CHAPTER IV

GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF SYRO-MALABAR CHURCH IN MADHYA PRADESH

4.1 Journey of Syro-Malabar Exarchates to Eparchy

We have seen that the ‘so called first century Church of Madhya Pradesh’ came to naught due to reasons unknown to us, without leaving even the trace of it. The establishment of the Syro-Malabar exarchates of Sagar, Satna, Ujjain, and Jagdalpur was a milestone in the history of this Indian Church which existed from the first century. Though the first century Church of St. Thomas in M.P came to be non-existing, the establishment of these exarchates filled the void that was left by the extinct Church of St. Thomas in the state.

4.1.1 Situation of the Exarchates at the Beginning.

The Syro-Malabar exarchates were established in the so-called barren lands of India. Moreover they got started in M.P at a time when the anti-missionary attitude was boiling in the governmental circles. Missionaries who came from the south had very little knowledge of the language and customs of the people. However the experience of the CMIs in Raigargh-Ambikapur mission proved to be beneficial for them to a great extent. Even the immigrant Christians to whom they were to cater was an unorganised group. They were considered aliens in their
own land. The local Christians were not familiar to the missionaries. They were familiar with a pattern of worship which was not practised by the new missionaries from the south. And as such even in the Latin Church much was not done on the vernacular front at that time.

In the (Syro-Malabar) oriental form of worship, practically nothing was done in north Indian languages. What they had was some rudimentary translations and songs of liturgical services done by Fr Prasannabai CMI and his companions in the exarchate of Chanda. In the beginning most of the missionaries had to depend on this and on the other texts of liturgical services available in the Latin Church. They came to a situation where they had no infrastructure, no support of the people, because they were not acquainted even with their own, no support of the language, and no support of the society at large. So they had to start everything from the zero point. Being an oriental Church she suffered from the non-availability of funds comparing to her occidental counterparts. With all these kind of debilities glaring at them, the missionaries from the Syro-Malabar Church ventured into the field in Madhya Pradesh.

Pope Paul VI was the reigning pontiff when all these exarchates of M.P were established. Msgr Clemens took Charge as the exarch of Sagar on 1st November 1968. Formal inauguration of the exarchate was held on 6th January 1969. When he took up the ministry of the exarchate however there were three communities of Catholics (Sagar, Shampura, and Bina) whose number was one thousand in total (Sagar-530, Shampura- 220, Bina 250).
Exarchate of Satna had only 335 Catholic population at the inauguration.\textsuperscript{5} Rewa was the only mission station existing at the inauguration of the exarchate. There was a small building at Rewa.\textsuperscript{6} Exarchate of Ujjain had a Catholic population of 220 people at its beginning. They were mainly in Nagda and Ujjain.\textsuperscript{7} "In these two places Bishop Simons of Indore had bought some acres of land."\textsuperscript{8} When the CMIs entered Jagdalpur there were 237 Catholics in the exarchate one school and two convents.\textsuperscript{9} The fathers who were there attended to the spiritual needs of the people.

4.2 Growth of the SM Exarchates During the Exarchate period

As I already stated the problems that these mission units were facing were very many. And in most of the cases all these places had similarity in problems and the solutions were also somewhat similar. First and foremost problem faced by these missionaries were the lack of accommodation for the missionary personnel. In most of the cases, in the initial days they had to find accommodation in rented buildings. Among the Syro-Malabar exarchates of Madhya Pradesh we can see a similarity of pattern during the exarchate period. Almost all the centres that the missionaries started in the beginning were, in the available towns or closer to the towns.
4.2.1 Growth of the Exarchate of Sagar

Exarchate of Sagar was the only mission unit which had three somewhat developed centres and that too with rather traditional Christians from military and elsewhere. "The present St Raphel's church came to existence on 24th October 1890 ... Sixteen years ago in 1874 Father Raphel Livorno O.Cap., then parish priest had laid the foundation stone of the church. Father Raphel had served the Catholic community of Sagar for a long time." Though there was a church and a small presbytery at Sagar there was no facility to house the exarch and his office. Slowly the missionaries started working on developing the infrastructure in different centres.

Shampura, a village near Sagar with Catholics alone had the beginning in 1875 when Fr Raphel Livorno came there with an orphan boy. Shampura has a long history of growth and development. In 1904 government granted 277 acres of jungle land to the orphanage. The Maltese Capuchins took over the management of Shampura in 1926 and in 1929 they handed it over to the Norbertines of Holland. In 1933 when it was brought under the Jabalpur prefecture, St. Joseph's Sisters of Champbery came to Shampura. 1968 it came under Sagar which was entrusted to the CMIs. Many CMIs like Frs Gerald, Diego, Prosper, George Chakkalackal and many others were the ones who developed the station. In the recent history Fr Paul a priest from the diocese of Sagar have contributed very much to the growth of the centre."
St Joseph Sisters came to Sagar in 1906 in order to replace the Loretto nuns who were already leaving Sagar. They took over the existing girls school and hostel. Mother St. Joseph, Srs Monica, Augustine, Ignatius, St. John evangelist, Josephine, Philomina, and Mary Francis along with three French sisters formed the first community. In 1969 the girls hostel was closed and a full-fledged English school was started by them.

Perhaps the first centre that came up newly in the exarchate of Sagar was the Holy Family church at Inthkheri in the district of Raisen. It was completed in record time within two months and was blessed by the Apostolic Nuncio, Rt. Rev. Caprio on his way to Sagar on 6th January 1969. This was a village station. There were Malayalee settlers in the area whose presence made it easier to accomplish the task. On the same day formal inauguration of the exarchate also took place at Sagar. Office and residence of the exarch was completed and was inaugurated on 8th December 1970.

In 1968 itself works to organise immigrant faithful in different areas of the exarchate had started. In Vidisha there were many Christian students in those days. And they were the majority of the faithful who attended religious ceremonies in the pioneering period. In 1968 itself church in Vidisha without a structure got started. Fr Cassius was the pioneer who organised everything initially. FCC sisters reached Vidisha in 1970 and started helping in the activities of the parish and started an English medium school with just seven children. Srs Mary Agnes, Christina, Lisset, and Agila were the pioneers among the sisters.
In 1970 CMC sisters reached Bina and started helping in the parish activities and in running a KG School of the exarchate. Pavitra Hridaya convent-Bina, was the first convent of the sisters’ congregations to start in the exarchate after Msgr Clemens CMI took charge.\textsuperscript{18} Already the parish church was functioning there from 1919 on railway lease land.\textsuperscript{19} The pioneers among the CMC sisters at Pavitra Hridaya convent were Srs Mary Zacharia, Rogellus, Climacus, Jasintha, and Vivian. Fr Basil CMI was the first parish priest from among the CMIs.\textsuperscript{20}

In 1971 a mission station was started in Asoknagar Thahsil headquarters. Along with the parish activities an English medium KG school also was stared by the CMC sisters there.\textsuperscript{21} In 1971 itself the Christian community of Ganj Basoda also got organised. Frs Joseph Puthenpurackal CMI and Abraham Thuruthimalil CMI were the founders of Jesupal Ashram at Ganjbasoda. The land for the church was purchased by Fr Antony Chiramel CMI and church was constructed by Fr Joseph Chirayath CMI.\textsuperscript{22} Helping in the parish activities and conducting an English medium school were started by the FCC sisters at Ganjbasoda. Here also they started in a rented building.\textsuperscript{23} Srs Christiana, Alexis, Canisius, Carla, and Socia were the first batch of sisters in Ganjbasoda.

The desire of the people for English medium school took the missionaries to Sironj. There upon the invitation of the local people Msgr Clemens agreed to start an English medium for them. They gave a municipal building rent free to start the school. In 1973 the Church opened an English medium school for the people. Fr Paul Malieckal was the
pioneer here. Since 1973 sisters from CSC Kerala render their services here. The pioneering batch included Srs Alphonsa, Alicia, Eulalia, and Gentia. By 1977 church managed to get a plot of land for the school and it was shifted to its own premises.

In 1971 Mrs Rebecca Diego an aged Catholic donated an old house and a plot of land to the CMI missionaries to whom the Christian activities in the exarchate of Sagar was entrusted by the Pope. From that time on CMI fathers started staying in this property and they have developed it with new buildings, church etc. Veteran missionary Fr Diego and Fr John Kallan and a group of scholastics were among the first inmates of the house which the community named as Carmel Ashram.\textsuperscript{24} The blessing of the repaired old building took place on 21\textsuperscript{st} November 1974.\textsuperscript{25} Even now the old timers call it ‘Chuyya bangla’ after the old lady who donated it.

In 1973 the mission station at Begumganj had its origin. Here also there were a few Catholics who were in government service. Benedictine Sisters of St. Lioba were rendering their services here in Begumganj and conduct a school of their own. The school was started in 1975.\textsuperscript{26} Thereafter many developmental changes have taken place in the mission centre.

Sisters of St. Elizabeth came to Guna in 1974 under the leadership of Sr. Beatrice. They too started in a rented house. Fr Jose Varghese CMI was the brain behind the over all development of the mission station. By 1975 they purchased a plot of land and they moved into their own
dwelling. In 1977 the new school building was inaugurated. Srs Mariat, Beatrice, and Grace were the pioneers.

One more group of missionaries from the MMB congregation came to the exarchate in 1975. By October 1976 they stated serving the people of Ganj Basoda through a dispensary and a home for the aged. Mission stations in Semarikalam of Raisen district and Raisen proper had their official origin in 1972 and 1976 respectively. Both the stations were managed by Fr. Harry Alapatt CMI. In Semarikalam it was medical service rendered by the Church. CSC sisters were helping the exarchate to run the dispensary from 1972 onwards. Fr Honorius CMI and Fr John Kollannur contributed much to the growth of the Semarikalam mission station.

Till 1975 the religious services in Raisen station were conducted in the house of one Mr M.T. Joseph. In 1976 onwards Fr Harry CMI was appointed as the priest in charge of Raisen and he started staying in a rented house. He was the one who moulded the station to its stature. In 1976 onwards members of the congregation of St. Francis started rendering their service in the field of education and in the parish activities. The sisters had purchased 12 acres of land in 1975.

In 1975 another plot of land was purchased in Sagar closer to the university with a view to develop a communication centre as well as to cater to the Catholic students who are studying in the university. But the authorities felt that the objectives with which Jyotibhavan was started
was met partially only because it was serving as the residence for the CMI scholastics who were doing their university studies.\textsuperscript{32}

Silwani was another mission station which was started during the exarchate period. Frs Diego CMI and Jose Kuruthukulangara CMI were the pioneers here. They reached Silwani in the Raisen district in 1975. First they started an English medium school which could not pick up due to the backwardness of the people. And they left that project and devoted their time and resources for developing the better living conditions of the people. This perhaps led to the starting of RDSS a registered society for social service. Fr Diego was the first president of the society.\textsuperscript{33} Pratapgarh, Bhamori, Siearmau, and Salaiyya mission stations developed under RDSS as its sub-centres, at a later time.

In 1976 itself a press had been started at Shampura which was later shifted to the city.\textsuperscript{34} Already before the exarchate of Sagar was made an eparchy the missionaries had extended to nine more new centres in her territory and this lifted the number of the Catholic institutions in the area to twenty five. And during this period saw the arrival of five more women religious congregations and one from the men religious congregations as the co-workers in the exarchate of Sagar.

Main thrust during this period was given in opening the English medium schools and in organising the scattered immigrant Catholics as a Church in these centres. All the centres opened, had a church though not a completed building to start with, a convent (the residence for the sisters), and a school or a dispensary according to the nature of the service
rendered by the Church there. In many places presbytery (residence of the priests) was constructed before the church itself.

4.2.2 Growth of the Exarchate of Satna

Satna exarchate had one established centre when the Vincentian congregation took up the activities in the area. Rewa had its beginning in 1947. Satna, Siddhi, and Nowgong were the centres which got started in 1969 after the Vincentian take over. Singrauli, and Panna mission centres were opened in 1970. Tikkamgarh mission centre had its beginning in 1972, Pateri in 1973, Karimatti in 1974, Kailaspur and Chhattarpur in 1975, Dewra, Jayant, and Odgady in 1976. Before the exarchate of Satna was made an eparchy she had extended her services to thirteen more centres in six districts. Let us see these centres a bit more closely.

Though Rewa was a mission station which was already existing Satna was to be the headquarters of the exarchate. It had its humble beginning on 26th January 1969. It was Fr Thomas Kuzhippala VC who had pioneered the centre at Satna. S.H sisters came here on 14th June 1973. They started living in a rented house and started teaching in the Vijaya Sishu Vidyalaya which was started by the exarchate. Slowly it developed into a fullfledged higher secondary school with its name Christu Jyoti Sshool. The pioneers among S.H sisters at Satna were Srs Divina, pious, and Genevieve. The convent was blessed by the exarch Msgr Abraham Mattam on 26th Jan 1975.
It was again Fr Thomas Kuzhippala VC who started the mission station at Siddhi in 1969. It was in Siddhi that FCC sisters started their service in the exarchate. They started teaching in the Gandhi Vidyalaya opened by the exarchate. Srs Boniface, Beena, Mariusha, Anaclete, and Aloysius were the pioneers of the convent. Only three of them were in the staff of the school.\footnote{40}

The mission station at Nowgong had its humble beginning when Fr John Rathappilly VC and Fr Chandy Kalapura started staying in a rented house in 1969. Service of the CSN sisters was made available to the station from 1970 onwards. Srs Nirmala, Stansila, and Basil were the pioneering team. In 1971 a KG school was started and it developed into a high school. Gandhi centenary memorial orphanage which was opened in 1971 caters to the destitute and physically challenged girls.\footnote{41}

From 1969 onwards the pioneer Fathers of the exarchate took care of the spiritual needs of the Catholic employees of the Northern Coalfields Limited at Singrauli. Though some land was purchased for the church in 1970 the construction started only at a later date. Fr John Kavunkal VC was the one who started construction work at the station. The church was blessed on 28\textsuperscript{th} September 1975 by the exarch. FCC sisters came to Singrauli in 1971. They were Srs Boniface, Lawrence, and Arcencia. In 1971 Christujayoti School had its beginning under the name MCM Sishu Vidyalaya in Hindi medium. In 1976 the construction of the convent was completed and inaugurated.\footnote{42}
Panna mission station had its beginning in 1970. Frs Emmanuel Paliakunnel VC and Mathew Thoyalil VC were the pioneers who started the activities there staying at a rended house called ‘lalkoti.’ The presbytery was ready in 1972.\textsuperscript{43} 1971 on 26\textsuperscript{th} June the ‘Lalkoti’ was given to the sisters as temporary residence. Before this they were staying in another rended house near the bus station at Panna. The first community of sisters included Sr. Venslaus, Florentine, and Annie Kalapurackal. In 1971 itself a new school was opened which eventually became Lisieux Anand Highschool.\textsuperscript{44} In 1973 an orphanage for boys also started. Fathers were taking care of this in the beginning.\textsuperscript{45}

Tikamgarh mission station was opened under the initiative of pioneering missionary Fr Thomas Kuzhippala. 1968 onwards he was offering holy mass at intervals at the residence of Mr. George Upendra Soreng SP of Tikamgarh. Staying in his house Fathers who came after him purchased a plot of land for the mission\textsuperscript{46} and by 1973 the church construction was completed and was blessed on 31\textsuperscript{st} January by the exarch Msgr Mattam.\textsuperscript{47} Sisters of SH congregation started rendering their services in Tikamgarh from 1973 onwards. Srs. Assumpta, Christy, Grace, Rose and Montfort were the members of the pioneering group. In 1973 itself one school also was started by the Church there.\textsuperscript{48}

Patteri which grew to be a formation centre of the eparchy had its beginning in 1973. This was a plot of 10 acres of land which was purchased and given by the diocese Jabalpur the mother diocese of the exarchate as a patrimony. Later some more land was purchased in view of development. By 1975 Br Thomas Chinnangathottathil started
supervising the farm. In due course a chapel was blessed for taking care of the spiritual needs of the people. By 1977 construction work for a hospital also commenced.\textsuperscript{49}

Karimatti which was named Udayagiri by the missionaries had its missionary beginning in 1974. Fr Antony Plackal VC was the one who began here. By 1975 CMC sisters reached here to render their services. The pioneers among them were Srs. Anslem, and Deena. A dispensary too was opened in 1975.\textsuperscript{50} An school also was started by the missionaries in 1974.\textsuperscript{51}

The starting of Chattarpur mission station was a long drawn process. The Asst. Parish priest of Nowgong used to offer Holy Mass at Chattarpur on Sundays. But it was conducted in different houses. In 1976 Fr John parayil VC managed to buy some land for the church though the church construction took place at a later date only.\textsuperscript{52}

Kailaspur mission station on the way to Chitrakoot was started by Bro. James VC. The Holy Mass for the community for the first time was celebrated by Fr varghese Naikomparambil VC on 10\textsuperscript{th} February 1975.\textsuperscript{53} it was the presbytery which was constructed first here. This was blessed on 20\textsuperscript{th} Feb 1977. Sisters of the Congregation of the Holy Family started rendering their service in running the medical clinic for people of the locality in 1977. Srs.Rose, Valerian, and Sudha were pioneers.\textsuperscript{54}

Organising Church activities in Jayant also was to cater to the spiritual needs of the believers who were employees in the coal mine. It had its
starting in 1976. The mission station has an English medium school too. CHF sisters help the exarchate to run the school. They came here in 1976. Sisters from other congregations also teach in the school here."\textsuperscript{55}

The starting of Dewra Mission station had its root in the Atharhar mission station started by Bro James VC in 1972. But the construction of the Bakia dam caused the centre to be shifted to Dewra. This took place in 1976.\textsuperscript{56} Fr Jacob Kalapura VC and John Vadakeparambil were the pioneers here. SH sitsers were here from the beginning of Atharhar.

Odagady station had its history from 1957. Some Christians were living here from that time onwards. From 1975 Fr John Kavunkal VC had been staying in a small hut to cater to the spiritual needs of the people. FCC sisters were serving the people of the area from 1976. There is a dispensary here. The construction of the church building took place at a later date only.\textsuperscript{57}

\textbf{4.2.3 Growth of the Exarchate of Ujjain}

We have already seen the beginning of a church at Ujjain by Frs Eric and Bernard. Already before the MST fathers took over sisters of FSMA congregation from Mhow were conducting a school in Ujjain. They came to Ujjain in 1964. The church which was there already became the Cathedral of the exarchate on July 28, 1968.\textsuperscript{58} SH sisters from Kerala came to Ujjain in 1969. They started rendering their service in the medical field. Staying in a rented house they started a dispensary in the
city. This was the seed of humble beginning of Pushpa mission hospital in 1974.

Shajapur was one of the first mission stations of the exarchate. It was Exarch J Perumattam himself who was the cause of starting a mission station at Shajapur. On 3rd December 1969 he paid a courtesy visit to the collector of Shajapur. Then he expressed the desire to have a good and a hospital run by the missionaries in the town. And the newly arrived missionary from Kerala Fr George Kuzhikandam took up this challenging task at Shajapur. By March 1970 a dispensary was opened and in July the school also was opened. FCC sisters are rendering their services from that time on.59

Rev Frs Francis Kandathil and Paul Naikarakudy the pioneer missionaries got acquainted with some government officials and they encouraged the Fathers to start a convent school at Shulgapur. Along with some believers they themselves found out the land for the purpose and the transactions were over in 1970. Fr Paul Naikarakudy began to live in a rented house at Shulgapur. Later Fr Paul made a temporary shed in the purchased land and started staying there by March 1971. In June 1971 sisters from FCC (Palai) arrived at Shulgapur to start their service. They too started in a rented house and in November they shifted to the school building. In 1973 a hostel for the boys also started. During Fr Thomas Varakil’s time a church was constructed.60

Nagda had a community of believers who were gathering in any one of the houses for Sunday worship. In 1970 Fr J Ayathamattam was
appointed as priest in charge. He started living in a house of one of the parishioners. Staying there he purchased a plot of land for the church. In 1971 they started an English medium school. By 1973 school got a new building. In 1974 a small beautiful church was added to the mission.

Chandassery mission station, started in 1970 is seven kilometres away from Ujjain. The land was purchased one year before. Frs Paul Naikaracakudy, Francis Kandathil and Joseph Karikilamthadam were the pioneers here. In 1970 itself SABS sisters started their service here. There is a small hospital here. The apostolate of medical care is done by the sisters.

Barnagar mission station had its seed in the local contact made in 1971 by Frs Plackeel, Valiyamangalam and Karikilamthadam. And they purchased a plot of land in the town. In 1972 Fr George Thoomkuzhy started staying in a rented house assisted by Bro Sebastian Elanjimattam. In 1974 under the leadership of Fr Puthenpurackal and FCC sisters, a dispensary and a nursery school were inaugurated. Later FCC sisters discontinued their service there and the DST sisters took up the service there. In 1976 Fr Jose Peringamala was appointed there and it was he who completed the construction work of the school and hostel.

Fr Augustine Kandathil took the initiative to start a mission station at Rajgarh. Organising the faithful there prompted him to enter into the service of the people here. In 1971 he purchased a plot of land from Raja Vikramadiya Singh and opened a school in the royal palace. By 1972,
the first floor of the building which was occupied by government officers were vacated. By 1978 the whole occupation of the building was vacated by the government. There is an English medium school here.\textsuperscript{67}

Piploda mission station of the exarchate of Ujjain had its beginning in 1972. Fr Francis Kandathil was the pioneer of the station. From March 1973 he started staying in a small mud house which was built at Piploda. In 1975 DST sisters joined him to render their services. A dispensary, hostel, and a school are run by the missionaries here.\textsuperscript{68}

The mission property at Kotra was purchased from the Rajgarh royal family in 1973. Since 1974 the mission orientation course for the sisters was conducted here. It also takes up non-formal education in nearby villages and has a dispensary.\textsuperscript{69}

Biaora mission station was started in 1973. Fr Zacharias Thudipara the pioneer of the mission station here started an English school in 1973 with the help of SH sisters. It was only in 1974 a plot of land was purchased for the mission and the construction work of the school also took place soon.\textsuperscript{70}

Narsingarh had Christian presence even before the inauguration of the exarchate. The request of the faithful to start a mission centre prompted the exarch to take steps in this direction. It was Srs Reena and Geena of DST who had the blessing to be the pioneers. They started a nursery school in the area. Fr Thomas Varakil was the priest in charge when the mission station was started.\textsuperscript{71}
Kamed can trace its origin in 1973 when MST Fathers wanted to buy a plot of land and start a regional house. Fr Placeel the regional director took interest to buy the land and constructed a small house. Fr Augustine Kandathil was the first priest in charge. 72 Slowly this developed into Ruhalaya major seminary.

From 1970 onwards priests and some SH sisters used to visit Bajrangarh and render their services through mobile clinic to the people. It was one of such visits and the medical assistance given to an injured person which was at the root of the starting of Bajrangarh mission station. The formal opening of the station was held only in the eparchy period.

Agar was another centre which sprouted during the exarchate period. Fr Jose Nedumthakidy was the pioneer of this station. It had its beginning in 1976. This station too had its development during the eparchy period.

4.2.4 Growth of Jagdalpur Exarchate

Jagdalpur exarchate had two mission stations when the CMIs took up the responsibility of the mission works in the exarchate. They were Jagdalpur and Kirandul. After the annexure of Bastar to the Prefecture of Raipur, Pilar Fathers Lulu Menesis and Nicolo Dias established Catholic church at Lalbagh in Jagdalpur. In Jagdalpur Fr Simonstock CMI was the pioneer among the pioneers from the CMIs. Fr Joseph Puthenpura CMI was the interim vicar for some time in place of Fr Simon Stock. Fr Michael Mundathanath was the founding principal of
Nirmala Vidyalayam which was started in 1972 itself in Jagdalpur. Since 1972 SABS sisters also started serving the mission station at Jagdalpur. Srs Concepta, Mary Joseph, Alice Thayil, and Mercy were pioneers among SABS sisters. The headquarters of the exarchate was also at Jagdalpur. In 1972 Msgr Paulinus Jeerakath CMI took charge of the exarchate.

Kirandul mission station had her beginning by Fr Ubaldo Fernandes of Pilar fathers from Raipur. There he started an English school with the help of Kristhu Sevika Sisters. Fr Kurian Machery was the pioneer among the CMIs who took charge at Kirandul. The management of the school was entrusted to the CMC sisters from Pala, in Kerala. Due to some unexpected and unforeseen problems, the management of the school was transferred to the exarchate in 1976. Srs Patience, Lucin Mary, Deepa, Catheline and Ansa were the first batch of CMC sisters who served at Kirandul.

Tom Sadan at Bijapur had its beginning in 1972. Fr Abraham Thuruthimalil CMI was the pioneer here. A plot of land was already purchased by Fr Satya of the Pilar Fathers before the CMIs come into the picture. Fr Abraham started living in a rented house and built a small house in the plot of land and shifted to it in 1973. In 1974 SH sisters reached here to render their services to the people of the locality. Srs Francis Mary, Mary Tom, and Ancy Augustine were the pioneers. It started as a medical care centre. Later boarding and parish church was added to it.
In 1972 itself Fr Thomas Vadaparambil CMI started the mission station at Kanker. He started in a rented house. CMC sisters also reached Kanker simultaneously. They run an English medium school. Srs Bulbina, Alphonse Maria, and Fabiola were the pioneers among sisters. There is a boarding, parish church, and a convent along with the school here.\footnote{76}

Since 1968 the spiritual needs of the Catholics of Bacheli was taken care of by fathers from Kirandul mission station. In 1974 CMC sisters started a nursery school in a couple of rooms of Kendriya Vidyalaya there. In 1976 DBS sisters took up the school management from CMC sisters. Srs Deepa and Ansa were the pioneers among CMC sisters, Srs Imelda and Maurelia were the pioneers from DBS sisters to run the school. Fr Kurian Machery CMI was the first priest in charge of the mission station. Fr Louis Mathew was the first manager of the school.\footnote{77}

In 1973 mission station at Geedom was started by Fr Joseph Puthenpura CMI. It served as the centre of CMI provincial administration for a short period.

Fr Augustine Srampickal CMI started a mission station near Narayanpur Thahsil. It was inaugurated on 20th February 1974. In 1976 ASMI sisters started rendering their services in the health care programmes of the centre. Srs Thekla, Louis Gonsaga, and Berta were the pioneers from the sisters.
Kondagaon started receiving the services of Christian missionaries through the initiative of Fr Antony Maris CMI in 1974. He started staying in a rented house, later purchased a plot of land in 1976 and constructed a small building. Snehagiri Missionary Sisters (SMS) from Kerala started rendering their services to the mission from 1977. Now there are two convents (CMC & SMS), an English medium school run by CMC sisters, an institute for the physically challenged (MC Brothers), and a parish church. Pioneers among SMS sisters were Srs Kusum, Sudha, Pradeep, and Sneha and from the CMCS Srs Pettit Treesa, Grace, and Merin. Both the groups of sisters help in the parish activities.

In 1974 Fr Thomas poothakuzhy CMI purchased a plot of land in Konta. In 1975 DBS sisters opened their first house in Konta. DBS was a pious association started by the Exarch. Srs. Mary Treesa, Deepa and Lilly were the pioneers among them. Parish, Boarding, dispensary etc are here.

Since 1973 Fr Simonstock was visiting Karithgaon. In 1976 Fr Simon Stock became the first priest in charge of the mission station. In 1976 itself MSMI sisters also started their service at Karithgaon. Dispensary, adult education centre, parish etc function here. Among the MSMIs Srs Sophy, Emily, Sosima, Xavier, and Leoni were the first batch to render their service.

Gangalloor of Bijapur Thahsil, started receiving the service of the Catholic missionaries since 1976 under Tom Sadan of Bijapur. With the initiative of SH sisters and Fr Abraham Thuruthimalil Gangalloor
mission station got started as a separate entity in 1977. Srs Crucifix, Anitta, Mary Tom (all from SH) and one Sr Kripalata of DBS were the pioneers. Later SH sisters left the place and DBS sisters catered to the services of the mission station.

In 1976 a plot of land was purchased by Fr Kurian Machery CMI at pally village near Jagdalpur. By 1977 a new Aspirants’ house of the CMIs was started at Pallygaon. Fr Emilian Vettath CMI was the first rector.

In 1977 the exarchate of Jagdalpur was raised to the status of eparchy with the Bishop. During the short period of exarchate Catholic institutions came up in 11 centres of which two already existed.

4.3 Growth and Development of Individual Eparchies

4.3.1 Growth of the Eparchy of Sagar

Sagar became a diocese/eparchy on 26th February 1977 by the decree of “Divinia Verba” of Pope Paul VI. In the same year Msgr Clemens became the first bishop of Sagar. He was consecrated as bishop on 25th April, 1977 by Arch bishop Eugene D’souza of Bhopal.  

After the erection of the eparchy of Sagar Sisters from the Congregation of Holy Family were the first ones to reach Sagar. They came to start the mission station at Khurai. They reached Khurai in 1977, in July and they started the apostolate of teaching. In 1980 they shifted to the premises provided by the eparchy in Khurai. Fr Mathachan was the pioneer to lead
the activities in Khuurai. Sr Theresitta, Gloria, Lissy Grace, and Satya were the pioneers from the sisters.

In 1978 a mission station was opened by Fr Sebastian Perepadan CMI in Bamhori. In 1983 St. Martha sisters reached here to render their services. In 1996 sisters were asked to terminate their services. There is no priest in charge appointed by the bishop there. Later the sisters came back to continue the services to the villagers.

In 1979 one more congregation of Sisters came to the service of the people of Sagar under the leadership of the Catholic eparchy of Sagar. It was in January 1979 the Missionaries of Charity opened their first house in Sagar. They started their service staying in a rented house. Since 1985 their services are operated from Madiya, in Sagar.

Since 1979 Pratapgarh in Raisen district too received the services of the Catholic Church. Fr Paul Perumpilly CMI started living in rented house in Pratapgarh. Due to prolonged litigation, missionaries could take possession of the house which they had purchased from a local man, only in 1981. And in 1981 itself after the inauguration three FCC sisters started living here. Bro Philip (now a priest) was the one who was managing the affairs when the mission station was officially inaugurated.

Guna, the district headquarters received the blessing of one more English School from the part of the Catholic Church when the CMI Fathers purchased a plot of land in 1979 in Guna for that purpose. They started a
high school in 1980 which eventually developed into a higher secondary school. Fr Jose Varghese Chirayath CMI was the main architect of this mission station. Till 1994 the parish activities were conducted from Christ home Guna. In 1994 the parish activities were made under another priest from the eparchy. The parish owns a plot of land for the church in the city.\textsuperscript{83}

Thakkur baba near Sagar, houses the generalate of the Jesus Sisters a congregation founded by Bp Clemens Thottungal CMI in 1980. Jesubhavan had its beginning in 1982 not as the generalate but as a novitiate house for the new congregation. Fr Jose Paul Eduthan CMI was the first priest in charge of the station and the director of the novices. Sr Alice CMC was the Novice mistress.\textsuperscript{84}

Since 1982 Jyothi bhavan Sagar became a communication centre and began to contribute to the all round growth of the Catholic Church of Madhya Pradesh and very specially the Syro-Malabar dioceses of Madhya Pradesh.\textsuperscript{85} Fr Paul Pallipadan CMI was the then director of the centre and Fr Antony Thaliaparambil CMI the assistant director. Since 1990 the activities of Jyothi Bhavan was limited only to regular parish work.\textsuperscript{86}

Majooskalam in the district of Raisen is a mission station started by Fr Raymond CMI. Fr George Chakkalackal constructed a church in the station. It was blessed in 1982. The parish activities and a few social action programmes are conducted here.\textsuperscript{87}
The Shahgarh mission station was started under the initiative of Fr Varghese Alengaden when he was the Cathedral priest in charge. Later Deacon Varghese took over from him. But soon Fr Diego CMI, the veteran missionary was appointed there to guide the pioneering works of the mission station at Shahgarh. By 1984, a small group of S.J sisters/postulants under the guidance of Sr Shanti started living here. Sr Nirmala and Deepti joined the community in the same year. This station was started with the intention of integral development of the people of the villages around. An English medium school was started here but had to discontinue due to several reasons. Here there is a Hindi medium school, a boarding, and small parish unit too.\textsuperscript{88}

Vandana Bhavan Jaisinagar was founded in 1985. This is also a village center of the diocese. Elizabethen sisters take care of this station. They run a lot of programmes for the social up-lift, in collaboration with the diocesan social service agency.\textsuperscript{89} Br Varghese Savari was the pioneer of the centre. Srs Reena, Karuna, and Lissy were the first batch of sisters who worked in the station.

Mandideep again is another mission station started in 1986. Fr George Thachan CMI was the first priest in charge who started organising this centre.\textsuperscript{90} Prior to this Fathers from nearby stations or from Poornodaya, Bhopal were taking care of the spiritual needs of the Catholics here. Later an English medium school and a parish were organised. In 1988 Sisters of Jesus also started rendering their services to the station. Sr Asha SJ was the first headmistress and Fr Joseph Chirayath CMI the first manager of the school.\textsuperscript{91}
In 1986 CMC sisters who are working North India from Nirmala province Trichur became a separate region. Sr Deepa became the regional Superior. This led to the establishment of Nirmal Jyoti convent at Bina in 1989. They conduct an English medium school also. The pioneers at Nirmal Jyothi were Srs Deepa, Caius, Ambika, Mercitta, and Rosella.\(^92\)

Dourana a place in Guna district had some Catholics in that area who were the employees of NFL. Since 1986 Fr Davis Vadakumpadan CMI the parish priest from Guna along with some sisters used to say Holy Mass for the faithful in some private houses. In 1988 a plot of land was purchased for the church and in 1989 a small church was constructed there. Now there is an English medium school and a convent also there.\(^93\) Sisters from the congregation of St. Martha serve here from 1997.\(^94\)

In February 1987 Bishop Clemens Thottungal CMI retired and in his place Bishop Joseph P Neelankavil CMI became the Bishop. He was made bishop by the papal bull “Resonant Saepenumero” of Pope John Paul II. He was born on 19\(^{\text{th}}\) March 1930 at Aranattukara near Trichur, in Kerala. He became a priest in the CMI congregation on 17\(^{\text{th}}\) May 1960. He is a doctor in Canon law from Pontifical Institute in Rome. He was consecrated as a bishop on 22\(^{\text{nd}}\) February 1987. Since then Bishop Pastor is at the helm of affairs of the diocese of Sagar.\(^95\)

Tada is a CMI centre, which again comes in the district of Raisen. Fr Sadanand Purattukara CMI was the pioneer of this mission station. It
was started in 1987. The centre takes initiative in community organisation and other developmental programmes. The origin of the mission station at Obaidullaganj goes back to 1975. The land for the station was purchased in that year. But it was 12 years later in 1987 only any construction was executed on the purchased land. It was under the initiative of Fr Joseph Chirayath CMI a convent and a presbytery was completed. A KG school and a formation house of the Sisters of Jesus are other activities here other than parish activities. Since 1989 the sisters are serving here. Srs Divya, Suma, Lissy Perepadan and the potulants were the first inmates of the convent.

The CMI s in Sagar started one more centre for their scholastics in the diocese of Sagar. They too started in a rented house. It was inaugurated in 1988. Prior to this in 1987 itself brothers had occupied the house. It was close to the university of Sagar. But the problem to get admission in the university after their novitiate and philosophical studies made the superiors to change this residence into the aspirants’ house. Fr Sebastian Perepadan CMI was the first rector.

The Catholic missionary presence at Naisarai can be traced back to 1989 when Fr John Kallan CMI along with some CMC sisters started a centre at Chandheri. Later it was shifted to Pranpur. But here also it did not last long. Finally it was shifted to Naisarai, a village 40 Kms away from Chandheri in the district of Guna. In 1989 under the leadership of Fr Pauly Thekken CMI and Sr Siji CMC, Naisarai mission station got started. CMC sisters Soona, and Jessin were the companions to Sr Siji in
her bold step. Due to lack of personnel it was closed down temporarily but was restarted again by Fr Shepherd CMI. Now there is a small school attached to the centre.99 S.J sisters are taking care of the school ministry.

Searmau mission station was started in 1989. CMI Fathers from Silwani used to visit this centre. This contact eventually led to the opening of this mission station. Sisters of Jesus render their service here. In 1996 sisters’ services were terminated. And the priest in charge was also removed.100 But the services were continued through some alternative arrangement made by CMI Fathers from Silwani. And after some time sisters were allowed to resume the service there.

The idea of a village mission station at Tulsipar of Raisen district was conceived by Fr Paul Pallipadan CMI. Benedictine Sisters of St. Lioba came here to share the responsibilities. Srs Rose Mary, and Jyothi were the pioneers among them. By 1989 the activities of Sevashram got started. Only in 1993 the station was shifted to its own completed building. Till then the Father and the sisters were living in the two rooms provided by a villager.101

Rehli had a handful of Catholics. On Sundays Fathers used to go to Rehli from Bishop’s House to celebrate holy Eucharist for the people. The decision to separate novitiate house of the Sisters of Jesus from the mother house led to the beginning of a mission Station at Rehli. Frs Jose Paul and George Thanchan helped the sisters to buy the land and to
supervise the construction. In 1990 Fr Michael CMI was appointed as the priest in charge. The novitiate was inaugurated in 1991.

Barodia mission station was started in the district of Sagar in 1991 in a rented room. Sisters of the Congregation of St. Martha were the missionaries who were directly involved in the mission. Srs Leena, Claire, Maria, and Ancy, were the pioneers. Fr Thomas Attumel was the first priest in charge and Deacon Varghese Savari was the station in Charge. There is a boarding, and a convent here. Parish activities also are there.¹⁰²

Bareli is a thahsil headquarters in the Raisen district. In 1994 Bp Joseph Pastor Neelankavil CMI erected a girl’s hostel for the convenience of girl students to study in nearby schools. Sr Philomina CSN and Sr Alice Jacob SJ were the pioneers of the venture. Fr George Thottungal CMI was the first priest in charge. His tireless efforts became fruitful when he purchased a plot of land in Dhanasari village near Bareli. And in 1995 the hostel was shifted to its own premises. Later (1996) the diocese opened an English school in the land which was purchased.¹⁰³

Fr prosper the then director of Jesubhavan Rehli, was the person who conceived the idea of a hospital in Jamghat. Accordingly land was purchased in Jamghat in 1994 and by 1996 the first floor of the hospital was ready and Srs Pavana, Leema, and Savita from SJ congregation started living there. And by 1997 the construction of the building was over and after obtaining the necessary permissions it was inaugurated on 24th April 1997 by Bishop Joseph Pastor CMI. Fr Paul Perumbilly CMI
and Sr Alice SJ were the people who toiled hard for the construction of the Hospital.\textsuperscript{104}

Sanchi mission station had its beginning in 1994 when a KG School was started in a rented building by the missionaries. Sisters of Jesus help the centre in running the school. Srs Shanti, Amrita, Rose, and Kripa formed the pioneer batch. By 1995 Fr Joseph Chirayath the Priest in Charge of the station managed to buy a plot of land for the mission and by 1999 the school was finally shifted to its premises.\textsuperscript{105}

Shampura had a decade of commendable growth in the last lap of 20\textsuperscript{th} century. The middle school, which was stopped due to financial difficulties, had already restarted in 1977. It was upgraded in 1994 as a high school and again as higher secondary in 1997. In 1998 a hostel for tribal girls and in 1999 a hostel for the tribal boys was started. They are taken care of by Samaritan sisters and Don Bosco Lay Brothers respectively. Later Asara Vikalang Bhavan was added to the centre. Here the OSF sisters render their service. In 2002 a separate parish church was also inaugurated for the parishioners.\textsuperscript{106}

Mission station at Gairathganj was pioneered by Fr David Mathew in 1995. Here the eparchy started an English medium school. Sisters of the congregation of St. Martha are rendering their service to the station. Srs Leema, Jeena John and Nisha were the pioneers among sisters.\textsuperscript{107}

Khajooria, the centre which houses the major seminary of the diocese at present, was purchased in 1994. The construction work was partially
completed in 1995 and the minor seminary of the diocese, which was functioning in Ganjbasoda under rector Fr Sebastian Nedungattil was shifted to Khajooria. The minor seminary functioned here till it was shifted to Bararu in 2002. For one year it was the place for the fourth year minor seminarians under rector Fr Abraham Kunnatholy CMI. During this year the incomplete construction was completed and the next year in June 2003 the major seminary of the diocese started functioning here.¹⁰⁸

Diocese had a rather big plot of land in Vidisha. In 1995 under the mission station some more activities were added. One more English medium school started functioning here. SJ sisters also came here to help the diocese in conducting the school. Srs Magi, Rose, and Treesa were the pioneering batch of sisters who served here. First it was the higher secondary school that started functioning directly under the diocese. Later the KG-X classes were also got underway. In 2000 the only college of the diocese of Sagar, was also started there. Fr Joseph Chirayath was the person behind all this growth.¹⁰⁹

The history of missionary journey to Makronia in Sagar, was a chequered one. The educational apostolate managed by the eparchy here started in 1995 at the Cathedral church premises. It was Fr Thomas Attumel who pioneered this institution. Later it was shifted to Ginda Barau. From there also, due to the bad roads they were compelled to shift the school to another site at Makronia, in Sagar. It was in 1999 that they finally got settled at Makronia. During its initial stage sisters of St. Martha rendered their service. Later SJ sisters took up the service from St. Martha
Sisters.\textsuperscript{110} Srs Grace and Siji were the first ones to serve Makronia Mission Station from the Sisters of Jesus.

Banda is a small town 30 K.M away from Sagar on the Kanpur Road. Under the leadership of Fr Jose Melekudy and Deacon Varghese Savari in 1996 one English school was started. Sisters of Jesus were helping in the teaching as well as in the parish activities from the beginning.\textsuperscript{111} Srs Preeti, Joycy, and Reshmi were the pioneers among the sisters.

The activities from Asoknagar mission station got widened with the erection of one more English school directly under the diocese in 1996. Fr Joseph Pulickan MST was the person behind the growth of this school. It is managed by the priest in charge solely with the help of lay staff.\textsuperscript{112}

Mohanpur was one of the village mission station started by Mr Gabriel a lay catechist in the district of Guna in 1999. In 2001 a priest in charge was given. At present there are a few catechist sisters of Don Bosco and sisters from the congregation of St. Ann from Kunkuri. They have a girls hostel for the poor of the locality.\textsuperscript{113}
4.3.2 Growth of the Eparchy of Satna

Gijwar is a village in the district of Siddhi. At the request of the sarpanch of the village Fr James Puthenpura VC started a dispensary in 1977. And in 1978 Frs Paul Kottaram and Paul Edasseril joined to develop this centre. SABS sisters started rendering their services in 1979. Srs Emily, Tessy, Vimala and Rosebell were the pioneers among the sisters.\textsuperscript{114}

Maihar, one of the famous Hindu pilgrim centres, started receiving services of the Catholic missionaries from 1978. The pioneers here, Frs John Kavunkal VC, Mathew Pothalil VC, and Bro Thomas Chinganathottathil VC started living in a rented house and later they purchased a plot of land. By 1981 DST sisters also came here to serve the people here. Srs Vijaya, Jaya, and Annet were among the first batch of sisters. Here there is a high school run by the missionaries.\textsuperscript{115}

MMB congregation reached the eparchy in 1978. They started helping the diocese in conducting a boarding house at Panna. Bros Victor and Varghese were the pioneers. They have a press also here. It was started in 1984. Since 1999 Panna mission station started receiving the services of SD sisters. Srs Libia, Bhagya, and Pushpa were the first batch of sisters serving here.\textsuperscript{116}

One more feather was added to the growth cap of Singrauli mission station in 1979. Eparchy opened a hospital for the people of the locality.
Along with this small team of FCC sisters started health work by visiting and distributing medicine in the surrounding villages.\textsuperscript{117}

Khajuraho, a place of religious and tourist importance, also started receiving the services of Catholic missionaries from 1982. Fr Kuriakose Pallikunnel VC was the pioneer of this mission station. SD sisters started rendering their services here in the educational as well as pastoral apostolate from 1986. Srs Collette, Salesia, and Consolata were the founding members.\textsuperscript{118}

Pateri the formation centre of the diocese received a shot in the arm during the eparchial period. The construction of the SD Convent and Samaritan Hospital and the consequent coming of the SD sisters to Patteri took place in 1979. Srs Divina, Rosella, and Jancy were the pioneers. Construction of the pastoral centre of the eparchy was stared in 1983 and the first floor was completed in 1985. Fr Mathew Vaniakizhakkel VC was the first director. An orphanage (in 1998), a school for the mentally retarded (in 1999), SABS Provincial house (1997), and different formation houses were also added to Patteri at different times.\textsuperscript{119}

The first Catholic missionary to reach Prithvipur was Bro Thomas Kunnel VC. In 1986 Fr Joseph Peechanatt VC the parish priest of Tikamgargh mission station, purchased a plot of land. In1987 Fr Jose Kalapura started to stay in Prithvipur. It is only during Fr Augustine Naduvilepurayidom’s time that a residence for the missionaries were
built. In 1988 Preshitharam Sisters also came there. There is an English school also here.\textsuperscript{120}

Waidhan also had its beginning in 1986. Fr Kuriakose Pallikunnel was the first priest in charge. SABS sisters also serve here. Srs Elise, Celine, and Sr Pushpa were the pioneers among sisters. There is an English medium school also here.\textsuperscript{121}

Kund is a mission station situated on the Rewa-Satna road. At the invitation of the people of the village missionaries opened a dispensary at Kund. In 1987 foundation was laid for the construction work in the purchased land and in 1988 Bp Mattam blessed the new institutions. SH sisters are helping in the mission station since 1988. Srs Josetta, Mary, and Mary Paul were the pioneers. First priest in charge of the station was Fr Raphael Tom Vezhaparambil VC.\textsuperscript{122}

Vindhya Nagar is a place about 270 Kms away fro Satna. It is near Singrauli and Waidhan. It was the dream of the Christians there to have a church at Vindhya Nagar. In 1992 Fr George Vembilly, the priest in charge laid the foundation and the construction was completed in 1999. Before the church there was a Vincentian house and attached to it there was a school since 1984. Fr Antony Kakkanat VC was the pioneer of the station. Sisters of the Handmaids of Mary are serving here since 1984. Srs Mary Chakkalackal, Alexia, Martha Kujur, Rosilind, Fatima, and Clementina were the pioneers.\textsuperscript{123}
The mission station at Deosar extents its historical roots to 1993 in the purchasing of a plot of land by Fr Francis Thottumariyil MST. Later in 1996 Fr Augustine Pullolickal and Bro Benchamine started living in a rented house. Later a school and a boarding was constructed. 1996 onwards DST sisters are rendering their services to the centre.\textsuperscript{124}

In 1994 the mission station at Niwari had its birth. Though the land was purchased by the concerted effort of different fathers Fr James Chempamkulathil was entrusted to look after the affairs of the purchased land. Later a school for the mentally retarded people was started. Preshitharam sisters takes care of them.\textsuperscript{125}

Rewa station got further developed through the presence of SH sisters (1998). In 1999 they started a convent there. They conduct one English medium school near VC Provincial house.\textsuperscript{126}

In 2000 Bishop Abraham Mattam VC retired and in his place Msgr Mathew Vaniakizhakel VC became the new Bishop.

4.3.3 Growth of the Eparchy of Ujjain

Mission station at Harsodan was inaugurated in 1979. Fr Albert Lucas who was from MP along with SMC sisters Elsy Tom, Snow Mary, and Theresina laid the foundation of the mission here. In 1980 they started a Hindi medium school and in 1983 a dispensary. In 1985 a beautiful church was also constructed here.\textsuperscript{127}
“Mana is a village mission station started by Fr George Kavukatt in 1979.” Fr George started living under a tree in the Mana village. Sisters of St. Joseph joined him in the missionary endeavours. In 1980 sisters opened a dispensary. A convent was built only in 1983. A church was added in 1988.

Since 1978 Agar mission station started receiving the services of Snehagiri Sisters. Srs Pushpa, Pavitra, and Prabhat were the pioneers. They started an English medium school. Slowly the convent, school building, a church, etc., were added.

Khadi is an interior village in Shajapur district. The eparchy of Ujjain opened a mission station in 1979. Fr Thomas Varakil was the pioneer who breathed life into the activities of the station. The Village panchayath provided the land for a dispensary and a school. In 1980 the dispensary building was inaugurated. FCC sisters reached here to serve the people. Pioneers among them were Srs Pauline, Sancta, Maria, Therese, and Nirmala.

Malikhedy is a village in the district of Ujjain. Under the leadership of Fr Abraham Aykara, in 1979 a mission station was opened here. He managed to purchase a plot of land. In 1979 CMC sisters Agnel, Jain Francis, and Joslin, reached Malikhedy. They were from the province of Pala in Kerala. But in the same year they were replaced by sisters from Changanacherry in Kerala. A dispensary, church etc are here at the service of the villagers.
Susner is a border village/town in the district of Shajapur. Catholic missionaries reached here only in 1980. In 1980 there was a great drought and the district administration asked the co-operation from the missionaries in providing drinking water facility to the villagers. Fr Sebastian Elanjimattam of Agar mission extended his help. Others those who came after him also co-operated. "As the support from the government was not coming as expected, the missionaries had to give up the idea of collaboration with the government." So the missionaries entered into the action to alleviate the suffering of the people for drinking water through different schemes of the Church. Fr Abraham Pandampadam who was appointed to start a mission station had to go from here due to his sickness. The void created by the retirement of Fr Abraham was filled by Fr Tom Kakkaniyil. DST and SMS sisters joined in this apostolate by staying in a rented house. By 1981 a plot of land was purchased by the mission and slowly a church, boarding, convent, presbytery and a school function here.

Zirapur is a big village in the district of Rajgarh. The mission station at Zirapur was inaugurated in 1981. It was opened in response to the repeated requests of the local people. Snehagiri Missionary sisters render their service here. They started with a school in a rented old building. But abruptly they had to vacate the place. In 1982 the missionaries moved to their own premises. Fr Joseph Kapiliparambil, Srs Manoj, Reni, and Pavana were the pioneers here.

Udenkhedi village mission station was started by Fr John Kizhukarakatt in 1981. he started living in a lodge and from there he managed to buy
some land in the village Udenkhedi. In 1984 two sisters from the
congregation of St. Agatha reached the station. They were Srs Victoria
and Genova. There is a small dispensary there.\textsuperscript{137}

Maksi was another mission station which was started in 1981 in the
eparchy. Fr George Thoomkuzhy was the man behind opening of the
missionary services at Maksi. In 1982 DST sisters came here to assist the
Father in the development of the station in a meaningful way. Now there
is an English medium school, convent, church, presbytery etc., here.
Social action programmes are also taken care of from the centre.\textsuperscript{138}

St Paul’s convent school at Makodia-am, in the city of Ujjain was started
by Fr George Thookuzhy. CMC sisters render their services to conduct
the school. Srs Mary Grace, Tresa Grace, and Lilliesa were the pioneers.
The land for the school was purchased by Fr Joseph Vadakechirayath and
the foundation stone for the school was laid by the then Chief Minister
Arjun Singh in 1983. The school imparts education in English as well as
in Hindi medium.\textsuperscript{139}

In 1983 itself Ujjain station received a vocational training centre. Fr
George Thoomkuzhy and Joseph Vadakechirayath mooted the idea of
this apostolate and Fr Kuriakose Vadana led this dream to reality.\textsuperscript{140}

Fr Sebastian Mullamangalam was the person behind the starting of a
mission station at Sarangpur. The goal of this centre was to reduce
illiteracy. Sisters from SABS congregation help in the educational and
pastoral apostolates of the centre. A church was also built here in 1990.¹⁴¹

Missionaries from Shujalpur used to visit Jamner occasionally. Sisters with the medical help, non-formal education etc., were in contact with the villagers here. People were happy with the services they were receiving from the missionaries. Since 1984 under the leadership of Fr Varakil a plot of land was purchased and a small mud house was built. FCC sisters also are rendering the services here.¹⁴²

Fr Alexander Pinamarukil purchased a plot of land at Bercha, in 1984 when he was in charge of Shajapur mission station. Fr Jacob Tharakunnel was appointed as the first priest in charge at Bercha in 1984 itself. The same year FCC sisters joined the mission and in 1985 and they opened a KG school in the village of Thilavad. Already in Bercha one was in progress. At present a boarding, primary school, and different social uplift programmes are going on at the centre.¹⁴³

In 1984 the eparchy of Ujjain started a printing press. And the service there was entrusted to the St. Martha’s congregation. They have a convent adjacent to the press.¹⁴⁴

Pachore mission station had its beginning in 1985. This mission station also had its beginning with the request of the people to start a school in the town. The missionaries started a school in a rented building. Till 1990 Sisters were coming from Udenkhedy to teach in the school. By 1987 the mission station had its own land and in 1990 the school was
shifted to their own building. Fr Augustine Vellaramkuzhy was the first priest in charge. Since 1997 the mission station has a charismatic prayer centre where the CMC sisters also serve.

Missionaries of Charity extended their services to Ujjain in 1985. Mother Theresa inaugurated their house in 1986 when she visited Ujjain. A plot of land was provided by the M.P government, upon the desire of the Mother to the mission. A house for the destitute was built in this land and was inaugurated in 1990.

Mendya mission station houses the MST regional house. It was started in 1986 by Fr Zacharias Thudippara who was the regional superior at that time. Later SH sisters also established their regional house which eventually became their provincial house and their novitiate house. They run a dispensary also for the comfort of the villagers.

A piece of land was purchased in 1986 near village Ghonsla by the eparchy for a minor seminary. Fr Augustine Puthenpura was appointed to oversee the construction work. Though the construction was started it was stopped due to scarcity of funds. By 1991 construction was completed and minor seminary which was functioning at Chandessary was shifted to the new premises. By 1995 a 10 beded hospital also came up. It is staffed by SABS sisters.

Bachukheda is a small village from the Ujjain city. Fr Francis Kandathil is the pioneer of this mission station. He purchased a plot of land in Bachukheda village on the Ujjain – Mehidpur road in 1988. A temporary
brickhouse was built and Frs Kurian Valiamangalam, Joseph Karikilamthadam, and Francis Kandathil started living there from 1988. By 1989 four small houses were built and these fathers occupied one each and one was kept as a chapel. The new venture was blessed by bishop in 1989.¹⁵⁰

Ambodia is a village in the Ghattia thahsil, in the district of Ujjain. The mission station at Ambodia came up to cater to the religious needs of the Christian workers who were employed at the Gamhir Dam. Fr Albert Lucas used to visit this dam site and on one such trip he came into contact with the Christians who told him about their inability to attend Sunday mass. Fr readily arranged for the holy mass and slowly this led to the birth of this mission station. St. Martha sisters came forward to help in this mission station. A school, dispensary, boarding house etc are functioning here.¹⁵¹

Since 1989, Malavanasa a village near Ujjain started receiving the Catholic missionary services. This is a centre where the SABS sisters conduct an English medium school. It was started in a rented building. But by 1991 they purchased a plot of land and started construction. The school building was completed in 1994.¹⁵²

Joint efforts of Fr Augustine Puthenpura and Fr Joseph Ayathamattam paved the way for opening a mission station at Mehidpur in 1990. In the same year SM sisters also reached here to join hands in the missionary work. Convent, nursery school, and a boarding are here.¹⁵³
Fr Augustine Puthenpura opened a mission station in between two villages, Bhutia and Avila in 1991. It is in the district of Ujjain. He started staying in a rented room at Bhutia and from there he managed to purchase a plot of land for the mission. In 1993 he started a hindi medium school. Since 1995 sisters of SABS congregation also are serving here. The pioneers were Srs Annie, Ancy, and Betsy.\textsuperscript{154}

Fr Joseph Karikilamthadam moved out of the trio who were having an experimental style of Ashram life in Bachukheda and started moving with the people in and around Duletia. In 1991 he purchased a plot of land and started living there as a Christian guru. There he was running a non formal education centre.\textsuperscript{155}

Tarana is a village mission centre started in Ujjain district by the eparchy in 1991. Fr George Thoomkuzhy the priest-in-charge of Kanasiya bought a plot of land in Tarana. Later in 1991 Fr Joseph Kizhakethottam was appointed as the priest in charge of Tarana. Daughters of St. Thomas the Apostle reached to serve in Tarana. In 1993 an English medium school was started. DST sisters were helping in the school.\textsuperscript{156}

Kilchipur can be considered as the extension of city mission of Ujjain-proper. DST sisters opened a house in view of working for the mentally retarded children. In 1991 they started living in a rented building. By 1993 they shifted to the new building at Kilchipur. They run a special school for the mentally challenged children.\textsuperscript{157}
The pioneering work at Akodia near Shujalpur was done by Fr George Thoomkuzhy when he was the in-charge of Shujalpur. When he was transferred the work at Akodiya was temporarily cancelled. In 1995 Fr Tom Kakkany MST was appointed as the priest-in-charge of the station and he purchased a plot of land and started an English medium school. FCC sisters help in the missionary activities here.\textsuperscript{158}

In 1998 bishop John Perumattom MST retired and Msgr Sebastian Vadakel MST was nominated as the bishop of Ujjain. He assumed office on 8\textsuperscript{th} September 1998.\textsuperscript{159} Bishop Vadakel hails from Vilakumadam parish of Pala diocese in Kerala. He joined the missionary society of St.Thomas the Apostle in 1968 and was ordained in 1979. He had his higher studies in canon law. While he was serving the society in the capacity of the superior general of the missionary society he was elected as the bishop of Ujjain.

Kayatha was a mission station that was started in 1999 by Fr James Mandapam. There is a school and parish. Sisters of St.Martha congregation render their services here.

**4.3.4 Growth of the Eparchy of Jagdalpur**

Keskal Mission station had its development starting from the exarchate period. Though the initial activities to start the mission station, like purchasing the land etc., took place in 1976 when Fr Antony Maris CMI was incharge of Kondagaon. It was officially started in 1978 during Fr J.C Prasad CMI’s time. FCC sisters reached Keskal to cater to the needs
of the people in 1998 only. Pioneers among them were Srs Lucina, Silvi, Divya, and Jeena. Dispensary and parish activities are the main programmes of the station.\textsuperscript{160}

Adaval too had the same story of its development. The land was purchased in 1975 by Fr Jose Palathara CMI. It was developed as a mission station by Fr Michael Mundathanam CMI in 1978. Snehagiri Missionary sisters started rendering their service here in 1978. Srs Karuna, Asha, Santwana, and Sneha were the pioneering batch of sisters. Here there is a home for the aged. It is also developed as the central office of the department of social work of the eparchy.\textsuperscript{161}

Even though Pottanar had some contacts with Catholic missionaries since 1974, it was only in 1978 this also got established as a mission station. Fr Thomas Jaisam CMI was the man behind the development of this centre. In 1978 a dispensary was built. In the same year SABS sisters reached here to render their service to the people. And in 1980, a diary farm also was developed by the mission. Pioneers among sisters were Srs Mary Joseph, Ancy, and Rosily.

Fr Thomas Poothakuzhy CMI purchased a plot of land in 1976 in Chintgarh, when he was the priest in charge of Konta station. Bro Joseph Vadakekannamchira CMI built a small house in 1979 and it was blessed by bishop mar Paulinos CMI. It was the beginning of Chintgarh mission station. In 1984 DBS sisters started their service here. Srs Lilly, Ancy, Merly, and Maria were the first batch to serve here. Parish, dispensary,
convent etc., are here. Mobile section of the dispensary was managed by Bro Gabriel Kookakalayil CMI. 162

Kothagaon mission station was started in two houses donated by the villagers in 1978. Fr Thomas Tharappel CMI was the pioneer of the station. CMC sisters reached here to render their service in 1978. The pioneers among sisters were Srs Christella, Deepa, Jessy, and Treesa. Dispensary and social uplift programmes are managed from the mission station. 163

Chivurgaon was developed as a centre of educational, medical and social uplift programmes by the missionaries. Upon the request of the people the station was started in 1980. Fr Simon Stock CMI was the first priest in charge. MSMI sisters also came here in the same year. There is a hindi medium school and a dispensary here. The pioneers among sisters were Srs Treesa George, Mary Thomas, Sophy, Lovely and Clare Jose. 164

Fr Abraham Malieckal CMI brought a plot of land in Koppaguda in 1980 to build a formation house for the DBS sisters. By 1982 some simple construction was over and the sisters started their postulancy and novitiate. The pioneers among sisters were Mary Treesa, and Lilly. 165

MSMI sisters reached Geetham in 1981. Srs Philcy, Lilly, Celine, and Rose Anto were the pioneers. They teach in the school and help in all other activities of the centre.
Dugoli was taken care of by Fathers from Bijapur mission station. In 1983 Fr Thomas Vadaparambil started a station with a small mud chapel. Since 1988-89 SH sisters are serving here. In 1992 a CMI aspirants’ House also was started here. At present an English medium school, boarding, parish church etc are functioning under this mission station.\textsuperscript{166}

Fr John Edakattuthara started a mission station in 1982 by staying in a rented house and purchased some land in 1983 in Sukma. Since 1990 DBS sisters are here serving the people in various ways. Srs Deena, and Moly Mathew were the pioneers among sisters. Parish activities and the social uplift programmes are the main activities of the mission station.\textsuperscript{167}

Dewda mission station started as a farm of the eparchy in 1984. The land was purchased by Fr Jose Palathara CMI in 1988. St. Martha sisters (SMC) started their house in the farm land. Srs Emir, Daya, and Julie were the pioneers. Fr Peter Kuppayil was the first resident priest (1990).\textsuperscript{168}

Bhanpuri mission station had its beginning in 1985. it was converted into CMI novitiate in 1989. Fr Joseph Kavalam was the first rector. CMC sisters reached Bhanpuri in 2000. They conduct an English medium school and a formation house here. Sr Christella was the pioneer among sisters.\textsuperscript{169}

Bande was a mission station started by Fr Peter Kuppayil in 1986. But the services of the station were discontinued for some time. Only in 1991 the mission station was reopened by Fr Alexander Maramattam CMI. At
present there is a boarding, dispensary, and parish activities. Since 1993 SMS sisters are serving here. Srs Daisy, Rajani, and Rosily were the pioneering batch.

In 1987 Bhiragaon mission station was pioneered by Fr Kavalam CMI. It was developed by Fr Kurian Puthumana CMI. CMC sisters started their services in 1987 itself. Srs Christella, Mary Joseph, and Shantini were pioneers among sisters. There is a dispensary and a boarding.

Dharampura was a centre developed by CMIs as their administrative headquarters in 1987. Fr Thomas Manickam CMI was the provincial at that time. In 1992 SABS sisters also made their regional house here. Mother Concepta was the regional superior at that time.

In 1990 Cathedral church at Jagdalpur was inaugurated. The same year bishop Paulinus died of blood cancer and Fr Kurian Macheril became the administrator. During his time (in 1991) Telly Maranga mission station had its beginning. This is a formation house of the SABS congregation. The land was provided by the eparchy. Telly Maranga serves as a postulants' novitiate house of the congregation. Sr Alphonse Mupathumkalam was the first in charge of the house.

Nelsnar was also started in 1991. This is a CMI centre. The land was purchased by Fr Thomas Jaisam CMI in 1992. Fr Abraham Kochukarackal was made the first in charge. The centre gives pastoral assistance to the needy.
Pahurbel was started in 1991. the land was purchased by Sr Immaculate MSMI. Since 1993 the MSMI sisters render their services here. They conduct an English medium school. The first batch of sisters who served here were Srs Immaculate, Suja, and Shanti.\footnote{174}

In 1993 Mar Simon Stock Palathara CMI became the bishop. After his becoming the bishop, Pakkanjore was the first centre to be developed. This is a mission station where SABS sisters run an English medium school. It was started in 1994. Srs Liberta, and Ranitta were the pioneers. Malabar Missionary brothers started rendering their service in the diocese in 2000. They take care of a boarding house for boys at pakkanjore.

In 1996 minor seminary for the diocese was opened at Parappa. Fr Varghese Erumachadath MST was the first rector. In 1997 a hospital with 50 beds were opened by the eparchy at Aghanpur in Jagdalpur. Fr Jose Palathara was the first director.

In 1998 SABS sisters started a centre for the mentally challenged at Kolchur. Later this was transferred to Aghanpur in Jagdalpur and Kolchur became a prayer centre and formation house for the congregation. Pioneers at Kolchur were Srs Pettit Maria, Tess Flower, and Ans Maria. CMI regional theologate also functions here in Kolchur.\footnote{175}
4.4 Major Activities, Special Thrusts and Personnel

The creation of Syro-Malabar Exarchates in M.P into Eparchies had its impact on the growth of these units. Higher respectability brought on them higher responsibility too. The initial birth pangs became less and slowly planned development was executed in all these eparchies.

The major initiatives in these dioceses seem to be in the educational front. The statistics of each diocese will tell us this is true. According to the Statistics of the diocese of Ujjain they run 127 institutions which are directly or indirectly functioning to impart education. This includes hostels, balwadis, and non-formal education centres and formal schools. Next slot may go to health care activities. In the diocese of Ujjain there are 19 centres which have health care activities as their thrust. This is the case with other dioceses too. Only the numbers are different. Topmost priority is given for the spread of education in all these dioceses/eparchies.

During the eparchial period also the thrust to extend to the new places continued. During the last decade of 20th century all these eparchies have established their own minor seminaries, in view of training the missionary personnel for the future.

The existence and life of a Church is not merely in extending the external structures, but also includes the invigorating the Christian life of its members. For this the individual dioceses have done their bit. But it was the diocese/eparchy of Sagar which took the lead in this direction. In
view of this Bishop Clemens had established a centre at Jyothibhavan-Sagar. The activities guided from Jyothibhavan were many. It served as a Catholic information centre, organised youth forums (Started a student movement called SUNS. It had its own mouthpiece called “Pratibha”), Jyothikalasagar, a department which communicated the word of God through performing arts, and managed a liturgical and catechetical centre which prepared and published material for liturgy in Hindi. The liturgical and catechetical centre had three active wings under this. They were: Jyothi Publications, Jyothi Audio-Visual centre, and Jyothi library.  

The period between 1982-1990, Jyoti Audio-Visual centre brought out 13 cassettes in Hindi. They are Hosana, Vandana, Jai Masih, Pukar, Abhishek, Upasana, Pushpanjali, Aradhana, Sandesh, Sradhanjali, Tarang, and Navdhara. Dhara was brought out prior to 1982. Sradhanjali was brought out sometime after 1990. The contributors to these cassettes in lyrics and music were Frs James M.L, Varghese Alengaden, Paulachan, David Chalackal, Sebastian Eluvathingal, Amarnad, and Mr P.P Johnson.

Publications under the diocese of Sagar during this period were: Pratah Upasana, Office for the dead both by Amarnad CMI, Croos ka Rastha by Fr Michael and Amarnad. Almost all the dioceses had done some sort of compilations of song books like Bastranjali, Geetanjali etc. Sagar diocese under the patronage of Bishop Joseph Pastor had initiated the canonical prayer books in Hindi (four volumes). The translation work was done by Fr Michael Palamparambil CMI. With the help of Fr
Michael the diocese has brought out Hindi texts for various occasions like priestly ordination, Christmas and Year ending services, Rosary in the song form, New set of Mass songs etc. In 1990 Jyothibhavan became a full-fledged parish and other activities were stopped.\textsuperscript{179}

In 1998 bishop Joseph Pastor Neelankavil of Sagar eparchy entrusted Fr Paul Pallipadan CMI the department of communication and Mass Media and he started a new venture named Navtarang. It takes care of the media production and performing arts, for liturgy, religious and national integration. The major productions of the centre are audio-visual cassettes Tara, Christ Jayanthi vol. I & II, Navgeet, Ashish, Dhyana Vachan, Shantisudha, Prahbu ke Sath vol.1-5 and Ish Charit vol I & II, Pascha, Seva, Vante Mataram, and Upasana, & Abhishek (remake). Some of these productions are in Bundeli. The lyrics are written by Fr James ML, Francis David, Sr Mercy OSB, Fr Paul Pallipadan, Sr Sheila Kannath CMC and Ashok. The music is given by Mr Matthew Cleton, Mr P.P Johnson, Mr Dilip Bose, Mr Anoop Sharma, Fr Amarnad, and Fr Sebastian Eluvathingal.\textsuperscript{180}

All the dioceses have their quarterly news bulletins. Jagadlpur and Sagar have got one each college run by them. Satna, Jagdalpur, and Ujjain have hospitals with better service facilities. Though all these eparchies except Jagdalpur (1972), was started (1968) simultaneously, they differ one another in the different aspects of growth.

Numerical growth of the Christians in these dioceses have come mainly from immigration. The more they spread to different centres the more
Christians also come there for different services. There is a departure from the old style of preaching and baptising among Catholics. This may be the reason that their numbers are not increasing as their centres increase.
Notes

1 They were established in places where the Christian population was meagre.
2 In 1968 anti conversion bill /the freedom of religion bill was passed in the State Assembly.
3 Chanda (under Nagpur Archdiocese) was made a Syro-Malabar Exarchate in 1962.
4 In SICO, p.5.
5 in SICO, p.6.
7 in SICO, p.7.
8 Apostolic Exarchate of Ujjain, p.7.
13 Information given by sisters of the Convent from their first Chronicle.
14 Directory Diocese of Sagar-1983, p.11.
17 Sagar Eparchial Directory-2003, p.84.
19 in The Jubilee and the Jubilee Celebrations, S.H Church and Pavitra Hriday Convent Bina, p.35.
21 Sagar Eparchial Directory-2003, p.27.
22 Directory Diocese of Sagar-1983, p.29.
26 Sagar Eparchial Directory-2003, p.34.
27 Sagar Eparchial Directory-2003, p.44.
28 Directory Diocese of Sagar-2003, p.35.
29 Directory Diocese of Sagar-1983, p.35.
32 Directory Diocese of Sagar-1983, p.16.
34 Sagar Eparchial Directory-2003, p.68.
35 All these years are taken from the Eparchy of Satna Directory 2003. When we speak about the individual stations page number will be quoted.

Thadikkat, Mission Stations of the Diocese of Sarna, in Jubilee Souvenir of Bp. Mattam, p.44.


Thadikkat, Mission Stations of the Diocese of Sarna, in Jubilee Souvenir of Bp. Mattam, p.44.


Chakkungal and Co, A Glance at Ujjain Mission, in Souvenir St.Mary’s Cathedral Ujjain, p.139.


Details from Eparchy of Jagdalpur Directory-2004, p.37, & From a discussion with Fr K Macheril.

Details from Eparchy of Jagdalpur Directory-2004, p.29, & From a discussion with Fr K Macheril.

Details from Eparchy of Jagdalpur Directory-2004, p.31, & From a discussion with Fr K Macheril.

Details from Eparchy of Jagdalpur Directory-2004, p.40, & From a discussion with Fr K Macheril.

Details from Eparchy of Jagdalpur Directory-2004, p.32, & From a discussion with Fr K Macheril.

Details from a discussion with Fr K Macheril.

Details from Eparchy of Jagdalpur Directory-2004, p.34, & From a discussion with Fr K Macheril.

Details from Eparchy of Jagdalpur Directory-2004, p.43, & From a discussion with Fr K Macheril.

Details from Eparchy of Jagdalpur Directory-2004, p.33, & From a discussion with Fr K Macheril.

Details from a discussion with Fr K Macheril.


Details regarding Jyothibhavan activities are collected from Frs. James M.L & Amarnad.

Details are given by Fr Pallipadan Director of Navtarang - Sagar.