



Cathedral Our Lady, Mother of the Good Sheperd

13/12/2015

Djibouti

Boulevard de la République BP94 - Djibouti - Djibouti



In 1885, two Capuchin Fathers came to Obock, the capital of the new French colony, from Ethiopia. In 1896, the mission was transferred to Djibouti, the new capital of the French Somali Coast. They lodged in rented houses, and one of the buildings became the interim church. In 1912, the Catholic Mission took over the old Post Office building on the Boulevard de la République. In 1913, the construction of the church of St. Joan of Arc was started. It was officially opened in 1922. In 1957, Msgr. Hoffmann was ordained the first bishop of Djibouti. In 1953, 1955, 1957, he organized fund raising with the idea of increasing the size of the church. Finally he decided to build the cathedral. On the 12th of January 1964, the cathedral was consecrated. There at the right of the altar stands a statue of the Virgin Mary holding in her arms a lamb, symbol of the name chosen for the cathedral: Our Lady, Mother of the Good Shepherd. It reminds also of the « Divine Shepherdess » celebrated by the Somali Christians originally from Somaliland.

Currently the buildings which surround the Cathedral house e.g. the bishopric, the Horn of Africa Elementary School, the management of the « Écoles Catholiques du Diocèse de Djibouti », community of the Sisters of Saint Joseph of Tarbes, community of the Missionaries of Charity, the headquarters of Caritas Somalia. Near to the Cathedral there are also headquarters of Caritas Djibouti with its base for the street children and the infirmary.