

The Compassionate Pastor

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Bethany commences
perpetual adoration on
97th anniversary of
Bethany's foundation
on 16 July 2018



“Have always before you
the desire of having
perpetual adoration in Bethany
during day and night...”

RFC Mascarenhas
(Last Will and Testament)



Prayer for the Beatification of the Servant of God Raymond Mascarenhas

God our loving Father, we thank you for choosing your servant Raymond to be your faithful priest and the Founder of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Little Flower of Bethany. His ardent devotion to the Eucharist, love for the Mother Church, Zeal for the proclamation of the Gospel and his compassionate love especially for the poor have borne abundant fruit. Like him may we too in union with Mary, our Mother, become bearers of the Good News.

We humbly implore you Father to grant us this special request through the intercession of your beloved servant Raymond...
(mention your request).

Deign O Lord, to grant your beloved servant the honours of the altar for your greater glory and the spreading of the Gospel.
Amen.

Glory be...

Imprimatur

Most Rev. A.P. D'Souza
Bishop of Mangalore

Mangalore
16.06.2008

N.B. Please report any favours or miracles received through the intercession of the Servant of God Raymond Mascarenhas to:

**The Vice-Postulator, Cause of Beatification and Canonization of the
Servant of God Raymond Mascarenhas,
Bethany Convent, Bendur, Mangalore D.K. 575002.
Ph: 0824-2211806; Email: rfcmas@gmail.com**

THE COMPASSIONATE PASTOR

July 2018

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EDITORIAL



All Arts - A Reflection of God's Beauty

Among the fond memories of my childhood, one that frequently haunts me with much love and amusement is the picture of a sleeping infant Jesus placed in the centre of many other photographs on the veranda of my house. For my mother, this picture was a sort of classroom and a Chapel for her little kids to teach and pray - Classroom, because she would almost chastise us the kids, when we slipped the track to say that Jesus in the picture was sad to see our misdemeanours and Chapel, for she would pray and teach us to pray before this holy piece of art. Though my mother was just a very ordinary woman, yet the profound faith and the responsibility of transmitting her faith to the children made her a genius using a simple picture. Today I can only render thanks for such a saintly mother and her ingenuity of communicating faith through a piece of art.

Yes, piece of art I said, could be a powerful channel of communication of so many things. Art speaks a language which is very often seemingly silent, but profound, enabling a person to penetrate into the indepths of human and religious experience. History of the Church is a history of the manifestation of God's infinite presence with human persons very often portrayed through the pieces of art by illustrious artists. Church has always esteemed in high dignity the value of art and its significance in the life of the faithful. One such area which has drawn very special consideration is the place of art in the liturgy.

According to Vatican II on Sacred Liturgy, "Arts, by their very nature, are oriented to the infinite beauty of God which they attempt in some way to portray by the work of human hands."¹ Speaking about the dignity of the artists it states: "Artist should ever bear in mind that they are engaged in a kind of sacred imitation of God the Creator, and are concerned with works destined to be used in Catholic worship, to edify the faithful, and to foster their piety and their religious formation."² The document gives direction to the Bishops to take the responsibility to see that the sacred artists are encouraged and trained, that they are "imbued with the spirit of sacred art and the sacred liturgy."³

This issue of *The Compassionate Pastor*, illustrates the prominence the Servant of God gave to Christian Art and the empowerment of artists. Skimming through the pages of the bulletin you might like to pause viewing the photographs of the gorgeous paintings on gospel themes that were done by the artist Francis de Gama from Jeppu in the

¹ Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, n 122. The Documents of Vatican II, (Bandra, Bombay: St Paul Publications, 1966), 162.

² Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, n 127.

³ Ibid.

year 1942 on the walls of Bethany Chapel. This Chapel, an exquisite piece of art, built by Mgr Raymond Mascarenhas has a new look after the renovation.

The article of Sr Dona illuminates the religious artistic ingenuity of the Servant of God. The Servant of God took delight in identifying the hidden artistic talents and skills in the ordinary people and helped them to flower forth. Prof Edmond Frank, spotlights the prophetic vision of Monsignor Raymond, which inspired him to commence the empowerment process of the women through non formal education programmes.

Sr Marie Therese says in her article, that the compass of the life of the Servant of God could be deciphered in the manner in which he acquired the vision of the Kingdom of uplifting the poor through his reflection on the Word of God. The homily delivered by Rev Fr Joseph Martis on the occasion of the death anniversary of Mgr Mascarenhas draws a parallel between the birth of John the Baptist and that of Monsignor Raymond. If the former brought so much of joy and happiness not only to the family but also and much more to the whole humanity at large, the birth of the Servant of God, without doubt was an event of elation to the family much more, it resulted also in the joy and happiness of so many people. As the homilist says, "His advent constituted a new beacon of hope and a new direction to proclaim the gospel with vigour and dynamism." Mr Ivan Saldanha, narrates the great event of the inauguration and blessing of the renovated Bethany Chapel which was built by Mgr Raymond, an artist par excellence. Sr Celine Vas, prompts Sr Acquiline to share her profound reflections on the personality and spirituality of the Servant of God through the interview that she held with Sr Acquiline. The two memories of Mgr Raymond by Fr Stanley Mascarenhas and Mr H P Tauro spotlight two facets of Mgr Raymond's personality – deep affection and passionate commitment to the mission of Jesus that enabled him to empty himself.

As this issue is highlighting the significance of arts in the life of human beings and Christians in particular, we remember all the artists who have contributed much to the joy and happiness in the world. We bow our heads to the artists who have elevated our hearts and minds to God. And we wish to encourage and support and pray for the artists of our times very often subjugated to varieties of uneasy situations, such as financial deficiencies, lack of encouragement, not properly remunerated, very poorly remembered and recognized. May the Servant of God bless them and may their skilful work be rewarded.

I thank all the contributors for carving out the divine image of the Creator hidden in the Servant of God and exemplified through religious art.

d. Lillis

(Sr M Lillis, BS)

HOMILY AT THE 57TH DEATH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SERVANT OF GOD, MGR RFC MASCARENHAS, 23 DECEMBER 2017, AT ST SEBASTIAN'S CHURCH, BENDUR

Fr Joseph Martis

Readings: Malachi 3: 1-4, 23-24; Luke 1: 57-66

Your Excellency, Lord Bishop, Reverend Fathers, religious sisters, and all gathered here, prayerful greetings to you all. We have gathered here, to recall to mind as well as, to thank Almighty God, for the gift of the Servant of God, Monsignor Raymond Mascarenhas, the founder of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Little Flower of Bethany, on the occasion of his 57th death anniversary.

The very first sentence that we heard today from the Gospel of Luke is filled with spiritual wealth. *Now the time came for Elizabeth to give birth, and she gave birth to a son.* St Luke speaks of the birth of John the Baptist. The birth of a child is one of the most joyful events in the life of a family. A child announces new hope, a new direction, and newness. Hence a new born baby brings so much of elation for the parents and for the family members. As a matter of fact, nothing brings more joy to a family than the birth of a child. The new parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles, are all filled with joy and excitement at the thought of welcoming the newest member of their family to the world. The first little smile, the first tears shed and the first baby laugh will surely capture the hearts of each family member and create the most beautiful and unforgettable memories for the baby's parents. Childbirth is not without its challenges, but it is surely one of life's most rewarding events.

With the birth of a baby, the joy and happiness in the household of Elizabeth and Zechariah was doubled for they had been waiting for the gift of a child for so many years. In fact, for the Jewish people, a child was considered as the greatest gift God could give to a couple. As the psalmist says, *behold, children are a gift of the Lord, the fruit of the womb is a reward* (Psalm 127:3). A couple without a child, was the most sad, despicable and miserable. Hence, Elizabeth and Zechariah were the happiest couple for they could get this gift even when they were advanced in years.

The birth of John the Baptist, was a moment of delight beyond the family circle of Elizabeth. The birth of this child was so jubilating for the

whole people of the world. For his birth was the birth of a new era; the birth of a new hope, it was the birth of a new life. This birth turns out to be the star of the birth of Jesus and the ray of new hope to humanity.

The birth of John the Baptist, became the immediate step towards the liberation of the world, and the climax moment for God to come and dwell with humanity. It was almost the last and ultimate link of the realization of God's plan and to manifest His supreme love towards humanity.

With the birth of John the Baptist, the covenant between God and man is accomplished fully, and God's coming towards us was imminent. Hence the Birth of John the Baptist was no doubt the most thrilling moment for the household of Zechariah, and what is more, it was also and most significantly the most considerable moment of hope for the entire humanity; for me and you.

As the gospel reading is narrating the glad event of the birth of John, we have in fact gathered here to recall the birth of another holy person, namely, Monsignor Raymond Mascarenhas. Today, we have come here to remember his death anniversary. In reality, for us Christians, our day of death is the day of our birth. That is the reason why, we celebrate the feast day of the saints on the day of their death. Our day of death constitutes the day of birth to our heavenly life. Therefore, it would not be wrong if I say, today is the birthday of the Servant of God.

The birth of Monsignor Raymond was no doubt a jubilation event for his beloved parents, what is more, his birth has brought so much of joy and happiness, hope and consolation to thousands of people.

His birth has given birth to so many events and things. His birth gives rise to the birth of the Bethany Congregation; his birth gives rise to the birth of a new hope, a new mission; birth of so many vocations to religious life, birth of numerous mission stations and birth of various evangelization apostolates through missionary houses. To sum up, his advent constitutes a new beacon of hope and a new direction to proclaim the gospel with vigour and dynamism in the diocese of Mangalore and today all over the world.

Celebrated writer, Mark Twain notes that there are two important moments in the life of a person. First it is the day of his birth and second, the day he finds the purpose of his birth.

Yes, the day of our birth is a day of rejoicing. Very often we mark this day with some sort of celebration. It is a gift of God given to us through our parents and we render our gratitude to them. But the

second issue, why we are born, in other words, the purpose of our birth is to be found out by us. With St John the Baptist, he was very sure to know and live for the purpose of his life, namely to prepare for the way of the Lord, to make straight the path and show that Jesus is the real Saviour, the lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world. John lived for this truth and was prepared to lay down his life to proclaim this truth and in fact he died for the very purpose for which he was born.

In the life of Monsignor Raymond, he finds out the purpose and reason for his birth. To start a new mission; to liberate the downtrodden and the lowly of the society; to give meaning and purpose in the life of so many people who had no hope and direction in life; to live a committed and dedicated life as a loving pastor in the diocese of Mangalore. He was successful and fruitful in his ministry.

St John the Baptist as well as Monsignor Raymond invite us today to cast a deep look into our lives. We are born and we thank the Lord for the gift of our lives, but the reason why we are born, the goal and purpose of our lives, the mission I am supposed to accomplish, this is the unfinished work we have ahead of us.

St Therese of the Child Jesus always is to say, every child that is born brings along a message. And this message is unique to every child. This message cannot be communicated by any other person than that child alone. This message has to be communicated through one's life, through one's words and deeds. In other words, life itself is a message and it has to be communicated in the way it should be communicated, according to the design and plan of God.

Monsignor Raymond, the Servant of God was sent by the Father with a message, a message of love, care and concern, a message to uplift the downtrodden, a message to inaugurate a new mission through the Sisters of Bethany, a message to go to the remote corners of the world, to the peripheries and diffuse the Word of God, a message to feed the hungry and the thirsty. This message he communicated through his life of simplicity, forgiveness, dedication, prayer and penance. Today as we remember this holy priest of God, let us relive our Christian faith with more commitment, through love, service and faithfulness to our life's vocation. May the Servant of God intercede for all of us.



THE WORD OF GOD-THE COMPASS OF MGR MASCARENHAS' LIFE

Sr Marie Therese BS

"Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path."

Psalm 119:105

Servant of God Raymond FC Mascarenhas' one obsessive desire was to have 'the Gospel preached to the poor' (Lk 4:18). In this endeavour the Word of God was the compass of his life in seeking the will of God. He patterned his life on the Gospel values and spent himself for God and His people. He was a compassionate pastor, who entered empathetically in the hopes and dreams, joys and sorrows of ordinary people whom he met. He responded to each one of them individually as Jesus did. As we go through the New Testament we are challenged by various episodes of Jesus relating with people, like the Samaritan woman, Zachaeus, the woman caught in adultery, the rich young man, Nicodemus and so on. The story of the Pharisee and the Publican, the numerous parables, the miraculous cures, the handling of the temple authorities and the political chieftains of his time, all this and more presented in the four Gospels and the other letters and books must have awakened a desire in Mgr Mascarenhas to fathom the values of the Kingdom and to share its secret to the simple folk of his time. In this article I illustrate how Mgr Raymond translated into his life the teachings of Jesus.

Mgr Raymond Mascarenhas was zealous to do great things for God, for the church, the country, and the world at large. He took up the herculean task of translating the New Testament in Konkani in 1952. He founded the Congregation of women religious on 16 July 1921 and to name the first house of the Congregation as 'Bethany' is once again a manifestation of His love for the word of God. Prayer being indispensable in the life of our Founder, he found the integration of prayer and service exemplified in Martha and Mary of the house of Bethany. He firmly believed that just as Martha's firm faith and unflinching trust in Jesus obtained for her the miracle of her brother's life, faith would also bring to life all kinds of 'deadness' frequently encountered in his apostolic activities.

Constant meditation on the Gospels to find models of loving service attracted Fr Mascarenhas to the mystery of the Annunciation and Incarnation. His personal experience of God's closeness and intimacy

through the contemplation of LK 1:26-38 and the self-emptying, Kenotic spirituality- Phil 2:6-12 brought him to tears whenever he expounded this passage to the sisters and sang the Konkani hymn, "*Sargin Thaun Jeju Saunsari Ailo, Nij Dev astha nij Monis Jalo*", meaning "From heaven Jesus came into this world, God became man". The more he reflected on these mysteries, clearer it became to him that this was the most appropriate inspiration both for his own life and for the new religious Congregation. It was his desire that through the Sisters of Bethany, Mary's attitude of 'handmaid' in the service of God and neighbour could be reproduced again and again indefinitely.

The '*Magnificat*' – Mary's song of praise was very dear and close to the heart of our Founder (LK 1:46-55). "The mighty has done great deeds in me. Holy is his name" (LK 1:49). As we flash a glance on his life of contemplation in action, we see how like Mary who was filled with the Holy spirit, expressed these poetic verses to magnify God, so too our founder through his life of gratitude and joy lived the spirit of the '*Manificat*'.

"Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone: But if it dies, it bears much fruit (Jn 12: 24). "Anyone who does not take up his cross and follow me is not worthy of me" (Mt 10:38). These two sayings of Jesus testify that the path to genuine sanctity is not an easy one. In the life of Fr Mascarenhas, from the day of his ordination until he drew his last breath, suffering in one form or another dogged his footsteps. The grain of wheat had to fall to the ground and die if it were to be fruitful. He constantly made it a point to die to himself.¹ As he advanced in age, when he abdicated his active involvement in the administration and the governance of the Institute he founded, he had ample occasions to die to himself and gain merit to heaven. He practised self-emptying love and blazed a trail for the Bethany Sisters to walk on this way, carrying their small and big crosses, thus, to experience fullness of life in order to bring fullness of life to others. The above was his favourite passage from the Gospels, which he practiced throughout his difficult and testing times of his life. *Unless the Seed Die*, is the title of the biography of our founder written by Sister Violette D'Souza; the title in itself is self explanatory and one can understand the bitter chalice he had to drink, during his short sojourn on this earth, which he accepted cheerfully.

Our Founder had great devotion to Our Lady of Sorrows. "Prepare well for the feast of Our Lady of Dolours, and pray and I shall pray with you that she turns 70 x 7 sorrows into as many joys." This was a letter

¹ Sr M Violette D'Souza, *Unless the Seed Die* (Mangalore: Bethany Publications, 1985), 85.

written to Sr Bertha using a humorous tone, which portrays his advancing age addressing her to prepare well for the Feast of Our Lady of Dolours. He continued showing his deep trust in Mother Mary and wrote, "I have had before this various manifestations from my loving Mother which have enabled me to go through my hard work for Bethany with courage, confidence and success." A seven-day preparation commencing on Friday, 28 March and closing on 4 April 1952 for the feast of Our Lady of Sorrows, would be made by all sisters and children in their Institutions simultaneously before a picture or a statue of Our Lady of Dolours with the recitation of the Rosary of Our Lady of Dolours. The devotion of 'Rosary of Seven Sorrows' was initiated by the Founder in Bethany. Thus, he along with the Bethanites was prepared to accept opposition and brave challenges of the present and future exigencies.² It is well to remember that Bethany in God's Providence has been 'a tree planted by the running waters, waters of sorrow and affliction which all along have nurtured it. It has been a planter's privilege to be a sign of contradiction'. In his work for us, our Founder's motto has been, "All for Jesus through Mary for Bethany." Reduced to actual facts it has all along been:

All for Jesus, Man of Sorrows,
through Mary, Mother of Sorrows,
for Bethany, close to Calvary and Gethsemane.

Every good cause in the Church, after the example of its Divine Founder experiences the same- "*Per Crucem ad Lucem*".³

The control Fr Raymond F C Mascarenhas exercised over his tongue in conversation presupposed continual mortification. The text from St James' letter, "If anyone is never at fault in what he says, he is a perfect man" (James 3:2), was a favourite one and he frequently quoted this and other texts from chapter three in his conferences to the sisters. Occasionally he would ask communities to read the same chapter daily at table for a couple of weeks in succession. In my numerous interactions with him during the period 1947 – 1959 I never heard him speaking ill of anyone. Neither had he remarked at his inconveniences, in the absence of a vehicle nor about any discomfiture. This made me admire his silence and mortification. He used his tongue only to praise God and used words wisely to draw us closer to Jesus and his Mother Mary. Such was his control over his tongue!!

² Sr M Lillis BS and Sr Miriam BS, *To You My Daughters*, Letters of Mgr Raymond F C Mascarenhas (Bangalore: Asian Trading Corporation, 2013), 287, 479.

³ Constitutions of The Congregation of the Sisters of the Little Flower of Bethany, 159.

Fr Founder was always prepared and conscious about his life of prayer and work, like the ten virgins (Math 25: 1-13) he was on his guard. The faithful and unfaithful servant (Mt 24:45-51) enabled him to be always faithful in little things, to keep awake in order to be ready to meet his Master, and because of his fidelity he was rewarded with multiple blessings and earthly offices (Mt 24:42). "Be on your guard because you do not know what day your Lord will come". Our founder would spend long hours in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament, on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday adhering to the warning given to the apostles, "Keep watch and pray that you will not fall into temptation" (Mt 26:41). He would caution the sisters "Be alert, and be on the watch: your enemy, the devil, roams round like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour and he would continue saying; "your fellow believers in all the world are going through the same kind of sufferings" (1Peter 5:9). Therefore, the Founder would ask the sisters to be conscious of the fact that, 'to sleep soundly one needs to be awake'.

Fr Founder reflected at length on the words of Jesus to Peter after commissioning him to feed his lambs and sheep: "Very truly, I tell you when you were younger, you used to fasten your own belt and go wherever you wished. But when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will fasten a belt around you and take you where you do not wish to go. (He said this to indicate the kind of death by which He would glorify God) after this He said to him, follow Me' (John 21:18-19).⁴ He exhorts the sisters that as one grows older in age as well as in grace and religion, one must surrender one's self totally into the hands of God. He underscores the rationale that we have to follow a crucified God who bent His will completely to others, even to his executioners, and allowed them to do with him what they liked.⁵

The Servant of God, Mgr R F C Mascarenhas had a dream, he had set his goal. He was committed to the goal that he had set before him, accompanied with a strong conviction that he by placing his trust in Jesus and Mary could achieve it. That was sainthood – he encouraged the sisters of Bethany to scale that height of sainthood. He lived a dedicated and compassionate life as God had ordained him. Mgr Raymond was convinced that he could fly towards the target he had set his eyes on and was willing to pay the price for it. He had steadfast recourse to the scriptures daily; thus he drew immense strength and power for his priestly ministry in difficult mission terrains. The Word of

⁴ Sr M Lillis BS and Sr Miriam BS, *To You My Daughters*, 486, 485.

⁵ Sr M Lillis BS and Sr Miriam BS, *To You My Daughters*, 339.

God enabled him to die to himself and accomplish God's will. It was the elevator that carried him to the heights of sanctity.

The life of Mgr Raymond is a role model for all of us to make the scripture as the compass of our life. This can be done by cultivating great love for the Scriptures, tasting its sweetness, and being empowered like him to make a difference in the life of others. We Bethany Sisters have ample means to become Good News and bring Good News to all through our apostolates of teaching, healing, social action, catechesis, frontier ministry and family visits etc. Our Congregation is gearing up for the celebration of the centenary year with three more years left for the same. Sisters are eagerly preparing, spiritually from a decade to usher in this memorable and unique occasion. Therefore, it is right and just that we build up our strength in union with the Lord and by means of His mighty power (Eph 6:10). We shall intensify our love for Jesus with the knowledge of the Scriptures and be courageous witnesses to his compassionate love.



"A Convent does not become a House of Prayer by means of its material building or the inanimate chapel it contains, but it is made so by the Life of Prayer which its religious inmates lead therein. Prayer therefore should be the breath of the soul of every Sister in the Convent."

Mgr RFC Mascarenhas



SPIRITUAL PATRIMONY OF RFC MASCARENHAS THROUGH RELIGIOUS ART

Dona Sanctis BS

Introduction

God is an unfathomable mystery. We humans make efforts to explore this mystery and experience God with our limited yet dynamic potentialities. We look for varied ways to experience Him as well as to express our tangible experience of God. Religious art has been one of the most fascinating as well as creative ways of giving expression to the religious experience. Religious artefacts stimulate our devotion to what it contains, for what we see and emulate impresses us, e.g. paintings, sculptures, iconography and religious objects. These have significance not only for a particular period in history but people in every age are capable of drawing inspiration from those religious experiences depicted in arts.

Fr RFC Mascarenhas was a man of vision with deep spirituality. His inner spirit of love for God ignited in him to bring home profound truths of Christian faith in various ways. He sought ways and means for the proclamation of God's word, to make it feasible to people to experience God, and thus to keep alive their faith. His mind and heart was always in contemplation of the things divine. This article focuses on how Fr RFC Mascarenhas sought to promote religious art and its importance in our life. We make a special emphasis on art and architecture, monuments, sculptures, paintings, imageries, and other art forms which Mgr RFC Mascarenhas promoted through his works, writings and exhortations, and his determination to make them available in the best manner possible.

Architecture

Pope Francis in his message at the annual meeting of the Pontifical Academies on December 7, 2016 says that through beauty, artists make the world better. He further said that when beautiful churches are located in underprivileged, or perhaps degraded areas, they offer, "even in their simplicity and essentiality, an oasis of beauty, peace, and acceptance." Fr RFC Mascarenhas, a visionary lived years ahead of his time and foresaw these needs of a future Church of our time.

Fr RFC Mascarenhas at the age of 28 took charge of St Xavier Church, Udyavar in June 1903. At that time the Church building was only a small chapel. During his tenure (1903-1909) this zealous priest



St Francis Xavier Church, Udyavar built by Fr RFC Mascarenhas in the year 1909

constructed quite an imposing Church building, large enough to accommodate also the people of Udupi who had no Church of their own.¹ This Church catered to the spiritual needs of the people for more than a century.

On August 23, 1914, at the special request of the people of Bendur, Fr RFC Mascarenhas was appointed as the first pastor of the newly constituted parish of St Sebastian, Bendur.



St Sebastian Church, Bendur built by Fr RFC Mascarenhas in the year 1930

The Church building was originally a small shed measuring 20 feet by 15 feet with a thatched roof.

Fr Mascarenhas took up the massive task of constructing the Church building. Because of financial constraints, the building made slow progress. He trusted in

God's providence that He will provide what is necessary in due course of time. He was so completely taken up with the plans for a beautiful Church for the worship of God that he built an imposing church building with dynamism and foresight.² The magnificent Church building that he built stands tall speaks of Fr Mascarenhas' stupendous fortitude and the passionate love for Jesus to preach the Good News.

The above two church buildings express Mgr Mascarenhas' artistic ability. The paintings of the altar, the statues erected inside, give emphasis to Christian faith and popular devotions. The religious set up, belfry and the appearance of the Church surroundings create an

¹ Cf. Sr M Violette D'Souza, *Unless the Seed Die*, (Mangalore: Bethany Publications, 1985), 16-17.

² Cf. Sr M Violette D'Souza, *Unless the Seed Die*, 20-21.

atmosphere of holiness and invite people to come and worship God who unites the faithful in the bond of Christian faith and love.

Mgr Raymond has an admiration for every sanctuary that has been built for the Lord in the Diocese and hence he expresses it during his sermon delivered on the occasion of the First Diocesan Eucharistic Congress on 29 December 1938. To quote his words: "What joy fills our hearts today when we raise our eyes and see our diocese decked with several churches and chapels that adorn it! Are they not the fragrant oil of the hard labour and sacrifice of our people... What a wonderful story each of these Churches tell us! The earnings and the savings of our people are buried in each of these churches under the feet of Jesus. Every stone of these Churches, every piece of timber, every tile, bathed in the sweat and sacrifices of our ancestors and that of us their children!"³

Art and Sculptures

Every house of the Congregation Mgr RFC Mascarenhas founded was provided with a chapel where the sisters could quietly spend their time in prayer. The Mother House chapel is a good example to substantiate this aspect. It is so designed that the spirituality of the Congregation is portrayed through various scenes from the Gospels, e.g. Bethany family of the Gospel fame on canvas artistically displayed behind the altar and other scenes from the life of Jesus connected to Bethany spirituality and also the pictures of the founder's patron saints – St Raymond of Penyafort, St Francis Xavier, and St Camillus in their mission depicted on the walls of the chapel.

The two statues of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and Mother Mary with baby Jesus on either side of the main aisle of the chapel present a gracious sight. The statues of St Joseph and St Therese on either side above the altar, two angels representing cherubim and seraphim in the posture of adoration before the tabernacle which has a carving of the pelican bird is an invitation for the worshippers to join themselves with the heavenly choir of angels. The life-size statue of St Therese below the altar makes one experience the divine presence. The picturesque Stations of the Cross and the Seven Sorrows of Our Blessed Mother uniquely presented speak of his great zeal to impart to the sisters of the Congregation a passion to imitate the life of Jesus and Mary which was sole the object of his life.

The statues of Jesus and Mary in various forms, e.g. the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the *Pieta*, the Immaculate Heart of Mary, the beautiful

³ How Great a Sacrament (by Courtesy: Souvenir of the Eucharistic Congress of 1938). A Souvenir of the 104th Priestly Ordination Anniversary of Mgr RFC Mascarenhas (Mangalore: Prasad Printers, 2004), 10-11.

grotto of the Blessed Virgin Mary, St Michael the Archangel, express the devotion and spirituality of Mgr RFC Mascarenhas. The two statues of our Blessed Mother erected just outside the Mother House give an added emphasis of his great devotion. The passersby experience the presence of God and many are drawn to express their devotion.



West Hill, Calicut.

A piece of art of exquisite beauty and an artefact of profound contemplation is the altar with two hearts, viz. that of Jesus and Mary that Mgr Raymond carried from Mangalore and placed it in the chapel of Eudes Convent,

The Bethany Mother House grotto which Mgr Mascarenhas got constructed became a place of spiritual experience and healing through



The Grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes at Bethany

the intercession of Mary of Lourdes not only for Bethany Sisters but also for those who visit this holy place. It was his fond place wherein he experienced the motherly comfort and solace from Our Blessed Mother especially in his trying

moments. He wanted to be at her feet even after his death.

The renowned artist of Mangalore Mr Simon Rasquinha received encouragement from Fr Mascarenhas who helped him to discover his talent and today his institute 'Simon Art Co.' produces sculptures and paintings which has great demand all over.

Coat-of-Arms

A Coat-of-Arms is a symbolic emblem of an institution, of a prominent family or of an individual. It encapsulates briefly the belief, the philosophy, the ideals of that person or institution to whom the coat-of-arms belongs. Fr Mascarenhas encapsulates the charism and spirituality of Bethany, the Congregation he founded and presents it in this Coat-of-Arms in a lucid manner. The meaning of the Coat-of Arms

of Bethany is here below quoted from the book: *The Charism and Spirituality of the Sisters of the Little Flower of Bethany*.

Bethany's Coat-of-Arms



The coat-of-arms encapsulates the profound meaning of religious life and the way a Bethany Sister has to live it in her day to day life, designed for the Congregation by its Founder Mgr RFC Mascarenhas. The emblem which has the shape of a shield, crown of twelve stars at the top reminding the members of the Institute that each sister of Bethany is protected by the Queen Mother of Bethany. The whole shield is supported by a scroll which bears the motto of the Institute "*Ecce Ancilla Domini*" Behold, the handmaid of the Lord which a Bethany sister utters before commencing each of her activities.

The oblique bar at the centre of the shield with its three roses is placed diagonally and it holds the shield in its proper place. It represents the love of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. This Trinitarian love of God is the root and foundation of our total and undivided consecration to God and to His service by the profession of the three evangelical counsels and by a life founded on and rooted in love (symbolized by the three roses). The lily on the right side symbolizes our religious consecration. It is also the symbol of purity of heart and intention, with which we serve God and His people through our apostolates of the Institute. The star on the left side reminds us that by the fulfilment of the apostolic activities of the Institute, each individual sister will shine brightly like a lone star in the sky in the darkness of the world.⁴

Imageries in the Writings and Exhortations

Jesus, the great teacher drew frequently lot of imageries from nature and with his profound wisdom he used imageries to bring home inspiring messages for everyday life. He communicated the reality of God's love through short stories and parables. Parables were in fact a common medium for imparting teaching and instructions in contemporary Judaism during the time of Jesus. Jesus did this very often and His purpose was that the values of the Kingdom be understood by all his audience of all ages. e.g. the sun and the rain (Mt 5: 45), the rock and the sand (Mt 7: 26), birds of the air and the lilies of the field (Mt 6: 28-30), parables like: the seed and the sower (Mt 13:1-9), the wheat and the weeds (Mt 13: 24-30), the mustard seed (Mt. 13: 31). All the kingdom parables

⁴ Sr M Violette D'Souza, *The Charism and Spirituality of The Sisters of the Little Flower of Bethany* (articulated and documented) (Mangalore: Codialbail Press, 1997), 153-155.

were in connection with imageries drawn from the nature and relevant in the day to day life.

As a true follower of Jesus the teacher, Mgr RFC Mascarenhas during his sermons, catechetical instruction, and religious exhortations used imageries, short stories and quoted the examples from the lives of the saints. For instance, we have a quote from one of his instructions that he gave to the Sodality of Girls, at St Agnes Convent, Bendur by narrating the virtues of St Rose of Lima:

Dear Children, your face must be transfigured like the face of St Rose of Lima so as to appear like a rose. It can be done by making it a mirror of your rosy heart! The face is the window of the heart and a rosy heart will make it a rosy window! You know what rosy windows are! You have to go to Jeppu Church or to the Cathedral to see rosy windows! They illumine and colour the whole church. But they require two things: beautiful colours of the glass and the light of the sun. Now your heart must be like that of rosy window, full of colours! They must have the virtues of faith, hope, charity infused into them. The image of Jesus Christ must be carved upon these windows. But the grace of God, the charity of God must light this window. It must not be darkened by sin neither mortal nor venial. Even venial sins, as feeling envy and disobedience tarnish this window. Therefore, you must also keep it polished by humility.⁵

In the above narrative Fr Mascarenhas has brought home to the teenagers in simple language the difficult concept of virtues and their importance in one's life. He also emphasizes the importance of the awareness of the presence of God shining in one's heart. This is applicable to all generations especially in the materialistic world of today.

Conclusion

I have made an attempt to highlight the obsessive desire of Mgr RFC Mascarenhas to preach the Good News through religious art. Mgr Mascarenhas sought ways and means available for the proclamation of the Gospel in a creative manner. His interests were varied and he took delight in what he did. He was determined to present a new phase for the relevance of art and architecture in such careful detail and elaborate depth. This article is only a portion of the vast contribution Mgr R F C Mascarenhas made in this field. We are invited to centre our lives on God who is the author of all beauty and art.

⁵ Fr R F C Mascarenhas, Instructions given to the Sodality of Girls, St Agnes Convent, Bendur, 30 August 1929.

RENOVATED CHAPEL - RENEWED MEMORY AT BENDUR – 2018

Mr Ivan Saldanha

In the annals of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Little Flower of Bethany, Mangalore which is an indigenous Congregation, May 8, 2018 is now a new red letter day. The Bethany mother house chapel that was constructed by the Founder, now renovated, was opened by the Superior General Sr Rose Celine BS who ceremoniously cut the red ribbon at the entrance. The Bishop of Mangalore Rt Rev Dr Aloysius P D 'Souza blessed the renovated chapel and celebrated the Holy Eucharist. The Congregation of the Sisters of the Little Flower of Bethany was founded at this very spot on July 16, 1921. It is now just 3 years away to celebrate its Centenary. Its Founder, Mgr R F C Mascarenhas, is the first Mangalorean Servant of God on the path to 'Sainthood' in the Universal Roman Catholic Church. His cause is progressing as per God's will and prayers are requested to take it effectively forward. His *magnum opus*, the Bethany Congregation that renders laudable service to humanity in various fields is spread over India and abroad. Basically comprising of 1414 nuns, 185 communities in 48 dioceses in India and 9 dioceses abroad – Mauritania, Senegal, and Tanzania in Africa, and Italy, Germany, France, and set to open in Nepal soon.

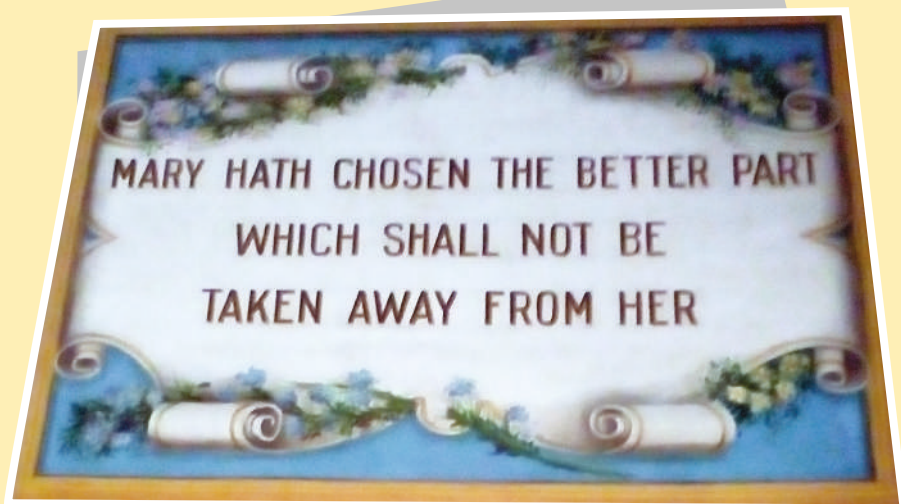
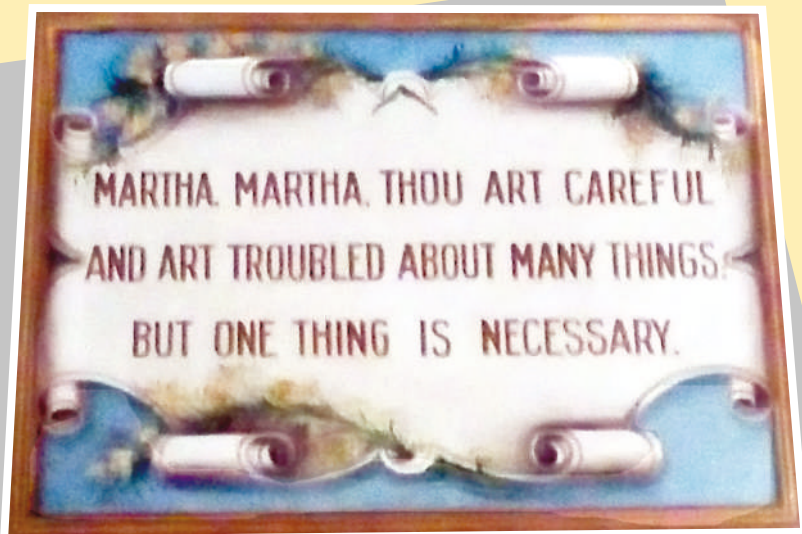
Servant of God Mgr Raymond has built churches and chapels for sure. His very first Parish Church was as a young priest just 28 years old, in 1903, St. Francis Xavier Church, Udyavar, which he built in 1909 (now rebuilt in 2015). His next parish from 1910 to 1914 was Agrar where he worked zealously and procured land for three future parishes – Siddakatte, Nirkan, and Allipade. In 1914, by people's choice he was brought to St Sebastian's Bendur, as its first parish priest - now a great flourishing parish of central Mangaluru and the head quarters of Bethany. Mgr Raymond's remains have rested in this church since his death on December 23, 1960. It has now become the base of all the Founder's celebrations since the proclamation in 2008.

The original mother house chapel in its early form was opened in 1927. The existing main chapel was blessed and inaugurated in 1935. Several scenes from the Gospel are painted on the walls of this chapel by Francis de Gama commencing from 1 February 1940 and completed by 7 May the same year. These are still very beautiful and now have been restored by the very well-known, Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH) group of Delhi. A visit to this holy place and the Founder's cottage just outside, are a matter of great worth and highly recommended.

**Paintings in the Bethany Mother House Chapel
got done by Mgr R F C Mascarenhas**

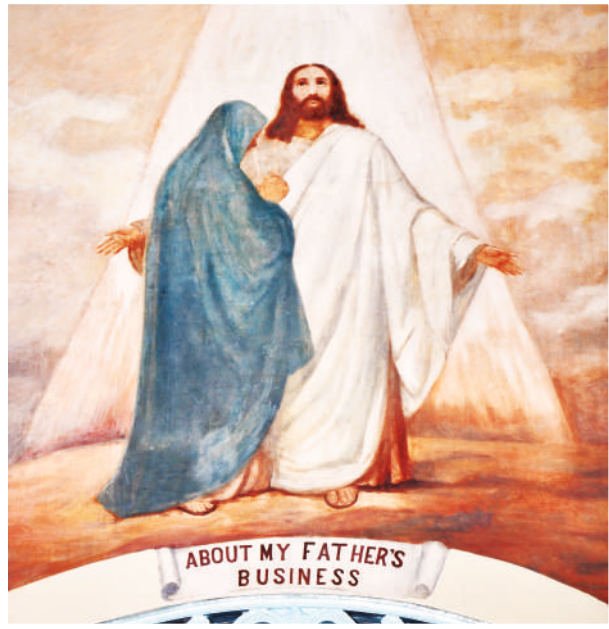


Bethany scene of the Gospel





The Holy Family - Jesus engaged in carpentry with Joseph, Mary at work



Jesus bidding goodbye to Mary to begin His mission



MANY SINS ARE FORGIVEN HER FOR SHE HATH LOVED MUCH

THY FAITH HATH MADE THEE SAFE GO IN PEACE

Jesus at the house of Simon the Pharisee



Raising of Lazarus



Mary, Mother of Jesus at the foot of the Cross



Resurrected Jesus appears to Mary Magdalene



**The Blessed Virgin Mary appearing to
Jacinta, Francisco, and Lucia in Fatima, Portugal**



**Patron Saints of Mgr RFC Mascarenhas:
St Raymond of Penyafort, St Francis Xavier, St Camillus de Lellis**

The artist and painter of the scenes in this chapel is Francis de Gama, hails from the Jeppu area and probably a 'new Catholic'. He was a close aide to the Italian Jesuit, during the painting and aftermath of the Aloysius College Chapel. De Gama had done works also for 'Simon Art Co.' of Angelore. A very talented personality in many ways, he contributed to the then Catholic institutions of the region, there is a memento just outside the chapel naming him in gratitude.

The main paintings in this chapel

All have a strong link with the spirituality of Bethany Congregation. The scene of Jesus in the home of Martha, Mary, and Lazarus with the inscription Jesus loved Martha, and her sister Mary, and Lazarus is of a rare nature. The words 'Maria', 'Rabboni' and the paintings on either side with the inscriptions "Martha, Martha, thou art careful and art troubled about many things." And (right side) "Mary hath chosen the better part which shall not be taken away from her." Then the scene of the crucifixion with the inscription 'Love is crucified' followed by raising of Lazarus with the inscription – "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother would not have died." The scene of Nazareth, Jesus immersed in the carpentry work with Joseph and Mary admiring while at work, seated on the side - "Is not this the carpenter's son?" Seemingly an inspiration to give importance for the dignity of labour and to recall that the work is redemptive and it is a participation in the creative work of God. On the other side, is the scene of the Resurrection. Then Mary Magdalene washing the feet of Jesus in the house of Simon the Pharisee with the inscription – "Thy faith hath made thee safe, go in peace." One noteworthy scene, above the door that leads to the convent proper is a painting of Jesus, bidding Mother Mary farewell as he leaves for his mission. This for long and to many new entrants to the convent in the past, is deeply symbolic to the parting from loved ones - parents, siblings, near and dear when ceremoniously they are received into the Congregation and are led into the interiors of the convent, a very emotional remembrance to many surely. This painting has a touching inscription – "About my Father's business." The last painting, the scene of the apparition of Mother Mary at Fatima was a special gesture of Mgr RFC Mascarenhas on the occasion of his *Sacerdotal* Golden Jubilee. Adjacent on the right side is seen a painting of the Founder's patron saints namely, Raymond, Francis and Camillus, in a combined picture; a detailed explanation of these three names, by Sr Dona Sanctis, can be found in the CP December 2017.

The renovated chapel is set to have many plus points with an extension and a dedicated entrance through a stairway from the approach road below. The extension of the rear and a vestry makes it spacious for liturgy; the choir loft of the chapel is also now better oriented.

The solemn rededication - May 8, 2018

Bishop of Mangalore, Rev Dr Aloysius P D'Souza, presided over the Mass celebrated with several priests, starting with sprinkling of holy water and singing the hymn of the Holy Spirit. The homily was given by the parish priest of Bendur, Fr Antony Shera, highlighting the life and services of the founder and the influence on the Bethany Congregation and the contributions of the nuns celebrating 50 years of consecrated life in the vineyard. The renewal of the vows and traditions were all a touching and memorable ceremony which have a lasting blessing on all. The engineer and contractor Noel Pinto and the key people involved were felicitated soon after the Mass.

On this special day, 27 Bethany Sisters marked their 50 years of vowed life - Golden jubilee of consecrated religious life in a solemn manner at the Mass in the renovated chapel; also 9 sisters of their who had gone to their eternal rest were fondly remembered and prayed for.

It is really edifying to note that several of the senior and ailing sisters housed in the mother house made a great effort to be present for the Mass and celebration in immaculate white habits that radiated joy. The theme of the Mass was a great consolation on this solemn occasion, reiterating 'Do not be afraid I am with you, I have called you each by name, follow me - I will bring you home, I love you and you are mine.'

Soon after the celebration of the Holy Eucharist, the Bishop installed the Blessed Sacrament in the freshly decorated adjacent adoration chapel; all set to revive 24 hours adoration as per the wishes of the Founder. The Bishop also congratulated the 27 sisters celebrating 50 years of vowed religious life and the good work and achievements in their half a century of dedication in various vital positions and mainly taking Christ's preaching, care and love to all people in need. He recalled the words of Pope Francis who stressed in this context the 3Ps for religious - namely 'Prayer, Poverty, Patience'. He mentions that presently these things in the world could solve all problems and suffering. In spite of the decrease in the number of vocations to religious life, the three Ps could bring change and the Lord will do the needful if one perseveres and has patience. The renovated power house of prayer is sure to bring miracles to the Church. The agape that followed in the main hall of the convent with smiles, song, and good wishes for the jubilarians. The whole event of the day will be a long great memory for all in the annals of Bethany.

The great visionary

Servant of God Mgr Raymond Francis Camillus Mascarenhas, his death as his life was of great heroic virtue. Favours received by devotees have given reason to look forward to his sainthood.

Early Life: Mgr Raymond Mascarenhas, is descendant of a family who faced the 15 years captivity (1784-99) under Tipu Sultan. Raymond was born on January 23, 1875 at Shimoga where his father was then based. He studied at Milagres and later at the famous Jesuit St Aloysius College of Mangalore; then he joined the St Joseph's Seminary at Jeppu. An extraordinarily gifted scholar of many talents, he was anointed a Priest on March 4, 1900 at the Rosario Cathedral here. Many have testified that 'Servant of God' Raymond was glowing with zealous holiness even from the early days of priesthood.

Compassionate Pastor: As a young priest he was assistant at Milagres, Mangalore his home parish and later in Milagres, Kallianpur. In 1903 he was appointed Parish Priest at Udayavar near Udupi. He worked zealously and established a new church – St Francis Xavier. He was then sent to Agrar. In 1914 Fr Raymond was requisitioned to the new parish of Bendur, a barren place, as its first parish priest. It is seen that in the 17 years, till 1931 that he served Bendur, it became a true Catholic centre of faith and development. Among his many achievements, founding the indigenous religious Congregation of Sisters at Bendur, Mangalore, under the title "Sisters of the Little Flower of Bethany" is his *magnus opus*.

All through his priestly service in Mangalore, he was given many important positions in religious matters and even as a civil leader, particularly in education matters. He was the Vicar General of the diocese of Mangalore for ten years (1931 – 1941). He was also known for his musical and writing skills and journalism and he aided the effort in a big way in early times earning the title of 'Apostle of the Media'. Mgr Raymond's vision and ability in the education arena earned him a place on the educational council of the region. He was a pioneer to heed Gandhi's call and set up industrial training for women and weaker classes. In 1955, recognizing Mgr Mascarenhas' singular services the then Bishop Rt Rev Basil Peres recommended him to the Holy See and he was granted the honour of "Domestic Prelate" which is a special recognition for the clergy equivalent to a 'knight'.

The striking factor about the Servant of God Mgr Mascarenhas is a life of reflection, silence, simplicity, asceticism, and zeal towards people around him and he was known to be consistent and constant. Sadly in March 1960, he was struck down by a paralytic stroke that left him bound to his bed in the Cottage at Bethany till his holy death on December 23, 1960. His passing away stunned the city of Mangalore. Today the places where he lived and moved are sacred who visit them to ask for miracles. Many historical facts here will be thrilling (read various publications and visit Founder's memorial cottage for abundant blessings). The procedures for the beatification have been initiated and are in progress. Hopefully the cause of this only 'Saint in waiting' from the city of Mangalore will move forward soon. Let us hope and pray that he will have the honours of the altar.

EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN THROUGH NON-FORMAL EDUCATION - INITIATIVE OF MGR R F C MASCARENHAS

Prof Edmund Frank

In the opening decades of the 20th century, a greater part of the inhabitants in Mangalore and the neighbouring regions were in the grip of poverty, illiteracy and unemployment. The First World War was also in a great measure responsible to this sad state of affairs. This menace was all the more prevalent in the villages especially in the female population. Various types of exploitative practices were prevalent there; practices that originated due to human greed for power, authority and superiority which ultimately took the form of social evils. It was in this setting that Mgr Raymond Mascarenhas was in the year 1914 introduced as the first Parish Priest in the newly formed parish of Bendur which was until then a part of the Milagres Parish.

Finding himself at the crossroads of a challenging situation staring at him, Fr Raymond decided to take on what seemed to be an impossible task of uplifting the marginalized sections among the poor especially women and young girls. He stressed on women's right to education and their equal social status and never hesitated to challenge the prevailing social evils. He firmly resolved to work for the suffering members of the female society most of who were living in sub-human conditions by providing them a means to access education. Very soon he realized that the issue was not as simple as it first seemed and it became more and more complex as he delved deep into it. He could see that a good majority among these sections of poor people could not access school education due to many reasons which included poverty, absence of schools and teachers, preoccupation of the children at work related activities as was common in those days and opposition from parents to send their children to school.

Here was an ordinary human being who set his sights on serving humanity in an extraordinary way. His full focus now was towards uplifting the social and economic status of women and he began working persistently to elevate their position. He had an enlightened thought process and could not stand the suffering of the weaker sections of people. He was aware of the responsibility bestowed upon him as a prelate and was determined to leave the earth behind him as a better place.

At this juncture the life and teachings of another great contemporary, Mahatma Gandhi got him interested. What impressed him the most was the principle of learning by doing because Fr Raymond was contemplating on something similar, the concept of Non-Formal Education to address the problem of illiteracy and unemployment. He was more convinced now than ever before that the upliftment of women through non formal education was the only solution and focused fully on the concept of learning by doing.

To appreciate the concept of non-formal education as conceived by Fr Raymond, we have to move back retrospectively a hundred years in time to the year 1920 and understand the situation of extreme poverty, illiteracy and unemployment prevailing then particularly among women. The concept of non formal education as envisaged by Fr Raymond had two aims:

1. To be the second best option to formal education.
2. To provide a higher quality of practical education than was available in regular formal schools

Fr Raymond wanted non-formal education to be preparatory, supplementary, and at the same time an excellent alternative to formal schooling. It had to impart basic education, life skills, and work skills. It could be given in different durations and did not follow a set of progressive ladder pattern and could be imparted with or without certification of learning achieved.

Placing ourselves at the position Fr Raymond was then, perhaps we can quantify the objectives of non formal education conceived by him as follows:

1. To provide literacy to adults and youth who could not attend schools and did not complete primary and secondary education.
2. To facilitate children and adults to acquire basic knowledge and skills of self employable crafts and trades.
3. To provide trainees on the job vocational training to improve their skills.

This formal education was to be conceived and delivered at any place convenient to the learners outside the walls of a regular school. It also had to meet the basic learning needs of the disadvantaged groups and could be availed of by all the age groups.

Launching of Non-Formal Education Programmes

It was in this context and with the active support of the Bendur parishioners, well wishers and the Sisters of the Bethany Congregation he founded on 16 July 1921, Fr Raymond began the process of establishing Industrial Schools, Community Learning Centres, hand loom weaving mills, small industries and vocational training centres to elevate and uplift the economic conditions of the people and thereby to empower them to be self reliant. He also set up a bakery in the Bethany Mother House compound to help in making bread, biscuits, and other bakery items.

First in line in the process of unfolding the non formal education package was the establishment of the St Martha's Industrial School in Bendur on 1 July 1922. This was the first industrial school for girls in the district. The main objective was to train women in self-employment. This school was approved by the then Madras State government and also secured grants from the Joint Directorate of Industries and Commerce.



St Martha's Industrial School offered 2 year and 3 year Industrial Certificate courses and also short term courses with or without certificates keeping in mind the objectives of non formal education to train girls who could not pursue their formal school education due to financial or other reasons. This school became the flag bearer of ventures set up to popularise non-formal education to impart self-employment skills to women in various trades and crafts resulting in their consequent empowerment and self-reliance.



The courses offered included among others weaving, embroidery, and tailoring, wide variety food processing and making bakery items. Bethany



Preparing Mass Vestments

sisters were also trained in this school. From the very beginning Fr Raymond imbibed in the trainees the meaning of dignity of labour and the need to be self-reliant.

1. The Management Stream courses were flexible and needed no minimum qualification. The

examination was conducted by the School Management. The certificates were issued by the School Management.

2. The Government aided courses. Here a minimum qualification of class 5 was required. The examination was conducted by and under the directions of the Government Department. The certificates were also issued by the government.

The century old apparatus used in the bakery and weaving mill are available for viewing in the Bethany Mother House. A few of the copies of Certificates issued by the Madras State Government are preserved in the archives of the Congregation.

However, it was unfortunate that after the formation of the Karnataka government due to government department problems this school had to be shut down in 1966. During the 44 years of its existence, St Martha's Industrial School trained thousands of women and imparted them with skills in various arts and crafts. These women were able to find good jobs. Many others started their own business enterprises and manufactured articles like mattresses, pillows and pillow cases, cloth making, and clothing units.

In 1922 along with the St Martha's Industrial School, Fr Raymond set up a handloom weaving mill in Bethany, Mangalore with the twin objectives of training aspiring youngsters including Bethany Sisters in the art of handloom weaving. The mill also operated to



Lace Making (Sr. Lumina - HM)

generate income to the Institution as well.

Pushing the parameter of non-formal education further the Bethany Founder established the St Joseph's Industrial School in Rosa Mystica in 1936. This School too was given Government recognition and became eligible for government grants in the year 1943. These schools functioned not only as centres of non-formal education but also as centres of vocational training.

The students at the St Joseph's Industrial School were taught weaving, gardening, cooking, tailoring, embroidery work, farming, and animal husbandry. This is another fine example of measures taken to spread non formal education. The primary goals of this school were mainly

1. to promote handloom weaving;
2. to train the youth as well as adults and Bethany Sisters in weaving art to meet the spirit of non-formal education;
3. to support the Gandhian movement to revive cottage industries.

In the year 1929 there was a significant development in the arena of self employment. Fr Raymond Mascarenhas made available a built up structure with partitions to set up small enterprises. Here the members the St Vincent de Paul Society of which he was the Founder Director and the Bethany Sisters started a number of manufacturing and processing industries. Since charity and uplifting the poor was the common motive of both these organisations, manufacturing operations were organised in such a way as to generate employment to both the able bodied and those with weak physical statures.

The items manufactured here included masala powders, condiments, papadams, pickles, jams and preserves, bakery items,, brooms and plaited items from coconut tree palms. The coconut tree palms were supplied by parishioners, and well wishers. Apart from these items, pounding, milling, sifting and packaging of rice and grains were also done here. The Bethany Sisters supervised the manufacturing and packaging operations. These industries not only provided employment but also imparted training to the interested youth to acquire skills and experience to start businesses of their own. Non-formal education which is learning by doing was brought to the fore and executed to the fullest extent.

To aid in the race to popularize literacy among people, Fr Raymond Mascarenhas authored in 1903 a book in Konkani titled '*Poilen Pustak*' with a sprinkling of phrases and colloquial words often used by the people.

Realizing the importance of non formal education and vocational training centres for the uplift of the poor, Jyothi Seva Kendra was brought into existence in Chittapur in Karnataka to provide skill development courses like motor winding, watch repairs, sewing, embroidery, textile study and methods of teaching and drawing. On 4 September 1994, Vanitha Vocational Training Centre was opened in the Rosa Mystica premises. This was a vocational training centre to impart non-formal education to school dropouts and those desiring to learn different trades and crafts. The trainees had an option to take it as a residential course or come from their houses. Here courses were conducted in needle work, embroidery, rexine bag making, screen printing, animal husbandry and gardening.

This way the thrust given by the Bethany Founder Mgr Raymond Mascarenhas has stood like a bedrock to the Bethany Sisters to go full steam and muster all the resources and courage at their command to uplift the lives of the downtrodden, especially villagers by setting up Social Service Trusts like the Sahodaya in Bendur, Jeevan Dhara in Kulsheker, Shubada in Suralpady, Abhyudaya Kendra in Belgaum, Jyothi Seva Kendra in Gulbarga, Shanthi Kiran in Bidar, Vocational Training Centre in Doddabelavangala, and Bethany Seva Trust in Bengaluru. All these centres where the Bethany Sisters are working has come a long way in bringing about the empowerment of women and young girls and helping them to uplift their lifestyles and standards of living.



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Managing Editor

INTERVIEW WITH SR AQUILINE BS - FOND MEMORIES WITH RFC MASCARENHAS, OUR FOUNDER

Sr M Celine Vas BS



Sr M Aquiline BS hails from Bellur Parish, of Mangalore Diocese. She had her schooling in the Parish School. In 1960 she came to Mangalore and joined St Martha's Industrial School run by Bethany Sisters in Bendur. Here she completed a three year certificate course and in 1964 she joined Bethany. After her First Profession she did her Teacher Training at Shimla, Himachal Pradesh in the North. There she started her teaching career at St Joseph's

School, Bathinda, Punjab. She was also the Warden in the hostel. Being affectionate, firm, and gentle she had command over the hostel boys as well and she was well known as a disciplinarian. In Kolkata and Mumbai she was the superior of the transit houses. At St John's Medical College, Bangalore she rendered her services at the Outpatient Ward. Cheerfulness, compassion, and Christic values are the hallmarks of her life.

Sr Celine Vas who had the privilege of spending her first year of religious life with Sr Aquiline at Bathinda took delight in interviewing her.

Sr Celine : You had the privilege of seeing Fr Founder in the last year of his life; can you recall your memories of the Founder?

Sr Aquiline : Yes, I lived close to the Founder's Cottage. Our hostel was situated where the present Generalate building stands. Almost everyday I saw the Founder. He was 85 years old. One look at his face was awe inspiring, he was a man of God, a man of prayer, a man of faith. He always sat at the rear end of his house on an easy chair stretching his legs, rolling the rosary beads, gazing at the Blessed Sacrament. He prayed constantly.

Sr Celine : Did you ever speak to him?

Sr Aquiline : I did not. He spoke. Sitting and praying over there even at that age he was recruiting vocations for Bethany. Because of his prayers and constant reminders I joined Bethany. We were many in the hostel. Three of us joined from my batch. When Fr

Founder died I was in the hostel.

Sr Celine : Sure, your memories are vivid.

Sr Aquiline : Yes. The whole chapel was decorated with flowers. Many priests and people were coming and paying their last homage. I sat at the staircase, attended the Holy Eucharist. Though I did not know much about him and Bethany I felt that the Founder was holy, a saint had died. This was the first funeral in my life where I saw a host of priests at the altar, a huge crowd of people and nuns at the funeral procession.

Sr Celine : Did you hear any one calling him saint or holy?

Sr Aquiline : On his funeral day I heard few exclaiming 'a saint has died'. Then neither I had known the greatness of this holy man as Founder nor those people who were visiting his mortal remains. While he was alive I saw a few priests were always coming to meet him and seek his advice. Something that struck me was those simple, poor people were always at his door. I am sure Fr Founder was a generous giver of his time and money. As I saw him he looked quite poor bereft of any modern facilities. When I became a senior Bethany Sister I realized what it meant to be a Founder of a new Congregation. I did not see him as proud and glorifying his achievements. He looked very humble. I felt he had direct access to God, because such was his outward appearance. He constantly gazed at the Blessed Sacrament, as though nothing mattered to him in this world. I felt he was in God's world. Later as a religious I realized he had a share of suffering, humiliation, punishment, and rejection from the ecclesiastical authorities and the sisters of his beloved Congregation which he had founded. It is my conviction that our Founder is a saint because of his holiness, his love for the Church, and the contribution he has made to the Church.

Sr Celine : You were three years in the hostel, what was your experience?

Sr Aquiline : I felt happy to be there. I learnt tailoring, embroidery, and making bakery products. Sr Lumina BS, a Goan sister was our directress and Sr Helmina BS, a junior sister was assisting her. Sr Lumina was dedicated, hard working, quite industrious, and professional in the

exercise of her duties. She was an inspiration to me in several ways and partly she also had a share in my vocation to Bethany. God's ways are beyond our imagination. My stay at St Martha's Industrial School turned out to be a blessing to me and to many who took this useful course. Today you have Hotel Management, Tailoring, Home Science, and many other courses. But this course was excellent. To say that our Founder was ahead of our times, this was one of the proofs.

Sr Celine : If Founder was alive today what would be his message to Bethany Sisters?

Sr Aquiline : It was Founder's desire that Good News of the Kingdom should be preached where it was not heard. According to his desire in the year of his death i.e. 1960, Bethany Sisters reached North India where Jesus was not heard of in many places. Through their educational institutions they found their entry points in many Northern States of India. Within five years, sisters also entered North Eastern States - the seven hills. Founder's desire was fulfilled at the leadership of Mother Macrina, the then Superior General. At present Sisters are rendering their services in African countries and in Europe. Education, health, ethnic clashes, drug menace, degradation of Kingdom Values are the most delicate topics Bethany Sisters are called upon to touch, heal, and bring fullness of life to those deprived people of the other continent.

Sr Celine : What are your concluding remarks?

Sr Aquiline : In the Old Testament we read from time to time prophets and judges were sent to remind the people of God to turn away from their evil ways and come back to Yahweh. We need prophetic Bethany Sisters to revive, renew, and review Bethany Spirituality, Charism, and Vision as it is fading away from us. Let every Bethany Sister be aware of why Bethany was founded by our revered Founder. The present need is that we become like Jesus to all in all things.

Sr Celine : Thank you Sr Aquiline for your commitment, love, and loyalty for Bethany. Wish you good health and wholeness of life.



BETWEEN OURSELVES

- MY REMINISCENCES OF MY UNCLE

MGR RAYMOND F C MASCARENHAS

Fr Stanley Mascarenhas

To speak however shyly, in praise of an Uncle is natural to a nephew. On the other hand, if good wine needs no bush as they say, I wonder in what new way I could eulogise my Reverend Uncle. Perhaps, I could indulge in a few homely reflections on what has impressed me in him-something, I should say, 'between ourselves'.

My earliest reminiscences of my Reverend Uncle are of the time when he was the Parish Priest of St Sebastian's Bendur. I could not have known him earlier, for his ministry in Bendur had begun ere I saw the light of day. In fact, he did not even give me a chance of witnessing the foundation of the Congregation of Bethany. It is to Bethany's credit, I should think, that it sprang into existence over a month in advance of me! At Bendur, then I first knew Uncle, but knew him little. We scarcely ever met- perhaps, once a year on the occasion of his birthday. And in return for a bouquet of roses, he would say, "Thank you and God bless you". Not once, in those days, do I recollect his visit at home. I might have then thought him less a man for it; but now I realize that detachment from his kith and kin, coupled with the austerity of his life, has been the secret of his success in the Lord's Vineyard. This is the first lesson I have learnt at my Uncle's feet.

In the early thirties, when I was due to embark on my teenage, Rev Uncle was made Vicar General. A send-off was accorded him by his parishioners, and I remember with what a heavy heart he bade good-bye to St Sebastian's. Is it superfluous to ask how firmly the cords of Christ-like charity can bind a parish priest to his people? Bishop Thomas of Bangalore, who was once his guest at Bendur has more than once remarked to me: "Your Uncle is a truly Apostolic man."

That very apostolic spirit of his impressed and inspired me throughout my seminary career. During those years, I came in closer contact with Uncle than ever before. Our intimacy was decidedly on the spiritual side, and I never left his door-step save a little better and wiser. There were lessons he taught me, practical lessons, which, in my humble opinion, can never be learnt even within the portals of the Seminary. And the conviction grew in me that a priest after God's Heart

should expect the 'Hosanna' of Jerusalem to be followed by the 'Crucifige' of Calvary. Whatever men thought of us, we were what we were in God's sight. With these maxims fixed in mind, I ascended the altar of God. The days of my ordination and First Mass were days of mourning for Rev Uncle. Rev Sr Magdalene, one of the pillars of the infant Congregation of Bethany, had passed away-a holocaust, I feel, which the Lord asked of Uncle, also for the benefit of his newly-ordained nephew. In spite of the sadness and grief that overwhelmed Bethany in those days, Reverend Uncle would have me offer, as previously arranged, my First Holy Mass in the Bethany Chapel. I did so gladly and willingly, and it was also my joy and pride, a week later, to have Uncle assist me at my First Solemn High Mass in Milagres, where forty seven years previously, on the same altar, he himself had offered his first sacrifice.

During the three years of my priesthood, Reverend Uncle has been to me a father, philosopher and guide. In all my little difficulties and anxieties, I have sought his advice and followed it with profit. His profound faith and trust in God have made me realize how little are men's opinions to be valued when God's work is at stake. A tender, filial devotion to Our Blessed Mother gives the clue to the peace and serenity he enjoys beneath an overcast, starless sky. To be convinced of doing a thing and then to see its fulfilment, despite the hurdles en route, has been Uncle's guiding principle. From him I have learnt that one should not only do God's will, but do it the way God wants it to be done.

On the occasion of his two- fold jubilee I join Reverend Uncle in thanking Almighty God for all the benefits that have been lavishly bestowed on him and Bethany. I now recall a verse from psalm thirty-six which he has frequently quoted to me, "Trust in the Lord, and do good and dwell in the land, and thou shall be fed with its riches."

Having carried out this mandate himself, I dare say he could exclaim with the Psalmist "My Chalice which inebriates me, how goodly is it!"

FOND MEMORIES OF MGR RAYMOND F C MASCARENHAS, MY GRANDUNCLE

Mr H P Tauro

I, Sri, H P Tauro, the grandson of Dr. Simon Mascarenhas, the nephew of Late Rt Rev Mgr Raymond Mascarenhas visited Bethany Generalate and the cottage of Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas on 29 October 2003.

I am extremely happy to recall my luck of having received my first Holy Communion in Bethany Chapel, from my grand uncle Msgr. R.F.C. Mascarenhas. I used to visit my grand uncle many times, especially to wish him on his birthdays and other occasions. He was very much fond of me. He was very loving and generous. I remember the Diamond Jubilee celebration of his Ordination, which was celebrated in the Bendur Church on 29 February 1960. I recall the sad moment while he got ill during the celebration. I also visited him while he was sick in his cottage. I attended his funeral on 23 December, 1960 in the Bendur Church.

I pray to him daily. I do consider him as a man of God. I wish and pray that he may be raised to the honours of the altar at the earliest.

Shangri La

17/6/307/7

St. Joseph Nagar Jeppu
Mangalore 575002

FAVOURS RECEIVED

GIFT OF A CHILD

We remain grateful to God for the favours received through the intercession of the Servant of God Mgr R F C Mascarenhas. Our daughter has been blessed with twins after eight years of marriage and our son blessed with a baby boy after five years of marriage.

Mr Basil and Mrs Celine Monteiro

Belgaum

Through the intercession of the Servant of God Mgr RFC Mascarenhas, my daughter Megan delivered healthy normal baby. We remain grateful to him for the countless blessings received.

Mrs Karis Rodrigues

Bangalore – 560 038

GOOD LIFE PARTNER

Through the intercession of Fr Founder God blessed my brother with a good life partner. My heartfelt thanks to him.

Sr M Cynthia Lasrado, BS

Bethany Convent, Hauz Khas, New Delhi

HEALING OF LEG PAIN

I am grateful to the Servant of God Mgr Raymond F C Mascarenhas for healing my husband Krishna from his leg pain. He was suffering from four months. Now he is fine and able to do his work.

Mrs Manjula,
Hassan

GOOD HEALTH AND HEALING

My heartfelt thanks to Fr Founder the Servant of God Mgr R F C Mascarenhas, for granting good health to my grandmother.

Sr M Teena, BS
Bethany Convent, Bendur

My grateful thanks to the Servant of God Mgr R F C Mascarenhas through whose intercession my back pain is completely healed..

Sr M Renita Rego, BS
Bethany Convent, Bendur

HEALING OF KNEE PAIN

I was travelling to Mangalore for my Golden Jubilee Celebration. It was very difficult to board the bus at Dharwad due to my knee pain. People helped me to get into the bus. Towards the morning when I alighted the bus at Mangalore, I could not keep my left foot on the ground. The conductor helped me to take my bag and to get down. When I came to Bethany Mother House for the renewal programme, all were surprised to see me limping. On the third day we had gone to visit Father Founder's tomb at St Sebastian Church, Bendur. I knelt there and prayed: Father Founder, if you want me to serve in Bethany for some more years, you have to work, you have to heal me and give me speedy recovery. Intercede with Jesus and Mary and grant me the favour I ask of you through the mercy of Jesus.

On the third day I was relieved from the acute knee pain. Now I am able to walk without any pain. Praise the Lord! Thank you Father Founder!

Sr M Lysetta BS
Bethany Convent, Dharwad

CONTRIBUTORS

FR JOSEPH MARTIS

Fr Joseph Martis is priest of the Diocese of Mangalore. Currently he is the Rector of St Joseph's Interdiocesan Seminary, Jeppu, Mangalore. He is academically specialized in Philosophy and has done his Master's and doctoral studies in Philosophy, at the Catholic University, Paris. His areas of specialization are: Phenomenology and Philosophy of Religion with special reference to Mystical Experience. Besides, he has a diploma in Formative Psychology. He is a visiting faculty in several seminaries and houses of formation. He has been a regular contributor to *The Compassionate Pastor*.



SR MARIE THERESE BS

Sr Marie Therese BS has vast experience as an educationist. She has served the Congregation as a Teacher and as a Principal for several years in different schools of North India managed by BES and a few years as a local superior and councillor to the Provincial of North India. She has done her PGDPC in Counselling and Guidance from Darshan College, Bangalore, in 2007. At present she enjoys working as a counsellor in Bethany Convent Senior Secondary School, Naini-Allahabad, U.P.



SR M DONA SANCTIS BS

Sr Dona Sanctis BS is a member of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Little Flower of Bethany. She did her Bachelor of Theology from Vidyajyoti, College of Theology, New Delhi, and her Master's and Doctorate in Theology at Radboud University Nijmegen, the Netherlands. She has worked in the fields of education and formation. She completed a course on the Canonization of Saints (*Studium*) organized by the Congregation for the Causes of Saints, Vatican. Presently she is working at the office of the Cause of the Founder, RFC Mascarenhas.



MR IVAN SALDANHA

Mr Ivan Saldanha "Citizen Journalist" has often written on the life of Mgr Raymond Mascarenhas. He regularly contributes articles to news papers, magazines, bulletins etc., and electronic media on local community and history. His articles and news items bring to limelight the forgotten personalities of the society. He is a member of the Editorial Board of *The Compassionate Pastor* since 2008. He has been keen in promoting the Cause of the Servant of God and contributes articles regularly to *The Compassionate Pastor*.



PROF EDMUND FRANK

Prof Edmund Frank is the Founder Chairman of the STF Centenary Foundation and Social Entrepreneur. He has written 5 books on Business and Industry Management. He is Prof., Dean and Chairman of the Board of Studies PGDBM and Member of the Academic Council at St Aloysius College (Autonomous). He is a Member of the Governing Board at St Joseph Engineering College. He is an active Member of the Prison Ministry of India and St Vincent de Paul Society in Bendur. He was the only person from Karnataka to represent India in a 35 member delegation in a 5 day International Convention of Eminent World Jesuit Alumni in Ohio, United States of America in June-July 2017. He is a member of the 11 Member "Karnataka Catholic Think Tank" a Consultative Body of which the Archbishop Most Rev Dr Peter Machado is the Chairman.



SR M CELINE VAS BS

Sr Celine Vas BS has a doctorate in Mass Communication and Journalism from The University of Mangalore. She has taught for a few years at St Aloysius College, Mangalore in the Dept of Journalism and Masters in Communication and Media Studies. She was also the Principal of St Raymond College, Vamanjoor. She has vast experience of working in formation for 14 years. She was the editor of *Chronicle* and at present the editor of *Bethany Flame*, the news letter of Mangalore Province. She also edited *Ripples* the newsletter of St Aloysius College, *Dhwani*, a practical journal of the Dept of Journalism, St Aloysius College. She has contributed several articles to *Raknno*, and to several magazines. Presently she is working for *Magnet* Magazine at New Delhi.



Inauguration and Blessing of Renovated Bethany Mother House Chapel





*Bethany Chapel built by
Servant of God
Mgr Raymond F C Mascarenhas
in the year 1934
(Renovated and blessed on 8 May 2018)*

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