



LOOKING BACK
to our
50 YEARS OF
Partnership
WITH
Gratitude



St. Katharina Parish - Aachen Forst, Germany
Church of Immaculate Heart of Mary
Kancheepuram, India



LOOKING BACK TO OUR 50 YEARS OF PARTNERSHIP WITH GRATITUDE

'O GIVE THANKS TO THE LORD FOR HE IS GOOD; YES, ETERNAL IS HIS LOVE'

As this year marks the Golden Jubilee of the partnership between St. Katharina Parish, Aachen Forst, Germany and the Church of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, Kancheepuram, Tamil Nadu, India, it is with immense joy and profound gratitude I write this record to show as to how this partnership has grown from strength to strength.

The late Arch-bishop of Mylapore, His Excellency Dom E. M. De Guerreiro sometime in 1940 – 1942 felt keenly the desirability of having a mission/Parish in the world famous Hindu Pilgrimage Centre namely, Kancheepuram which is one of the ancient civilizations and cultures of the Pallavas.

A plot of land was purchased at Damalwar Street and a plan was made to build a Church in honour of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

The late Rev. Fr. Thamby was appointed as Parish Priest and was given the responsibility of building the Church. As the Church saw its completion in the year 1949, it was blessed open by Bishop Guerreiro.

The Arch-bishop of Madras- Mylapore His Grace Dr. Louis Mathias had been inviting the Oblates of Mary Immaculate from Sri Lanka since 1964 into the Diocese but somehow the plan did not materialize in his time.

In 1967 the Oblates accepted the invitation of Arch-bishop His Grace R. Arulappa and came to India as missionaries. The Arch-bishop with the consent of the two Oblate missionaries, entrusted Kancheepuram Parish to the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate.

On 1st July 1968 the two Oblate missionaries from Sri Lanka namely, Frs. Emmanuel Mariampillai, OMI and Philip Stanislaus, OMI took charge of Kancheepuram Parish officially.

In 1970 Fr. Emmanuel Mariampillai, OMI with his prophetic vision along with Fr. Lucien Schmitt, OMI former Provincial of Sri Lanka initiated the partnership programme between St. Katharina Parish, Aachen Forst, Germany and the Church of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, Kancheepuram, Tamil Nadu India. This humble beginning gradually started to grow from strength to strength.

In 1971 Fr. Emmanuel Mariampillai, OMI having met late Mother Teresa, invited her Missionaries of Charity Sisters to do ministry in Kancheepuram Parish, among the poorest of the poor.

In 1976 with assistance from Aachen Forst, the Oblates opened up a house at Muthuvedu a substation of Kancheepuram Parish to accommodate Sisters of Franciscan Missionaries of Mary to involve in the ministry of teaching and to help school drop outs with Adult Education.

From 1976 - 1996 Oblates namely Fathers Philip Stanislaus, Arul Raj, Amal Raj, Joseph Vaz, Pathinathan, and Pragasam who worked in Kancheepuram Parish continued this partnership and helped people to grow in their faith and socio-pastoral life.

In 1996 the old Parish Church of Kancheepuram was given a face lift with assistance from St. Katharina Parish under the leadership of Fr. Anthony Jeevaratnam, OMI

On 25th June 2001 Aachen Forst Kancheepuram Parish Community Hall ((AKP Community Hall)) was blessed open under the leadership of Fathers Cyril Joseph, OMI and M. Alexander, OMI. We remember with gratitude all the members of St. Katharina Parish. This community hall is very practical and it is being used for multipurpose. Many people benefit by this project. We really appreciate the donors.

On 1st January 2003 BRIGITTE'S HOME FOR CHILDREN at Vaiyavoor was opened with assistance from St. Katharina Parish under the leadership of Fr. M. Alexander, OMI. It is functioning well with about 15 children and two teachers. This is a very good undertaking where children are molded to become responsible citizens in the future.

On 21st May 2003 St. Mary's Primary School new building at Muthuvedu was blessed open under the leadership of Fr. M. Alexander, OMI. With gratitude we remember all those who associated with PMK and all the members of St. Katharina Parish. Now there are two full time teachers with about fifty children.

On 4th December 2005 St. Joseph's Church at collectorate Kancheepuram was consecrated and blessed open under the leadership of Fathers Loorthusamy, OMI and David Raj, OMI. With gratitude we remember all the members of St. Katharina Parish.

In 2007 the present presbytery of the Church of Immaculate Heart of Mary was declared open with assistance from St. Katharina parish under the leadership of late Fr. Loorthusamy, OMI

In 2009 during Fr. Chinnappan Santhappan's tenure as pastor of Kancheepuram, the Parish Church underwent some renovation and a face lift was given.

On 15th August 2014 a brand new Parish Church of Kancheepuram was consecrated and opened with assistance from St. Katharina Parish under the leadership of Fr. S. Vincent, OMI. The parishioners of Kancheepuram owe a great debt of gratitude to everyone associated with St. Katharina Parish.

In the course of time, Kancheepuram Parish has given birth to two more parishes namely St. Anthony's Church at Vippedu became an Independent Parish in 2007 and St. Joseph's Church, Collectorate, Kancheepuram became an Independent Parish in 2019, making Muthuvedu village a sub-station of it. This is a sure sign of grace, growth and development.

During Fr. Simeon's tenure as Parish Priest he renovated the AKP Hall, and to mark the Golden Jubilee of the Oblates presence in India he constructed a grotto to our Lady of Lourdes and the Adoration Chapel. He also renovated St. Anthony's Chapel at Enathur village.

At this point of time we would like to affirm and acknowledge the very significant role you, the parishioners, members of Parish Council, members of Mission Committee and different Pastors of St. Katharina Parish have played in our growth by your generosity, good will and graciousness. We really appreciate, acknowledge, and affirm your selfless involvement. You are like the mustard seed or the yeast Jesus mentions in the Gospel of Mathew (13/31,32) totally unassuming without looking for publicity. I wish to place on record, from my own personal experience, your total trust and confidence in the Oblates over here.

This partnership has been of great help not only to build schools and churches but also it has provided substantial resources to put up houses for the poorest of the poor. For instance, in 2020 Mr. Shankar was given a reasonable amount to finish constructing his house, which was incomplete for long time due to lack of funds. And Mr. Johnson was given a reasonable amount to start constructing his dream house. We make sure that people do not totally depend on us but they are helped to stand on their own legs.

Another commendable Mission/Apostolate/Service this partnership enables, is the human formation of poor children. School/College/Professional Institute fees are partially paid for poor students. They are followed up, challenged and motivated to complete their course of study, so that employment opportunities could be possible in view of having a bright future. We constantly drive home the message of the Gospel "You received this as a gift so give it as a gift" (Matthew 10/8). In this way we form them to become credible, authentic and committed persons.

As we celebrate the Golden Jubilee of our partnership, we, the Oblates and the parishioners of Kancheepuram feel that we have been blessed by God abundantly through this partnership and we owe a great sense of gratitude to God and to all the members of St. Katharina Parish. We pray and hope that this partnership would continue for many more years for the Glory of God and for the integral growth of our people.

50 YEARS OF
Partnership

We admire, appreciate
& affirm your love
and concern towards us



Children from Brigitte's Home
with our guests.



Beneficiaries of our Sponsorship
Program with Ms. Brigitte.



Parish youth with Fr. Terliesner, OMI.



Sisters of Mother Teresa serving
food to our guests



Aachen Forst & Kancheepuram
Partnership Function Hall.



Oblates at their residence.

Our Heartfelt Thanks & Prayerful Wishes
Priests, Religious & Parishioners of Kancheepuram Parish

