

Milagres Church, Mangalore

Written by W.J.Pais

CHURCH OF OUR LADY OF MIRACLES

Milagres, Mangalore - 575 001
D.K. District

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LOCATION : This church is situated in the heart of Mangalore city and ½ km away from the Diocesan Headquarters. The church is surrounded by the Cathedral, Bejai, Bendore, Valencia, Jeppu and Cascia parishes.



HISTORY :

This church popularly known as Milagres church is one of the ancient churches of the diocese of Mangalore. It has been rebuilt a number of times. The present church is the fifth one. The church was built by the Vicar Apostolic, Rev. Thomas de Castro in the year 1680 on the Inam land gifted by Queen Chennama and the Bednore King at the site of the present cemetery. Fr Lawrence Pinto, a Mangalorean priest secured again the land resumed by the Queen at a later date, from King Somashekar II in 1715. His nephew Fr Antony Pinto built a new church on the site of the present one in 1756 as the earlier church was too old. On February 24, 1784, Ash Wednesday, the soldiers of Tippu Sultan destroyed the Milagres church, the stones of which were used by Tippu to erect the Idgah on Light House Hill, and took many Catholics as captives to Srirangapattana. Amongst those who returned from the captivity was Mr Lawrence Bello, a baker to the Europeans at Mangalore, who built a chapel on the site of the present church to replace the destroyed church. Fr Jose Minguel Mendy served in this chapel as the parish priest.

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In 1811, Fr F.M. Mendez, the Vicar Vara laid the foundation for a spacious building. The parish priest received a contribution of Rs 600/- from the government with the help of Salvadore Pinto, brother-in-law of Marianne Monteiro and former Munshi under Tipu, and built a new church. 100 years later in 1911, the façade of the church collapsed, and it was decided to demolish the whole building and raise a new one.

Fr S. Frank Pereira erected the present magnificent church in 1911, with Fr Diamanti sj of the Jeppu Seminary as its architect. The spacious portico was added in 1956 by Fr Albert V. D'Souza, later the Archbishop of Calcutta. The main altar has the privileged status, Altare Privilegiatum.

Abbe Dubois (Frad Saib) is said to have brought the statues of St Anthony, St Joseph, and St Francis Xavier to India to be installed in the church at Cordel, which he had started. The construction work of at church being unfinished, the statues are believed to have been transported to Milagres to be installed there.

Fr M .P. Colaco, later Msgr, founded the miraculous shrine of St Anthony of Padua, the great Wonder Worker in 1898. Pope Leo XIII granted the privileged status to this Altar on January 22, 1902. Two feasts of the Saint on February 15 and June 13 are celebrated in the church.

Fr Pius Noronha started a school in 1849. It became a Middle School in 1907. It was upgraded to a High School in 1944 by Fr Francis Pinto and later as the P.U.College on 1982.

For more information on the history of the Mangalore diocese click [here](#)