assumed the charge of Kirem parish on 6th June 1994.

He encouraged an active and meaningful participation of the faithful in the mass and thus revitalized the liturgy in the church. Regular Sunday masses were arranged in the newly built Mundkur Church. He also animated the Parish Pastoral Council and the various parish associations. Through regular ward wise gatherings and prayer meetings, the Basic Christian Communities, were made more active.

The bicentenary of the establishment of Kirem parish was celebrated in a meaningful and memorable way during his tenure. He planned a spiritual rejuvenation of the parish on this occasion and undertook a number of like charismatic retreats, precession of the picture of the Blessed Virgin Mary in procession to every house, etc.

As the major projects of bicentenary jubilee celebrations, the church building was beautified and renovated, a new presbytery and a big parish hall were built.

He was ably supported by Frs John Alfred Barboza, the principal of Pompeii College and Lawrence Rodrigues, the Principal of Pompeii P.U. College.

In 2001 he was transferred to Shirva as a Parish priest.



**Rev. Fr Charles Noronha (2001-2008), a Silent Priest:**



**Rev. Fr Charles Noronha**

Fr Charles came to Kirem Parish as a parish priest in 2001, May. He strengthened the spiritual life of the people. During his seven years of priestly service in Kirem, he not only paid attention to the spiritual life of the parishioners but also helped the poor students to continue their education. He saw the urgent needs of the P.U. College and built a new science block and a new auditorium. He also laid foundation stone for the Girls Hostel in the College. He paid attention to the urgent needs of the college. He was transferred to Udyavar parish in 2008..

**Rev. Fr Paul Pinto (2008-2015):**



**Rev. Fr Paul Pinto**

Fr Paul Pinto is well remembered by the parishioners of Kirem for his multifaceted personality. His focussed on strengthening the Basic Christian communities in Kirem. He enthused the parishioners and regular meetings were conducted in the wards. He himself

was attending the meetings personally. He is known for his punctuality and discipline. He also organized music classes for those children who are interested in playing keyboard. As a result, today many children play key boards during Sunday masses. He renovated the church: he installed new kneelers, installed a new sound system, beautified the cemetery, laid interlocks in the compound beautified teh garden and renovated the parish hall, etc.

He started M. Com., a postgraduate course in the College. He built a new St John Paul II P.G. Block. A new library hall was added to the college. He also started the BCA course. However, the course could not be continued due to lack of students. On June 7, 2015 he was transferred to Gurpur church.

**Rev. Fr Victor D’Mello (June 6, 2015- ):**



**Rev. Fr Victor D’Mello**

Fr. Victor D’Mello assumed the charge of Parish priest on 6 June 2015. He came from Urwa parish.

The seed of Kirem Parish which was sown like a mustard seed about two centuries ago, has now become a well grown tree. Many, especially the priests, have watered and nurtured this tree. Above all, the life of the tree is sustained by its Patron, viz, our Lady of Remedies.

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

1. J. Moore S. J. (Ed) : History of the diocese of Mangalore, 1905.
2. Silva Severine Karwar, 1958.
3. Vasanth Madhav New Delhi. History of Christianity in Canara Vol. I & II, The religions in Coastal Karnataka 1985.
4. Vasanth Madhav : The Portuguese, the Christians and the rulers of Karnataka (1500-1763), A P. Quarterly journal of the Mythic Society
5. JNO Godinho The Padroado of Portugal in the Orient. (1454-1860) 1924, Bombay.
6. Gleanings - Souvenir of Our Lady of Remedies Parish - Nerul, Goa - 1987
7. The Directory of the diocese of Mangalore.
8. D'Souza AL.P. - History of the Catholic Community of South Canara, Mangalore, 1987.
9. Fr D'Souza Abundius : The History of Kirem Parish - (Manuscript)
10. The Parish Charge Register - Kirem Church archives
11. Palm leaf (Manuscript) - Kirem Church Archives.
12. Fr Pinto Pius Fidelis - History of Christianity under Vijayanagar and Nayaks of Keladi (1500-1763 AD.), Appendix, unpublished thesis.

**Acknowledgement:** *The writer of this article is grateful to Rev. Dr Alphonsus D'Souza S. J., Rev. Fr Pius F. Pinto and Rev. Fr Ronald Cutinha, presently Ph.D. research scholars of Mysore University, for making available the material and for accompanying him on field trips to some of the historical places mentioned in the article The Saga of Kirem Parish.*

## List of the Parish Priests in Kirem

	<b>From</b>	<b>To</b>	<b>Parish Priest</b>
1	1759	1761	Rev. Fr .Jose Francisco Alvares
	1761	1805	Not Known
2	13-04-1806	1812	Rev. Fr Narcissus Piadade Baretto
3	12-07-1912	1818	Rev. Fr Camillo Maunel Salvadore D'Silva
4	01-02-1818	1822	Rev.Fr Canstantius de Misquita
5	14-04-1822	1823	Rev. Fr Joachim Vincent Marian Gomes
6	12-10-1923	1829	Rev. Fr Francis Xavier Suares
7	14-04-1829	1834	Rev. Fr Joseph Lawrence Vas
8	01-09-1934	1936	Rev. Fr Pascal Antony Parias
9	17-04-1936	1967	Rev. Fr Joachim Eleutherius Mark Da Costa (Schismatic –died at Kirem)
10	13-01-1867	1871	Rev. Fr Avelino Joao Marcel Baretto V.G.
11	Sept. 1871-1876		Rev. Fr Euphemian Fidelis de Espirito Sancto Costa
12	Sept. 1876	1880	Rev. Fr Avelino Joao Marcel Baretto V.G <sup>17</sup>
13	July 1880 - 1887		Rev. Fr Lucas dos Reis V.G. * <sup>17</sup>
14	17-02-1887	1903	Cajetan Philip Sebastian de Noronha
15	04-02-1903	1908	Rev. Fr Aloysius John D'Souza <sup>18</sup>
16	1908	1914	Rev. Fr Salvador D'Souza
17	1914	1937	Rev. Fr Emmanuel M. Rebello
18	02-10-1937	1951	Rev. Fr George Menezes D.D.
19	17-06-1951	1955	Rev. Fr P.D.G. Rego
20	12-04-1955	1969	Rev. Fr Basil A. D'Souza
21	18-05-1969	1982	Rev. Fr Abundius D'Souza
22	29-05-1982	1983	Rev. Fr Bernard L. D'Souza
23	14-05-1983	1984	Rev. Fr . Simon D'Souza
24	05-04-1984	1987	Rev. Fr Victor Saldanha
25	01-07-1987	1994	Rev. Fr Vincent Martis
26	06-06-1994	2001	Rev. Fr Valerian Pinto
27	2001	2008	Rev. Fr Charles Noronha
28	2008	2015	Rev. Fr Paul Pinto
29	06.06.2015		Rev. Fr Victor D'Mello

<sup>17</sup> Nos 12 and 13 above were the Goans Vicar Generals who resided at Kirem

<sup>18</sup> No 15 above was the first Mangalorean Parish Priest at Kirem; the earlier ones were Goans.

## Assistant Paris Priests in Kirem

	<b>From</b>	<b>To</b>	<b>Asst. Parish Priest</b>
1	C 1806		Fr Raphael Camil de Silva
2	C 1875		Fr Adolphus Joseph E.S. Rangel
3	1880		Fr Joseph Peter de Conceicao Souza
4	09-02-1915	14-02-1915	Msgr. Julian L.A . D'Souza
5	01-08--1923	31-05-1926	Fr Lawrence D'Souza
6	07-03-1929	04-06-1932	Fr Paul Farias
7	30-05-1932	07-07-1933	Fr Albert Nazareth
8	15-04-1934	16-05-1937	Fr William Rebello
9	23-05-1935	09-09-1944	Fr Raymond D'Cunha
10	01-05-1942	24-06-1946	Fr J.S. T. Rodrigues
11	21-04-1946	30-05-1949	Fr Abel Coelho
12	10-05-1949	01-01-1951	Fr Antony J. D'Souza
13	06-05-1951	09-04-1956	Fr Arthur C. D'Souza
14	09-04-1956	03-05-1959	Fr Joseph M. Lobo
15	03-05-1959	03-05-1963	Fr Norbert D'Souza
16	03-05-1963	04-05-1965	Fr Joseph N. Lobo
17	03-05-1963	03-05-1965	Fr Cyprian M. Lasrado
18	02-05-1965	15-04-1966	Fr Albert Menezes
19	15-04-1966	10-05-1969	Fr Joe Morris Shinoy
20	10-05-1969	01-05-1971	Fr Aloysius Alvares
21	24-04-1971	09-05-1972	Fr Victor Castelino
22	01-06-1972	29-11-1974	Fr John Noronha
23	30-11-1974	09-05-1977	Fr Vincent Menezes
24	16-05-1977	29-04-1980	Fr Mark Veigas
25	22-05-0980	13-05-1981	Fr Jonh Mendonca
26	15-05-1981	12-05-1983	Fr Vincent Monteiro
27	06-06-1984	20-051985	Fr John Barboza
28	20-05-1985	02-06-1986	Fr Richard Lasrado
29	01-06-1992	03-06-1994	Fr Oswald Monteiro