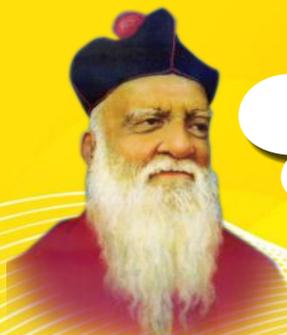


The Compassionate Pastor

December 2016

Vol 9

No 2



56th Death
Anniversary
Issue



Little Flower High School, Kinnigoli.
The First High School Founded
by
Mgr RFC Mascarenhas Turns Platinum





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

December 2016

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EDITORIAL



"So powerful, yet so humane"

Dear Readers, I wish you all the joys of Christmas season and the happiness of the New Year. As we usher in a New Year, may the blessings of the Almighty shower bountifully on you and all your beloved ones. The 56th Death Anniversary of Mgr Raymond Mascarenhas, celebrated on December 23rd and the birthday that occurs on January 23rd, both in the season of Christmas, urges me to focus on the manner in which the Servant of God lived the spirit of Christmas in his day-to-day life.

Sr Theresine BS, an octogenarian, reminisces an incident of her younger days in the Bethany institute. One day, she and her companions were playing in the courtyard just outside the residence of Mgr Raymond, the Founder of Bethany. The children needed a few sweet potatoes for their games. They ran to the convent asking for the same as they knew sweet potatoes were cooked in the convent. To their disappointment the sisters refused to give them. Unhesitatingly they ran to Mgr Raymond asking him to plead on their behalf. The saintly priest who was busy with the translation of the New Testament into Konkani put aside his work and wrote a note to the sister in-charge of the kitchen, "Please give some sweet potatoes to these children." With his recommendation, the children managed to procure plenty of sweet potatoes. Recalling this incident of her younger days, Sr Theresine pens, "So powerful yet so humane; so busy yet so accessible."¹ Is this not the message of Christmas?

Christmas precisely is the celebration of God becoming human; it is a feast where we are called to be humane in our relationship towards others and very specially towards the poor, the marginalized and the powerless. The Servant of God, Monsignor Raymond, lived and proclaimed this truth. Half a century ago, the children and women were in the lowest rung of the society in our diocese. Mgr Raymond, a valiant prophet embracing a "culture of care" as an indispensable aspect of his

¹ Theresine and Esuria, BS, *Reminiscences*, 2009, pg. 32

spirituality, laboured for the uplift of these categories. The writers in this issue, highlight these aspects. Sr Marie Therese who had experienced his fatherly love all through her younger days, elucidates the way in which the ripples of Mgr Raymond's compassionate love continue even today to stir thousands to live a better life. Sr Sahana underscores that the mystery of incarnation was close to the heart of Mgr Raymond. Sr Refuge who is in her nineties, recounts her missionary life under the guidance of Mgr Raymond, a zealous missionary. Mgr Dennis Prabhu spotlights the aspects suffering in the life of Mgr Raymond.

An article by the Servant of God himself from the archives of Bethany, titled, ' *What should we name Him?*' emphatically brings home the importance of choosing a Christian name for babies. It is certainly a good reminder to the present day generation to value the significance of Christian names.

A speech by late Mgr Marian F C Castelino, delivered on the occasion of the Birth Centenary of Mgr Raymond in 1975, would constitute a fitting tribute to the Servant of God for his 143rd birthday which occurs on 23rd January. Sr Hilarita briefs us on the grand celebration of the 56th Death Anniversary of the Servant of God.

I am happy to inform the readers that the Historical Commission members for the Cause of Beatification and Canonization of the Servant of God, have completed their work and have handed over the documents to the Bishop to be sent to Rome. The procedure in the Bishop's House is yet to be completed. Let us pray for its successful completion. I wish you all a joyous New Year 2017.

Sr Lillis BS

WHAT SHOULD WE NAME THE CHILD? (NAMES FOR CHRISTENING)

Fr RFC Mascarenhas

This article written in Konkani by Mgr Raymond was published in 'Jezucha Kalzacho Ange' in February 1920. Though printed 96 years ago, yet it has a powerful message even today as giving Christian names to babies has become out of fashion. In the light of the Bible he clarifies the need of giving Christian names to babies.

This is the question asked by many when the child is about to be born. In this important work as in all things, Lord Jesus Christ should be our teacher and our model for imitation.

Jesus wants first of all that a name which pleases the mind, expresses the faith, and shows the desire to love Jesus must be given to the infants. In the Holy Bible we see that God Himself used to give a name to those whom he loved the best.

Among the apostles, Simon was he first to be chosen by Jesus to be the foundation for his Church and Jesus gave him a new name, saying, "You are Simon, the son of John and henceforth you will be called Peter." He gave Simon the name, Peter.

In the Old Testament, God spoke to the patriarch Abraham and said, "Henceforth you are not Abram, but you will be known as Abraham."

Another time God said to him, "Your wife will bear a son for you and you must call him Isaac."

Again Lord God spoke to the patriarch Jacob, "You will no longer be known as Jacob, but your name will be Israel."

What do we read about St John the Baptist whom Jesus Christ praised as the greatest prophet born of women? The angel Gabriel who came to announce the birth of John said to his father Zachariah, "Zachariah, do not be afraid. Your prayer has reached God, and Elizabeth, your wife would bear you a son and you must name him John." After he had spoken with the angel, Zachariah lost the power of his speech, and he was unable to tell anybody of this incident. Eight days after his wife had given birth to the child, all the relatives who had met for the circumcision of the child chose his father's name, Zachariah for the child. But the mother, doubtlessly inspired by the Holy Spirit about her

dumb husband's inability to speak, said to them, "It shall not be that. He must be named John."

Then they said to her, "But there is no one in your family with that name." They asked Zachariah by means of signs, what name should be given. He took a writing tablet and wrote on it, "His name is John." Everyone was amazed, and at the same time his tongue was loose, and he thanked the Lord and began to speak.

All these examples show us that God even loves the names of those who are his beloved. God used to predict through their names the destiny of his chosen people, and the good they would do. There is another, most splendid example in the holy name of Jesus.

Angel Gabriel sent by God visited the Virgin Mary and said, "Do not be afraid, Mary, as before God you are filled with grace. You will conceive and carry a Son in your womb and deliver. You shall call him Jesus."

Again, the angel of the Lord appeared to the depressed Joseph who did not understand what had happened to Mary, and said to him, "Joseph, the son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary by your side, because she has conceived by the Holy Spirit and she would deliver a son and you must call him Jesus because he will save his people from their sins."

Please think deep about what name you should give to your child and how to give it. Let it be like the name of Jesus, coming from heaven and inspired by God. It should be a name which makes God, His blessed Mother, His angels and saints happy. Through it there should arise a relationship of love between your child and the kingdom of heaven, and anyone there should be able to say, "This child bears my name," and show him affection and love.

These are the names of the saints remembered by the Church and given to the child on the day she/he is born or baptized.

Besides these, it is better to thank the saints through whose intercession the child was born, as a result of prayer or vows. We can perpetuate the memory of our elders and ancestors, by giving them to the child, if they are the names of saints.

Let us follow the example of the Catholic Countries, for example, look at the names of our Bishops: Paul, Abundius, Nicholas; and if we look at the baptismal names of our latest Popes, we find them named, Jacob, Joseph, Joachim, John.

This tradition of giving these blessed names was followed by our elders, but these days it is not followed as it should be.

Some people find the names adorning the kingdom of heaven not only unpleasant but they are also ashamed of them. They feel that these are for the rural folk or the domestics. They prefer the names of the people from the Protestant countries or the earthly flowers, for the sake of refinement. Even in case they give a saint's name, it will be so hidden that they do not wish to call the child by that name!

These things show our infidelity and the children lose the heavenly help because of this. There is no patron who sets an example and shows them the way, takes care of them and get blessings for them, because like Jesus his saints also say, "Those who recognize us among men we recognize them before our Heavenly Father."

Every parent must understand these things and give their child a name from the angel of God, that is, from the Church like the Virgin Mary had given her son; they must have their child under the strong mantle of a saint. They must realize that the names of the saints would not be in the way of their well-being but would be a great help.

Ray. Mas.

THE COMPASSIONATE PASTOR

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Managing Editor

MYSTERY OF INCARNATION IS AT THE HEART OF MGR RFC MASCARENHAS

Dr Sahana BS

Introduction

Incarnation is the foundation of Christian faith.

Incarnation is the central fact of human history.

Incarnation is the defining reality of all existence.

Incarnation is at the Heart of Mgr RFC Mascarenhas.

In the past, God had revealed Himself through His works, His world (Psalm 19:1-6), and His word (Ps. 19:7-14). In the coming of Christ, God revealed Himself in the person of Jesus Christ. God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers through the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last days has spoken to us in His Son. Apostle John says: "In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him" (1 John 4:9). Earlier John said, "God is love". He emphasized this attribute of God several times prior to the statement quoted above. And then he states that it was this love of God that was manifested towards us in the Incarnation of His Son. Jesus is the Word of God who became human and pitched his "tent," his dwelling, among us. The Evangelist writes: "The Word became flesh and came to live among us" (John 1:14). God became mortal, fragile like us; he shared our human condition, except for sin, but took our sins upon himself as if they were his own. He entered into our history; he fully became Immanuel; God-with-us! Jesus' birth, then, shows us that God wanted to unite himself to every man/woman, to each one of us, to communicate his life and his joy.

Faith in the Incarnation tells us that God is in solidarity with human and in their history. This closeness of God to every man/woman, and to each of us, is a gift that never fades away! He is with us! He is God with us! This is the good news to entire humanity: the divine light, which flooded the hearts of the Virgin Mary and St Joseph, and guided the steps of the shepherds and the magi, also shines for us today. The Mystery of Incarnation became the object of contemplation to the Servant of God RFC Mascarenhas and is the foundation of the Bethany Spirituality. Mgr Raymond was captivated by the Mystery of "Incarnation" Immanuel

God with us." He was drawn more often towards a God, who is loving and compassionate, merciful and kind.

a. What is the Mystery of Incarnation?

It is one, which no matter how hard we try to deny it; it simply cannot be shut out. In every age, no matter how far we may move away from God, it continues to shine through. Our existence is contingent on it, our hearts were created to bask in it, and we are all restless until we are fulfilled by it. The Mystery of the Incarnation, that is, that God is love and it was that very love that impelled God to become one of us. Everything that our Lord does, everything, both in Himself, and outside of Himself, is an act of Love. This is the vision given to our founder the Servant of God RFC Mascarenhas; that is the vision we have to follow as Bethany Sisters. The vision is to contemplate Jesus the Son of God, Jesus in His weakness, in His helplessness, Jesus as the servant and as the one who will ransom many by paying the cost of sin by his life.¹

Through love, God not only brought men/women out of nothing, but chose Him and elevated Him to the state of divine sonship, destining Him to participate in His own intimate life, in His eternal beatitude or blessedness. This was God's first plan. He created us, although he needed not to, but because he desired to share his infinite love with us so that we would enjoy His glory. This was awesome enough, and it reveals God's infinite charity towards us. God is Love. It is not surprising, therefore, that the story of His benevolent action on behalf of humanity is all a poem of love, and of merciful love.

b. Incarnation is an Act of Love

God shows us from the very beginning his plan for redemption was going to be accomplished through humility. This means that love is humble. And as St Paul tells us in his first letter to Corinthians, 'Love is patient' as well. God could have redeemed us in any way at any time, but in this way, redemption is perfect not because God needed to redeem us this way, but because we needed to be redeemed this way. Everything he does, he does for love of us. It was his will, that we be saved. It was his Son's will to show us how to do the Father's will.

In love He emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, coming in human likeness; and found human in appearance, he humbled himself,

¹ Violette D'Souza, *The Charism and the Spirituality of the Sisters of the Little Flower of Bethany*, Mangalore, 74.

becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross. And it was because of this humility, that God exalted him. This is what the Son revealed to us in the mystery of the Incarnation. The true path to our liberation, as Pope Francis is so manifesting, and the world is once again powerless to resist, is not in our own glory, but the glory of God. The love that he showed us by choosing to be born in the least of ways, he does for us and then invites us to lower ourselves with him, in humility, so that we might defeat sin and death, with him and accomplish the will of the Father. On the level of the Father, the Incarnation is a love gift, a self-gift and a total availability to the human persons. On the level of the Son, the Incarnation is self-emptying love, and expiation for us and participation for us in his victory.² RFC Mascarenhas states that Jesus through his Incarnation gives us many lessons and we must learn from Him. The very first lesson and the most emphatic is that of 'Love.' He further says that Jesus was at our service—that He even washed the feet of His disciples. "Wasn't this pure service born out of Love?"³ When a person loves another truly he is ready for any service to his beloved. Mgr Raymond expressed that Bethany Sisters are supposed to lead a "life of love," to set our hearts on Jesus. If love increases, we wish to possess that person.⁴

c. Incarnation is an Act of Humility

The truth that confounds the human mind is that Christ, who is fully God, would humble Himself to become one like us. This is exactly what St Paul declared has happened. This is the second stage of our journey. It takes us to earth and to a manger in Bethlehem. Ultimately it takes us to the cross. In Phil 2:7-8 St Paul expresses this condescension of Christ in the Incarnation by using two phrases. First, he states that Christ "made himself of no reputation" and second, that He "humbled himself." The phrase "made himself of no reputation" has troubled interpreters because it literally means, "He emptied Himself." The natural question to ask is, "Of what did Christ empty Himself?" Some have replied, "He emptied Himself of His deity." This certainly cannot be the answer. If Christ is eternally God, as Paul has just proclaimed Him to be, then He is changeless and therefore cannot lay aside His deity. Others

² Violette D'Souza, *The Charism and the Spirituality*, 75.

³ Bertha BS (ed). *From the Lips of the Founder* (Mangalore: Bethany Publications, 1996), 82-83.

⁴ Bertha BS (ed). *From the Lips of the Founder*, 85.

have interpreted this phrase to mean that, at the time of the Incarnation, the Lord Jesus voluntarily gave up himself. Mgr Raymond opined that the main lesson we find in this description is the lesson of humility. According to Mgr Raymond, "Humility is the foundation of all virtues. Our spiritual life will not be solid unless we build it on the rock of humility."⁵ Mgr Raymond who had deeper insight into the Mystery of Incarnation states that "without humility we shall never be true religious; the deeper the humility the greater the sanctity we acquire."⁶

d. Incarnation is an Act that Elevates the Human Dignity

God's incarnation in Jesus Christ elevates the human worth and dignity not just of the woman who carried him, Mary or the followers who believe in Him, the Church but every human being everywhere on the planet at any time in human history. The Incarnation elevates human dignity both retrospectively and prospectively. It elevates the dignity of every human being at every stage of existence, in part because of the glory of Jesus' own life included every stage of existence, from conception to death and even resurrection which is our own destiny in Christ. If as Karl Barth says "Jesus Christ is the man and the measure, the destination and limitation of all human being" and he is the "decision as to what God's purpose and what God's goal is, not just for Him but for every man." Then our understanding of humanity itself must be fundamentally transfigured and permanently elevated through its association with God-man Jesus Christ.⁷

Through the Incarnation Jesus teaches us to see in and through the face of every person His own face. Particularly through his teaching he instructed us to see Him in and through the face of every suffering person, everyone who counts as among the "least of those" enumerated here as a hungry, thirsty, stranger, naked, sick and imprisoned. Jesus came as a human being and thus he came in a body which was fully capable of hunger, thirst, suffering and death and he experienced all of these to the utmost. The Servant of God saw this perhaps more clearly than any one of us. He was driven by this vision into mission with the poor and the marginalized of the society. As he contemplated the mystery of Incarnation it became clearer to him that his mission was to imitate Jesus, who was for the poor, the lonely, the oppressed, the dejected,

⁵ Bertha BS (ed). *From the Lips of the Founder*, 163.

⁶ Bertha BS (ed). *From the Lips of the Founder*, 164.

⁷ Karl Barth, *Dogmatics in Outline* (New York: Harper and Row, 1959), 89.

especially women. He shared their joys and sorrows, hopes and agonies. He used to visit the poor in their huts, listen to their grief and help them in their needs. He not only helped the poor seek jobs but made them stand on their own feet. Through this act of his he tried to uphold the dignity of women in the society.

e. Incarnation is at the Heart of Mgr RFC Mascarenhas

The Mystery of the Incarnation was at the very heart of Fr Raymond the *raison d'être* of his spirituality and apostolic ministry. Through the Incarnation the Triune God in His salvific plan liberated the wounded, broken and sinful humanity and gave the fullness of life to all. Mgr RFC Mascarenhas inspired by an Incarnated God greatly desired to continue God's salvific plan in the socio-economic religious context of South Kanara. With the fire of Divine love in his heart he consistently and relentlessly toiled hard for the total emancipation and development of underprivileged, illiterate and backward people. RFC Mascarenhas was a man of great compassion and empathy. He instituted the Congregation to be motivated by the self-giving and self-sacrificing love and the mercy of the Triune God. He encountered the God of compassion through Jesus Christ who sent him to bring the Good News to the poor.⁸ RFC Mascarenhas surrendered himself totally to the Divine plan of Incarnation, became the exemplar and the intercessor not only for the Sisters of the Little Flower of Bethany but to thousands of people of various strata of the society.

Conclusion

God has been relentless in His pursuit of humans. There has always been a fierce determination to reveal Himself, to speak, to act, to communicate His word. Finally He does so in the fullest manner possible, as Word became flesh. The Servant of God RFC Mascarenhas contemplated this love of God which was revealed to us historically in the flesh of Jesus. He was able to recapture that sense of wonder as he pondered over the mystery that God became human so that humans could become God. He was able to say that everything is shimmering with divinity, which means that every individual, every human situation, every happening has been touched by God.

⁸ Fr Geo Payyapilly & Sr Mary Benedict, *Fullness of Life* (Bethany Publications: Mangalore, 2003), 38.

GOLD IN THE CRUCIBLE

Mgr Denis Prabhu

God raised the prophets, kings, judges and leaders of Israel according to the need of the times to come to the help of His people. Lord said to Moses, "I have seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt, and have heard their cry because of their task masters; I know their sufferings, and I have come down to deliver them out of the land of the Egyptians and bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey..... And now, behold, the cry of people of Israel has come to me and I have seen the oppression with which the Egyptians oppressed them. Come, I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring forth my people, the sons of Israel out of Egypt (Ex.3:7-10). A similar calling was heard by Fr Raymond F C Mascarenhas from the day he was ordained a priest in 1900. He was ordained a priest 25 years after the arrival of the Jesuits, the last group of foreign missionaries to the region of Kanara, now in Karnataka, and Malabar mission- now in Calicut and Kannur. From the year 1500 due to heavy migrations from the region of Goa, the people of Konkani language of Aryan race, it was imperative that the missionaries to come along with them to take care of their spiritual needs. The Franciscan missionaries were the first ones to come to Kanara, not only to take care of the migrants but to preach the Gospel to the people of Kanara and Malabar on the coast of Western India from Goa to Calicut. This was followed by Dominicans and Theatine missionaries, Carmelites, Jesuits. Every mission group was under the patronage of the Portuguese Government in Goa. The hard working migrants, who were by and large agriculturists, had made their living comfortable. The local feudal lords of Keladi Kingdom of Bidanoor had been benign to them by giving them lands to cultivate.

Fr Raymond Mascarenhas is an off-shoot of the Mascarenhas clan of Brahmins. He was endowed with a rich family heritage, having culturally and educationally rich. He had at the same time opportunities for a matriculation studies in St Aloysius School and College at Mangalore. With this background he was able to discern the call of the Lord. He once again heard the vibrating call of the Lord, "I have seen the affliction of my people." It was like the prophet who heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send and who shall go for us?" Then I said,

“Here am I, send me!” (Is.6:8).

Then the Diocese of Mangalore was comprised of the coastal region from the end of Goa in the North till the end of Calicut region. The people in this region had no opportunities of education or leadership. People were satisfied with what was available from nature and earth. The formal education in the classrooms was lacking in those times. Though the missionaries had made their presence in the region, they did not venture at a formal education due to various factors. One of the factors was that they were foreigners and they might have struggled for native languages. The missionaries were not stable at definite places. There was no stronghold of their Congregation in a strange place. Hence people were illiterate lacking formal education. The situation was worse for women.

It was in this background Fr Raymond was ordained a priest on 4 March 1900. He was appointed as an assistant priest in Milagres Church, Mangalore, which was his own native parish. His family lived close by at Falnir area. After four months he was sent to Mount Rosary Church in July 1900 as an assistant parish priest, and in March 1901 he was transferred to Milagres Church, Kallianpur where he served the parish for two years. In May 1903 he was appointed vicar of Udyavara parish. Former two parishes had schools and the people were mostly of upper middle class whereas people of Udyavara lacked education; they were by and large agriculturists. Here he felt the need of a church for the people. According to the then prevailing standards, he built a spacious and a big church. In those days it was considered a beautiful structure. He encouraged the children for primary education. He made the people understand that the church community cannot prosper unless every girl child is educated. After a tenure of seven years he was transferred to the Church of the Most Holy Saviour at Agrar in 1910.

Here he worked with future ideals. Agrar was an ancient and well established parish. It had extensive territories. He thought in the days to come, it would create more parishes. Accordingly, he purchased land in Allipade, Nirkan, and Siddakatte for future parishes. All the plots of the churches were on the main roadside, so that the people and the priests may have an easy access to the churches. He started a school in Agrar parish. He founded 7 schools. It is said that if a child did not come to the classes due to financial constraints, he would visit the

families and assure them financial support. He is remembered to date. During his tenure he had assistant priests. Among them was his own future Bishop – Bishop V R Fernandes. For some time he had Bishop Valerian J D’Souza who succeeded the Jesuit Italian Bishop Perini. From here he went to Bendur to start a new parish carving out some parts of Milagres, Mangalore, and some from Rosario parish. He had to stay in a rented house and begin the entire infrastructure of a church and a priest’s residence. He worked here as a pastor after the heart of Jesus until he was appointed Vicar General to his own assistant who became a Bishop – Bishop V R Fernandes. The history would tell us the solid work he turned out as Parish Priest of Bendur. It was while at Bendur he started the schools and the most monumental work of everlasting memory is the establishment of a Congregation, Sisters of the Little Flower of Bethany. If glory is attached to Fr RFC Mascarenhas, it is due to Bethany and if Bethany is what it is today is due to its Founder. Hence, there has been a dialectical interaction and connection between the two. Having gone through several books, articles and letters pertaining to the Founder and the Bethany, I hasten to make an abrupt observation that the establishment of the Congregation brought him more sufferings as he would narrate. A few of them are in *Apologia Pro Vita Sua* in which he briefly explains his excruciating sufferings which he narrates as his 14 stations of ‘*Via Crucis*’.

Many parish priests, knowing the services of Bethany Sisters, even when the number was below 25, made repeated requests to the Founder to send the sisters to their parishes. Until then most of the people of the Diocese of Mangalore were ignorant of the category of Bethany Sisters. The priests however knew that sisters would be a great boon to the parishes with regard to education in primary classes, catechism in the church, visits to the families and participation in all liturgical services.

There is a sharp difference between the diocesan clergy and the religious clergy. The diocesan clergy is more mobile than the religious. The diocesan clergy is not understood without the parish and people. Hence to work in a parish under the diocesan priests is more a challenge than under the religious. The latter being the religious would pretty easily understand the religious and their status. First of all we should understand that the sisters were totally new in terms of administration, interaction with the clergy and parish structures. Neither the priests

would understand that these are a religious group having their own spiritual and religious community dimensions. It could be said that community as such is good but a particular sister may not be that wise and prudent as it would happen in any human structure and it happened in some of the newly started convents of Bethany. When Mgr M F C Castelino (a most dear disciple of the Founder) was the assistant parish priest at Puttur, a Bethany convent was started there. They took up catechism and informal teaching of the women folk and girls. There were no reasons for any dispute. That was the first Branch convent. When he was transferred to Bolkunje, he requested the Founder to establish a convent of Bethany Sisters in Bolkunje. Here the convent thrived. Since his own uncle was the parish priest at Kinnigoli by name Rev Fr Joseph L Pais (who was appointed the Bishop of Mangalore, which he declined to accept), he made requests to bring the group of Sisters of Bethany and work in the parish schools. Here both uncle and nephew worked hard to establish a girls' school to be run by the sisters. Mgr M F C Castelino told me the struggles he had and difficulties he faced in putting up the school and the convent. When construction work was going on he would travel daily from Bolkunje to Kinnigoli on a bicycle to supervise the work. Due to the good offices of both the priests, Maryvale Convent at Kinnigoli was built on a solid rock. This convent has made a great contribution to the education of girls. To Mgr M F C Castelino I was an assistant-cum-admirer in St Anthony's Poor Homes, Jeppu, in Mangalore in the early 1970s. I could see in him a great admiration and charity towards the Bethany Sisters. If he had a word for Bethany it was only an admiration and from the heart, his gratitude. Sisters were regular visitors to Mgr M F C Castelino. In all their anxieties, they used to seek guidance and draw consolation from him.

Due to his love for Bethany, I too learnt from him more about the Bethany Congregation and its Founder. Though it was started with four young ladies who were teachers in St Sebastian School, as the years went by, more and more girls from the towns as well as the villages showed their desire to join the Congregation of Bethany. The establishment of the Bethany Congregation was nothing but an act of faith explicitly in God, all provident Father. The Founder in his own words did not comprehend the future of the Congregation, the future

ups and downs and often more downs than ups, the shelter, property, maintenance etc was never in his mind. He knew only one thing, that he was inspired by God with the assistance of Mother Mary to start a Congregation of Sisters who otherwise would not get an opportunity to become religious. He took St Joseph as the Father and protector of Bethany and Blessed Therese - the Little Flower of Jesus as their Patroness with special affection and confidence. Later on the Founder remarked: "I feel that it is through her help, I have been able to overcome insurmountable difficulties..." The Founder was staunchly supported by the Jesuit priests of St Joseph's Seminary and St Aloysius College, Mangalore. While he saw the glorious beginnings of the Bethany Congregation, he had to face with as the years went by, misunderstanding and various struggles in the convents which were in rural areas. There occurred strained relationship between the sisters and the parish priests with parishioners joining them. As a result some of the convents were closed down.

A theft took place in the first decade itself in the Tailoring and work room of Bethany. This was a place where they were earning their daily bread which became a big disaster and a lot of financial loss when they needed money for their daily maintenance. This gave a big blow to the infant community of Bethany. The opening of the new convents needed finances and other resources. The main apostolate had been teaching in the rural primary schools. Hence the sisters had to be equipped for it. Those who came with less education had to be sent to the school to make them eligible to Teacher Training Course. This involved a lot of finances. One should remember that the Founder did not have enough of finances to provide shelter, spend on formation, take care of the sick, and educate the sisters. Hence one can imagine the struggle the Founder had in the first decade of the start of the Congregation. The pioneer sisters or those who took the responsibilities had to be prepared for it. Until then the Founder himself had to shoulder many a problem and many crosses. In the second decade which Sr Violette in her book *The Vine that He Planted* names as the "Trusting Twenties" was not that burdensome since the Congregation was just limping. In the third decade considered as "Thriving Thirties" saw the new beginnings of several convents. The diocesan clergy was constantly requesting the Founder to spare some sisters to come to their parishes and teach in the schools.

The vocations also were on the increase. This did not last long. The fourth decade is named as the "Frustrating Forties". All over the country, there was a kind of epidemic - the Tuberculosis. Quite a number of sisters suffered and succumbed to this sickness. All those died were the young sisters. Since it was a war time, food stuffs and other amenities were scarce. The stress on finance was tough. There was anxiety from the parents of the sick sisters. The rumours spread about the sickness that took the toll of sisters faster than a epidemic. There were fears that the Bethany would be wound up. The Diocesan authorities had to face the criticism from all corners.

Any person of ordinary calibre should have broken down or gone mentally deranged. The times were such he was struggling for strength from all quarters. In the life of ordinary people one should have given up all courage or run away from the reality. The trials that he was facing could be compared to that of St Paul. He narrates his own sufferings and admits his weaknesses. At the same time he says that it is the Lord who stood by him in all his weaknesses and sufferings (2 Cor. 11:16-33). These and many other trials made him like really gold in the furnace. In spite of all odds, formation of the sisters could not be sacrificed.

Mgr RFC Mascarenhas was a great intellectual of our times endowed with tremendous capacities as borne by a witness Mgr Marian F C Castelino. Mgr R F C Mascarenhas was a celebrated Vicar General of the Diocese of Mangalore, and a long time consultor to the Bishops of Mangalore and finally a victim of confusion and conflicts. He repeatedly in his writings reiterated saying that his name was intimately connected with that of Bethany. Hence Bethany should not suffer in its history that the Founder was the cause of defame or scandal.

For a period of time he became the prisoner in his own house. Not a single person was permitted to see him or to run errands. Though he received the limited services, he bore these sufferings as reparation for his sins and sanctity of the Bethany Congregation. He had finally the consolation and kindness from the new Bishop, Bishop Raymond D'Mello. His advice was coupled with mercy and kindness. This was followed by the new Superior General, Mother Macrina who was very solicitous to Mgr R F C. The life of the great saintly priest came to an end on 23 December 1960. While he was in his last days he was visited frequently by Bishop D'Mello and Mgr M F C Castelino was at his bedside. He

narrated to me every moment of his last days and hours like St John in his gospel about the death of Jesus. Though Mgr R F C Mascarenhas suffered and died, the tears were shed while narrating by Mgr M F C Castelino. I don't think that a priest was more close to the heart of Mgr R F C Mascarenhas than Mgr M F C Castelino. Hence I have heard personally from him about the beginnings of Bethany, the growth of Bethany along with its Founder until his death. In those days to establish a Congregation of indigenous members was a greatest achievement. Over a thousand sisters took shelter under it. Thousands and thousands of children, more specially girls received education, were humanized due to hard work and dedicated service of the sisters while consciously the Founder suffered like gold with dross in the burning furnace. Such is the life of a saint - unless a grain of wheat falls and dies, it remains alone. When it dies, it gives abundant fruit. This has been the case of Mgr R F C Mascarenhas. He was in fact **Gold in the crucible.**

Books and materials relied on:

1. *The Vine that he Planted:* by Sr M Violette D'Souza BS
2. *Bethany, My Joy and My Crown:* by Sr M Esperie BS
3. *The Ripples* by Sr M Jessy Rita BS
4. *My Apology* by Mgr RFC Mascarenhas.
5. *Apologia Pro Vita Sua* by Mgr RFC Mascarenahs.

**Celebration of 56th death anniversary of Servant of God
Mgr RFC Mascarenhas at St Sebastian's Church, Bendur,
Mangalore**



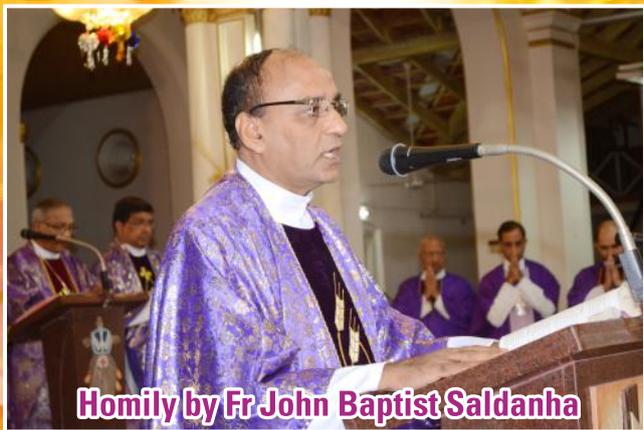
Mr Stephen Pinto



Mrs Dorothy



Sr M Babitha BS



Homily by Fr John Baptist Saldanha

**Celebration of 56th death anniversary of Servant of God
Mgr RFC Mascarenhas at St Sebastian's Church, Bendur.
Mangalore**



Mr Vincent Goveas



Sr M Manisha BS



**Celebration of 56th death anniversary of Servant of God
Mgr RFC Mascarenhas at St Sebastian's Church, Bendur,
Mangalore**



**Celebration of 56th death anniversary of Servant of God
Mgr RFC Mascarenhas at St Sebastian's Church, Bendur.
Mangalore**



**Floral tribute from Bishop Aloysius Paul D'Souza,
Sr Rose Celine BS, Superior General and
Fr Antony Shera, the Parish Priest**



**Celebration of 56th death anniversary of Servant of God
Mgr RFC Mascarenhas at St Sebastian's Church, Bendur.
Mangalore**



Pilgrims at the memorial of Servant of God Mgr RFC Mascarenhas





**Sr Rose Celine , Superior General greets
Bishop Aloysius Paul D'Souza who is celebrating
his 50th Sacerdotal Jubilee**



**Celebration of Platinum Jubilee
of Little Flower School, Kinnigoli founded
by Mgr RFC Mascarenhas**

CHARISM OF THE COMPASSIONATE PASTOR MGR RFC MASCARENHAS CREATING RIPPLES.....

- Sr Marie Therese, BS

"A good religious is not only holy because she prays much, but with prayer she spends herself in service for God" (RFC Mascarenhas).

The above Founder's saying are very apt for the innumerable good works, the Servant of God Mgr Raymond FC Mascarenhas did during his life time. Reading the signs of the time he responded creatively through his thoughts, words and actions, constantly love being at the centre of his praxis.

I was a candidate in the close proximity of our founder for about twelve years. It was the most impressionable age of my life, seeing, touching, listening and experiencing the vibrations of his selfless love through his words and actions as a child and teenager. As a Priest and Vicar General his contribution to the diocese, society, country and the whole world was immense in the field of education, liturgy, Word of God, love for the poor and the marginalized, women and children, service to the sick and needy, and as a member in committees and commissions. Single handed he worked for the greater Glory of God and for the extension of His Kingdom. To crown it all he planted the seed of an indigenous Congregation of women which is a clear proof of his stance as regards the emancipation of women, which was close to his heart. Hence, on July 16th 1921 he founded the Congregation of the Sisters of the Little Flower of Bethany, with only four pioneers who placed themselves under his patronage. He blazed a trail and made a difference with this selfless service. This was a challenging dream that involved great risk, hard work, and perseverance. He could muster courage only because of his deep faith in JESUS and Mother MARY. This is how I happened to know and experience the goodness of this visionary and saintly priest and had the opportunity of coming all the way from Sirsi, North Kanara, to Mangalore, Bendur, and South Kanara. All thanks and praise to God for this committed and diligent priest.

Founder was a man of vision, deep faith, keen intellect and enormous creativity and he has become known as the 'Compassionate Pastor'. I said earlier a saintly priest, because my contact with him was after he was relieved from active service. Mgr Raymond had then retired to the 'Bethany Cottage' Bendur. Though he was going through excruciating suffering and agony both mental (due to criticism and misunderstanding) and physical (due to old age) his patience, fortitude, suffering and ability to bear pain and discomfort without complaining deserve special mention. It is always a pleasure to recall his good deeds for the benefit of humankind, and also get inspired to try to do similar deeds. What is more inspiring is that his life makes me wonder, how I had contact with such a great person and yet I was far away from his world of wisdom and farsightedness? He lived what he said to his sisters. He stated, "Suffering strengthens our spiritual life. One who suffers exactly as God wishes, enjoys spiritual joy. Calvary is the mountain where divine lovers are formed. In suffering we increase in humility. Here we acknowledge our own nothingness, and turn to God for help".

Mgr RFC Mascarenhas was a compassionate pastor whose vision was forward looking and ever thought of widening the activities of the Congregation. The pastoral apostolate of the Congregation, focuses on the 'agenda' of Jesus' ministry to bring good news to the poor, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free and proclaim the year of Lord's favour (Lk 4:18). Mgr RFC being a pastorally oriented person, the same blood flows through the members of his Congregation and pastoral care runs through all the ministries of the Congregation to bring fullness of life for all.

The outstanding ones are the following:

- Pastoral care of parish community
- Pastoral care of academic community
- Pastoral care of children in the hostel/ boarding houses
- Pastoral care of the sick in hospitals and homes
- Pastoral care of prisoners
- Pastoral care of migrants
- Pastoral care of families

- Pastoral care of the aged and mentally challenged
- Pastoral care of domestic workers and drug addicts
- Pastoral care of the victims of women trafficking and women in distress
- Faithful to the Founder and the pioneers, it is the Congregation's constant concern to renew and adapt itself to the changing times. No work of love is strange to this Congregation. Its work involves all forms of service by individual or communitarian contact in order to restore /promote the dignity and integrity of human beings.

BETHANY LAY ASSOCIATION

The inspiration and legacy left behind by the Founder and pioneers is aimed to put our faith into action. One of the innovations was



Bethany Lay Associates during the 'Commitment'

involvement of lay people to continue and collaborate with the sisters through prayer and action. The urge to attract many more to co-operate in our way of life motivated us to begin with the 'Bethany Lay

Association' in the year 2004 in the spirit of the teachings of Vatican II and the vision of the XIV General Chapter we launched into sharing our Charism and Spirituality with all the sisters and brothers who are called to be joyful witnesses of the Gospel. The Sisters of the Little Flower of Bethany invite Catholics of good will to join them as Bethany lay associates to participate in their charism and spirituality and collaborate in their mission. Catholic men and women who respond to this invitation share in the life of the Divine Trinity and promote the glory of God through the life of Bethany spirituality. It is a radical living of the baptismal consecration through which one is called and sent forth as Bethany Lay Associate and thus share in the vision and charism of the Servant of God Raymond F C Mascarenhas the Founder of the Congregation.



Distributing the Badge

Within a span of a few years of the commencement of this venture we have succeeded with the help of God to have around 155 units in India and abroad with a total number of 450 to 500 Lay Associates. It is

heartening to observe the momentum and growth of membership in different areas of our country. A hand book on Bethany Lay Associates, gives details of rules and regulations and a comprehensive list of activities to be taken up by themselves as a guide and directive.

Every month they gather together and are re-charged through prayer, discussion in twos on the Word of God, and constant discourse on the Charism and Spirituality of our Founder, pioneers, religious life, vows and apostolate. This initiative along with three days of annual retreat or a day's recollection animated by priests helps them to be contemplatives in action. They take active part in parish activities, visiting the homes for prayer, rosary, helping out during sickness, death, burial, birth or any tragic or happy event. During the Year of Mercy, responding to the clarion call of Pope Francis the B L A were conscious of their responsibility for their personal conversion and transformation, to be more merciful themselves, in their family, parish and society to usher in change. They undertook generously both corporal and spiritual acts of mercy. This year there was an enthusiastic revival of these practices especially by BLA who took positive action on an individual level, as a family and as an association – to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, to give water to the thirsty, to visit the sick, to visit the prisoners, and to console the bereaving members. Their faith is deepened and in turn they act as catalysts in various missions and parishes, undertake small projects to reach out to the distressed and the last and the least in the society

The message of "Laudato Si" of Pope Francis has been fruitful in

their life. Servant of God Mgr Raymond F C Mascarenhas was close to nature and always encouraged the sisters to care for the Mother Earth, our planet. Same respect and protection for the environment is inculcated among the BLA members and they take utmost interest to preserve nature for the coming generation.

Intercessory prayer for Church, world, country, family, society or individuals is a regular feature including the cause of sainthood of our Founder, during meetings.

This commendable spiritual and action force was possible only because of the innovative and creative response to the Charism and the Spirituality of our Founder.

A NEW FEATURE:

In Ecclesia in Asia 1999, Pope John Paul II wrote, "All activities of the church and its personnel are for evangelization whether it be dialogue, education, medical apostolate, social work or proclamation (EA # 23). Yet proclamation is always the most important and can never be substituted. There can be no true evangelization without the explicit proclamation of Jesus as the Lord (EA # 29, 27).

Servant of God Mons Raymond FC Mascarenhas instilled in the sisters a love for the Word of God. His farsightedness is manifested (even before Vatican Council II) when he translated the New Testament into Konkani so that ordinary village people could comprehend the Word and come to know and love Jesus.

It is a matter of great pride that Sr Pacifica BS is involved in direct evangelization from past seven years and is continuing as the Co-ordinator of the Diocesan Catholic Enquiry Centre 'Su-Sandesh Kendra' at Belgaum. The queries of the seekers asking who Jesus is, how to be the close followers of Jesus etc. are answered by her through post cards, letters or personal dialogue with the people of other faith. Her great love for Jesus and devotion to His Sacred Heart have kept her alive and active and to be the harbinger of Good News, that God loves everyone and His compassion and mercy are everlasting. Bibles, print material in Kannada and other languages are distributed. She assists

those who need counselling and guidance especially in matters of faith and morals. Also the Kendra provides the youth of all faiths with good and wholesome reading material through a library and reading room thus enabling them to build their character on sound values and principles.

BETHANY CHAMPIONS



With the advent of rapid revolution in science, technology, modern means of communication, information outburst, in short, fast pace of development in every sphere, there is a drastic

decadence as regards morals and values in the society. Every youth is like an atom bomb, possesses explosive energy and potential, which needs to be directed and channelized into constructive, humanitarian deeds. No one can be a good human being until she/he extends a helping hand to the needy and downtrodden. The motto our Founder followed was 'service born out of love'. He said, "If you have friends let them be the poor". Our students must not only live and let live but should also do everything in their power to make others' lives easier and comfortable. Only then does life get a meaningful purpose for all during their brief sojourn on this planet.

We see both at the Church and National scenarios there is a lack of genuine leadership, training and exposure among the Catholic youth to generously serving others. This goaded (urged) the Congregation of the Sisters of the Little Flower of Bethany, to think out of the box and create a new group called 'Bethany Champions.' The Congregation felt that our country is in need of enlightened and committed Christian leaders. In view of this it has decided to promote in all our schools Value Based Leadership and train the students to face competitive examinations from the initial stage so as to make them confident and capable to get into civil service and such other services.

The dictionary meaning of a 'champion' is a person who fights, argues or speaks in support of another or of a cause. 'Bethany' in the Bible was a home loved by Jesus, where Martha, Mary and Lazarus lived. It was a hospitable place, which was frequented by Jesus during his earthly ministry. Mary would sit at the feet of Jesus and listen to his words, while Martha was busy serving. These disciples of Bethany teach us 'Contemplation in Action', in other words prayer and service. Hence, a Bethany champion is trained to move out in service to others.



At present there are several units of Bethany Champions in India, with a total membership of 1464 enrolled as Bethany Champions. Regular meetings are held to motivate and groom them by distinguished speakers, guests, and staff of the school. Eminent speakers influence them how to be a champion and what a champion should do. They emphasize on being a good human being continuously praising God through their actions. The input sessions enlighten the students with the Vision of the Founder, growing up, leadership, Christian leadership, political leadership, qualities of a good leader, media education and its right use. This movement is in its infancy.

We join the thousands of Indians and the people from all over the world who are acquainted with the Servant of God Mgr Raymond FC Mascarenhas, in thanking God for gracing the world with such a gem of a person to humanity. May his passion for the Divine and compassion for the distressed, inspire many more to serve the poorest of the poor and keep alive his mission in the years to come. Not only the Sisters of Bethany draw inspiration from his life and example, but also others imitate him and create innovative ripples - through creative response to his Charism and Spirituality which is his legacy to the Bethany Sisters.

Let us always cherish his words, **"All the work that we do for GOD will not be taken away from us but only we should not neglect Mary's part."**

AN INTERVIEW WITH SR REFUGE

Here is a brief interview of Sr Leena D'Costa, with Sr Refuge (96) residing at Jeevan Jyoti Senior Citizens' Home in Bangalore.) Sr Leena is a social worker by profession.



- Sr Leena** : Sister, you are now 96 years old. You always look cheerful. I would like to hear from you some of your memories of Mgr Raymond F C Mascarenhas, our founder. Do you still have some memories of him or have you forgotten them?
- Sr Refuge** : How can I ever forget him? He is in heaven looking at me. I am getting ready to go near him.
- Sr. Leena** : What are your specific memories?
- Sr Refuge** : I remember going to him for spiritual direction. I still follow the advice he used to give in those days. That makes me joyful.
- SrLeena** : What were those?
- Sr Refuge** : He used to speak mainly on obedience according to our Constitutions. He would say, "It does not matter whether the rules are big or small. God wants us to follow each of these rules. You ought to love and respect the superiors."
- Sr Leena** : Anything more?

- Sr Refuge** : My memory is failing. I remember him saying not to worry about our faults. It is enough if we ask forgiveness from Jesus and make efforts not to repeat them. He was really a father to us.
- Sr Leena** : Tell me something of your missionary experiences. In which all places have you served?
- Sr Refuge** : I have always been in the field of mission work. I remember my work in the Belgaum mission. Fr Founder opened many mission stations around Belgaum such as Madhanbhavi, Chechadi, Guledgudd, Balekundri, Santhibastwad, and many others. We used to work along with the Jesuit missionaries. We used to go around in the villages the whole day, visiting the families and catechizing the people. We would be brought back to the convent in the evening by the priest.
- Sr Leena** : Wasn't it a very strenuous work?
- Sr Refuge** : What more enjoyment than this! Labouring for Jesus (smiles)! Visiting the villages on foot was very hard. But I felt it enjoyable as I was doing it for Jesus. We used to teach people a lot of hymns.
- Sr Leena** : Oh! Yes, now you are reviving your memories. Continue..
- Sr Refuge** : (smiles) Fr Founder used to explain to us the Gospel passages in Konkani as we could not understand English. He was very prayerful. He would join us for prayers especially for the Way of the Cross. He would do it with great devotion.
- Sr Leena** : Indeed, he was really holy.
- Sr Refuge** : He genuinely loved us. He would say, "I love you as my own daughter. I shall pray for you. Do not worry. Be happy in Bethany."
- Sr Leena** : Thank you Sr Refuge for sharing your memories and lived experiences that you had with the Founder. Even at this age your memories about our Founder are vivid. Very great! Now you look very tired. You better take some rest.

SPEECH BY MGR MARIAN F C CASTELINO AT THE CLOSING OF THE BIRTH CENTENARY OF MGR RAYMOND F C MASCARENHAS, FOUNDER OF BETHANY ON 23 – 1- 1975

Rt Rev Mgr Alexander, President of today's function, Very Rev Superior General of Bethany, Mother Macrina, Bethany Sisters and honoured guests,

I really do not know what made Mother Macrina to choose the same person to speak at the opening as well as at the closing of the birth Centenary of Rt Rev Mgr R F C Mascarenhas. I have undertaken this job because this function is arranged to honour a person whom I loved and still love, whom I admired and still admire, whom I revered and still revere.

However it is not an easy task for the same person to speak twice on the same subject to almost the same audience. I shall imitate a good cook. You give him a fowl and he prepares a nice dish out of it. Tomorrow you give him a fowl again and ask him to prepare a nice dish for the same guests. What does he do? He cannot change the fowl into mutton but he can change the condiments, alter the *masala* and prepare a dish, a nice one too with quite a different taste.

1. Mgr Mascarenhas was a great intellectual man. As a boy he was topping his class, as a seminarian he was head and shoulders above the rest. As a priest he was a luminary in the ranks of the Diocesan clergy. He was only a Matriculate. But can you believe even graduates were coming to him for the last touch to their drafts or memoranda? Add to it, some of his own drafts were of the very best. They were master pieces. Mr. Mahahali Shiva Rao who was president of the Dt Educational Council of which Fr Mascarenhas was a member, said to his friends – "ಕಸಲ್ ತೊ ಫಾದರ್ ಮಸ್ಕರೇಞ್ಸ್ ಆಮ್ಗೆಲೆ ಆಗುನ್ಯಮೆಂಟ್ಸ್ ಪುಡ್ಡಿ ಪುಡ್ಡಿ ಕರ್ತಾರ" (that Fr Mascarenhas just splits our arguments into pieces) Yes, Fr. Mascarenhas with his acute intellect could pinpoint the weakness or the fallacies of their arguments and powder them. – ಪುಡ್ಡಿ ಪುಡ್ಡಿ ಕರ್ತಾರೆ.
2. Fr Mascarenhas was a renowned preacher. People from other parishes were coming to Bendur to hear his sermons especially on

Good Friday. For big occasions it was Fr Mascarenhas that was chosen to preach. He used to take a text from Scripture and base the whole sermon on it. Quite original. "ವೊಡ್ಡಿ ಮಾಯ್ ಸಾಸ್ತಿನಿಚೆಂ ಪಾಳ್ ಯಾ ಯೆಕಾನ್ಯಾ ಕಾಚೆಂ ಪಾಳ್ ಫಾತ್ರಿರ್ ಝರೊವ್ನ್ ತಾಂತ್ಲೊ ಸತ್ವ್ ಕಾಡ್ನ್ ವೊಕಾತ್ ಕೆಲ್ಲ್ಯಾ ಬರಿ" (It is like, a grandmother digs out a herbal root, rubs it against a stone, takes out its essence and prepares medicine) His simple but pure and flowing Konkani kept the audience spell bound. Besides his sermons, I still remember the toast proposed by him at the consecration dinner of Bishop Valerine D'Souza; it was again a masterpiece.

3. Fr Mascarenhas was a great builder. I am told that when he took charge of Udyavar Parish, there were only 2 pies in the coffers. But he managed to put up a nice strong church there. Ask your sisters from Udyavar and they will tell you about it. At Agrar, there was money but what was needed was engineering talent. Young Fr Mascarenhas was ready to supply it. He had put up a three floor parochial house there, probably the only one of its kind in the whole diocese. There was a grand old man in the parish who while speaking about the parish house used to say – ಕಾಜಿಶೊರ್ ಸರ್ಗಾರ್ (assistant vicar in heaven) i. e. top floor, ವಿಗಾರ್ ಪುರ್ಗತಂತ್ (vicar in purgatory). i.e. I floor, ಆನಿ ಬೊಟ್ಟೆರ್ ಯವ್ಕೊಂಡಾಂತ್ (and the cook in hell) i. e. ground floor. Some may criticize Fr Mascarenhas because one has to get down 22 steps to the refectory and climb up again 22 steps after meals. Old priests will surely find it hard; but you must know that there was no other site to change the plan. And what about the Bendur church? You are seeing it almost every day. He built it during the years following the First Great World War; difficult times indeed!!

These buildings are nothing compared to the innumerable little churches he built in the hearts of his parishioners by instilling in them the devotion to the Blessed Sacrament and devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary. Add to it the love of liturgy and congregational singing instilled in the hearts of his parishioners though he himself was not much of a singer. Add to all this number of buildings he erected for the Bethany Sisters in Bendur and elsewhere.

4. Fr Mascarenhas was a great educationist. You know what he has done for the education of children especially for the poorer ones. What difficulties and opposition he had to encounter in starting

and guiding the destinies of St Sebastian School! Bishop James Mendonca was the first headmaster. Fr Mascarenhas brought up St Joseph's School at Kankanady, erected a nice building within the space of a few cents of land close to the market. Today it is a very good and flourishing upper primary school. Then again St Margaret Mary's School at Bendur which he started separating the girls from the boys' school. Add to this the number of primary, upper primary, high schools and a training school! Fr Mascarenhas was appointed a member of the Dt Educational Council where he rendered yeomen service to the various schools of the Diocese.

5. Not enough to start schools, you must have teachers, good teachers, dedicated ones to take care of the little children and form them. It is here that he thought of founding Bethany with four trained teachers of whom I am glad to say two are still with us. They were in ಗಾಂಧಿ ಪೊಲ್ಕಾ for a few years. Another reason for starting Bethany was to give a chance to young ladies to embrace religious life who for some reason or other could not get admission in the existing convents on account of want of higher education or dowry or both.

Of all the works of Fr Mascarenhas I should think this is the grandest and most difficult. God alone knows how much he had to suffer on account of Bethany – Criticism galore, hardly any encouragement even from persons who ought to have given him a helping hand. Even opposition. Had he not to suffer even from some of the sisters – His own?

1. You must have heard from the lips of some mother addressing a mischievous child "ತುಜೆ ಕಾಳ್ ಹಾಂವೆಂ ಸೊಸ್‌ಲೆ ಕಷ್ಟ್ ಪುತಾ !!" (My God! The problems I have gone through during your childhood are horrible) Fr Mascarenhas could say this of Bethany, his child of predilection. I remember when I preached a sermon almost extempore - the day Fr. Mascarenhas left for the Bishop's house as V. G. I said "ಬೆಥನಿ ಹ್ಯಾ ಸಂಸಾರಾಂತ್ ತಾಚೊ ಖಾಂಟ್ಯಾಂಚೊ ಮುಕುಟ್, ಸರ್ಗಾರ್ ಅನಂದಚೊ ಕುರೊವ್ ಜಾಂವ್ಕ್ ಪಾವ್ತಲೊ". (Though Bethany will be his crown of thorns in this world, it will be his crown of joy in heaven)Was I not right?

A smaller man than Fr Mascarenhas, a less brave man than he could never think of putting his hand to this project. But only Fr Mascarenhas a far seeing man – a man of vision, a man of undaunted

courage and resolute will could think of it and guide it and today we see Bethany spreading to the length and breadth of India and even beyond it to Italy and Germany. And the literary attainments of some of the sisters – you know better than I. *Deo gratias!* God be praised! Implicit trust in Divine Providence and full confidence in the intercession of our Heavenly Mother has worked this miracle.

Rt Rev Mgr Mascarenhas was a great man, very great man; but he was a poor man, I mean he led a life of poverty, detached from the things of this world – His food was quite simple, his dress ditto, whatever he had, he spent for others.

Some of my hearers may be thinking that I have been extolling Mgr Mascarenhas to the skies or canonizing him. Mgr was a great man – great in so many ways, but he had his defects and short comings. This only shows that he was human. Even the greatest man on earth or the most saintly one has his defects. Mgr Mascarenhas was no exception. On account of these some of the sisters had to suffer. I too had my share though I had done pretty much for Bethany. Don't be surprised! Don't be scandalized! God permitted it for the humiliation of this great man. He permitted it for the sanctification of Bethany and some of the Bethany Sisters.

In spite of these defects or short-comings God blessed Mgr Mascarenhas and made him an instrument for doing so much good to children, to the parishioners, to the church in Mangalore, throughout India and even outside in Italy and Germany. Long live Mgr Mascarenhas!

Sisters, be proud of your Founder. Imitate him in his poverty, simplicity, detachment from the things of this world. Imitate him in his love of the Blessed Sacrament and of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Imitate him in his implicit trust in Divine Providence and the Intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary and Bethany will still prosper.

May Mgr Mascarenhas live with us, live specially in Bethany, in the heart of every Bethany Sister!

Thank you.

THE FIRST HIGH SCHOOL FOUNDED BY MGR RAYMOND CELEBRATES PLATINUM

Sr Lillis BS

Little Flower Girls' High School, Kinnigoli, the first High School of Bethany Congregation started by its Founder, Mgr Raymond Mascarenhas celebrated its Platinum Jubilee on December 10, 2016. The institution started on 2nd June 1941 has been a boon to the poor girls of the surrounding areas and even of faraway places because the orphanage provided them with free accommodation.

Most Rev Aloysius Paul D'Souza, in his message wrote, "It goes without saying that the farsightedness of the Founder, and the pioneers has made it possible to reap rich fruit by all those who have gone through the portals of this school. I pay my tribute to all. It is a matter of great satisfaction and fulfillment to know that the alumni of this school have made a difference in society and have promoted human values. No doubt, integral formation is given in the school."

During the celebration presided over by Sr Rose Céline, the president of the Society, the institute paid a fitting tribute to the founding visionary Mgr Raymond FC Mascarenhas to whom education of the girls was the most important means for the development of a society. The stage was adorned by dignitaries from various strata of the society and four among them were alumni holding high positions in the society. Each one of them profusely thanked the institution for its unique role in their life and of the society. Rev Fr Vincent Monteiro, the Parish priest, Mr Walter D'Mello, the DDPI and others spoke emphatically that Kinnigoli which was a small unknown village 75 years ago would not grow into a big town if not for the education imparted specially to the girls through Little Flower School. They extolled the school, its founder, the patron saint St Therese and all those who were at the helm of affairs. In addition to it Sr Rose Celine, the president of the Society spotlighted the great contribution of the school in terms of nurturing numerous vocations to Bethany and among them one raised to the status of the Superior General of the Congregation.

All the headmistresses, correspondents and well-wishers were honoured. Professor Edmund Frank a great benefactor of Bethany schools was specially honoured and thanked for. The school put up a thrilling ballet named *Amma* underscoring the importance of education for a girl child.

56TH DEATH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION OF THE SERVANT OF GOD

Sr Hilarita BS

The 56th Death Anniversary of Servant of God Raymond Mascarenhas was celebrated with a solemn Eucharistic Sacrifice on 23rd December 2016, at 8.45 am at St Sebastian's Church, Bendur, Mangalore which was built by the Servant of God. The church was packed to its utmost capacity with parishioners, well-wishers, students, and teachers. At the scheduled time, Most Rev Dr Aloysius Paul D'Souza, the Bishop of Mangalore along with ten priests ascended the altar of God to the tune of the melodious hymn sung by the choir. Mr Stephen Pinto, a parishioner in the introduction to the Eucharist highlighted the importance of the day stating that 56th Death Anniversary of the Servant of God Mgr Raymond Mascarenhas, the first parish priest of St Sebastian's Church Bendur, was a suitable occasion to praise and thank the Lord for the many blessings that we receive through his intercession. He called upon the participants to use this occasion to thank the Lord for helping the members of the Historical Commission for the Cause of Mgr Raymond to complete their work which they would be handing over to the Tribunal today after the Eucharistic Celebration.

Rev Fr J B Saldanha reading the Gospel passage "The Sermon on the Mount" expounded its deeper meaning and spotlighted how the Servant of God Raymond F C Mascarenhas lived the beatitudes in a prophetic manner in his day-to-day life. He quoted the testimonies of the two eye witnesses who were inspired by the life of beatitude of the Servant of God. He also called upon the faithful to practice these virtues in order to attain holiness in life. Prayers were offered for various needs of the church, society, diocese, Bethany Congregation and all those who were present on the occasion. Bishop prayed in a special manner that the Lord may grant Mgr Raymond Mascarenhas the honours of the altar.

Sr Lillis BS, the Asst Superior General while proposing the vote of thanks recounted the major role played by Bishop Aloysius Paul D'Souza who initiated the Cause of the Beatification and Canonization of Mgr Raymond Mascarenhas eight years ago and expressed her wish that he gets the privilege of closing the Cause. She detailed the services of Rev Fr Henry Sequeira, the Episcopal Delegate for the Cause who has to take the Cause further, the members of the Historical Commission namely

Rev Fr J B Saldanha, the head of the Historical Commission and the members Rev Fr Peter Mascarenhas, Rev Sr Mariette BS, for their labour of love, the past and present notaries specially Fr Naveen Pinto, the theological censors, Rev Fr Gregory D'Souza OCD and Rev Fr Peter Paul Saldanha, Rev Fr Antony Shera, the parish priest of Bendur, for the erection of a new tomb for the Servant of God, the technical assistants and thanked them for their unique services. She thanked Rev Fr Joseph Martis, the rector of St Joseph Seminary, Rev Fr Peter D'Souza, director of Pastoral Centre, Fr Francis Almeida, SJ, Rev Fr Hilary Sanctis, Rev Fr Ashwin Cardoza, for their benign presence. The parishioners of Bendur and other parishes, Sr Rose Celine BS, the Bethany Superior General, all the Bethany Sisters, their lay associates, relatives of Mgr Raymond, students, teachers, and well-wishers were thanked for participating in the Eucharistic Sacrifice and expressing their love and devotion to the Servant of God.

As the Postulator of the Cause, Sr Lillis placed on record her gratitude to the rectors and superiors of various religious institutions such as St Joseph Seminary, Jeppu, Carmel Hill, Kulshekar, St Aloysius College, Mangalore, parish priests of various parishes of Mangalore Diocese and other Dioceses, superiors of Bethany convents and the Apostolic Carmel for opening wide their archives and libraries to the Historical Commission members for collection of documents. She also thanked the editors of various publications for the free access given to the Historical Commission to collect the needed documents. The audience applauded the Historical Commission on hearing that they had visited 95 archives and libraries in India and Rome for collection of documents on Mgr Raymond Mascarenhas which will be submitted to the Tribunal for the Cause at Bishop's House.

The Bishop too appreciated the efforts of the Historical Commission and that of Bethany Sisters for taking up the Cause in the interest of the Church and expressed his desire that the Servant of God is raised to the honours of the altar. Emphasizing on the importance of prayer for the success of the Cause he said, "We need to pray much. Only prayer can take us through."

At the end of the Mass, prayer for the beatification of the Servant of God was prayed. Thereafter the Bishop, the Bethany Superior General and the Parish Priest each laid floral wreathes on the tomb of the Servant of God and others strewed flower petals with prayer in their hearts and on their lips. The devotees continued to flock the tomb seeking the blessings of the Servant of God.

FAVOURS RECEIVED

Healing from kidney stone

I am Mrs Sarala hailing from Bangalore, mother of Sr Tresa Lidya. I was healed from kidney stone as I prayed to the Lord through the intercession of Servant of God Mgr RFC Mascarenhas. I was suggested by the doctor to undergo an operation for the removal of kidney stone the size of which was 12 mm. As I told my daughter she suggested to pray through the Servant of God and I visited his memorial in Mangalore along with my husband. We prayed through the intercession of Servant of God and I felt confident that my prayer would be answered. On my return to Bangalore I went for a scanning. To my surprise, the 12mm stone in my kidney was dissolved to 7mm and the doctor told me that operation was not needed and it dissolved by itself. I thank Servant of God Mgr RFC Mascarenhas for interceding on behalf of me.

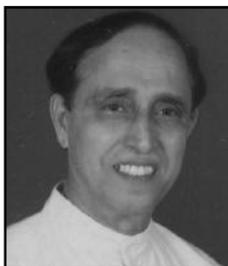


Mrs Sarala

CONTRIBUTORS

REV MGR DENIS PRABHU

Mgr Denis M Prabhu, is the Vicar General of Mangalore Diocese and is known for his wisdom and knowledge. He has served the diocese of Mangalore in various capacities since 1967 earning a reputation as a holy and an able priest. Among many roles that he played are: Parish Priest at Milagres, Permude and Urwa, Director of Vocations, Secretary of the Catholic Board of Education (CBE), Director of Family Life Service Centre, and as Chancellor of the diocese. He was Vocation Chairman of Karnataka from 1975-1977. Mgr M F C Castelino was one of his mentors who was also a close associate of Mgr Raymond. This connection gives great credibility and substance to the writer's views and insights. Mgr Dennis contributes informative and erudite articles on Mgr Raymond and is devoted to the Servant of God.



SR M SAHANA, BS

Sr M Sahana is a Bethany Sister serving as Tertian Directress at Rosa Mystica Tertiate, Gurpur, and Karnataka. She holds a doctorate in Moral Theology from K U Leuven, Belgium. She has presented papers at the International Conference in California, Bangalore and other places. She has done the Formators' Course for three consecutive summers under the Institute for Formation India and has worked in the fields of education and formation. She conducts retreats and seminars for formees at different stages. At present she also renders service as the Provincial councillor of Bangalore Province.



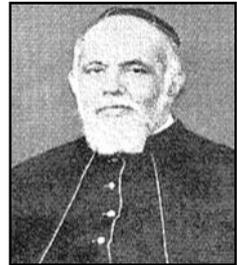
SR MARIE THERESE, BS

Sr Marie Therese had the privilege of living in the same compound as the Founder for twelve years. She has experienced and received immense love and care from the servant of God Raymond F C Mascarenhas, during her encounter with him. She has vast experience as an educationist. She has served the Congregation as a teacher, local superior, provincial councillor and as a principal for several years in different schools of North India managed by BES. She has done her PGDPC in counseling and guidance in 2007 from Darshan College, Bangalore. At present she enjoys working as a counselor in Bethany Convent Senior Secondary School, Naini-Allahabad (UP).



MGR MARIAN F C CASTELINO

Mgr Marian F C Castelino was a renowned priest of the diocese of Mangalore. Bethany opened a community at Balkunje at his invitation. He was the director of St Anthony's Charitable Institutions when he delivered his speech on the occasion of the birth centenary of Mgr Raymond F C Mascarenhas in 1975. Mgr Marian Castelino joined the seminary inspired by Mgr Raymond Mascarenhas. He was very dear to Mgr Raymond and knew him intimately. In any event of Mgr Raymond's life, Mgr Marian was inseparable. He was there at the death bed of Mgr Raymond.





Historical Commission Members: Fr Peter Mascarenhas, Fr John Baptist Saldanha, Sr Mariette BS, with the Postulator Sr Lillis BS at the completion of collecting and arranging the documents on the Servant of God Mgr RFC Mascarenhas



The commission with the technical assistants, Postulator and Vice Postulator



Members of the Historical Commission seek the blessings of Bishop Aloysius Paul D'Souza before submitting their report to the Tribunal for the Cause of the Beatification of Servant of God Mgr RFC Mascarenhas.



The Historical Commission submits the report to the Tribunal on 23.12.2016

The Compassionate Pastor

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