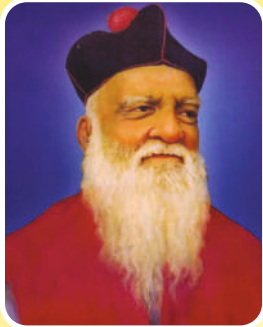


The Compassionate Pastor

July 2019

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No. 1



**Closing Session of the
Diocesan Inquiry
of the Cause of Beatification
and Canonization of the
Servant of God**

Raymond Francis Camillus Mascarenhas

**At St Sebastian Church,
Bendur, Mangalore
17 July 2019**



"My Soul Magnifies the Lord". Lk 1:46

SERVANT OF GOD



RAYMOND FRANCIS CAMILLUS MASCARENHAS
(1875-1960)

- | | | |
|------------------------------|----------|--|
| Founder Parish Priest | : | St Sebastian Church, Bendur
(1914 - 1931) |
| Vicar General | : | Diocese of Mangalore (1931-1941) |
| Founder | : | The Sisters of the Little Flower of
Bethany, Mangalore 16 July 1921 |
| Servant of God | : | 3 June 2008 |
| Opening Session | : | Diocesan Inquiry, 17 August 2008 |
| Closing Session | : | Diocesan Inquiry, 17 July 2019 |

THE COMPASSIONATE PASTOR

July 2019

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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:

Office of the Cause of Servant of God Raymond Mascarenhas,
Bethany Convent, Bendur, Mangalore 575002, D.K.
Ph: 0824-2211806; Email: rfcmas@gmail.com



EDITORIAL

Three Epoch-Making Events

July 17th 2019 the church of Mangalore witnessed one of the most significant event of Closing of the Diocesan Inquiry of the Cause of Beatification and Canonization of her first son, Servant of God, Raymond Francis Camillus Mascarenhas. The Diocese of Mangalore has the joy of seeing one of its own recognized by the Church as a Servant of God and the success in submitting the findings of the Diocese to the Vatican for further study. This great event coincides with the 70th Anniversary of the translation of the Four Gospels by the Servant of God Raymond F C Mascarenhas in the year 1949. Three years later in 1952 the Servant of God Raymond Mascarenhas translated the whole New Testament from Latin into Konkani. It was the first of its kind, the Sacerdotal Golden Jubilee gift of the Servant of God to the Catholic community of then South Kanara.

Like Jesus our Master who fed the hungry people with the Word and bread, the Servant of God Raymond Mascarenhas who assessed the need of the local Catholic community took up the venture of translating the Word of God from Latin into Konkani. It was amidst numerous activities such as education of the poor girls in various parts of Karnataka and Kerala and directing the Bethany Congregation, he found time at the age of 77, to translate the whole New Testament into Konkani. As per the records, the New Testament was sold for Rs. 1.50. Even then, people could not afford to procure a copy. Three clippings from the Unitas, Raknno and Poinnari respectively included in this bulletin with the title From the Archives of Bethany Generalate establish this fact. Recognizing his contribution to the Church, Cardinal Fumasoni Biondi, and the Prefect of the Congregatio de Propaganda Fide, Vatican City wrote to Mgr Raymond Mascarenhas on January 7, 1950:

“Words are inadequate to express our profound appreciation for the tremendous work that you have accomplished during your fifty years in the Sacred Priesthood. Where our words fail, your endeavours, your labours on behalf of the many parishes and institutions of the Diocese

of Mangalore, on behalf of the cause of education and Catholic Literature, all will bear indelible testimony to your pastoral zeal. Undoubtedly, you have been a useful and intelligent instrument in the Provident Hand of God and many of His special graces have guided you.

This Sacred Congregation “de Propaganda Fide” acknowledges with gratitude the work you have done for the Missions and heartily invokes Almighty God to shower you with singular blessings.”

How blessed is he who brought the Good News to the poor! (Cf. Is. 52:7)

I would consider that the completion of the Diocesan Phase of the Cause of the Beatification and Canonization of the Servant of God Raymond Mascarenhas on the 70th Anniversary of Mgr Raymond’s translation of the Four Gospels is an approbation of God, the good done by him.

The third event that we should celebrate on this occasion is the Centenary of the Centenary year of the Apostolic letter of Pope Benedict XV, *Maximum Illud* issued in 1919. Rev Fr Cedric Prakash SJ in his article titled *Maximum Missionary* expounds how the whole of the priestly ministry of the Servant of God was flood-lit with the Apostolic Letter *Maximum Illud* of Pope Benedict XV. The Apostolic Letter focuses on the need of developing the local resources of the local church especially training of the local clergy and the importance of local language and adaptation to local culture in the evangelization of people. At the background of this document the Servant of God Raymond F C Mascarenhas stands out as an exemplary evangelizer and a zealous missionary.

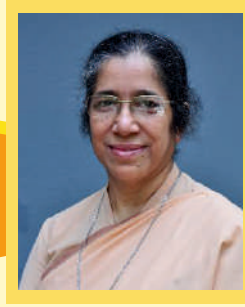
As we happily remember these three wonderful events in the life and mission of our beloved Father, Raymond, we wish and beseech the Lord, may the Universal Church who conferred on Mgr Raymond Francis Camillus Mascarenhas the honour of Domestic Prelate in the year 1955, raise him to the honours of the Altar.



Sr M Lillis, BS
Chief Editor



MESSAGE



“Everyday give the first place in your heart to the Lord. Never act with a view to please the world or others or the self; act only to please God. If God is pleased, what does the rest matter?” True to his words, the Servant of God Raymond Francis Camillus Mascarenhas gave the first place in his heart, life and mission to God and lived to please Him alone.

The entire life of the Servant of God Raymond was a living testimony of his deep faith in God, undying hope and intense love that lived only to please God. Insightful reading of the signs of the times he ventured into initiatives that would change the religious, educational and socio-economic environment with far reaching consequences not only of Mangalore but also of rural India from Himalayan range to Kanyakumari, from Arunachal Pradesh to Gujarat, a few of the European and African countries. The daring interventions against the convention of his times empowered the rural poor, girl children and women giving a new understanding to the immortal words of Jesus, “I came that you may have life, life in all its fullness” (John 10:10).

17 July 2019, a day to be ever remembered for creating history in the Diocese of Mangalore, Church in India and Universal Church as the Closing Session of the Diocesan Inquiry was celebrated at the Church of St Sebastian, Bendur, Mangalore. Most Rev Peter Paul Saldanha, the Bishop of Mangalore and the President of the Closing Session officially decreed the closing of the Diocesan Inquiry, having perused more than 3,000 documents from 90 archives and libraries from all over India and Rome by the Historical Commission Members Rev Fr J B Saldanha, Rev Sr Mariette BS, and Rev Fr Peter Mascarenhas MMS, and having examined by the Board of Inquiry 101 witnesses who knew the Servant of God.

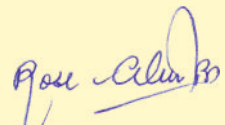
It was in 1998, the members of the XIII General Chapter guided by the Holy Spirit resolved to take up the Cause of the Beatification and Canonization of the Founder of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Little Flower of Bethany, an indigenous Congregation which he founded as the founder parish priest of St Sebastian Church, Bendur, Mangalore.

In 2007, Sr Jyoti BS the Superior General of the Congregation through the officially appointed Postulator Sr Lillis Kattakayam BS presented the petition (*Libellus*) to the Bishop of Mangalore requesting to initiate the Cause of Beatification and Canonization of Mgr Raymond Francis Camillus Mascarenhas. Having obtained the *Nihil Obstat* dated 3 May 2008 from the Sacred Congregation for the Causes of Saints, Rome, Most Rev Aloysius Paul D'Souza recognised Mgr Raymond Francis Camillus Mascarenhas the Servant of God on 3 June 2008 and initiated the process of the Diocesan Inquiry of the Cause on 17 August 2008.

A saint is someone who lived a life of “heroic virtue” on earth and who now is living the fullness of God's life in eternity. The Servant of God Raymond remained firm in his faith in the most trying situations of his life. His love for God expressed in the love of his neighbour had no bounds. He never lost hope amidst intense suffering and humiliation even when he lost everything - his position, his fame and felt abandoned by all. His sense of justice, fortitude, prudence and temperance in critical moments are evidences of his heroic virtuous life.

His life of deep and constant prayer, love for the Eucharist and for the Word of God is admirable. His translation and publication of the entire New Testament from the Latin Vulgate into Konkani the first of its kind ever done is a proof of his zeal to make Jesus known and loved by all especially the ordinary people whom he cared for and loved compassionately. His love and devotion to Mary is reflected in the many Marian hymns he composed or translated and the books he wrote or translated. He loved the Mother Church and served her lovingly through his life of holiness and educating the children and adults in faith-life.

It is my ardent desire and prayer to see the day when the Mother Church will declare the Servant of God Raymond F C Mascarenhas Venerable, Blessed and a Saint. I invite you to pray for the dawn of that great day where the people of God in the Universal Church will draw inspiration, strength and guidance to live a life of love and service only to please God, and God alone and grow in holiness.



(Sr M Rose Celine BS)
Superior General





Presidential Address

Most Rev Dr Peter Paul Saldanha
Bishop of Mangalore

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The Book of Sirach 11: 22 says “The blessing of the Lord is the reward of the godly, and quickly God causes his blessing to flourish”. These words from the book of Sirach are actualized in the life of Servant of God Raymond Francis Camillus Mascarenhas who was a faithful priest of the Diocese of Mangalore. The Lord has blessed him and today we witness the blessings of the Lord flourishing among us.

We are gathered here for the celebration of a great event, the first of its kind in the history of the Diocese of Mangalore. During the past eleven years, the process of gathering the facts about the holiness of the Servant of God was carried on by a Board of Inquiry appointed by the Bishop following the norms laid down by the Congregation for the Causes of Saints, in Rome. Some among us have given their testimonies. The Historical Commission has collected more than 3000 written documents connected with the Servant of God and they will be sent to the Congregation for the Causes of Saints. The Theological Censors have studied the published writings of the Servant of God and have given their opinion regarding his teaching. I am happy that Bishop Aloysius Paul D’Souza who opened the Diocesan Inquiry eleven years ago, is here to witness the Closing Session. I appreciate the collaboration and hard work of many priests, both religious and diocesan, religious sisters, especially Bethany Sisters, and lay staff and thus fulfilling the task assigned to them.

Holy Mother Church offers us many inspiring models in saints who intercede for us. We can keep in front of our eyes their faith and love towards the Lord and be charged to love him all the more. Saints are men and women like us who have lived their Christian life heroically. They certainly had their human weaknesses. However, like St Paul with the grace of God they have striven hard to overcome them and followed Jesus closely through the practice of virtues.

It has been a blessing that the Diocese of Mangalore has a Servant of God in the person of Mgr Raymond Mascarenhas who was its former Vicar General and the Founder of the Bethany Congregation. Mgr Raymond firmly believed in the communion of saints. He continuously sought their intercession and patronage in his mission activities and on the institutions he started. It is explicit that he had great devotion to his own three patron saints namely St Raymond, St Francis, and St Camillus whose portraits he got painted on the occasion of his Sacerdotal Golden Jubilee. He had an extraordinary devotion to the Eucharistic Lord and he perpetuated the same among the people and among the Sisters of Bethany by instructing them to have perpetual adoration. The sermon that he preached on the Eucharist on the occasion of the First Eucharistic Congress of the Diocese is remembered even till this day by a few of the elderly. He preached: "Eucharist is a great Sacrament and as great as God Himself – all powerful, Almighty, all perfect, Creator of Heaven and Earth, the One who was, who is, and who will be, for ever more, Truth itself, Immortal. *Tantum Ergo Sacramentum* – How great a Sacrament! Not only like God it holds the world in its hands, but works 'another miracle' of giving Almighty God into our hands". One of the Bendur parishioners, after many years, commenting on this sermon, wrote to the then Mother General: "those who heard him will know what was it like and if there was any arrangement to record that sermon which would have been a masterly literary achievement not only in Konkani language but also in substance and religious fervour, a thesis on faith worth translating in all the great languages of the world, a treasure for the generations to come" (Letter, B. D'Souza, to Mother Petra BS, dated 19.03.1950).

No less was his devotion towards Mother Mary and Mother Church. He saw his suffering as part of the divine plan manifested to him by Mother Mary and he trusted in her maternal assistance. His last desire and wish was to be buried in the grave he had prepared for himself at the foot of the Grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes in Bethany. His relentless quest was to make Jesus Christ known and loved by the people. As a priest he used all his energy, resources, and talents for this purpose. This monumental church built under his leadership 89 years ago speaks of his zeal in building the faith of the faithful. His outstanding compassion

towards the poor urged him to found 'Bethany' an indigenous religious congregation with four lady teachers from this very parish of Bendur. A study on his life and personality clearly echo four aspects of his personality.

1. He lived his priestly vocation with great pastoral zeal
2. His spirituality was deeply rooted in the Word of God and the Eucharist
3. He had a new vision for the Church and the society
4. His sacrificial love for the economically and spiritually poor

Mgr Raymond inspires us to strive for holiness whichever state of life we are in. Jesus said, "You are the light of the world" (Matthew 5:14-16). Raymond Mascarenhas strove to be the light of faith to the people through his priestly ministry especially through the translation of the New Testament into Konkani. He used Catholic education to share the light and love of Christ with the poor and the marginalized. In times of trial and suffering, he used to spend hours meditating on the Word of God, remaining close to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament drawing strength and light. "The only unchangeable, unchangeable, unfailing friend, companion, co-worker who gives me courage, help, strength in my work is Jesus Christ God-Man, who is present in the Blessed Sacrament. He is the only solace when I am afflicted, courage when I am discouraged, friend and companion when I am lonely, abandoned by others. I have to give you love of Christ and teach you in the mission to witness Christ by your ideal life. If I should give you love, first I should have this love and therefore I go to the Blessed Sacrament. I should be cistern of God's love if I am to give this love to others by various channels. Unless I love, my apostolate will be but sounding brass and tinkling cymbal" (Sr Gemma, Memories on R.F.C, Mascarenhas, dated 23.07.2002).

In his striving for holiness as well as in his missionary activities he imitated and sought the assistance of the Blessed Mother and the saints, with special devotion to St Therese of Child Jesus, the Little Flower, as special patroness. Mgr Raymond in one of his writings emphasizes the importance of giving Christian names to the children as they need the intercession of saints in their daily life. He even gave the names of men saints to sisters during their religious consecration.

Saints are with us and we have to only recognize them to understand the work of God in each one's heart. Having received the gift of faith 450 years ago, we can truly uphold that Mangalore Diocese has many saints, though their

names are not written in the album of the Holy See. Pope Francis writes in his Apostolic Exhortation on the Call to Holiness in Today's World, *Gaudete et Exsultate* (19 March 2018) that we need to recognize the holiness in our next-door neighbour. The Pope says: "I like to contemplate the holiness present in the patience of God's people: in those parents who raise their children with immense love, in those men and women who work hard to support their families, in the sick, in elderly religious who never lose their smile. In their daily perseverance I see the holiness of the Church militant. Very often it is a holiness found in our next-door neighbours, those who, living in our midst, reflect God's presence. We might call them 'the middle class of holiness'" (n. 7). God "wants us to be saints and not to settle for a bland and mediocre existence" (n. 1). Each one can strive to be holy and spread the sweet aroma of Christ in one's own way.

At this juncture, I appreciate the initiative of the Superior General of Bethany Congregation, Sr Jyothi, in recognizing the holiness of Mgr Raymond and for petitioning the Cause. I admire the perseverance the Superiors General Sr Wilberta and Sr Rose Celine in carrying the work forward. I place on record the hard work of the Postulator Sr Lillis Kattakayam and her team that followed it up till today. Having completed all the works that are to be done, we have the satisfaction of closing the Cause at the diocesan level and now the documents are ready to be sent to the Holy See through the Nunciature for the next phase, the Roman Phase.

Dear brothers and sisters, closing the diocesan phase of the Cause does not mean that our responsibilities are over. On this occasion we need to pray that the work done by many priests, sisters, and lay collaborators and the depositions made by the witnesses may bear fruit and that the Servant of God may be raised to the honours of the Altar. I pray to God Almighty that He may come to our aid in completing the process of Beatification and Canonization of the Servant of God Raymond Francis Camillus Mascarenhas.

Further, I encourage you to visit his tomb and seek his intercession for your various needs. May we experience an outpouring of the blessings of the Lord through the intercession of the Servant of God Raymond!



Prayerful Wishes



Most Rev Dr Aloysius Paul D'Souza
Bishop Emeritus

Most Rev Bishop Peter Paul, all the Members who worked for the Cause and dignitaries,

It gives me great joy to know that the Diocesan Phase of the Cause of the Beatification and Canonization of the Servant of God Mgr Raymond Francis Camillus Mascarenhas which was started by me in the year 2008 has been completed. It is a joy for the Diocese of Mangalore because Mgr R F C Mascarenhas, Servant of God is one of our own and it is an honour for our Diocese to take his Cause.

On this occasion I express my appreciation towards all the officials and the support team who have worked hard and given their best to complete the Diocesan Phase of the Cause. I wish and pray that the hard labour put in for the Cause will bear abundant fruit. The next Phase of the Cause will be carried out in Rome. We pray that it will be done successfully. It is said that if the Diocesan Phase is done well, then the rest will go on well too. To the best of my knowledge, all those involved in the Diocesan Phase of the Cause of the Beatification of Mgr Mascarenhas have done their best.

A good number of the priests of this diocese, Bethany Sisters, and lay people have taken part in the interview and given their testimony regarding the virtues of the Servant of God Mgr Mascarenhas. Having done our best we rely on God and pray incessantly that the Servant of God may be raised to the honours of the Altar. The parishioners of Bendur have an additional obligation to pray and promote the Cause as the Servant of God, for he was the Founder Parish Priest of Bendur and his mortal remains are interred in this Church. A saint is not just, of a religious Congregation or for a particular Diocese, but is for the Universal

church. It is the desire of all of us that the Diocese of Mangalore that has given 47 Bishops to the various dioceses of India including Pakistan should give Saints to the Universal church, beginning with Servant of God, Mgr Raymond Mascarenhas. Let us pray ceaselessly for this favour from God almighty.

A saint is a person who lived his ordinary life in a heroic or extraordinary way; this includes practice of virtues in a heroic way. Persons or people would testify to that effect. Mgr Raymond Mascarenhas was a person who lived the life of beatitudes profoundly in his day-to-day life especially the practicing of corporal and spiritual works of mercy. His love and compassion for the poor and the needy especially girls, women and children knew no bounds. He was the first person to translate the New Testament into Konkani language in the year 1952 and made history. It is an indication of his desire to nourish the faithful with Word of God and give them spiritual nourishment.

On this occasion I thank God for the gift of the person of Mgr Raymond Mascarenhas for the Diocese of Mangalore. He served the Diocese as a committed pastor, efficient Vicar General holding numerous other responsibilities. The greatest work he did was the founding of the Bethany Congregation of the Sisters. He did that in this church while he was its parish priest. The Catholic Church is richer by the ministry of the sisters, rendering spiritual, social and pastoral services in many countries of the world. Thanks to Mgr Raymond Mascarenhas, the Bethany Sisters are striving to imbibe the ideals of their founder and work zealously to build God's Kingdom. I thank the Bethany Sisters, starting from the Superiors General and the other sisters of the Congregation for their commitment towards the Cause. I sincerely thank my successor Most Rev Dr Peter Paul Saldanha for guiding the team while in Rome to now in Mangalore. I pray and thank for God's blessings on the team who worked hard for the Cause. I request you all to pray for the success of the next Phase of the Cause in Rome. And I pray, dear Lord God make your servant Mgr RFC Mascarenhas a Saint. Let this be your prayer too. Thank you.





Rev Fr John Baptist Saldanha
Convener, Historical Commission

Prayer Service held on the occasion of the Closing Session of the Diocesan Inquiry

Opening Hymn: Hymn to the Holy Spirit

Introductory Words

My Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Who is a saint? One finds many explanations to this question. A saint is a person who is recognized as having an exceptional degree of holiness or likeness or closeness to God. One cannot possibly understand the teaching of the saints unless one has a pure mind and is trying to imitate their life. As for me, there are saints every day. They stand up and help others and live for others and do things for others.

Today, we are closing the Diocesan Inquiry of the Cause of the Beatification and Canonization of the Servant of God, Raymond Francis Camillus Mascarenhas, the former Vicar General of the Diocese of Mangalore and the Founder of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Little Flower of Bethany. He was a holy priest of the Diocese of Mangalore. His memory is fresh in us, though he went to his eternal abode in the year 1960. He is remembered for his virtuous life, pastoral zeal and priestly commitment.

We now silently pray to God to guide our steps in this Cause of the Beatification and Canonization.

Opening Prayer

O God our Heavenly Father, We thank you for the gift of the person of Servant of God Raymond to our local Church and to Bethany Congregation. You have used him as your instrument for the spreading of the Gospel. We thank you for the blessing you have showered on the local Church in Mangalore and on the Bethany Congregation through your servant Raymond. We pray that you guide us in this process of sanctification of your servant Raymond Mascarenhas. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Scripture Reading

We shall now listen to a reading from the Holy Gospel of St Mathew, chapter 5: 3-10.

Reflection

My brothers and sisters in Christ Jesus,

The Church in India in general and Mangalore Diocese in particular rejoices at the initiation of the Cause for the Beatification of the Servant of God Raymond Francis Camillus Mascarenhas (hereafter S D Raymond. S D Raymond was born on 23 January 1875, ordained a priest of God on 4 March 1900, departed to the Lord on 23 December 1960 and his mortal remains have been interred at St Sebastian Church, Bendur, Mangalore Diocese, South India.

Hearing of the news of the death of S D Raymond large crowds paid homage to this holy priest, the great pastor of souls. Those who had witnessed his final journey perceived something different in him, and expressed that he was a holy priest. As a parish priest, Founder of a native Congregation, the Vicar General of the Diocese of Mangalore and the Domestic Prelate, he manifested extraordinary commitment in uplifting the souls to God and serving the poor.

These days I have been pondering on the pastoral qualities of the Servant of God, Raymond Francis Camillus Mascarenhas. What is the inspiration that we can draw from his life? Of the many qualities, I wish to pinpoint three of the following:

1. His Zeal for the Word of God: He wished that all the faithful should have access to the Word of God. He took the trouble to translate the Bible both Old and the New Testament into Konkani. He is the first one to venture into this great work.

We find in the archives the manuscripts of his translations. He not only translated it but also used it in his homilies. His preaching was firmly rooted in the Word of God. That makes me to ask the question, "To what extent are we rooted in the Lord and His Word?"

2. His trust in the Providence of God: As the Head of the Historical Commission, I have gone through his writings. Along with other members of the Historical Commission, I have analysed the primary sources and secondary sources. His deep trust in God and his trust in the providence of God are outstanding. When the Bethany Congregation was still a baby he had to make many bold decisions. He sought guidance of God. When sisters were suffering, he went through agonising moments. When he had no funds to carry forward the Congregation, nobody came to his rescue but God provided him with everything that he needed.

That makes me to ask one more question, "Do we believe in God's providence or do we trust in muscle power or do we trust in money power?" Every local Church, every Congregation has to go through a process of introspection on this point. I am afraid, at times, instead of trusting in God's providence, we are up in arms against one another both *ad intra* and *ad extra*. In the bargain we have failed to give a witness of unity and solidarity. Because of this the mission of Christ suffers and the growth of the Kingdom of God is garrotted.

3. SD Raymond, a Man of Prayer: Sitting in the veranda of his cottage he would be gazing at the tabernacle of the main chapel in Bethany. Physically I think, he was not able to see the Blessed Sacrament but spiritually, he was united with the Eucharistic Lord. His love for the Eucharistic Lord is evident in the homilies he preached on the Eucharist.

He had special devotion and immense love for the Blessed Mother. I do not know how many rosaries he recited every day but I know he held rosary in his hand all the time. He venerated many saints and holy people. He had a deep sense of piety. He is a man filled with virtues of faith, hope, and love.

That makes me to ask yet another question, "How do you and I describe our love for the Lord in the Eucharist? What kind of filial devotion to Mary have we developed in our life of commitment?"

Finding answer to these questions would help us, not only to strengthen our spiritual life but also it could help us to dive deeper into the spiritual quest of SD Raymond as well as his virtuous life.

The Gospel passage that we have read just now on beatitudes pinpoints how we can become saints. It is not necessary to practice all the beatitudes. Even practising any one beatitude can make us saints. Do you wish to be a saint?

- By being dependent on God?
- By way of comforting those who are in pains?
- By being meek and humble?
- By being merciful?
- By being pure at heart?
- By being a peacemaker?
- By seeking righteousness?
- By suffering for Christ and His Kingdom?

It is nothing but a choice to stand up for Christ. If we forget the spirit of beatitudes, we cannot be called Christians anymore.

[Pause for silent reflection]

Closing Prayer

Loving Jesus, we thank you for giving us a virtuous personality in your servant SD Raymond. We also thank you for calling us to be holy in the Church. We believe that your presence makes the Church holy. As we come to the Closing Session of the Diocesan Inquiry of the Cause of the Beatification and Canonization of the Servant of God RFC Mascarenhas, we implore your blessings on our efforts and we ask you to guide our steps through your Spirit, so that all that we undertake in this Cause may give glory to the creator and bring salvation to all of us who follow you our Master under the example of your beloved mother, the angelic hosts, communion of saints in heaven and your servant SD Raymond. We make this prayer in your holy name, Amen.

Let us bless the Lord. Thanks be to God.

Final Hymn: *Naman Aymkar Morye* (Hymn to Mary)

A MILESTONE IN THE HISTORY OF THE DIOCESE OF MANGALORE



The Closing Session of the Diocesan Inquiry of the Cause of Beatification and Canonization of the first Mangalorean Servant of God Raymond Francis Camillus Mascarenhas which was held on 17 July 2019 at St Sebastian Church, Bendur, Mangalore marks a milestone in the history of the Diocese of Mangalore. It was presided over by Most Rev Dr Peter Paul Saldanha, the Bishop of Mangalore. The solemn ceremony ignited in the hearts of many that greater hope of Mangalore soon having their very own saint in the person of Mgr Raymond Mascarenhas.



On Sunday, 14 July 2019 a Thanksgiving Mass officiated by Most Rev Dr Aloysius Paul D'Souza, Bishop Emeritus of Mangalore Diocese was offered at St Sebastian Church, Bendur.



The ceremony began with a prayer service conducted by Rev Fr J B Saldanha, Parish Priest of St Sebastian Church, Permannur.



Thereafter, Bishop Peter Paul Saldanha, Sr Rose Celine, Superior General of the Bethany Sisters and Rev Fr Vincent Monteiro, the Parish Priest placed floral tributes on the tomb of the Servant of God.



Sr Rose Celine, presently the petitioner of the Cause, welcomed the gathering and requested Bishop Saldanha to preside over the Closing Session.



In his presidential address, Bishop Saldanha portrayed the Servant of God Raymond Mascarenhas as a holy and committed priest of the Diocese of Mangalore. He highlighted four main aspects of his priestly life: his commitment to the priestly vocation with great pastoral zeal, love for the Word of God and Eucharist, a new vision for the Church and the society, and his sacrificial love for the poor and the neglected particularly girls. He emphasized that the Servant of God Raymond Mascarenhas is an inspiration for the people and exhorted the people to pray that the Servant of God Raymond Mascarenhas is declared as a model of sanctity for all of us and as an effective intercessor before God.

At the outset of the ceremony, Rev Fr Naveen Pinto, the Notary presented the documents to the Episcopal Delegate Rev Fr Henry Sequeira.

Rev Fr John Mendonca, the Promoter of Justice, declared 'no objection' in transmitting the documents to the Holy See.



Thereafter, the officials connected with the responsibilities of the Board of Inquiry took an oath declaring that they have faithfully fulfilled their tasks. Bishop Saldanha began the oath-taking and was followed by Rev Fr Henry Sequeira, the Episcopal Delegate, Rev Fr John Mendonca, the Promoter of Justice, Rev Fr Naveen Pinto, the Notary, Rev Fr Vincent Saldanha, the Vice Notary, Sr Lillis Kattakayam BS, the Postulator of the Cause, Sr Molly Sharon BS, the copyist, and Sr Hilarita BS, the Language Translator.



The Episcopal Delegate Rev Fr Henry Sequeira, then authenticated the integrity of the documents and handed them over to the Bishop.



The Notary, Rev Fr Naveen Pinto read out the minutes of the entire procedure. The authenticated minutes were inserted into the three packages.



The Bishop officially sealed the suitcases containing the three sets of documents. The Bishop then decreed the closing of the Diocesan Inquiry. Thereafter, the Bishop entrusted Rev Fr Victor George D'Souza, the Chancellor, with the original set of the documents namely the Archetype arranged in 15 packages and placed in 8 suitcases to be placed in the archives of the Diocese of Mangalore.



The other two sets known as the Transcript and the Public Copy arranged in 30 packages placed in 16 suitcases were entrusted with Sr Lillis Kattakayam BS, the officially appointed carrier under oath. She was instructed to send the same to the Congregation for the Causes of Saints in Vatican City through the Nunciature in New Delhi for further study of the life and virtues of the Servant of God Raymond Mascarenhas.



Bishop Emeritus Rev Dr Aloysius Paul D'Souza, then expressed his appreciation for the work done and invoked God's blessings for the completion of the Roman Phase of the Cause.



The Bethany Sisters along with Bendur parishioners paid tribute to the Servant of God through a song.



The Postulator, Sr Lillis Kattakayam BS proposed the vote of thanks. She acknowledged the services of all those who had laboured for the Cause in various capacities. She also thanked all the institution heads for the relevant materials on Mgr Raymond Mascarenhas. Sr Rose Celine BS, the Superior General honoured Bishop Peter Paul Saldanha and Bishop Aloysius Paul D'Souza for their unique services at the opening and closing of the Diocesan Inquiry.



The Bishops honoured the members of the Board of Inquiry, the Historical Commission Members, Theological Censor, the three Superiors General Sr Jyoti BS, Sr Wilberta BS, and Sr Rose Celine BS who played key roles as the petitioners of the Cause at different times.

The other helpers of the Cause too were recognized for their services. Rev Fr Vincent Monteiro the Parish Priest of Bendur and his predecessors Rev Fr Antony Shera and Rev Fr Peter Noronha were profusely thanked and honoured for their unique contribution. Sr Lillis BS was appreciated and honoured by Bishop Peter Paul for her twelve years of generous service as the Postulator. Sr Dona Sanctis, the would be Postulator for the Roman Phase of the Cause was wished well and honoured.

In 2007, Sr Jyoti BS the Superior General of the Congregation through the officially appointed Postulator Sr Lillis Kattakayam BS presented the petition (*Libellus*) to the Bishop of Mangalore requesting to initiate the Cause of Beatification and Canonization of the Cause of Mgr Raymond Francis Camillus Mascarenhas.



The Diocesan Inquiry of the Cause was opened on August 17, 2008 by Most Rev Dr Aloysius P D'Souza, the Bishop of Mangalore. During the past eleven years the Board of Inquiry interviewed a hundred and one eye witnesses and hearsay witnesses.



The Historical Commission members Rev Fr J B Saldanha (Convener), Sr Mariette BS, (Secretary) and Rev Fr Peter Mascarenhas MMS collected a large number of documents connected with the life of the Servant of God visiting 90 archives and libraries from all over India and Rome. All these materials are now sent to Rome for further studies.

The Servant of God Raymond Francis Camillus Mascarenhas was born in a devout Christian family and was a zealous and committed diocesan priest of Mangalore Diocese. He is the Founder of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Little Flower of Bethany, Mangalore. He served the parishes as an assistant priest, parish priest, and Vicar General of the Diocese. His services as a dedicated priest and Vicar General of the Diocese of Mangalore as well as the Founder of Bethany Congregation and the Bethany Educational Society are truly meritorious. He was the founder parish priest and the builder of St Sebastian Church, Bendur where his mortal remains lie today.



A large number of priests, Bethany Sisters, Religious brothers and sisters, parishioners, the relatives of the Servant of God RFC Mascarenhas, and the faithful witnessed the Closing Session and prayed that the Servant of God may soon be raised to the honours of the Altar.





Sr Dona Sanctis BS compered the programme.

THE HISTORICAL JOURNEY TO THE NUNCIATURE NEW DELHI

During the wee hours of 18 July 2019, the day after the epochal closing of the Diocesan Inquiry of the Cause of the Servant of God Raymond Mascarenhas, a group of seven sisters along with Sr Lillis, the Official Carrier of the documents on the Servant of God Raymond Francis Camillus Mascarenhas left for New Delhi. They were Sr Erasma, Sr Helima, Sr Helen D'Costa and Sr Gracy D'Souza from Northern Province and Sr Dona, Sr Leena D'Costa and Sr Margarita from Mangalore. The 16 suitcases containing the documents connected with the Cause of the Servant of God were guarded by seven sisters for 40 hours lest anyone disappears. After a safe journey the sisters were accorded a warm welcome at Bethany Convent, Green Park Extension by Sr Natal and community. The suitcases were reverently placed near the Chapel and blessed and prayed over before they were shifted to the Nunciature on the 25th. The Sisters from Northern Province especially Sr Erasma the Provincial Superior, her councillors and the community at Green Park Extension expressed that it was a unique privilege of the Northern Province to welcome the documents of the Servant of God at Bethany in North India. The Sisters from Mangalore returned with great satisfaction that the suitcases were in safe hands. Sr Dona who would be the Roman Postulator was wished many blessings before her return on 23rd July along with the others.

The long awaited day to submit the documents was 25th July, the feast day of St James. At the appointed time, Sr Lillis, the official Carrier of the documents who was also the postulator at the Diocesan Phase accompanied by Sr Erasma, the Provincial Superior of Northern Province,



Sr Jyoti the first petitioner of the Cause, Sr Helima, the Asst Provincial Superior, and Sr Natal, the Superior of Bethany Convent, New Delhi reached the Nunciature in Delhi.

They were accorded a warm welcome by Msgr Mitjaleskovar, First Counsellor of the Apostolic Nuncio who was appointed to accept the documents officially.



Sr Lillis, the Official Carrier handed over the official letters and the 16 suitcases containing the documents, and the packet of keys to the Monsignor along with her letter of appointment as Carrier by Most Rev Peter Paul Saldanha. The Monsignor was extremely appreciative of the presentation and the work done and took custody of the documents to be sent to the Congregation for the Causes of Saints. The information regarding dispatching the documents was discussed. The team of sisters took delight to be at the Nunciature and to share the refreshments.



Before they left the Nunciature, His Grace Giambattista Diquattro, the Apostolic Nuncio who was on a visitation tour returned. A short time of conversation with His Excellency, a photography session, and words of appreciation and blessings made it a

memorable historical event for the team. "It was indeed a spiritual experience", they shared.

Bethany Generalate, Mangalore

Maximum Missionary



Fr Cedric Prakash SJ is a Jesuit Priest of the Gujarat Province. He is an internationally known human rights and peace activist and also a prolific writer on these issues. He teaches at several seminaries and universities in India and abroad on subjects like Contextual Theology, Catholic Social Teaching and Human Rights. For his work, Fr Prakash, has received numerous national and international awards which include the Kabir Puraskar from the President of India, the Minorities Rights Award from the National Commission of Minorities, the Mother Teresa Award for Social Justice and the 'Legion of Honour' from the President of France. He is closely associated with the Bethany Sisters besides being a great grandnephew of their Founder SD Raymond Mascarenhas. Contact:cedricprakash@gmail.com

One hundred years ago, on 30 November 1919, Pope Benedict XV issued an Apostolic Letter *Maximum Illud* (meaning *‘that momentous’*). Pope Benedict begins by recalling "that momentous and holy charge" from the Gospel of St Mark 16:15: "Go into the whole world and preach the gospel to all creation". That apostolic letter (often referred to, as the first of five 'papal encyclicals' issued between 1919 and 1959 that redefined the Church's missionary role) addressed to the 'Patriarchs, Primes, Archbishops, and Bishops' all over the Catholic World, was path-breaking on several counts. It primarily identified the principles and priorities of the Catholic missions. It represented a break with 'Eurocentric' and colonialist thought; and instead, it proposed an appreciation for cultural differences, a separation of the Church's work from political alliances, and the need to develop the resources of local churches to thrive independently once the missionaries withdraw in favour of an indigenous priesthood, religious, and episcopacy.

"It established", according to what Cardinal Fernando Filoni, the current Prefect of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples in the Vatican said recently, *"that the Church could no longer be linked to the reality of that moment where there were so many nationalisms and the desire to promote a certain*

colonialism through religion: a union that had to be broken. The Catholic missionary, Pope Benedict XV said, presents himself as an ambassador of Christ, not as a messenger of his own nation."

The world of the early twentieth century was not a digital village! No one would have heard of the worldwide web (www), of the internet, of email or of social media that have gripped our way of proceeding today. Books/documents were printed as limited editions and communications in general was handwritten when not in the oral form. It was the era of 'snail mail'— at times even slower than that: because the only way letters and documents could reach India were by sea and the ships of those days certainly took several months. One can therefore safely conclude that the papal document, *Maximum illud* would have reached the Church in India only sometime in 1920.

Fr Raymond Francis Camillus Mascarenhas was in the 1920's the Parish Priest of St Sebastian Church Bendur (he was the first Parish Priest there; he built the Church and today, the mortal remains of this Servant of God lie in this very Church). One can assume that once he received a copy of Benedict XV's *Maximum illud*, he would have read it very minutely, underlined some of the key sentences/passages and reflected and prayed over it in great measure. The entire document was close to his heart; in more ways than one it encapsulated his vision and mission and his tremendous zeal to be a 'maximum missionary'.

One of Fr RFC Mascarenhas' pathbreaking (and controversial) document is the 'Memorial' which was addressed to the Rt Rev Dr Paul Perini SJ, the then Bishop of Mangalore. It was 'submitted by the undersigned deputation (Fr A J D'Souza, the Vicar of Urwa, Fr J S C Vas, the Vicar of Cordel and Fr RFC Mascarenhas, the Vicar of Bendur) of the Secular Clergy of the Diocese of Mangalore'. The 'Memorial' is dated 1st March 1918 and is 29-pages long. It is divided into three main sections A, B and C with about eight sub-sections. The overall tone of the 'Memorial' is one of respect and willingness to discern and obey the will of God. The document provides factual details on the state of the Diocesan Clergy; it contains their grievances questions some unilateral and harsh decisions on them and calls for a greater and more open dialogue with those who are in authority. A key element in the 'Memorial' is the need and importance of giving the native clergy their rightful place in Diocesan structures with apt formation provided at every stage.

A careful and objective re-reading of the 'Memorial' in the light of Benedict XV's *Maximum illud* throws up several similarities and complementarities. The tone and the highlights of *Maximum illud* strongly resonate with that of the 'Memorial'. Pope Benedict XV in his Exhortation emphasises the role that an exemplary missionary needs to play saying, "The

man entrusted with a Catholic mission, if he is working single-mindedly for the glory of God and the salvation of souls, goes out whenever it is necessary and searches, searches everywhere, for helpers in his holy ministry. He does not mind who they are; he does not mind whether they belong to his order or to another, or whether or not they are of his nationality, "provided only that, in every way... Christ is being proclaimed" (Phil 1:18). Moreover, he does not limit his welcome to men, either. He will bring in sisters to open schools, orphanages, and hospitals, to found their hostels and establish other charitable institutions. He is happy and eager to do this, because he realizes how remarkably works of this kind, with God's help, contribute to the spread of the Faith" (#12). Fr Raymond lived this mandate conscientiously throughout his life. He went to the peripheries to proclaim Christ to those who lived on the margins. On 16 July 1921 he founded the Congregation of the Sisters of the Little Flower of Bethany; at that time and even today, in keeping with his vision and mission, the sisters committedly do what was/is expected from them.

A key dimension of the 'Memorial' was the role of the local clergy in the diocese particularly with reference to their formation and the responsibilities entrusted to them. Fr Mascarenhas was certainly prophetic in his concerns. A year later Pope Benedict XV re-echoes similar sentiments saying, *"There is one final, and very important, point for anyone who has charge of a mission. He must make it his special concern to secure and train local candidates for the sacred ministry. In this policy lies the greatest hope of the new churches. For the local priest, one with his people by birth, by nature, by his sympathies and his aspirations, is remarkably effective in appealing to their mentality and thus attracting them to the Faith. Far better than anyone else, he knows the kind of argument they will listen to, and as a result, he often has easy access to places where a foreign priest would not be tolerated (MI#14)"* and further, *"If, however, the indigenous clergy is to achieve the results we hope for, it is absolutely necessary that they be well trained and well prepared. We do not mean a rudimentary and slipshod preparation, the bare minimum for ordination. No, their education should be complete and finished, excellent in all its phases, the same kind of education for the priesthood that a European would receive. For the local clergy is not to be trained merely to perform the humbler duties of the ministry, acting as the assistants of foreign priests. On the contrary, they must take up God's work as equals, so that some day they will be able to enter upon the spiritual leadership of their people (MI#15).*

Long before Vatican II, Fr RFC Mascarenhas was convinced about 'inculturation': of the dire need to be one with the people; 'to smell of the sheep'; to be in their midst; to have a thorough knowledge of the local language (namely Konkani) in his missionary endeavours. His primer in Konkani for literacy

education was accepted and used widely in Government schools. With tremendous commitment he painstakingly translated the entire New Testament into Konkani; he also translated other important prayers, holy passages, and hymns so that the ordinary people to come closer to Jesus in the language they understood best! All this clearly in keeping with, *“Among the attainments necessary for the life of a missionary, a place of paramount importance must obviously be granted to the language of the people to whose salvation he will devote himself. He should not be content with a smattering of the language, but should be able to speak it readily and competently. For in this respect he is under an obligation to all those he deals with, the learned and the ignorant alike, and he will soon realize the advantage a command of their language gives him in the task of winning the confidence of the populace. If he is earnest about his work, he will be particularly reluctant to delegate the explanation of Christian doctrine to his catechists. He will insist upon reserving this duty to himself. Since he has been sent to the missions for no other purpose, after all, than to preach the Gospel, he will even come to look on these instruction periods as the most important part of his work. There will also be occasions when, in his position as representative and interpreter of our holy Faith, he will have to associate with the dignitaries of the district. Or he may be invited to appear at scholarly gatherings. How will he maintain his dignity under these circumstances if he cannot make himself understood because he does not know the language? (MI#24)*

Fr Raymond was holiness personified: as a zealous missionary he was deeply aware that he always had to be close to our Eucharistic Lord, to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and Mother Mary. For him, spirituality was being a ‘contemplative in action’ – a combination of the spirituality of Martha and Mary of Bethany. *“Let us have him, then, be an example to those he deals with. Let him be humble and obedient and chaste. And especially let him be a devout man, dedicated to prayer and constant union with God, a man who goes before the Divine Majesty and fervently pleads the cause of souls. For as he binds himself more and more closely to God, he will receive the grace and assistance of God to a greater and greater degree. Particularly applicable here are the words of Saint Paul: “Therefore, as God’s chosen ones, holy and well beloved, clothe yourselves with sentiments of compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, patience” (Col 3:12). With these virtues the missionary will open for the Faith he preaches a smooth and unobstructed entrance into people’s hearts. All obstacles will melt from his path, for no man’s will is obdurate enough to oppose their attraction with equanimity (MI#27)”*.

From its very inception, the Congregation which Fr Raymond founded, the ‘Sisters of the Little Flower of Bethany’ (commonly known as the ‘Bethany Sisters’) focused on reaching out to and attracting to religious life, young girls

from the rural areas who came from simple and unassuming backgrounds and without the baggage of endowments. Religious Sisters who would always stay close to the heart of Jesus, who were able to radiate the complementing aspects of Martha and Mary. *“We must not go further without saying something about the work that is being done by women, for since the very earliest days of the Church they have always been remarkable for their diligence and zeal in assisting the preachers of the Gospel. We want to single out here, and single out for our highest praise, those many women who have vowed their virginity to God and have gone to pursue their vocation on the missions. There they have devoted themselves to the education of children and to a great many other works of charity and devotion. This recognition of their achievements will, we hope, encourage and inspire them to further efforts on behalf of the Church. We hope too that they will hold fast to the conviction that the usefulness of their work will increase in proportion to the care they give to their own spiritual perfection (MI#30).* Fr Mascarenhas believed that local vocations had to be fostered and nurtured and he did all he could to realise that!

It was therefore fitting that on 17 July 2019, in a solemn ceremony, the Diocese of Mangalore officially closed the Diocesan Inquiry of the Cause of the Beatification and Canonisation of SD Raymond Mascarenhas. The ceremony which was presided over by the Bishop of Mangalore Rev Peter Paul Saldanha, in the presence of the emeritus Bishop Rev Aloysius Paul D’Souza and hundreds of other priests, religious and laity was indeed a unique one, in the annals of the Catholic Church of Karnataka. The speakers during the ceremony, eulogised the significant contributions made by SD Raymond to Church and to society and prayed that he would soon be raised to the honours of the altar.

Pope Francis in a special letter dated 22 October 2017 says, *“On 30 November 2019, we will celebrate the hundredth anniversary of the promulgation of the Apostolic Letter Maximum Illud, with which Pope Benedict XV sought to give new impetus to the missionary task of proclaiming the Gospel. In 1919, in the wake of a tragic global conflict that he himself called a “useless slaughter,” the Pope recognized the need for a more evangelical approach to missionary work in the world, so that it would be purified of any colonial overtones and kept far away from the nationalistic and expansionistic aims that had proved so disastrous. “The Church of God is universal; she is not alien to any people he wrote, firmly calling for the rejection of any form of particular interest, inasmuch as the proclamation and the love of the Lord Jesus, spread by holiness of one’s life and good works, are the sole purpose of missionary activity. Benedict XV thus laid special emphasis on the missio ad gentes, employing the concepts and language of the time, in an effort to revive, particularly among the clergy, a sense of duty towards the missions”.* As a preparation for that Centenary Celebration,

Pope Francis has proclaimed October 2019 as an 'Extraordinary Missionary Month' to be marked and celebrated in the whole Church throughout the world with a focus on evangelization.

An impartial and objective study on the life and initiatives of SD Raymond will surely result in some important lessons. For one, he was a visionary: even before *Maximum illud* and long before it was mandated by the Church post Vatican II, he was already living in every possible way the commitment of a spirit-led missionary. He was in fact the 'maximum missionary' – in bringing Jesus to the people through Word and by Witness! His spirituality was deeply incarnational: one of insertion, of identifying himself with the poor, the excluded, the marginalized, the unlettered. He actualised this spirituality in a variety of ways. From the way he conducted himself in the light and context of *Maximum illud* – it is without doubt that he had an unflagging commitment to the spirit and the letter of that Apostolic Exhortation particularly in the foundation of an indigenous religious Congregation for women. It was not easy to do so; SD Raymond had to deal with rigid mindsets, and from those who were convinced that the 'status quo' had to be maintained. They frowned on his pathbreaking initiatives; and particularly his desires and deeds to go where no one dared to go. On 19 March 2018 Pope Francis gave his Apostolic Exhortation *Gaudete et Exsultate* (On the Call to Holiness in Today's World); much of what is written in the Exhortation is reflected in the life of SD Raymond; he was a man who epitomised holiness throughout!

In the letter mentioned above, Pope Francis writes, "*The Apostolic Letter Maximum illud called for transcending national boundaries and bearing witness, with prophetic spirit and evangelical boldness, to God's saving will through the Church's universal mission. May the approaching centenary of that Letter serve as an incentive to combat the recurring temptation lurking beneath every form of ecclesial introversion, self-referential retreat into comfort zones, pastoral pessimism and sterile nostalgia for the past. Instead, may we be open to the joyful newness of the Gospel. In these, our troubled times, rent by the tragedies of war and menaced by the baneful tendency to accentuate differences and to incite conflict, may the Good News that in Jesus forgiveness triumphs over sin, life defeats death and love conquers fear, be proclaimed to the world with renewed fervour, and instil trust and hope in everyone.*"

As we celebrate the centenary of *Maximum Illud*, we need to thank God for the gift of SD Raymond to the Church and the world! We need to pray to SD Raymond, the 'maximum missionary' too, that each one of us, like him, may have the courage, the compassion, the contemplation, the context and the commitment to be authentic evangelizers in our world today!

Bethany Heritage Park



Ivan Saldanha-Shet

Highlighting the vision of first Mangalurean saint-to-be of the Church and Founder of the indigenous Bethany Congregation - Servant of God Raymond F C Mascarenhas - a 'Heritage Park' was inaugurated at Bethany Complex, Bendur in the evening of June 28. Being the solemn feast day of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, a devotion so favourite to the Servant of God, it commenced with the enthronement of the statue of the Sacred Heart of Jesus by Mgr Maxim Noronha, the Vicar General of the Diocese of Mangalore. Mgr Maxim Noronha, who conducted the blessing ceremony, deeply appreciated Bethany Sisters for their unique contribution to the society by setting up this inspiring park. He encouraged all to be the bearers of love, peace, and harmony which come from a pure heart like that of Jesus.



Sr Lillis, the Assistant Superior General and mastermind behind this dedicated theme park in her introductory speech said that the heritage park highlighted the vision, ideals and spirituality of the Servant of God Raymond F C Mascarenhas, the Founder of Bethany Congregation, the Former Vicar General of the Diocese of Mangalore and the pioneer priest of Bendur. She called upon all Mangaloreans to recapture these values especially the compassionate love that Mgr Raymond translated into his daily life.



Sr Rose Celine, the Superior General inaugurated the Heritage Park replete with memorials of spiritual and of practical values.



She also unveiled the statue of Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane, a place often referred to by the Servant of God Raymond Mascarenhas in his conferences to the sisters.

Rev Fr Vincent Monteiro, the Parish Priest of St Sebastian Church, Bendur, unveiled the scene of Jesus Crucified on Calvary.

In his long and crucial sufferings the Servant of God used to draw strength and courage by meditating on the scene of Calvary.

Sr Wilberta, the former Superior General paid homage to the portrait of St Joseph centrally placed in the garden with whose intercession the particular property was purchased.



A beautiful terracotta art work of disciples sleeping while Jesus was in agony, the memorial to the deceased Sisters of Bethany, the beautiful guardian angel and other items expounded the messages of Mgr Raymond.



Mrs Sabitha Misquith, former area city corporator, unveiled a spectacular image of the Servant of God RFC Mascarenhas, with all present honouring it. Various leading nuns, inaugurated different pieces of spiritual art and culture in the park.



Children present took delight in unveiling the portrait of Jesus with children and posed for photographs - which made it a puzzle as to which was a statue and which was real.

The Heritage Park was set up to mark the great occasion of the Closing of the Diocesan Inquiry of the Cause of the Servant of God as well as the forthcoming Centenary of Bethany Congregation.

A Visit to 'Servant of God' Mgr Raymond F C Mascarenhas' Museum at Bethany Convent, Bendur

(Article published in www.Mangalorean.com)

By [Alfie Dsouza, Team Mangalorean](#)

[July 3, 2019](#)



Mangalore : A few days ago, on 28 June 2019 during my visit to Bethany Complex / Convent, Bendur - Mangalore for a coverage on the inauguration of Bethany Heritage Park on the Feast Day of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and also the enthronement of the statue of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, my eyes set on the nearby museum of Mgr Raymond F C Mascarenhas - the Founder of the Sisters of the Little Flower of Bethany, Mangalore, and

with the help of a Bethany nun, Sr Severine, I took a complete tour of the in and out of the museum- and it was worth my time spending at the museum.

Mgr Raymond Museum, set up in the residence of the Servant of God Raymond Francis Camillus Mascarenhas, the former Vicar General of the Diocese of Mangalore and founder of Bethany Congregation is a haven of peace and serenity. Sr Severine who took me around the museum explained to me the various exhibits and artifacts of the museum. Each one of them exemplifies the personality of the great luminary of Mangalore, Servant of God Mgr Raymond Francis Camillus Mascarenhas.



One section of the museum consists of glimpses of his literary works in Konkani. He deserves a debt of gratitude from the society for the rich contribution that he has made in terms of translation of the Four Gospels and the entire New Testament into Konkani, when the people then had hardly any Catholic literature in the local language. The New Testament translation printed in the year 1952 was the first of its kind in the history of Christianity in Dakshina Kannada. The appreciation letters from the Holy See for this and other translations adorn the bulletin boards of the museum. The photos of the two churches Mgr Raymond built in Udyavar



and Bendur, the schools he built, the associations he started at Bendur, the contribution that Mgr Raymond had made to the Catholic Association of South Kanara (CASK), Mangalore, spotlights the multifaceted personality of this spiritual giant of Mangalore.

A portion of the mortal remains placed in a casket at the centre of the museum below the elegant canvas painting of the Servant of God draws the devotees to bow down for a blessing.

I found the visitors, including a few Bethany Sisters in deep prayer mood in different rooms of the museum. The museum displays the attires of the celebrity namely, the official garment that Mgr Raymond had received from Rome on the occasion of his receiving the honour of Domestic Prelate. The section on spirituality of Mgr Raymond comprises of his prayer books, Rosary, holy articles used for offering Eucharist such as chalice, ciborium and the crucifix.



The small and neatly kept bed room of the Servant of God wherein he breathed his last holds a cot covered with white bed sheet, his easy chair, the cupboard displaying his simple wardrobe, the ink pot, spectacles, and medicine bottle, speaking volumes about the last days of his life. The photographs of the death scene depicted on the bulletin board with a quotation from poet Shelly, and his own sayings moves one into tears. Numerous photographs in the other cupboards depict the association the Servant of God Raymond FC Mascarenhas had with different categories of people. The letters and prayers written in neat and diligent handwriting are very inspiring.

The statue of Monsignor with the children outside the museum is parallel to the one of Jesus with the children. The statue of the Holy family at work in Nazareth depicts the ideal that the Servant of God upheld regarding the dignity of all sorts of work. Sr Lillis, the Asst Superior General told me that the museum was set up on the occasion of the Platinum Jubilee of the Congregation twenty five years ago and was



inaugurated by His Eminence Cardinal Lourdasami in the year 1996. It is renovated and has turned out to be a pilgrim centre. Since he is the founding visionary and life member of the Bethany Educational Society, Mangalore (R) hundreds of students from various institutions from all over India visit the place” said Sr Lillis.

The Servant of God Raymond Francis Camillus Mascarenhas was born in Shivamogga on 23 January 1875 and was baptized on the 27th of the same month at the Sacred Heart Church, Shivamogga. He was the seventh among the 13 children of Lazarus and Joanna. One could perceive that this was an exceptional child, destined for great things, and pioneering works. In his school career and the seminary which he joined at 16 he has left brilliant record of his intellectual acumen. He was ordained priest at the age of 25 for the Diocese of Mangalore on 4 March 1900.

A man of vision, he worked to meet challenges present and future, in the Church and society. A man of holiness, he worked for the spiritual welfare of his people. An eminent speaker gifted with a sharp memory and eloquence, he preached impressive sermons and gave eloquent speeches and was called the Bossuet of Mangalore. His passion for the Word of God led him to translate the entire New Testament into Konkani and made it available to the ordinary people. He has authored also other books on spirituality, composed and translated hymns into Konkani.



He served the Church as parish priest in Udyavar from 1903 to 1910 and Agrar from 1910 to 1914, and the newly carved out parish of Bendur for 17 years from 1914 to 1931. As a zealous pastor he worked to meet the spiritual, intellectual and even material needs of his people. The two church edifices he built at Udyavar and Bendur, and several schools speak volumes about his zeal for God's glory and welfare of humanity. His service as Vicar General of the Diocese of Mangaluru and Vice President of the Catholic Board of Education is laudable.

Among his pioneering works, his 'Magnus Opus' the Congregation of the Sisters of the Little Flower of Bethany, to serve the cause of the poor and marginalized has won him laurels and has rendered his memory immortal. The Sisters of this Congregation numbering 1400 serve in three continents – Asia, Europe and Africa in 189 communities and many centres, and work for the uplift of the least and the lost. The little acorn that the Servant of god planted has become a mighty oak nourished by the Divine graces showered on the institution and the blessings of Mgr Raymond who had promised Bethany his prayers and blessings even after his death.



FROM THE ARCHIVES OF BETHANY GENERALATE

“How beautiful on the mountain are the feet of those who bring Good News, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings ...” Is: 52: 7-10

This year marks 70th anniversary of the Translation of the Four Gospels into Konkani by the Servant of God Raymond Francis Camillus Mascarenhas. Thereafter in the year 1952 Mgr Raymond Mascarenhas translated the whole New Testament into Konkani which was the first of its kind in the history of the Konkani Christians of the then South Kanara. The write-ups given below throw light on the zeal of Mgr Raymond who took up this arduous work even when he was advanced in age. As we celebrate the closure of the Diocesan Inquiry of the Cause of Beatification and Canonization of the Servant of God let us pray that God may reward him for his pastoral zeal.

UNITAS

Double Centenary Number

ST. JOSEPH'S INTERDIOCESAN SEMINARY

MANGALORE

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The New Testament in Konkany

REV. FR. R. F. C. MASCARENHAS published in 1949 his Konkany translation of the Four Gospels. By the end of this year, he will bring out the full New Testament in Konkani. The Most Rev. V. R. Fernandes, our Bishop has very graciously written the Foreword to this work.

Rev. Fr. R. F. C. Mascarenhas has aptly dedicated the New Testament to St. Thomas the Apostle and St. Francis Xavier. This is the first time we are having the full New Testament in Konkani for which the Catholics of Mangalore, as His Excellency the Bishop has pointed out, ought to be grateful to Fr. Mascarenhas. In spite of his old age, he set himself to the arduous task of translating the 27 books of the N.T. into Konkani! He has wiped off a blot from our history. Now we have the Word of God in 'Mangalorean Konkani'.

The work of publication was started about a year ago by Rev. Fr. Mascarenhas with the help of the Seminary Missionary Union. The publishers relied on donations to keep the cost down to Re.1 per copy. But as the collection amounts to about one-third of the cost, they will be obliged to raise the price to Rs. 2 unless there be a windfall from some quarter or other.

An Extract from the Raknno of Feb. 13, 1953 (TRANSLATION)

The New Testament in Konkani

It had been announced in The Raknno towards the end of November that the New Testament in our language would be published in two or three weeks. Since then about 1,500 bound copies of the volume were sold fast and it is difficult to publish copies according to the present demand. The soft and hard cover bound copies are available at the Codialbail Press, Simon and Co and Jeppu Seminary at Rs 1 ½ and 2, respectively. Only a few copies of the hard cover volume are available. The Vicars of some parishes had ordered 50, 100 or 200 copies so that this volume is easily available to the parishioners.

The Konkani translation of the New Testament was prepared by Rev Fr Raymond Mascarenhas. Its language is simple, easily understood by the young and the old, the erudite and the simple. It is not possible to issue a critique of the translation within two or three days, that too quickly. Only those well-versed in the Holy Scriptures or the Biblical studies can do this and surely it would be out after some time.

The Prakashalaya (the Seminary Missionary Unit) has worked with Fr Raymond Mascarenhas. The readers already know why this bulky volume of 832 pages is made available at a cheap rate. If the work was

done commercially, many would not have afforded to buy it. The work has been completed successfully and nearly half of the expenses of printing and publishing being met by benefactors. A Mass has been offered on Christmas day for those who had helped in the work benefitting the people. It is not much to ask the readers to say at least a Hail Mary for these benefactors.

Prakashalaya
PB 3 Mangalore 2

10 September 1953 The POINNARI Konkani Weekly (TRANSLATION)

The Patriarch of Mangalore

One may say that only Goa has a patriarch in India, and who is the one in Mangalore. The Church has not yet given this man this or any other title, but the people who revere him are hopeful that Rome will surely confer some reward on him.

The 76 year old Very Rev Fr Raymond Mascarenhas is like a beloved patriarch not only for the city of Mangalore but for the entire diocese, not by his authority and stature but because of the broadmindedness of his heart and soul.

God's Chosen Priest

Very Rev Fr Mascarenhas is a chosen priest of God. He has served many parishes from 1900 to 1931, and his parishioners vouch for his "doing good" everywhere. He has raised with great commitment and toil the parishes of Udyavar-Udupi, Agrar and Bendur. A peace-loving man he is, famous for the restoration of love and peace in places of disputes and conflicts. When there were troubles at Bantwal, Karkal and other important parishes, it was this priest who brought peace to these areas as a trouble-shooter representative of Bishop Perini. He was elevated to the Vicar Generalship in 1931 and served in that capacity till 1941, his efficiency and competence winning him accolades.

A Renowned Preacher and Author

Fr Mascarenhas is extremely sagacious and intelligent. It is said that once he had learnt for a certain function a two to three hundred line

Latin poem by heart within two days. Who is not delighted and moved by his meaningful sermons in his unique spiritual style? The people still vividly recall his sermon during the Eucharistic Congress at Mangalore.

Though he writes proficiently in Latin and English, it is his Konkani books that have whetted the people's appetite for his writing. The recently published the New Testament of his containing (for the first time) the Gospels, the Epistles and the Apocalypse of St John proclaims his scholarship. It is really heartening to note that even at his ripe old age he has undertaken the translation of the Old Testament into Konkani.

The Founder of a Religious Order

In 1921, Fr Mascarenhas founded the Congregation of the Bethany Sisters and has toiled tirelessly and undergone hardships to make it grow and spread it to four Indian dioceses with more than twenty branch houses. After his retirement in 1941 from all his other responsibilities, he has been concentrating on the work of his Congregation which now has more than 250 members.

He has done a lot of memorable social service when he was in the Mangalore Municipal Council, in the Mangalore Roman Catholic Pioneer Fund at Kodialbail and in many organizations. The Very Rev Fr Raymond Mascarenhas who has done such a lot is surely the Patriarch of Mangalore.

- A Bendur Parishioner

THE COMPASSIONATE PASTOR

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Managing Editor

GLIMPSES OF THE WORK

Office of the Cause
at Bethany Convent, Bendur



The Members of Historical Commission at work in Bethany Archives



The office staff with the Diocesan Postulator

GLIMPSES OF THE WORK

Office of the Cause at Bishop's House



The Members of the Board of Inquiry at work at the final stage



An encouraging visit by Most Rev Dr Peter Paul Saldanha

Servant of God
Raymond Francis Camillus Mascarenhas
Closing Session 17 July 2019



Servant of God
Raymond Francis Camillus Mascarenhas
Closing Session 17 July 2019



Superior General Sr Rose Celine and Team with the Bishops Most Rev. Peter Paul Saldanha and Most Rev. Aloysius P D' Souza



The close relatives of the Servant of God Raymond Francis Camillus Mascarenhas

Servant of God
Raymond Francis Camillus Mascarenhas
Closing Session 17 July 2019



**“The blessing of the Lord is the reward of the godly,
and quickly God causes his blessing to flourish”. Sirach 11: 22**