



The Church Of India - CIPBC

## Memorial Church Anglican – Whitefield

Consecrated 1886

Main Road, Whitefield, Bangalore 560 066



### **HON. SECRETARY'S REPORT 2016 / 2017**

Once more we come to the end of another year, and with God's grace, our little church continues its regular calendar. Now with a full time resident vicar, we are able to function much better.

#### **Congregation:**

Our congregation is still quite small, but we enjoy a healthy sound fellowship. We have twelve Tithing members, sixteen Communicant worshipers, and fourteen floating worshipers.

We welcomed Fr. Suthi Gabriel last April (2016). We had supported him through his studies, and when these were over he joined us in April 2016 as the Metropolitan, the Rt. Rev. John Augustine had promised. He comes to us with his wife and two children. We have put them up at the Vicarage that was prepared for him and arranged for the children's schooling at the local St. Thomas' School. He has settled into our church very well.

Our Metropolitan, the Rt. Rev. John Augustine, visited our church on May 9<sup>th</sup>. 2016. That morning, His Grace celebrated Matins with us with a warm message. In the afternoon we all assembled in the church again, and Mr. Dewars gave His Grace and the VC a short but complete history of our church. That evening His Grace visited Cottolengo Convent where the children and sisters showed much affection and were touched by the visit and concern shown by His Grace. That night 27 members, of the church attended a dinner we on the hosted on the lawns of the Royal Orchid, where the Metropolitan was staying.

#### **Ministry:**

Now with a resident priest, we have regular Holy Mass every Sunday mornings and Vespers on Sunday evenings. We have Matins, Sext and Vespers every day. We are able to hold services on Feast Days also when they fall during the week.

On 15<sup>th</sup> May 2016, we held a special service to commemorate 130 years of the Anniversary of the Church's Consecration.

On 14<sup>th</sup> August 2016 we held a special service for the Nation where we began by affirming our commitment to the Nation, by reciting the preamble to the Constitution of India. We then prayed for the Father of the Nation, members of the Constituent Assembly, all leaders past and present, members of the Defence Services, the Intelligence and Investigative Agencies, all Civil servants, healthcare professionals, teachers, farmers and those in business activities.

On October 2<sup>nd</sup>. 2016, after Holy Mass, we had a breakfast sale as a fund-raiser. This became necessary, as our commitments have increased, but funds are not enough or in our budget. Hence the fund-raisers became necessary.

On All Souls' Day a general prayer of thanksgiving for the lives of the departed was said at the entrance of the cemetery. Then individual prayers were said by the Vicar at the gravesides of loved ones of the parishioners.

In November on the eve of Advent Sunday, the Sanctifying of the church was carried out as well as the blessing of all the elements, linen, vestments, altar clothing, sacramental vessels and all items in the sanctuary. These were all cleaned in advance.

At the mass on Advent Sunday and the following Sundays, the tradition of lighting the Advent candle was followed. On the evening of Advent Sunday, the vicar visited 9 homes of parishioners for the lighting of their Advent candles. At Mass in the morning members returned Terramundi pots taken the previous year and collected new ones for the current year.

The Carol Service was held on the 18<sup>th</sup>. December 2016 and this was well attended. Ashley William Joseph and some of his musicians from the William Joseph International School of Performing Arts, accompanied us for the singing of the Carols with a soloist as well. Midnight Mass was held on the 24<sup>th</sup> night as usual with a very good attendance of 87 people. We had fellowship with coffee and Christmas cake after the Mass. Regular Mass was held on Christmas morning as well.

On 26<sup>th</sup> January 2017 Republic Day, we held a service for honouring God and Country followed by Holy Mass.

We had a special service for the Festival of Spring on the 26<sup>th</sup> February 2017. This was followed by a fellowship lunch for all, for which no cost was stated, but any donation was welcomed. This year we released a souvenir on Easter Sunday, 16<sup>th</sup> April 2017. This project was organised and run by Mrs. Romola Kuruvilla and her team who did an excellent job. It was hard work, but done with much dedication. This was a fund-raiser for this year, for which we extend our sincere thanks to Mrs. Kuruvilla and her team for all their hard work.

This year for the first time, on Palm Sunday we began Holy Mass with a Procession around the Church, and entered the Church singing a hymn and holding palms.

On 13<sup>th</sup> April 2017, we held Maundy Thursday Holy Mass. Unfortunately, the ritual of Washing of the Feet could not be performed for lack of Twelve men.

On 14<sup>th</sup> April 2017, we held the Good Friday Service. For the first time at this Service, the Stations of The Cross were conducted.

The Easter Vigil was observed on Holy Saturday night from 11 p.m. Holy Mass was held on Easter Sunday morning.

### Out Reach:

Our main Out Reach project continues to be Cottolengo Convent. Here they house and care for 28 children destitute children who are physically/mentally challenged. It is known to all that the Sisters take care of children and adults from all walks of life. There is no bar on caste, colour or creed. They also run a special school for mentally and physically handicapped children, resident and non-resident, who are all cared for and much loved. They have a physiotherapy department which functions under the supervision of qualified and well-trained staff and is open to any who need help.

We have supported education for the children of Fr. Gabriel and two other children.

We continue to pay our 10% of income as Tithes to the Diocese every quarter, and have paid for the period April to December 2016.

We also pay the salaries for the church staff, as well as the electricity and security charges. This year we increased our support towards the Cemetery charges.

Last year in October the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Pallike - broke down the boundary wall and took a strip of land as well. The wall had to be reconstructed, and this was done by the Church of South India congregation to the tune of Rs. 7,00,000/-. We would reimburse fifty percent of this cost once we have raised the amount.

### Misc:

In September 2016 Fr. Gabriel had made an issue of wanting to shift out of the Vicarage, as he found it unsuitable. It was explained to him that if he could find accommodation for the same rent he was free to move. All the ramifications of the deposit and the rent being split into rental and amount towards furniture, was pointed out also. After much mail going back and forth, Fr. Gabriel apologised for any trouble he had caused, said it was God's way of telling him he should remain where he was.

Mrs. Lunel and Mrs. Kuruvilla, our church members, did a thorough proof reading of the Book of Common Prayer sent from the Diocese, and returned the same to be printed. We are still waiting for the new books to arrive.

Fr. Gabriel's Leave requested some time off to take his family to Orissa. He was asked to make this request to His Grace, The Metropolitan, which he did. With the consent of His Grace, Fr. Gabriel went of leave from the 8<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> October 2016.

He requested leave again from the 17<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> April 2017. With the Metropolitan's consent, Fr. Gabriel was away for that period. Mr Dewars our Lay Reader conducted Matins on the Sundays he was away.

Mrs. Sydney Smith

Hony. Secretary