CHAPTER I
LATIN MISSIONS IN KOTTAR

1.1 EARLY LATIN MISSIONS

In the 13th century Pope Innocent IV founded the first society of mission for the East, known as Society of Pilgrim for Christ (Societates Peregrinatium Pro Christo). It consisted of the Franciscans and Dominicans. The Latin missionaries arrived at Malabar much earlier than the Portuguese and the objectives of them were the propagation of Gospel and present Latin rite Catholism before the Travancore Christians, who had been converted by St. Thomas and pampered by Thomas of Cana. The most remarkable feature of the 13th century was that papacy wanted to promote the expansion of the church beyond the border of Christendom. The religious were organized into orders and congregations. They evolved in various forms in the church from the early centuries. St. Dominic (1170-1221) and St. Francis of Assisi (1182 – 1226) found their congregations in Europe. The Franciscans, a congregation founded by Francis of Assisi and legally approved in 1209, were the first missionaries who came to India. They did considerable work in Goa and Travancore and looked after the spiritual needs of the early converts. They soon expanded their missionary service to the local Indian people. John of Monte Carvino was a Latin missionary visited India in the early days. He was a Franciscan friar, who visited Quilon in AD 1291, a little earlier than Marcopolo, on his way to China. This prominent figure stayed at Malabar for a year and baptized a number of people into the Latin Catholic rite. Marcopolo the Venetian traveller’s visit to Quilon in 1293

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3 Ibid., p.13
referred the Chinese connection to Quilon, an early trade centre of South Travancore. According to Marco Polo, the Jews were already at Quilon and he speaks of Nestorian Christians in Malabar. At that time, the king of Quilon had diplomatic and commercial ties with the Chinese emperor, Kublai Khan who was responsible for sending the Venetian traveller to Quilon. The missionaries who came with Marco Polo did their apostolic work in China and Quilon. Jordanus, a Dominican friar, visited Quilon in the years between 1321 and 1324. He made his way by the trade routes to India. In his book “Mirabilia Descripta”, he described himself as Orlundum de Severaco of India’s major Episcopus Columbensen i.e, hailing as Severae Bishop of Quilon in the great Indies. Persecutions were always on their track in Travancore. In 1326, Andrew of Perusia, a Latin missionary speaks of a massacre in South India, that the Latin missionaries Nicholas of Banterra and Andrutius of Assisi were killed. In 1324, five Dominican Friars were dispersed for mission work in Kanara, Mysore, Malabar and Travancore. Jordanus was one of the five Dominican friars responded to the appeal of the Pope and was dispersed to Travancore. The service of the Dominican friars increased the conversions and in 1328 the number of converts in the East reached ten thousand.

1.1.1 John De Marignolli and the Christian Pillar

John de Marignolli, a Franciscan visited India on his way to China some times in 1347. He visited Quilon at Easter and stayed there for sixteen months. Quilon was a center of catholic mission in India and a very busy port, where the whole of pepper trade

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7 Yule, H., op. cit., p. 294.
8 Moraes, G.M., op. cit., p. 79.
9 Ibid.
10 Ibid., p. 98.
was concentrated\textsuperscript{11}. Before leaving India, Marignolli set up a pillar at Cape Comorin. He said that in India he erected a stone as a landmark and memorial in the corner of the world\textsuperscript{12}. It was a marble pillar with a stone cross upon it, intended to last till the world’s end. It had the Pope’s arm and his own thumb engraved upon it with inscription both in Indian and Latin characters. These holy monuments were consecrated and blessed in the presence of an infinite multitude of people. He was carrying it on the shoulders of the chiefs and later this monument was attributed to St. Thomas by the local people. Baldeaus, another missionary, reports that he visited the place and saw the pillar in 1622\textsuperscript{13}. Father Jordanus left for Rome to place before the Sovereign Pontiff John XXII the affairs of the Indian mission. He convinced the Pope the need of establishing a regular ecclesiastical government in India with a bishop as its head. The 197\textsuperscript{th} Pope, John XXII (1316 –1334) unhesitatingly offered the office to Friar Jordanus who was highly responsible for the Catholic Church in India\textsuperscript{14}. In 1328, bishop Jordanus went to Toulouse. He convened a General Order enlisted a large number of friars for his mission and returned to India. He found several houses of his order in this country and\textsuperscript{15} converted many people to the catholic faith and the Christian activities reached its zenith when Pope by his bull constituted Quilon as an Episcopal See\textsuperscript{16}. The Muslims could not bear to see these conversions, so they stoned him to death at Thana and unfortunately we do not know the year of his death. The bull of Pope Nicholas V dated 8\textsuperscript{th} January 1454 by which the Potuguese king Affanus IV gave extensive right to all the countries that might be discovered by them in Africa and India the right to undertake the work of conversion. The bull of Pope Nicholas V was confirmed by Pope Calitus III in 1456 and again by Pope

\begin{footnotes}
\item[13] \textit{Ibid.}
\item[14] \textit{Ibid.}, p.100.
\item[16] Monumental Vetricana Veterem Deocesia Columbens, Rome, 1328.
\end{footnotes}
Alexander on 5th May 1493 that the missionary work should continue in the countries and colonies of the Portuguese.\textsuperscript{17}

1.1.2 Mission – “O Estado Da India”

The Portuguese government was very eager to propagate Christianity while they held power in the East. They found colonies and encouraged their missionaries to spread the catholic faith throughout East and by this means an extensive christian population arose and rapidly spread in their colonies.\textsuperscript{18} “O Estado da India” was the name given by the Portuguese to all their possessions and trading ports between Safalo to Macao and from Cape of Good Hope to Japan. It was a commercial and maritime empire of the East which lasted for 450 years in a military and ecclesiastical mould.\textsuperscript{19} The Portuguese sea-faring was not only a matter of peaceable exploration and profitable commerce but it often involved in armed conflict with enemies at land and ashore.\textsuperscript{20} Every male Portuguese who went out to East did the service of the crown and church. It was a military and religious duty of a citizen compulsorily done in their colonies. The Portuguese soldiers liable for military service throughout their life until they died, married, deserted or incapacitated by women or diseases were called “Sol dados”. The laymen who married after reaching India were allowed to leave the royal service and settled down as citizens or traders were called “Casados”. They had to lead a religious life and were a model to the other people.\textsuperscript{21} The Portuguese were willing to join hands with any caste or community if they were willing to follow the catholic religion. They gave them moral support, military protection and financial help. They gave stipends to the clergy and other men who

\textsuperscript{17} Moraes, G.M., \textit{op.cit.}, pp.99-100.
\textsuperscript{18} Agur, C.M., \textit{Church History of Travancore}, Madras, 1903, p.23.
\textsuperscript{21} Boxer, C.R., \textit{op.cit.}, p.58.
were involved in the ecclesiastical service\textsuperscript{22}. The vicas (village leagues) of Travancore received a subsistence allowance from the royal treasury of Goa \textsuperscript{23}. Generally the clergy regulated the discipline of the church among the people. In the matters of civil disputes among christians, they often inflicted corporal punishment on the erring members of the folk\textsuperscript{24}. In those days, the Portuguese wanted to spread Latin and Portuguese languages among the local people. They started a vigorous campaign of Latinisation. The missionaries preached and administered baptism and other sacraments to the people in the Latin language\textsuperscript{25}. The Latin catholic community was a heterogeneous one and it was composed of St. Thomas Christians who embraced the Latin rite, the paravas or bharathas, nadars or sanars, vellalars, mukkuvas or arasas, parayas or sampavar, pulayas or cheramars, mudali etc\textsuperscript{26}. The arrival of Vascoda Gama to India was a strenuous effort of the king of Portugal by whom Christianity was promoted in India. In 1487, the king of Portugal dispatched two ambassadors to the East with instructions to reach India by land to obtain information with regard to a possible sea route. One of them Pedre de Govilham took ship from Arabia to Malabar and sent valuable information to the king\textsuperscript{27}. Acting on this, Vascoda Gama sailed from Lisbon harbour in four ships in 1497 as the head of the Portuguese fleet and landed at Kapad, a coastal village in Calicut on 9\textsuperscript{th} May 1498. There, he was quite surprised to see numerous churches not belonging to the Roman jurisdiction but having their own priests, bishops and forms of church government\textsuperscript{28}. The discovery of sea route to India marks a new epoch of Roman Catholic missions in India. In 1499, the Portuguese admiral Pedro Alvares Cabrel, the successor of Vascoda Gama was

\textsuperscript{23} Agur, C.M., \textit{op.cit.}, p.276.
\textsuperscript{24} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 274.
\textsuperscript{26} Arattukulam, M., \textit{op.cit.}, p.19.
\textsuperscript{27} Julius Richer, \textit{A History of Missions in India}, Bangalore,1971, pp.41-43.
\textsuperscript{28} Agur, C.M., \textit{op.cit.}, p.200.
accompanied by eight Franciscan friars, who were sent to spread Christianity to the nations with direction from the king to subjugate by war in every province that refused to listen to them. They converted some people and every following year more missionaries came and were working in Cochin, Calicut, Cannanore, Travancore and other places. At that time the missionary work was extended in Vypeen, Purakkad, Kayamkulam, Quilon and towards the South. The relation between the Portuguese and the christians of Travancore took a political turn when De Gama landed in Cochin on 7th December 1502 on his second voyage to India. He came with five Franciscan friars. The Syrian christians welcomed them and begged Gama to take them under the protection of the Portuguese against their Mohammedan neighbours. The missionaries who came with Cabral and Vascoda Gama preached from Cochin to southwards along the coast covering many stations among the fisherfolk perusing their activities in the interior with some success. They proceeded up to Cape Comorin and beyond the limits of Travancore coast. The visit of the missionaries became regular. At that time Travancore Kingdom had the divisions like Thekkumkur (south) and Vadakkumkur (north). Thekkumkur refers to Quilon, Venad and Kanyakumari provinces.

Alfonso de Albuquerque landed in India in 1503. He helped the local king of Cochin in his administration, got his permission to build a fort there and established it as a catholic centre. His travel towards south found 25,000 christians from Quilon to Cape Comorin. Friar Rhoteric settled in Quilon as early as 1503 and used the power

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29 Ibid., p.41.
35 VelluPillai T.K., op.cit., p. 678.
to win over the local Syrian chiefs and their people. In the later years numerous people were converted and many churches were erected by the industry of these memorable missionaries sent to this coast by the Portuguese government\textsuperscript{36}. The Portuguese collected money from the people of the country and spent it for them. A good number of churches were built at the expense of the Bishops of Cochin and their ministries. Some of the churches were built by the rich people, some by private gentlemen and rich merchants. The Portuguese government was very eager to propagate Christianity while they held power in the East\textsuperscript{37}. In 1509, the Portuguese king Emmanuel appointed Alfonso de Albuquerque as viceroy of India. He spread Christianity in the south coast, allowing the natives of India to marry the Portuguese. It was another step by which large conversions had taken place in this region. The Indian women willing to marry Portuguese men and Indian men willing to marry Portuguese women were immediately converted to the Catholic faith\textsuperscript{38}.

The bare footed Carmelites were noted for kindness, consideration and they worked for the wants of all. The Roman church was divided into Portuguese and Italian Carmelites. The Papal bull 1514 of Pope Leo X “Dum Fidei Constantnam” gave power to the temporal king with the spiritual administration of Christians in far away lands\textsuperscript{39}. These foreign missionaries came to India mainly because the spirit moved them and these people thought of India as their own house\textsuperscript{40}. The policy of the early catholic missions devoting their entire attention for the conversion of the Syrian Christians was to lead a spiritual life for them\textsuperscript{41}. These early missionaries continued to practice the Hindu rituals while spreading their faith in India. These missionaries

\textsuperscript{36} Agur, C.M., \emph{op. cit.}, p.216.
\textsuperscript{37} \textit{Ibid.}
\textsuperscript{38} Leonard Fernando, \emph{op.cit.}, p.18.
\textsuperscript{39} VelluPillai T.K., \emph{op.cit.}, p.707.
\textsuperscript{40} George Koilparamphil, \emph{Caste in the Catholic Community in Kerala}, Cochin, 1982, p.98.
\textsuperscript{41} Agur, C.M., \emph{op.cit.}, p.207.
ritually and officially empowered the leaders of the particular community to exercise specific role to lead the community and in many cases conversions took place⁴².

1.1.3 Kottar under Cochin and Funchal 1515-1557

In 1515, Pope Leo X established the Arch Bishopric of Funchal and all foreign missions found by the Portuguese in the East were made subordinate in the Arch Diocese of Funchal in the island of Maderia. Funchal continued to be the Arch Diocese from 1515 to 1557⁴³. Goa, the centre of Portugal dominations in India had been raised into a bishopric. The whole of Asia resided in the diocese of Goa and its bishop was a suffragan of the bishop of Funchal in Maderia. In 1557, Pope Paul IV made Goa an Arch diocese. In 1558, he made Kochi (Cochin) a diocese. The fisherfolk and the poor sections felt significant presence on that day, as it was an ecclesiastical institution of the disadvantaged castes and communities⁴⁴.

Kochi was the centre of christianity from 1498. It has an age old tradition as many churches were erected in the coastal area of South Travancore. These churches were mainly huts, bearing the symbol of a cross⁴. Sebastiao Gonsalves in 1532 speaks about a big fight between the parava fishermen community and the muslims. More killings had taken place in the attack held in Tuticorin and in the areas of south upto Kanyakumari. The muslims decided to blockade the paravas both by sea and land with the intension of uprooting the entire race⁴⁵. At this point of time John de Cruz, an Indian horse dealer came from Calicut. He was a young man converted to the

⁴² Leonard Fernando, op.cit., p.295.
⁴³ Agur, C.M., op.cit., p.217.
⁴⁴ Leonard Fernando, op.cit., p.128.
* Under the Portuguese jurisdiction (or) Padroado or Goanose jurisdiction, the churches of Travancore were built chiefly through the instrumentality of the Portuguese power at Valiatoray (1538), Kottar (1543). Punthura (1556) Mampally (1568) Manakudy (1571). Source, Agur, C.M., op.cit., p.310.
⁴⁵ Abuna, East Syrian Bishop, His Testimony in the 1533 Inquiry about the Tomb St. Thomas, Goa, 1533, p.3.
Christian faith. He heard of the plight of the local population of Kanyakumari. He visited the people and spoke to them of the Portuguese and the protection they could offer. He spoke about Christianity as a powerful religion and a form of mercy. The people were impressed by the informations he gave and decided to send fifteen leaders of their community called “Pattamkattis” to Kochi. There they asked for baptism and for priests to take care of them and for the Portuguese military protection. This request was willingly granted in principle. The Portuguese captain of Kochi, Pero Vaz, a pious and God fearing man wanted the whole caste to be ready to accept Christianity. At Kochi, the paravas met Micheal Vaz Cautinho, the Vicar General of Goa, who came there on an official visit. The Portuguese king had power of appointing Vicar General, for the spiritual and ecclesiastical supervision in India. Micheal Vaz was the Vicar General of the Bishop for South India and his jurisdiction extended over by the king of Portugal to establish stern discipline and to make a steady growth by attending all religious duties. He was appointed Vicar General for the area of the present diocese of Tuticorin and Kottar. He came to India in 1530 with other Portuguese priests. He held this office from 1536 till his death in 1547. His service in South Travancore is highly recorded by many church historians. Vicar General Micheal Vaz Cautinho was neither a priest nor a cleric. He was a pious catholic and he had doctorate degree in Canon Law.

On the request of Pero Vaz, seventy pattamkattis from the coast came forward to be baptized. They all reached Kochi and the Vicar General Micheal Vaz who took charge in 1536 baptized these paravas in the church of Mother of God, the future

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49 Ladislaus Micheal, *St.Francis Xavier*, Delhi, 1884, p.22.
cathedral of Cochin. In a ceremony these converts adopted Portuguese surnames. They gladly accepted the Portuguese names such as De Cruz, Miranda, Kulos, Decosta, Fernandez, Souza, Micado, Morais, Rebairo, Amaldo, Gonsalvas, Vaz, Rodrigues, Rozario, Pedro, Pero, Pereira, Roche, Barbosa, etc. Many of the paravas chose the name of John De Cruz as their family name out of respect for the man who had been acting as their guide and it become a tradition among the parava chieftains to hold the Portuguese names as a mark of distinction and honour and these surnames their descendants use even today. In February 1536, captain Pero Vaz sent a strong fleet in the fishery coast with the newly baptized parava chiefs under the delegation of John De Cruz, Micheal Vaz Cautinho the Vicar General of Goa and Pedro Gonsalves the Vicar General of Cochin and three other clerics to baptize the rest of the paravas. In 1536, the Franciscan friar Lawrence De Goes sent the first news of this new christians to king John II of Portugal and the king sent an ambassador to Rome to inform the Pope about the matter of the parava christians. It was the initiate step and then many missionaries reached Travancore from the European countries. Michael Vaz Caurtinho was the Vicar General of South Travancore for eleven years and during his stay in South India, he met Francis Xavier and spoke to him about the seventy leagues (villages) from Cape Comorin to the Peninsula of Pamban in the isle of Mannar inherited by an able and enterprising people, the paravas. Micheal Vaz had gone through the expeditions in Travancore before Francis Xavier. He was serving the semi independent and the able pearl divers. It was to this Micheal Vaz, John De Cruz a Calicut born chetty who had been working as an official in the court of the Samorin of Calicut, visited Lisbon and was

52 Mary Philomina Villavarayar, *Customs of the Paravas (Tamil)*, Nagercoil, 1989, pp.78-81.
53 Louise Roche, *op.cit.*, p.118.
54 Abuna, *op.cit.*, p.32.
converted to Christianity. He only proposed the inclusion of the parava community into the Catholic Church by extending them Portuguese protection against the Muslims.\(^5\)

### 1.1.4 Five Priests and the Conversions

Five priests were sent to evangelize the whole Parava land and this mission was small and relatively insignificant in number. This small band of clerics baptized about 20,000 Paravas in thirty villages\(^6\). The men of this community were baptized in camps probably in the month of March and April 1536. It was easier for the clerics to baptize the men who came from different villages. The women, children and the old people were also baptized in their own villages during May, June, July, August, September and October months of 1536. The second group of baptism took place in 1537 lasting from February to September. During this time, large numbers of people were baptized in and around Cape Comorin. This land and these people belonged to the Nayak Kingdom of Madurai.\(^7\) The Parava conversions as a whole was voluntary and all the conversions were based on the free will of the people. The community had unanimous will to become Catholics to get rid of their critical situation.\(^8\) At that time the Parava Catholics were more in number than the rest of the Christian flock of Goa and Travancore region. In 1539 this entire people came under the jurisdiction of the Goa diocese, which was established in 1533. Goa was a good and prosperous Catholic centre of the Portuguese where many religious activities took place.\(^9\)

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\(^5\) George Schurhammar, *op. cit.*, pp. 156-161.


\(^8\) Monumenta Xaviriana, 1874, p.848.


\(^*\) The Goa diocese was established in 1533 and it was taken possession of a Bishop in 1539, Source, *Ibid.*, p. 132.

The Catholic faith and sea faring activities brought close the new christians of Travancore and the Portuguese merchants. The paravas worked under the Portuguese merchants and the muslim traders became common enemies. Amidst the traits and difficulties, the Portuguese had to experience in the Indies that they did not lose sight of their duty to spread the Gospel, a duty imposed on them by the Holy See. They were highly enthusiastic in planting christianity in the coast. They gave serious consideration to the deputation of the Paravas and took strong and necessary steps to baptize the entire race. In 16th century, the Portuguese developed an interest in the fishery coast to take over the muslims, the maritime trade and the control of the pearl fishing. In 1523, John Flores arrived at the fishery coast as captain of the Portuguese fleet and it was to protect the fisherfolk of this region. Sensing troubles, the muslims gathered together and a fourteen year war started between the muslims and the Portuguese. In 1535, the dispute between the muslims and the local inhabitants reached the peak and in these conflicts both communities suffered heavy losses. The fishermen of the fishery coast had to face the cruel merchants and the biased hindu administration of Travancore. In this situation, the Portuguese strongly supported the parava fishermen and gave all help and support for survival. At the same time, the mukkuva people were waiting for the arrival of the Portuguese Governor, the Vicar General and the priests who should make them christians. The villages where the mission work took place were Kottar, Kanyakumari, Manakudy, Kottilpadu and it is true that many large conversions had taken place in the coastal areas during the 16th century.

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62 Venantius Fernando, S., *The Evangelization of the Pearl Fishery Coast*, Bangalore, 1985, p.150.
63 Fishery Coast - refers the region between Tuticorin and Cape Comorin. The inhabitants of this place are mostly paravas: Source, *Ibid* p.259.
64 Leonard Fernando, *op. cit.*, P.88.
century. Many of these people were converted to Christianity on account of the charity showed on them. The Catholics of today owe their origin to the adoption of this rite by a good number of Catholics during the Portuguese regime.

1.1.5 The Paulists in South Travancore

Through the labour of the secular priests, Micheal Vaz and James Barba, a senior missionary of South India, a seminary was established in Goa in 1541. It was developed into a college, namely St. Paul’s college. This college was richly endowed with the Jesuit missionaries. In the following years, they did a commendable job for spreading the Catholic religion making more social and educational service in South Travancore region. Afterwards, this college was supported by a college of St. Roch of Mount Rosary and the old college became their novitiate. The men belonging to St. Paul’s College were known as “Paulists”. Some of the old churches in Travancore, belonging to the Portuguese period, are said to have been built by the Paulists. From the Goa seminary (Paul’s College), priests and senior seminarians were sent out on mission to preach the Gospel in the adjoining territories along the coast. This Jesuit mission was otherwise called Fathers of St. Paul (or) St. Paul Missionaries. These Paulists spread all over the Travancore and Malabar coast.

A good number of missionaries came to India during the second half of the 16th century. Eventually, group of religious women arrived in south India. They all worked with the local priests and the Paulists, who had been trained either in the traditional community of St. Thomas Christians or the Latin Christians. Gradually the

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68. Agur, C.M., op.cit., p.205.
69. Ibid.
church divided the work of all these volunteers to work among the local christians\textsuperscript{70}. Totally the mission plan included education, justice, social work, awareness programmes, preaching the Gospel and towards multidirectional programmes\textsuperscript{71}.

1.2 MISSION OF ST. FRANCIS XAVIER 1542-1552

The hey day of Latin Christianity in South Travancore was certainly during the time of Francis Xavier. Mass conversions in the southern coast of Travancore were held largely during the visit of this unique personality, who was profoundly concerned with the spiritual needs of the Indian Christians and made more contributions to the spread of catholic faith in South India, especially in Travancore region\textsuperscript{72}. He was gifted with talents and he succeeded in winning the love and confidence of all the converts of this area. The nation is proud of having a great reformer of the catholic reformation movement\textsuperscript{73}.

Francis Xavier, a Spaniard of noble descent was born on 7\textsuperscript{th} April 1506. He was maternally related to the royal house of Navarre and paternally belonged to the Bourbon Family\textsuperscript{74}. He was gifted with penetrating intelligence and received excellent education in Theology and Philosophy\textsuperscript{75}. Francis Xavier was a friend and colleague of Ignatius Layola, founder of the Jesuit order and was led to the religious by him\textsuperscript{76}. Blessed by the Pope and encouraged by the king of Portugal he started for the east\textsuperscript{77}. As an aristocrat, very able, charming and ambitious, he become the greatest

\textsuperscript{70} Leonard Fernando, \textit{op.cit.} p.26.  
\textsuperscript{71} \textit{Ibid.}, p.143.  
\textsuperscript{72} Lawrence, V., \textit{A History of the Catholic Church in Kanyakumari District}, Nagarcoil, 2002, p.61.  
\textsuperscript{73} Louis Roche, E., \textit{op.cit.}, p.143.  
\textsuperscript{74} Agur, C.M., \textit{op.cit.}, p.207.  
\textsuperscript{75} Julius Richer, \textit{op.cit.}, p.50.  
\textsuperscript{76} Agur, C.M., \textit{op.cit.}, p.147.  
\textsuperscript{77} ArattuKulam, M., \textit{op.cit.}, pp. 32-34.
missionary of all time and his arrival to this land was the humble beginning of the
“Society of Jesus” in India.

Francis Xavier reached Goa in a ship travelling for thirteen months with
thousand men. He came as a political deliverer of the Portuguese and a religious
instructor. He went and visited the fisherman villages further down the west coast
especially in the south west of Travancore and enrolled thousands of disciples of
Christ. He was embarked with some other priests and two non-priest companions
arrived in Goa, headquarter of the Portuguese in Asia and his arrival marks the forty
four years after the landing of Vascoda Gama in Kozhicode in 1498. The day he set
foot on the Indian soil, 6th May 1498 is the birthday of Roman catholic missionary
activity in India on a large scale. When Francis Xavier went to preach this coast,
whole villagers surrendered themselves. On his arrival in the coast, he baptized the
children of the christian families born after 1537. He came with the title and
authority of a papal nuncio to baptize the children and to do the other religious duties
in this land. The method of preaching Christ to all classes alike was set foot by this
celebrated missionary Francis Xavier who mainly sought the depressed classes. He,
with his disciples and assistants visited the Portuguese colonies and sailed from Goa
to Cape Comorin during October 1542. Shortly afterwards, he undertook his journey
through Travancore with great and successful results. Francis Xavier was wearing

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78 VeluPillai, T.K., op.cit., p.681.
79 Leonard Fernando, op.cit., p.91.
80 Joseph Mullens, op.cit., p.134.
81 Leonard Fernando, op.cit., p.95.
82 Arattukulam, M., op.cit., pp.32-34.
83 Leonard Fernando, op.cit.
84 Ibid.
an old patched habit and an old black cloth hat and was courageous as a noble Spanish knight and went barefooted to preach the Gospel in this region\textsuperscript{86}.

The then Vicar General of the Bishop of South India Michael Vaz, who came to India in 1530 with other Portuguese priests spoke to Francis Xavier about the fishery coast, a country extending in seventy leagues from Cape Comorin to the Peninsula of Pamban in the island of Mannar, inhabited by the fishermen communities\textsuperscript{87}. Pastor Micheal Vaz’s jurisdiction extended to both sides of Cape Comorin where Francis Xavier worked willfully to spread the catholic religion. Ignatius Layola(1490-1550) appointed Francis Xavier as the first provincial superior and before that he was a personal secretary to him. He was the sole head of the Jesuits of Indian subcontinent. Francis Xavier knew well about the place from Cape Comorin to the peninsula of Pamban, and the inhabitants who were mostly fishermen and pearl divers\textsuperscript{88}.

1.2.1 Methods of Conversion

Francis Xavier introduced his own methods in this soil and imparted religious instruction in the local Tamil language. In every village, there was an overseer appointed, called kannakkapillai\textsuperscript{89}. This kannakkapillai was an account keeper and also fulfilled the duties of catechist, school master and the supervisor of the morals of the village. This overseer received a salary from the Portuguese army\textsuperscript{90}. The kannakkapillai and other catechists appointed by the clergy in these villages conducted common prayers for the people on each Sunday. They baptized the people

\textsuperscript{86} Ladislaus Micheal- \textit{op.cit.}, p.22.
\textsuperscript{87} Ibid.,
\textsuperscript{88} Ibid.,
\textsuperscript{89} Castes, J., \textit{The Madura Mission}, Tricinapolly, 1924, p.2.
\textsuperscript{90} Julius Richer, \textit{op.cit.}, p.60.
when necessary and kept abreast of village happenings, so as to help the visiting missionaries in their work for the village people. This structure proved successful and was followed in the mission work elsewhere. The parochial setup with kanakkapillai and melinchi in each parish village started from the time of Francis Xavier. It is amusing to note that the melinchi who is merely a sexton in present day coastal parish was originally in charge of the jail. He had to give instructions to the adults and the children of the parish. He kept watch on the border of the village and informed the soldiers about the matters happening in his area. Baptizing the men, their wives and their children was the aim of the mission of Francis Xavier. He was ignorant of the vernacular language and he concentrated his activities in the South of Travancore where the people spoke Tamil which he learnt and committed to memorise the Lord's Prayer, the creed, avemaria and the de catogue. His attempt to communicate christian faith in the local language Tamil and Malayalam is to be specially appreciated. He learnt, taught and prayed with the most genuine devotion for the success of his efforts, and all his labour in south were crowned with success. He proposed father Heariquez whose catechism work was the first christian production promoted in Tamil characters. He had a small religious instruction book translated into Tamil, and all the prayers learnt by heart, a sermon in Tamil which he repeated in every village. It was then explained by the assistants or seminarians. He also made the new converts repeat again and again the common christian prayers in Tamil translation. He travelled from village to village in Travancore with a bell in hand and taught the

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91 Leonard Fernando, op.cit., p.91

* Melinchi (Meirinhos in Portuguese) means policemen. In 1579 Valignana S.J, wrote that in every village of Travancore there was a meirinho who called the adults and children and gave them instructions about the religious and civil life: Source, Steaphen Fuches, Anthropology for the Missions, Allahabad, 1979, p.8.

92 Ibid.

93 Agur, C.M., op.cit., p.208.


95 Leonard Fernando, op.cit., p.91.

people to repeat the prayers and baptized all who had submitted themselves. At the
stroke of the bell the converts surrounded him and followed him as the sheep
following a shepherd. In every parish he collected the people to a particular place
and taught them to mark the sign of the cross. He also recited the christian prayers in a
loud voice, the form of general confession, the Ten Commandments, so that the
people could follow the christian way of life. In the villages he trained the chief and
left the converts under their charge to supervise and see the converts do the prayers
regularly. In cases of emergency, these village head men had to lead the prayers
commonly and to preserve the principal divine articles of belief and to lead the people
on holy days and Sundays. In those days, a Portuguese squadron guarded the
people of Cape Comorin to help the christian inhabitants against the muslims. The
Portuguese Commander Da Cruz persuaded the king of Travancore not to object the
conversion of the paravas to the catholic religion and the Portuguese viceroy had
political ties with the Travancore ruler extending large military support to the king.
Francis Xavier was largely aided by the influence and prestige of the Portuguese
government, then all powerful in India. The Goa government ordered a company of
soldiers to accompany Francis Xavier wherever he travelled and protected him. A few
priests were also deputed to assist him in his missionary tour and evangelistic work.
Francis Xavier acted severely with regard to idol makers. He did not allow the
converts their idol worship. The people were threatened with fines and imprisonment.
He was very strict to those who prepared palm wine and who consumed it.

97 Agur, C.M., op.cit., p.208.
100 George KoilParamphil, op.cit., p.80.
101 Agur, C.M., op.cit., p.208.
102 Ibid.
103 Julius Richer, op.cit., p.60.
1.2.2 Schools and Catechist Centres

Francis Xavier realising that only through education the people could be converted and therefore he established elementary schools wherever he landed and his letters show that his great anxiety was to provide a school at each station. The formation of schools in important places and the spread of education in the Travancore region for the special interest of the poor and the needy was one of the primary aims of him. These schools imparted knowledge to the village people on the religious and secular studies. Now a days there are many primary schools in the rural areas of Kanyakumari district and almost all these were started simply by Francis Xavier during his missionary work here.

Francis Xavier had special concern for the growth of native clergy and catechists. In 1542, he went to Manappad on the fishery coast accompanied by three christian paravas who had been sent to Goa to study for priesthood. These men were Xavier’s interpreters and catechists and they were the first seminarians of this region submitted to God’s service. Francis Xavier’s actual work in India went beyond the community of the fisher folk in South India. He visited and stayed with the new converts in the interior for some months ensuring what was for him, the most important thing, the instructions in the faith of the new christians. His contacts with South India were only through the coastal region of South West and South East and with its less educated people. Francis Xavier went to the southern tip of the Indian peninsula to work among the paravas in October 1542 and to Travancore in the

105 Meerson, Development of the Church Under the Padroado, Christianity in India, Alleppey, 1972, pp.99-100.
106 George KoilParamphil, op.cit., p.80.
107 Leonard Fernando, op.cit., p.91.
108 Ibid., pp.91- 93.
109 Meerson, op.cit.
beginning of November 1544. At Trivandrum he had an audience with the Maharaja, who gave him permission to preach the Gospel in his whole kingdom and to baptize those of his subjects who would desire to become christians. After visiting the ruler, he began his apostolic work and concentrated his activity in South Travancore at the present Kanyakumari district where the people welcomed him heartfully. During his first visit in 1542, he spent an year labouring untiringly, conveying to the people in their own language friendly and paternally, spreading the catholic religion and baptizing many people. The early converts of Travancore were mostly from the parava community of the fishing villages. Francis Xavier on his arrival to the coast found these paravas knowing nothing of their new religion except that they had been baptized with new Portuguese names. Before he proceeded to Travancore and started his operations, he had been in the Tuticorin coast converting a large number of fisher folk. His service continued in the Kanyakumari region and he found a few churches in the coast. He entered the Portuguese territory near Cape Comorin and worked under the protection of the prince of Tala or Thovala. His influence with the powerful Portuguese governor in India Martin Al Fanso de Souza and the other officials had valuable impact during his work in Travancore. He knew much about the courts of kings residing in Kalakkad, Kayathar, Thenkasi and Travancore.

1.2.3 First Mass Conversion

Francis Xavier had been preaching the catholic faith in the villages of Cape – Comorin, Kovalam, Chinnamuttam, Puthenthurai etc. Francis Xavier had been repeatedly requested by the mukkuva fisher folk of Manakudy village near Cape

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110 Ladislaus Micheal, op. cit., pp.102-104.
111 George KoilParamphili, op. cit., pp.78-79.
112 Agur, C.M., op. cit., p.208.
115 Narchison, J.R., Latin Church of Kottar, (Tamil), Diocese of Kottar, Nagercoil, 1997, p.18.
Comorin to baptize the people and their kin in the coastal village of Travancore\textsuperscript{116}. After obtaining personal assurance from Dyarts-De-Gama, the Portuguese captain of Quilon, that he would care all necessary means to guard these fisherfolk\textsuperscript{117}. Francis Xavier and his companions sailed to Quilon to obtain information from the captain. He received two Indian assistants for the return voyage to work among the mukkuvas. Francis Xavier set about baptizing them in November 1544. Starting from Poovar, a village in Travancore to Cape Comorin and it was the first mass conversion undertaken by him in person and he was overjoyed at walking southward from village to village and pouring the sacramental water over more than ten thousand mukkuvas\textsuperscript{118}. The mukkuvas were economically impoverished, politically and culturally oppressed by the officials of the Travancore kingdom. They had hardships and unspeakable worries, which remained as a scar in their life. This folk formerly worshiped Bhadrakali to whom they dedicated small hut temples containing her idols and portraits of the sacred cobra\textsuperscript{119}. The mukkuvas were equal to their neighbours, the paravas and sanars in their social status. They also used catamarans like the paravas for fishing. They lived in huts and followed mostly the social custom alike the paravas. Most of them spoke Tamil and some of them spoke Malayalam\textsuperscript{120}. These people, supported by the Portuguese officials and missionaries felt that they could save themselves only by converting to Christianity and by receiving baptism. They all wished to place themselves under the protection of the Portuguese like their parava neighbours\textsuperscript{121}. The missionary work of Francis Xavier among the fisher folk in south Travancore took place as few visits he made at different parts of the place followed

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\textsuperscript{116} George Schurhammar, \textit{op.cit.}, p.459
\textsuperscript{117} \textit{Ibid.},
\textsuperscript{118} Narchison, J.R., 1997, \textit{op.cit.}, p.15
\textsuperscript{119} George Schurhammar, \textit{op.cit.}, pp.465 - 470
\textsuperscript{120} Antony, E.P., \textit{op.cit.}, pp.41-169
\textsuperscript{121} Ladislaus Micheal, \textit{op.cit.}, p.169
\end{flushright}
by brief study at each station\textsuperscript{122}. When Francis Xavier was at Cape Comorin, the mukkuvas pleased the great father and inclined them towards his religion. He took advantage of the request of the people made to him and with sympathy asked for more priests and assistants to meet these people. This situation favoured the mukkuvas or arasas who lived in fourteen villages west of Cape Comorin who sought mass conversions to Christianity\textsuperscript{123}. It was hard to evangelize this folk totally to the christian faith. Remedial action was found if the newly converted failed to perform their religious duties, lapsed back to idolatry or if they refused to obey the missionaries\textsuperscript{124}.

1.2.4 Francisco Mansillas and Rodriques

Francis Xavier was in the coastal villages, baptizing the fisherfolk and when he was at Pallam doing his missionary work and he was called to Ceylon to prevent the king of Jaffna from persecuting the christians at Mannar. He had to leave for Ceylon and at his request Francisco Mansillas came from Punnaiaakayal and continued the work left by Francis Xavier, baptizing the people and introducing them the christian way of life. Francis Enriques came to the south coast of Travancore to look after the Machua (mukkuva) converts and he estimates that Francis Xavier and his men converted twenty thousand mukkuvas in the southern region\textsuperscript{125}. Father Rodriques, a Tamil Jesuit cleric and an ordained priest in Goa was in total charge of the parava christians in 1545 especially wherever Francis Xavier had long expeditions. The letters of Francis Xavier reveal his tender affection towards Francisco Mansilhas, and Rodriques\textsuperscript{126}.

\textsuperscript{122} George KoilParamphil, \textit{op.cit.}, pp.78-79.
\textsuperscript{123} Ladislaus Micheal, \textit{op.cit.}, p.169.
\textsuperscript{125} Machua Converts- Fishermen Converts of the Mukkuva Community: Source, Ladislaus Micheal, \textit{op.cit.}, p.106.
\textsuperscript{126} George Schurhammar, \textit{op.cit.}, p.457.
1.2.5 Francis Xavier as Provincial

The appointment of Francis Xavier as provincial of Jesuits in India and the East was a glorious moment of the Jesuit order in India. The paravas or arasas who lived in the coast were often plundered and pillaged by the muslims, the badagas in many cases. Often quarrels and conflicts were held between the parava fishermen and the muslims. Since 1536, a muslim flotilla guarded the coast of Cape Comorin making it impossible for the paravas to ply their trade. Oppressions and killings had taken place in this region. Francis Xavier sought the help of the Portuguese governor and protected the total folk from the attacks of the enemies. The vadagars (Northerners), who were also called badagars were the common intruders who attacked the southern provinces of Travancore during the stay of Francis Xavier at Cape Comorin. These intruders were officers and soldiers of Vittala, a Prince of Vijayanagar. The Portuguese faced the badagas, the lawless, marauders and the Portuguese governor Alfanso de Souza organised an expedition towards the south in 1543 AD. When they reached Cape, they found a large army belonging to the Vijayanagar Empire held sway over the southern provinces. They could find that the army of Badagas conquered the interior of Travancore. The badaga incursion continued till July 1544. In this critical situation, the sudden appearance of Francis Xavier in front of them and at his presence, the badagas failed in their attempt to conquer Travancore. Francis Xavier’s connection with the Portuguese was a strength and a peril to the Travancore christians.

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127 George KoilParamphil, op.cit., p.79.
128 David,M.D., Asia and Christianity, Bombay, 1985,p.245.
129 Ladisleaus Micheal, op.cit., p.22.
Francis Xavier had to face another danger as he was involved in a cruel war. This time the invaders were the Nayaks of Madurai. The enemies crossed the mountains through the Aramboly pass, invaded Travancore and marched towards the coast devasting the country. The king of Travancore was not able to meet this unforeseen attack. In this attack Francis Xavier who was familiar with the European tactics of war joined the Maharaja in order to help him with his advice and prayers. In the mean time, the Madurai forces were advancing and crushed Travancore by an overwhelming number of their soldiers. Tradition reads that Francis Xavier taking the crucifix walked alone towards the enemy and loudly said “In the name of God, I command you to halt”\(^{132}\). Francis Xavier was dressed in black and his face seized with an undesirable tremour and the enemies fled in disaster\(^{133}\). Word was sent to the Maharaja about the victory over the Nayak army. Learning the defeat of the enemy, the Maharaja showed great affection and called him “Greater Father”, and henceforth gave protection to the christian people\(^{134}\). The political situation changed over night and the attitude of the king of the Travancore became favourable towards the christians. This historic incident brought Francis Xavier and the king closer and as a result of this event, he was permitted to carry his missionary work with out hindrance. The king assigned a land to build a church\(^{135}\). Church in Kottar, the popularity of the Roman catholic church in Kanyakumari district, was mainly due to the efforts of Francis Xavier. He made a steady starting of the propagation of christianity among the people of this region. With the presentation of land in Kottar, he built a church in the local style and worked among the people of the region for their betterment. The primitive church, which still subsists, was built in between the years between 1542

\(^{132}\) Ladislaus Micheal, \textit{op.cit.}, p.112.  
\(^{133}\) Heras, H., \textit{Aravidu Dynasty of Vijayanagar}, Vol I, Madras, 1928, p.113.  
\(^{134}\) Ladislaus Micheal, \textit{op.cit.}, p.113.  
and 1550 by Francis Xavier at the expense of king John III of Portugal\textsuperscript{136}. A new church was built close to the primitive church which was more spacious and was endowed with precious ornaments and utensils by the king of Portugal. While preaching the principles of Christianity, miracles were said to have taken place in the church built by him and the hindus who resented him began to throng to this place\textsuperscript{137}.

1.2.6 Demise of Francis Xavier – 1552

Francis Xavier found many congregations and built a number of churches in this region. He was able to find forty-five churches in Travancore. These churches were built of palm leaves with a simple wooden cross. The Portuguese called these churches as “Ramados”. These Ramadoses were gradually superceded by stone churches\textsuperscript{138}. These churches were small but were symbols of God’s presence on earth\textsuperscript{139}. At Kottar, he was persecuted by the pagans several times. They set fire to the house where he used to take shelter. Once he was forced to flee for his life into a forest and climbed up a tree where he remained praying until his enemies passed by and he was out of danger. Several times he was wounded by arrows\textsuperscript{140}. In a report of Francis Enriques who came as missionary in the south coast of Travancore notes that Francis Xavier was not without danger. The Brahmins, seeing crowds of people behind him, shot him with arrows and several wounded him. The Portuguese solders used to guard him and very often christians had to guard him throughout the night. On 20\textsuperscript{th} November, he felt high fever. He was looked after by a Chinese captain Antony. Francis Xavier died on 3\textsuperscript{rd} December 1552 in a small island of the coast of Canton in

\textsuperscript{136} Agur, C.M., \textit{op.cit.}, pp.212 – 214.
\textsuperscript{137} Ibid.,
\textsuperscript{138} Ibid., p.279.
\textsuperscript{139} Ramasamy, \textit{The Catholic Church and the Catholics}, Madurai, 1998, p.68.
\textsuperscript{140} Ladislaus Micheal, \textit{op.cit.}, p.106.
China. The ornaments of his body are even today kept for renovation in the Basilica of Bom Jesus in Goa as a protected monument.

Mass conversion had taken place when Francis Xavier appeared on the scene. He was a clever personality. He was profoundly concerned about the spiritual needs of the christians of south Travancore all the ancient and the new. He was very resourceful interpreter, preacher and propagator of Gospel in India. He was the first Jesuit to enter India. He was the greatest teacher and mission worker, Europe has ever sent to the East. He transcended all sectarian bonds of humanity. The work of Francis Xavier was full. He and his men converted the folk from the paravas, pulayas, mukkuvas, nadars, vellalas, cheramas and muthali communities. Infact he is rightly considered the second apostle of India. Wherever he landed, he sought to reform the life of the christians and to gain more people to the catholic fold, and because of the great work he did, the catholic religion emerged as a popular faith in the Kanyakumari region. The religious tension in south Travancore caused by the Portuguese officers and soldiers was considerably lessened by the pious activities of Francis Xavier. He was an amicable person whose poise and unostentatious nature left an indelible imprint on the people of India especially on the Latin catholics. The country is immensely benefited by the missionary enterprises of this great religious preacher. Numerous christian villages sprang up after his name. Many magnificent cathedral churches, colleges, schools, boarding centers, hospitals etc enrich and embellish the

Leonard Fernando, op.cit., p.93.
Venantius, S., Early History of St. Xavier Church, Bangalore, 1988, p. 28.
142 George Schurhammar, op.cit., p.433.
143 Louis Roche, E., op.cit., pp.10 -27.
144 Antony, E.P., op.cit., p.XVIII.
145 Ladislaus Micheal, op.cit., p.349.
146 Lawrence, V., op.cit., p.68.
country. Many of the Christian churches that fringe the coast of South India are monuments of his sacrifice and self-denial attitude. Travancore has special reason to be thankful that this great apostle of the East spent a valuable part of his life and labour in this country. Francis Xavier was a person naturally gifted with infinite patience and perseverance, the qualities which could seldom be found among the missionaries who proceeded him. His amicable nature and winning manners drew all the people close to him. He was totally free from intolerance. He was a successful missionary of India who won many souls with his love and affection. As a soldier of God, he sowed the seeds of very truthful mission work by his successors and by his apostolic work and the influence he had in Rome and Portugal, he rendered priceless service to Travancore. In 1552, he left India, reached Far East where he ended his life. His memory is perpetuated in India by the preservation of his dead body at Goa and by a number of monuments in his name all over the world.

1.3 MISSIONS AFTER FRANCIS XAVIER

Francis Xavier and his fellow Jesuits flew from Europe into the south Travancore in 1545, 1546, 1548 and they established spiritual settlements around the coast south of Quilon. At Quilon, Father Lancilotto was appointed as the first superior of the Jesuit house to train the youth as catechists and priests for the whole Travancore and this house was called “College of Travancore”.

A report entitled “Relazione del” made by Bescopatto di Cochino reads that in 1568 there were about 14,000 Catholics in 30 churches of Travancore and all these

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147 Agur, C.M., op.cit., p.80.
148 Ibid., p.211.
149 Louis Roche, E., op.cit., pp.140.
150 Wicki, S.J., 1972, op.cit., p.75.
151 Louis Roche, E., op.cit., p.27.
churches were under the care of the Jesuits\textsuperscript{153}. In between 1571 and 1574, the senior Rani of Travancore at Attingal, alarmed at the growing power of the Portuguese, burnt three christian churches. It created tension throughout Travancore coast but the converts remained steadfast and remained christians even in that critical situation\textsuperscript{154}.

On 22\textsuperscript{nd} January 1622, the Holy See established a separate congregation named "De Propaganda Fide" to supervise all missionary endeavours of the church. This congregation had to challenge the forthcoming issues. The Carmelites and Capuchins came to promote the work of evangelization.

1.3.1 The Jesuits in Kottar

In the 17\textsuperscript{th} century, the Portuguese and the Dutch had a struggle and the Portuguese\textsuperscript{155} power began to decline. So the Portuguese bishoprics suffered the most. The bishopric of Cochin remained vacant for many years and the Pope refused to recognize the Portuguese ecclesiastical appointments. A vicar capitulator was in charge of the administration of the diocese. In 1663, the Dutch took the Cochin port. They destroyed the colleges, convents and churches\textsuperscript{156}. They drove away the bishops and all the catholic priests\textsuperscript{157}. The College of Travancore was shifted from Quilon to a safer place, which was to be Thope between Muttom and Kadiyapattinam and this place was with the present diocese of Kottar and it served as the Jesuit provincialate of Malabar\textsuperscript{158}. Baldeus, a Dutch clergy wrote in the 17\textsuperscript{th} century that the shore as far as Comyryn (Cape Comorin) were full of little churches established with wood and stone. Father Pierre Martin S.J witnessed the feast of St. Francis Xavier at Kottar, and

\textsuperscript{153} Placid, \textit{Portuguese Religious Concept in Malabar Under the Diocese of Cochin During the 17\textsuperscript{th} Century}, Vol. III, 1597, p.306.
\textsuperscript{154} Ferroli, D., \textit{op.cit.}, p.141.
\textsuperscript{156} Agur, C.M., \textit{op.cit.}, pp.228-230.
the Jesuit fathers who were in charge of the churches on the coast were fully involved and occupied from dawn to the dusk of the day of the feast\textsuperscript{159}. He also notes that a good number of christians made prayers, worship and offerings at high mass in the celebrated Catholic Centre Kottar. Multitudes of devotees and pilgrims from British India, Ceylon and Malacca reported to the annual festival at Kottar during December every year\textsuperscript{160}. When the Mughal king Akbar proclaimed Din-I-Lahi as a common religion and as a sign of religious tolerance, the Jesuit christian missionaries visited king Akbar's court in 1580, 1591 and 1605 and Fr. Jerome Xavier, a great nephew of Francis Xavier, who came for missionary work in Travancore from 1595 to 1615 worked in this soil and preached the christian faith\textsuperscript{161}. In the middle of the 18\textsuperscript{th} century the king of Travancore, MarthandaVarma at the request of his general Eustache D Lanoy, built a Roman catholic church at Fort Udayagiri or Puliyoorkurichi and assigned money for the maintenance of the church\textsuperscript{162}.

There was an internal threat to the catholic church and to the Jesuits. The Portuguese turned against the Jesuits. The Portuguese king Joseph and his chief minister Sebastian de Convalho Marques de Pambal issued a royal command of expelling the Jesuits from Portugal and all her overseas territories. On 3\textsuperscript{rd} September 1759, the Jesuit order was banned all over the world. When this order reached India in 1761, the Jesuits of all provinces of Travancore were rounded up and sent to prison in Lisbon. It created a turmoil in the local church of Kottar, as this church knew no other priests than the Jesuits\textsuperscript{163}. Also in south India, Rama Iyar Dhalava was strengthening the hands of MarthandaVarma, king of Travancore against the

\textsuperscript{159} Agur, C.M., \textit{op.cit.}, p.279.
\textsuperscript{160} \textit{Ibid.}, p.211.
\textsuperscript{162} Agur, C.M., \textit{op.cit.}, p.20.
\textsuperscript{163} Villavarayan, J.M., \textit{op cit.}, p.32.
encouragement of Christianity\textsuperscript{164}. In 1774, at the phase of Travancore history, which was more critical by the muslim invasions from Mysore, Pope Clement XIV sent a letter to king Tirunal RamaVarma of Travancore by a personal messenger Fr. A. Paulino da San Bartholomeo requesting him to continue to protect the christians of his kingdom\textsuperscript{165}.

In 1780, Fr. Antonio Peyrotto, a Jesuit missionary was in Kottar and Fr. Aloysius Falcao in Thiruvithancode and by 1800, nearly all the old Jesuits in the Kottar region were dead\textsuperscript{166}. However, the Jesuits made each church independent, created the revenues, administrative councils, the parish homes, schoolmasters, the sacristan etc to have the finest function in every parish\textsuperscript{167}.

1.3.2 The Franciscans

In this situation the king of Portugal permitted the Franciscan missionaries to work in the place of the Jesuits in south Travancore. The Franciscans possessed sixteen churches and had four parishes all over the Kottar region. The first parish was the Holy Cross Church at Enayam with 800 souls. Its substations were Ramanthurai, Midalam, Kurumbanay, Vaniakudy and Colachel. The parish priest of Enayam was Father Antony de Jesu Maria. The second parish in which the Franciscans had charge was the Holy Rosary church, Puthenturai with 920 souls. The substations were Kadiyapattinam and Pallam. The parish priest was Father Antonio de Canceicao. The third parish was St. Andrew’s church at Manakudy with 900 souls. The substations were Kovalam and Cape Comorin. Father Joseph de-S. Joachim was the parish priest. The fourth parish was St. Francis Xavier church, Kottar. The

\textsuperscript{164} Narchison, J.R., 1983, \textit{op.cit.},
\textsuperscript{165} Ferroli, D., \textit{op.cit.}, pp.533.
\textsuperscript{167} Villavarayan, J.M., \textit{op.cit.}, p.25.
substations were Thiruvithamcode, Vencode and the other inland catholic churches of the region. The parish priest was Father John de Christo. The Franciscans had to leave India in 1825, as the Royal decree from Portugal of 28th May 1834, expelling all religious orders from the Portuguese possessions. In June 1838, two new missionaries of the restored Society of Jesus came to Cape Comorin, Father Martin and Mousset from France. They were welcomed by the local christians, who had no priest for more than three years. These priests catered to the needs of the people only for a short term. They were ordered by the English resident of Travancore to quit because they were French missionaries. The political situation in India weakened the Portuguese. The Portuguese power was restricted by the Dutch, the French and the English. It became politically impossible for Portugal to supply missionaries necessary for evangelization. The religious persecutions and troubles in the home continued. It soon became a challenge to the local clergy of India to face the grave situation as a whole.

1.3.3 The Carmalites and the “Vicariate of Malabar” - 1842

On 24th April 1838, by the bull, Pope Gregory XVI established the Vicar Apostolate of Verapoly and it was called “Vicariate of Malabar”. The territory of the present diocese of Kottar thus passed into the Vicariate of Verapoly in 1842 under the Carmelite missionary. Kottar directly came under the Papal congregation of “Propaganda Fide of the Carmalites”. On 12th May 1845, the vicariate of Verapoly was provisionally divided into three units, Mangalore in the North, Verapoly in the centre and Quilon in the South. All the territory to the south of the river Ranni was

168 Ibid., pp.28-31.
169 Ibid., p.34.
171 Catholic Directory of India, 1887, p.137.
constituted into the Vicariate of Quilon, and Kottar region became a prominent part of this ecclesiastical unit\textsuperscript{172}.

The catalogue of Quilon gives an idea of the formation of the churches in the present Kottar diocese. According to this, there were nine parishes in 1847, six coastal and three inland parishes. The coastal parishes were Cape Comorin with four villages having a catholic population of 2536 including Kovalam and Manakudy, Puthenthurai with six villages having a population of 2484 including Pallam and Rajakkamangalam, Pillaithope (also called Thope) with six villages having a population of 2458 including Mutton and Kadiyapattanam, Colachal with four villages having a catholic population of 2566 including Puthur, Kodimunai, Ramanathichanpethur, Kurumbanai with five villages having a population of 1384 including Midalam and Vaniakudy. Ramanthurai with four villages having 1698 people including Enayam and Thengapattinam. The inland parishes were Kottar with 87 villages including Mathal, Kurusady, Asaripallam, Madathattuvillai with a catholic population of 6515, Karankadu with 127 villages with Eranial, Mankuly, Mulagumoodu, Manalikarai, Puthenkadai, Mathiravilai, Anjali, Mulluvillai with 7873 catholic people, Vencode with 55 villages including Puthukadai, Kaliyakkavilai, Kuzhithurai, Thirutherupuram with 2780 people\textsuperscript{173}. The nine parishes of the Kottar region were placed under the vicariate of Quilon officially from 1853. The Discalced Carmelites of the Belgium province were managing to run the mission. Besides the Carmelites, there were some Latin and Syro Chaldean rite priests taking charge of the Quilon Vicariate\textsuperscript{174}. In 1860, Quilon had its own seminary to train the youth for

\textsuperscript{172} Narchison, J.R., 1983, \textit{op.cit.}, pp.36-37
\textsuperscript{173} Archival Records of Quilon – File XI, Quilon, 1847, pp. 9-18.
\textsuperscript{174} \textit{Ibid.}, p.19.
priesthood and Kottar grew with Quilon. In 1870, four parochial units of the interior were established and these were at Anjengo, Trivandrum, Ramanthurai and Kottar.\footnote{175}{Marieli Benziger, Arch. Bishop Benziger, Carmelite In India, Altadena, 1977, p. 226.}

\textbf{1.3.4 Kottar under Quilon – 1886 -1930}

With the establishment of Hierarchy in India by Pope Leo XIII, Quilon became a separate diocese on 1\textsuperscript{st} September 1886. Its first bishop was Ferdinand Ossi, O.C.D. The whole territory of the present diocese of Kottar came under Quilon. The spark of the missionary fire penetrated in the inland villages of Travancore. Bishop Ferdinand Ossi strengthened the Ramanthurai and Kottar missionary units. New and strong catholic centres emerged at Karamkadu, Manguly, Mulagumoodu, Mathiravillai, Allanchi, Mullanginavillai and Vencodu villages.\footnote{176}{Villavarayan, J.M., op.cit., p.28.}

On 9\textsuperscript{th} March 1902, Bishop Aloysius Maria Benziger, the co-adjutor Bishop of Quilon proclaimed seven religious districts in the Kottar region named Vencodu, Ramanthurai, Mulagumoodu, Colachel, Karankadu, Cape Comorin and Kottar. Among these, Vencodu had eighteen churches and 4695 Catholics, Mulagumoodu had nineteen churches and 9000 Catholics, Colachel had seven churches and 7012 catholics, Cape Comorin had seven churches and 4774 catholics, Ramanthurai had 6 churches and 9002 catholics, Kottar had fifteen churches and 11924 catholics, Karankadu had fourteen churches and 10294 catholics.\footnote{177}{Marieli Benziger, op.cit., p.198.} Bishop Benziger, in 1906 also added that the total population of catholic christians of this area was more than 63300. By that time mass religious conversions had taken place at Vilavancode taluk of Vencodu religious district.\footnote{178}{Narchison, J.R., 1983, op.cit., pp.38-39.}