CHAPTER –III

BIRTH AND GROWTH OF THE BETHANY CONGREGATION

3.1. Phase I (1921-1934)

3.1.1. Birth of Bethany:

During the time of Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas it was such that men would generally be with boys hence it was more appropriate for man to start men’s Congregation rather than women. Women had no place in the society and they were considered as the weaker section of the society. Being a man of strong character and fully convinced of his mission to help the women, girls and the poor in the small town like Mangalore where women and girls were neglected. Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas wanted to empower the women by founding the Bethany Congregation so that they in return would empower others. He was looking forward for generous women who would do the work which men cannot do for one reason or the other. He wanted them to work mainly for the spiritual, educational, social and material development of girls and women.¹

Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas took it as a challenge in founding the Bethany Congregation and find for women an organization through which they would work for others, regardless of the difficulties and hurdles on the way in the traditionally male dominated society. Further this native venture would have to compete with men in many ways, along with the existing two Congregations in Mangalore i.e. the
Apostolic Carmel and Sisters of Charity of Maria Bambina which had foreign affiliations. These missions were more after the upper classes. Though not stated explicitly their activities indicated directly their disinterestedness over the problems of the common group of Christian community needless to say that the girls of this group did not have and outlet for even getting primary education and women at large remain totally neglected.

Many of his friends, including his clergy brothers ridiculed him and teased for wasting his time on the four poor women. Others advised him and said “Father Mascarenhas knew that the best and the most effective means of bringing out the latent powers and capacities in the young people is education. Therefore, he looked for suitable lady teachers who would devote their lives for the growth in remote villages, often inaccessible for lack of transportation”.

At one time he was telling his desire to Sr. Violette, to open the school in a remote village in order to lit the light of education there. When she asked father how will we get there to that remote village where no-body had reached so far? He said “so you grasp the situation. If three adult Sisters (to form community three persons were a must according to the Constitution of Bethany) cannot find a way to get there, how will the little children there, perhaps thirty or three hundred find a way to get to some school? So let us go there and give them a school.” Hence he dotted the many villages of South Canara with many elementary and later higher elementary schools. He walked on the unbeaten path, always finding and making way to others to follow. He had to do God’s work of reaching to the masses with merely Indian means, Indian persons and all that is Indian in India and outside India.

In this chapter three we will see the birth and the growth of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Little Flower of Bethany. (Henceforth called as Bethany Congregation) in two phases: - Phase one: 1921-1934 and Phase two: 1935-1960. In the phase I, the nucleus of the Congregation will be discussed, the Congregation founded on four strong pillars under the direction, guidance and encouragement of
Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas who shared his dream and vision and prepared them to actualize his dream into actions in the locality initially in Mangalore – South Canara. We shall deal each phase separately; and the steady growth of the Congregation step by step, period wise and space wise. Let us see the highlights of founder’s vision and dream and materialization of the same in the cry of the poor and the suffering of the humanity, to bring compassion and fullness of life and live according to their dignity of the human person, before getting into the formal and non-formal education and social work.

In the first quarter of the 20th century, in this particular place called Mangalore, South Canara there was born an Indigenous Congregation on 16th July 1921 called the Congregation of the Sisters of the Little Flower of Bethany, through the life and ministry of a truly Indian priest. The thirty year old priest who was sent to Bendur in 1914 to establish a new parish in the barren area at that time. At present it is a city situated outside the town of Mangalore. When Bethany Congregation was born the church of Bendur was seven years old. In colonial India most of the religious women were members of foreign foundations. Admissions to their Congregation were restricted as they required candidates of higher education and to come with large dowries about which we have discussed in chapter two. This requirement could be fulfilled only by a few families in Mangalore during the British Raj, in the early twentieth century.

Fired with zeal, restless as he was during his childhood, Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas was deeply pained to see the distress of many young women who had genuine vocation to religious life but could not get entry into the then existing Congregations because of the requirement of the higher education and exorbitant patrimony. In order to meet the dire need of that period he launched the above project of providing Education for the poor- especially the girls, providing an opportunity for the girls who had genuine vocation to religious life irrespective of their status in the society, to have one class of sisters in the Congregation. Andto
supply good, dedicated and permanent teachers to teach in the schools and to impart Christian doctrine in schools and parishes in the rural areas.  

When young and enthusiastic priest, Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas arrived in Bendur, he found a small, one room school, called St Francis Xavier School in the vicinity of the present Kadri. Associated with the name of a certain Mr. Peter Lobo, popularly known as ‘Pedru Shenoy’, who appears to be the pioneer in private education in the locality. This school was run on the traditional ‘Gurukula system’ and housed at the residence of Mr. Santan Menezes, the brother-in-Law of Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas. Thus this is for the first time we come in contact with one among Msgr. Raymond’s sisters, Cecelia, the fifth child of their family, second among the daughters. Later on the school was moved to a government site close to Pedru Shenoy’s own residence. The Kadri Municipal School stands more or less on the same site.

After the death of Mr. Pedru Shenoy, his son Jeremy Shenoy took over the school management. He appointed Marcel D’Souza (nick-name is Gandhi Marcel) as a teacher. The school continued under the name ‘St Francis Xavier School’ with six grades. Mrs. Aurelia Fernandes, the widow, due to the untimely death of Mr. Jeremy Shenoy had to manage the school with Mr. Marcel D’Souza when he was still on the staff. Eventually this school was handed over to Mr. Marcel D’Souza the capable and talented teacher. Negotiations between Mr. Marcel D’Souza and the then parish priest of Bendur Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas concluded, in the transfer of the management of St Francis Xavier School to Sebastian’s Church, Bendur. Side by side with the newly opened St Sebastian’s School, the St Francis Xavier School was conducted in a house in the neighbourhood of the church. Some of the students from the latter transferred to the former. He always believed that success and effectiveness of the school depends on the efficient staff. So, Msgr. Raymond was looking for capable teachers. This need became very urgent as two teachers from the St Francis Xavier School involved in a bitter quarrel and had to be relieved of their teaching jobs.
Being a man of vision Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas thought it was good to have good religious teachers who would be more dedicated to their work of teaching and committed to the spiritual and material welfare… So much so he quickly spotted out the qualified and zealous teachers in his parish who were working as teachers in the schools outside the parish and even outside Mangalore. One problem that always bothered him was the lack of elementary educational facilities specially for girls in Bendur and in the rural areas. Scarcity of good and committed teachers was a hurdle in running the existing schools and starting the new ones especially in the villages.

Moreover religious Sisters who were engaged in the field of education were mainly caring for the needs of the economically upper and upper middle classes, and their activities were confirmed in a more developed towns and cities. A large mass was deprived of both elementary education and religious instruction. He moved with compassion for these people and wanted to do something for them. For the sake of the poor he was ready to risk his own life. The very thought of the poor, elementary education, religious instruction, young girls who want to become religious, committed and dedicated teachers motivated him. One day Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas took courage to reveal his idea to the then Bishop Paul Perini S.J, of founding a Congregation for the above purpose and sought his guidance. So the Bishop replied, “Act, if you have an inspiration to do so, make use of the opportunities you have.”

As a man of deep faith in God, Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas waited God to send generous lady teachers who would be willing to use their services and talents in the service of the poor. As usual, he started visiting the people of the Bendur Parish to care for their spiritual and material needs, especially those who are in great need. One particular day, he entered the house of Mr. and Mrs. Sebastian Mathias of Kadri who had two grown up daughters Flora and Alice. Flora wanted to be religious but did not know ,where and how ?Alice her sister who was schooling her High School studies wanted to get admitted in the Carmel Convent of Trivandrum in Kerala.
After a short chat with Mr. Mathias, Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas realized and thought to himself, ‘Here are the two young girls from a decent, pious family, wish to become a religious, but were forced to look far and wide because Mangalore had nothing to offer them’.

– Flora Mathias was already employed on a staff of St. Joseph Asylum School for girls in Jeppu, Mangalore. But she desired to get a job in her own parish Bendur, Mangalore. She was relived from St. Joseph Asylum School for girls in Jeppu, Mangalore. As per the request of Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas she joined his own School in Bendur parish on June 1st 1918. He found her reserved, well-mannered, balanced person, devout, religious and duty conscious.

Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas then shared his idea to her to found a congregation and she felt privileged to be a part of his plan. Alice her sister, who towards the end of her schooling wanted to leave to Trivandrum in Kerala. Knowing the plan of her sister and the mind of, Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas, she too thought to be a part of this project instead of proceeding to Kerala. While these developments were taking place Miss Marceline Menezes of Falnir, a well-known and much-loved teacher in the parish school of Kallianpur Udupi, was looking for a teaching position in her home town in Mangalore. Accordingly, she had sent an application to St. Sebastian's School Bendur of which, Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas was a manager. Since her application was accepted by the manager she joined her duty in Bendur School in June 1918. Soon Flora and Marceline became good friends and began exchanging ideas and plans. Marceline who was looking out for a congregation to join, soon made up her mind to serve the poor along with. All the three stayed back every Friday after the school hours for an instruction by, Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas on the spiritual and religious life. Fr. Sylvester Menezes the assistant pastor to Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas revealed the desire of Miss Regina Gonsalves from Kadri, had a teaching position at St. Joseph’s Asylum School, Jeppu but was living at home in the Bendur parish with her parents. Knowing her desire, Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas invited her for a discussion on the future plans and related matters. Convinced by her genuine desire to become religious he welcomed
her to join the other three for the weekly exhortation on religious life., Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas made provision for her too to be on the staff of St.Sebastian's School Bendur from 1st June 1919.

Now, there were four candidates who were ready to carry on his plans. So he found it was the opportune time to build his foundation on these four pillars but the new venture was a leap into the unknown for both founder and the founding members. There were many uncertainties as there was no finance. Side by side he thought whether they were really ready? Would they be able to bear whatever burden lay upon their inexperienced shoulders? Criticism and discouragement was not lacking. Inspite of all the anxieties, their faith was strong enough to leave everything in the hands of God. Msgr .Raymond Mascarenhas also was a man of strong faith as he grew in the family atmosphere of strong faith grounded in piety and virtuous under the firm parental discipline.

2. Founder’s dream visualized

The dream of Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas the Founder of Bethany was actualized on 16th July 1921 at 5.pm when four valiant daughters of the soil of Mangalore namely Flora Mathias and Alice Mathias ,daughters of Sebastian Mathias and Piedade Rodrigues ,Kadri born on 13th July 1891,and on 9th April 1898 respectively, Marcelline Menezes daughter of Peter Manual Menezes and Emilain D’Souza, Falnir, Born on 27th July 1892 and Regina Gertrude Gonsalves ,daughter of Cyprian Gonsalves and Mercina Martins of Kadri ,born on 6th June-1937 joined the religious life.

Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas and the assistant pastor Fr. Sylvester Menezes warmly received the four young women who were accompanied by their parents and relatives. Their parting from the family was painful because of the new uncertain venture. Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas kneeling before the statue of Blessed Virgin recommended, “the four”’ to her protective care saying, “Blessed Virgin protect these children whom you have entrusted to me, in all confidence for the extension of
your Son’s Kingdom”.

21 And he consoled the parents saying, “The tremendous sacrifice that you have made in offering your children to the service of the Lord, in the poor will have its reward”. Thus the seed of Bethany Congregation was sown.

3. Name of Bethany

From the beginning of the Congregation, of the Sisters of the Little Flower of Bethany, they were familiarly called as Bethany Sisters by the people who lived in the surroundings. Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhashad also a great affection for St. Theresa of Lisieux who called herself the Little Flower of Jesus, the 20th century Saint, because of the simplicity of her life and doing the small and ordinary works, of day today's life, in an extraordinary way for the love of Jesus, along with her missionary zeal to reach out to all the people of the world. St. Theresa was born on 2nd January 1873 at Lisieux in France. Although she was a cloistered nun, she reached out to all the continents of the world and supported the missionaries by her prayers and sacrifices. It was through her little way of performing perfectly the small duties of everyday life for the love for God. St. Theresa died in 1897, within a short span of nine years in the convent as a nun. The world recognized her greatness soon after her death and the Church started her Sainthood process, while Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas was dreaming to found the Congregation. She was Canonized as a saint in 1925. Her missionary zeal of supporting the priests and missionaries through her prayers and sacrifices captured the attention of Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas and gave her as a model for the sisters of Bethany Congregation.

The name of the Congregation as the Congregation of the Sisters of the Little Flower of Bethany was evolved in the following manner. The name which Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas the Founder desired for this Institute is, “The Congregation of the Sisters of the Little Flower of Bethany”. His reason for this title is that, this whole work has been conceived and worked by him under the protection of St. Theresa of Lisieux, the Little Flower of Jesus, (as she called herself) even before her Beatification. From the very commencement of the Congregation of the sisters of the Little Flower of Bethany, St. Theresa of Lisieux has been invoked as patroness and
sought particularly, for imitation by the inmates of Bethany Congregation as, she has been officially declared by the church, as patron of missions. Therefore members of the institute of Bethany wish to devote themselves in a particular manner to the missionary work after her example, is an additional reason for embodying her name in the title. Thus she has become the model and inspiration of Bethany Congregation and her spirituality is adopted by the Bethany Sisters.

4. Humble Beginning of Bethany Congregation

The child was born; “will it survive” was the question of many when Bethany Congregation was founded. The History of the Bethany Congregation as per the record shows, that it had a small beginning, and had to grow and develop through the sufferings, sacrifices, trials and tribulations. Here are a few remarks from the people as the Bethany Congregation was growing. They said “this venture is too poor to last,” Msgr. Raymond's sisters will die when he dies”. People measured Bethany Congregation according to the human standards. Sufferings due to lack of resources, poverty, ill health and the criticism of the people in and out of the frame work of the Church became a part of Bethany’s growing process.

In people’s eyes this Bethany Congregation looked like foolishness and termed it as foolhardy. They underestimated and predicted it, as it would soon vanish, as people were used to the sisters who had financial and personnel backing of the strong European Congregations. They could not imagine that the Congregation would emerge from the native soil. This is because they had grown up in a colonial India where the people were kept dependent on foreign resources. But Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas Says, “I carried on the work of founding Bethany in the face of warm appreciation and bitter criticism”. Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas never hesitated to start any project, for he says, “I did not feel I had the capacity for it. However, following my general principle of action to make use of the opportunities as they presented themselves and make the best of the situation”.
On March 19th 1925, Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas the founder presented a report on this infant Bethany Congregation to the then, Bishop of the diocese of Mangalore, his immediate superior which says, “This is the report. I must explain why, I did not do it earlier. I felt that the work must go on slowly and unostentatiously and develop in a natural way. Now, that the number of the members of the Congregation had risen to thirteen, and there were requests for their services in other parishes, it is the befitting time to do the same”. Accordingly, on 29th May 1925, a convent at Puttur in South Canara was opened, the first house outside Mangalore, which is situated at a distance of 50 kilometers to the east of Mangalore on the Mangalore- Madikeri highway. The house was named ‘Lisieux convent under the patronage of St. Theresa of the Little Flower of Jesus who was canonized as a saint in the year 1925. Sr. Lourdes was installed as the first superior. The then, parish priest of Puttur Church Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas Joseph Aloysius Rodriguez had extended an invitation to Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas, the Founder of Bethany to teach in the newly established St. Francis Xavier Boy’s school of his parish. Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas says, “I, for one feel that, it is through her help I have been able to overcome insurmountable difficulties, and have been able to do the work…” when the need for the education of girls was felt in the locality, a second school of and ‘Little Flower Girl’s Elementary School at Puttur was opened in 1927. The boy’s school started by Fr. Joseph in 1924 and the latter school, co-existed until 1971.

The further details are discussed under the brief History of convents from (1921-1934) in the chapter three, phase-one. From then on, the other parishes of the Mangalore diocese invited the Bethany sisters in the various parishes. Within ten years, Bethany sisters were working in nine parishes and were in-charge of eleven schools in the diocese of Mangalore. The main objective of Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas the founder to found the Bethany Congregation was to form a community of women in order “to preach the good news to the poor and the
marginalized. And to give admission to the deserving candidates to religious life coming from the lower economic strata of the society.

Here, we would like to quote Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas the founder regarding the objectives of founding Bethany, “when Bethany was founded, the girls, it received would not find admission into the older congregations of the diocese, for want of sufficient higher education or a substantial dowry. But Bethany has done for such girls not only by directly opening to them the doors of religious life, but still more indirectly by being the cause for the older congregations, to open their hitherto closed doors, to such girls as these, who now are warmly received everywhere both inside and outside our diocese.” By the quote of the founder we conclude, that he desires, that Bethany Congregation should keep open its doors to the poor and less educated girls who have aptitude for religious life. Accordingly, Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas opened the door to all the poor girls, who had genuine vocation to religious life is now clear in our study. The following statistics found in the Mangalore Journal further support our study and says, “The Bethany Sisters count twenty six in number just now. Of these one is SSLC trained, sixteen are Higher Elementary trained, four are Primary trained, one is in the 2nd year of Primary Training and four are Untrained.

Here is another incident to support our study. One of the sisters wrote: “once I met a girl in our parlour who was sad, disappointed and helpless. She told me that she was denied of admission into other Congregations and was told; only the Sisters of the Little Flower of Bethany accept the candidates, with minimum education. I took her to our Founder, who not only treated her with kindness but also accorded a warm welcome to Bethany. Another objective of Bethany Congregation was to provide education and faith formation especially to girls in the rural areas. Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas desire to work for the poor led him to open convents in the remote, rural areas to cater to the spiritual and educational needs of the poor, who otherwise would be neglected. The Dalit community, women and girls received his special care and attention as he opened a convent at Puttur in the remotest villages.
He provided them with good educational facilities and medical care and also concentrated on their Faith formation. Since the members of the Bethany Congregation were from the native soil he also felt the need of forming the members. So he began their first formation by encouraging the sisters in inculturation and to uphold the dignity of manual work, through simple occupations like cleaning, weaving and agriculture, thought he culture of that time, expected a nun, in western culture, engaged only in occupation of a liberal nature. Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas being a visionary, was adventurous and daring, like his father who found new innovative movements. He could formulate any programme, after critically analyzing the life situations and finding out the root causes.

The wide spread illiteracy among girls and the poor were always his concern, He was aware of the scarcity of committed and qualified teachers in the existing schools. The existing educational system was such that it was catering to the economically upper strata of the society. Also the medium of instruction was not in vernacular. Even the church and the society did not pay much attention towards the education of the children. And there was no initiative to provide education with less expense for the poor students in the remote villages. With this background in mind Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas instructed Bethany Sisters to work with dedication and commitment to become the driving force in reaching out the poor and the weaker section of the society. Along with this, Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas wanted in Bethany to have only one class of sisters without any distinction from the beginning, i.e., educated and highly educated, rich and the poor all were to be equal.

Since Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas was influenced by Gandhian philosophy, he held in high esteem the dignity of labour as one more objective of Bethany. For, he believed, to bring progress in a village is to bring progress in the country. Hence he started schools and community centres in remote villages of South Canara. In view of this, he started St. Martha’s industrial school in 1922, with handlooms for spinning and weaving, needle work, lace making, tailoring and embroidery.
Raymond Mascarenhas wanted the sisters to take up manual work and agriculture whenever and wherever possible. Thus Bethany believes in the dignity of labour, hence, Bethany is not ashamed to work, whenever there is the necessity or occasion for it, in spite of the prevailing ideas of some people, a nun should be a neatly dressed person. His idea is that sisters should work with the poor and inspire them to use their own land to grow in order to meet their daily needs and stand on their own feet. In this connection he says, “My trust is that, Bethany will outlive all the prejudices, and be a witness to the dignity of labour, and continue to set an example worthy of imitation”.  

Bethany’s early apostolate could be summarized in the words of Cardinal Simon Pimenta, for he says, “Bethany has provided the benefits of Catholic Education to hundreds of poor children in the villages of South Canara, and given a chance to girls who had no opportunity for higher education or a substantial dowry to become religious. It has upheld the dignity of labour in the congregation and considered all equal by the policy of Bethany, as one class of sisters in Bethany. It has particularly commendable work in the remotest areas of the diocese of Mangalore, where the presence of the church practically non-existent. For he says, manned entirely by an indigenous order of new congregation without any foreign control or guidance, the Bethany Congregation gives as a taste of Swaraj”.

The inspection report of the different schools, year after year, speak of the successful work of the sisters, while the steady increase in the number of children attending them is an index of their popularity. The principal instances are: St. Margret Mary’s Higher Elementary School, attached to the Mother house with 80 pupils in 1921 as now three hundred twenty seven pupils, Little Flower Higher Elementary School, Talapady, which was handed over to them in 1930, with one hundred three children, now has two hundred fifty five pupils, St. Joseph’s Higher Elementary School, Cordel, Kulshekar, Mangalore which had one hundred eight children when the sisters took it over in 1930 now has three hundred eight four pupils.
Bethany, besides the schools, had a boarding house attached to it. There was an orphanage for the neophyte children at the mission station of Uppinangady. This was a small beginning of the similar institutions elsewhere. Bethany also had industrial side of education in which they were teaching tailoring, needle-work, and weaving. They were also good at farming and cultivation of land of which we will discuss in detail in the chapter five under the non-formal education.

5. The First four Pillars:

The first four began their religious life and their community life together. Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas appointed Miss Flora Mathias as first superior of the group and Marcelline Menezes as the minister of the house. This community was named Bethany, so that new congregation would always be guided by the same spirit that motivated Martha and Mary in the Gospels. Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas earnestly desired to name his congregation another Bethany of Bible where the prayer and action goes together, coupled with hospitality to all those come to Bethany.

On 15th August 1921 the first four candidates duly prepared by Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas, made their vow of poverty, chastity and obedience in order to live a simple life. To signify the change in their life –style and as a reminder of their new way of life they changed their baptismal names to new religious names with Religious numbers. Rel no.1. Marcelline Menezes, Sr. M. Martha BS. of St. Joseph, Rel. no.2. Flora Mathias, changed her name into Sr. M. Clare BS. of the Scared Heart, Rel. no. 3. Alice Mathias changed her name into Sr. M. Lourdes BS. of the Blessed Sacrament and Rel. no.4. Regina Gertrude Gonsalves changed her name into Sr. M. Gertrude BS of Jesus Crucified. Each member of Bethany chose a patron saint for herself along with their changed name.

The attached name of the saint or the different aspects of the life of Jesus added to the new religious names of the sisters perhaps helped them to grow in virtue and sanctity as they served the poor in their mission. Each one added Mary
to their name inorder to remind them as the handmaids of the Lord as per their spirituality. They also have prefix (Sr.) sister and suffix (BS)Bethany sister to their name. On the same day they also got the typed copy of the Constitution – the Rules for the way of life. Slow but steady, Bethany Congregation took shape and grew into a religious community on August 5th 1921 when parish at Bendur laid a foundation stone to two parish schools i.e. St. Sebastian’s Higher Elementary School in Bendur and the St. Joseph Elementary School in Kankanady. Sr.Martha was appointed Superior of Bethany and Sr.Lourdes as the Headmistress of St.Margaret Mary’s Higher Elementary School of Bendur.

On the first anniversary another Lady teacher Miss Apoline Menezes daughter of Pascal Menezes and Angeline Nazareth, born on 14th December 1902 was added to their number. Two more candidates, Christina Pires and Maggi Alphonse were admitted into the community on the second and third anniversaries respectively so by 16th July 1924 they were seven in number. On 21st March, 1925 another stepping stone in the congregation of Bethany, Sr.Martha was the first elected as a superior for a period of three years. With the self-sacrificing spirit, the first four sisters over came all the hurdles of wide range such as poor living conditions, uncertainties of the future and mastering a new language. So as to be able to teach in the parish and to give catechetical instructions.

**About the four:**

Here we briefly discuss about the four pioneers who co-operated with the founder in founding Bethany Congregation and thereafter. The first pioneer was Marceline Menezes daughter of Peter Manual Menezes and Emiliana D’souza of Falnir was born on 27th July 1892, the first among the four pioneers. She was well known and much loved teacher. After joining Bethany she changed her name as Sr. M. Martha BS. She was very humble, helpful, mild and understanding person. She was elected mother of Bethany consecutively for three terms from 1925 to 1940. In
the first General Chapter she was called Mother Martha, as she was elected as the
Mother General. She was in the helm of administration for twenty five years and
died on 14th February 1951. 60

Flora Mathias, daughter of Sebastian Mathias and Piedade Rodrigues from
Kadri. Born on 13th July 1891, was the 2nd among the pioneers. She was a teacher by
profession. She took Sr. Clare BS. as her Religious Name in Bethany. She taught in
an Elementary School and was a lover of children. She was kind and thoughtful in
her dealings with others. She taught in the Bethany’s Industrial School and later
worked as a Headmistress. She died on 12th June 1962. 61

Alice Mathais the sister of Flora Mathais was born on 9th April 1898 in
Kadri. She joined along with her sister to Bethany. She was pious and humble and as
a hard worker, who looked after the property, maintained the house and cultivated
the land. She changed her name and took her new name as Sr. Lourdes.BS. She was
the third among the pioneers of the Bethany congregations. She was the teacher at
the St. Sebastian’s school, Bendur, Mangalore and was the first headmistress of St.
Margaret Mary’s school, Bendur, Mangalore, opened in 1921, also the first superior
of first branch house opened in 1925. She was known as the teacher of infants. She
died on 4th March 1977. 62

Regina Gertrude Gonsalves is the daughter of Cyprian Gonslaves and
Mercina Martis of Kadri who was born on 6th June 1899. She was the 4th among the
pioneers, a daring personality in the hardships and sufferings of the initial years of
the congregation. She was very punctual in all that she did. She took her Religious
name as Sr. m. Gertrude BS. She was a teacher who was very good to both children
and adults; and also to the Tulu Christians. In Puttur, Kadaba, Uppinangady and
Kokkada in the mission areas of the congregation. In Puttur 1926, she started her
missionary work among the lowest status of the people. She taught them to read and
write. All these parishes she was invited by the then concern parish priest of the
place. Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas was happy wherever she went and expressed
his appreciation by saying “you are Bethany’s first missionary”. She was the last among the pioneers who passed away in 1995. I too had an opportunity to see her, spending her last days patiently and prayerfully in Bethany Mother House at Bendur, Mangalore.

6. Constitution-----Administration.

Constitution is the Rule Book of the Congregation. It contains the purpose, aim, goal and objectives of the congregation and how to implement them in their prayer life, community life and the mission. In one sentence it is the discipline of religious life. It is the rule book with rules and regulations prepared according to the canon Law (Church Law) which is required to live by those who come together and live as religious. Charism is a gift of God given to a person for the benefit of the entire ecclesial community. Every Religious Congregation is an answer to some need that arises in the church; it urges someone to institute a particular form of religious life to meet the needs of the society. This unique inspiration and way of responding is said to be its “charism.” It is to meet the particular need, of particular people, at a particular time. And the person endowed with this gift is a charismatic person.

Essentially a charism is an insight into how a current need in the church can be met. The first step is to assess both the need and the insight in the light of the Gospel. Fr. Piovesan S. J gives a simple analogy to illustrate the process: “A match strikes, together a match box and a flame results. The match is the charismatic person, the match box is the situation and the resulting flame is the charism.” To the group of charismatic persons like St. Domnic, St Francis Xavier, St Ignatius Loyola, St Theresa of Avila, St Don Bosco, Blessed Mother Theresa of Kokatta and Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas the founder of Bethany.

Charism is a gift of God given to a person for the benefit to the entire ecclesial community. When we discuss about the charism of the founder, the another concept we have to pay attention is, charism of being a founder is a particular gift
given by God to some persons in the church to found a particular religious institute for specific purpose. So being a founder, comprises the following components: the world full of needs, the perception of the need, inspiration of God to be found a religious congregation, response to that need and the particular life style. Once the new congregation is founded, the founder also takes the responsibility to frame rules or draft constitution for their institute. Now we try to understand the charism of Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas who was one among many, who are being called and inspired by God to respond to the existing needs of the locality. In order to make this dream a reality he went through the process of discernment, specially confiding his superior, the then Bishop of Mangalore Rev. Dr. Paul Perini S. J. Thus, Bethany Congregation was born because of Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas charism; This charism became an inspiration for the sisters to lead a common life and to undertake common mission in the congregation. Charism determines the kind of life to live and animates the spirit that guides the members.  

The charism of the congregation forms its collective personality. Each member can say it is what I am to the church, while the mission is what I do for the church. All the activities of Msgr. Raymond's life, revels some aspects of Jesus and His ministry, specially the Nazareth manifesto in the Bible. which he took it as his ‘motto’ on his Ordination day. His whole charism can be summoned in the following quotation from the Bible in the words of St. Mathew: “I was hungry, and you fed me, thirsty and gave me to drink, I was a stranger and you received me in your home, naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you took care of me, in prison and you visited me … whenever you did this for one of the least important …you did it for me”.  

The charism and spirituality of Bethany has three fold sources, in the first place, it is in the mystery of Annunciation and Incarnation of Jesus. Secondly, in the discipleship and service of Martha, Mary and Lazaras, finally in the little way of St. Theresa of Lisieux, the Little Flower of Jesus. So the Bethany sisters in imitation of Jesus and Mary His mother, wholly consecrates and surrenders herself in faith as the
humble servant of the Lord, to serve Him in His people. They take this motto as their own “Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it done unto be according to your word”.

The service that Bethany renders to others especially the poor and the neglected has its source, first in the love of God manifested towards His people through Jesus, second in the Bethany family of Gospel and third in St. Theresa of Lisieux the Little flower of Jesus.

Charism of founder is summarized in one phrase, “service born out of love”. It is service of God and his people, especially the poor and the neglected by liberating the poor masses through education which is their birth right. Love for the poor was the beacon light and the divine force that provided a significant achievement that forced him to found the congregation of Bethany. His service of the poor was supported by a strong scaffolding of prayer. Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas envisioned the Bethany house to be the home of hospitality, consolation and guidance to the people who approach them.

The vision of the founder is the flowering of his charism. This vision enabled him to look far ahead, as one of his dreams for the church in India. The newly founded congregation he wanted to be rooted and developed in Indian culture. He longed for total emancipation of Indian women, especially the women of rural areas. He was convinced that this can be done only through education. Therefore one of the Apostolates that he gave to the sisters was the education of girls in the backward and the rural areas.

Though the life was very challenging, yet their life attracted many more young girls to become sisters. The number increased year after year. At the invitation of the diocesan priests, the sisters started working in the rural parishes in the Mangalore diocese. Bethany penetrated into the interior villages bringing comfort and solace to the poor through formal, non-formal education, developmental works, faith formation and medical care. Thus Bethany congregation spread far and wide of the country.
As per the record, from the beginning of the congregation in 1921, for more than half a decade before the canonical erection of the Congregation, Bethany Sisters considered Msgr. Raymond as their father and superior. For he writes, “they look up to me as their father and superior but there is one appointed, from among them, whom they regard and obey as their mother and call her by that title. She is assisted by the minister of house. The appointments are made by me”. 75

As the founder of Bethany he had a great concern towards the formation of sisters from the very beginning, so he framed rules and were given to the sisters in the form of a constitution. Little by little he explained to them the characteristics of religious life and told them by their own accord to confirm themselves to the spirit of religious life and not by external forces. He urged them to make a rule and constitution to themselves by establishing their practice and traditions by keeping up the vows as discussed earlier. As a rule they did not visit their families except in the case of sickness or some extraordinary need. The earnings were in common in religious life and nothing was contributed to their kit and kin. 76

They made a time table for spiritual and other exercise in common. They had weekly instruction from the founder. On January 2nd 1927 the sisters started wearing the new black uniform dress. Nine were clothed and made their private vows on this day including the pioneers. In 1954 December sisters dress was changed from black to white, considering the health and hygiene. For a better understanding of the information on early sisters perhaps a clarification of some practices is necessary. Those who entered the Institute before 1932 had a “Special Novitiate,” (i.e., before the decree of Erection of Bethany was canonically recognized as a religious congregation,) and it was subject to all the canonical requirements. Therefore, the members of the institute were required to make a public profession of vows and a year’s novitiate in preparation for it. The founder explained his dilemma to the Apostolic Delegate and sought his advice. In his letter he mentioned that at that time the sisters were working in nine different parishes of the Diocese and were incharge of eleven schools. It was impossible to take them away from their work in order that
they may go through their novitiate even by batches without disorganizing and paralyzing the life and activities of the Congregation. Therefore, a dispensation was obtained from the Holy See whereby all those who had been in the institute for at least full three years be admitted to profession as if they had just finished the novitiate, and those who had been six years or more in the institute to make the vows for three years.

The Holy See granted all the necessary dispensations. Accordingly, a special novitiate was organized beginning from May 15, 1933 to May 25, 1934. Fifty-two sisters including the pioneers made their first profession of religious vows on May 26, 1934. Out of this number all those who had been in the Institute for six years or more made their profession of vows for three years. Whereas those who had been three years in the Institute but less than six years made their religious vows for one year. Those who had made their public profession of vows for three years in 1934 renewed their profession perpetually in May 1937 while those who had made the profession for one year in May 1934 professed their perpetual vows in May 1940.77

Ever since the Bethany Congregation started members had rules and regulations framed under the guidance of Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas their founder to the members till 1932. As the congregation was canonically erected on 28th July 1932, the first constitution, the Rule Book was printed and was given to them as their rule of life in 1932. In 1957 edition to the rule book was printed and made available for sisters.78

In the Stages of formation the stage is the come and see, where candidates get the feel of the congregation. If the candidate has not finished P.U.C, during this period, she is given a chance to do the same. The next stage is the Pre-novitiate period where the candidate’s suitability and adaptability to the congregation is tested. Then follows the First year of novitiate which is a period of probation, wherein, the candidate has to undergo a strict training through the study of the constitution, Bible, Theology, Prayer and reflection. At the end of second year a
short period of community experience to the candidate is given in order to provide the glimpses of the life lived thereafter. Novitiate is to confirm ones vocation to religious life.

The next stage, the juniorate, which serves to deepen and strengthen the vocation, by exposing to the missions in the different parts of the country. Missions like teaching, medical and social work. It is time to grow in freedom and personal convictions through reflections, commitment to a mission and upgrade academic qualifications. At the end of the Juniorate there is a year's tertianship where all the above mentioned activities of are integrated. It is a time to re-order the value system in accordance with the charism and spirit of the congregation. Personal guidance is provided to the candidate to personalize the Gospel values. At the end of this period they make their final commitment (perpetual profession) to God by pronouncing publicly the three vows i.e. Poverty, chastity and obedience.  

Next follows the formation for the senior members which are called ongoing formation. This formation is a lifelong process. During this period the responsibility of continuous renewal and adaptation rests with both the individual Sisters and the major superiors of the institute. This formation is given in phases. Phase one is the formation of the sisters between perpetual profession to forty years, Phase two consists of the members between 41-60 years, Phase three of the members between 61-75 years and Phase four of the members between seventy six years and above. The four dimensions of formation at all the stages, is Human, Christian, Theological and spiritual formation.
Table No 5. The Formation Houses of the pre-novices and novices as on 01 06 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-novices</th>
<th>Novices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Place</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Goa Bambolim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No of candidates</td>
<td>11 14 21 46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As per the table given above in the year 2011-2012 there were forty six pre-novices and eighteen novices in First year and forty eight in the second year, altogether sixty six candidates.

Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas extended his service to Fr. Faustino for the formation of the Holy Family Sisters of Nazareth of Goa- an indigenous Congregation too Fr. Faustino the founder of the Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth, Goa, approached the Superior General of Bethany of Mangalore to form their candidates to the religious life in the Bethany novitiate. Three young girls namely, Estelita Coutinha, Abelina Braganza, and Sabina D’Souza were sent to Mangalore for training with the Bethany Sisters. This was in 1933. A years later the fourth girl Assucena Silveria joined them. After their training they returned to Goa in 1935. The Holy Family of Goa remains grateful to the Bethany Sisters for shaping their nascent institute in keeping with the traditional norms laid down by the church for religious communities. Holy family Sisters say, “We recall with gratitude the meritorious work Fr. Raymond Mascarenhas, has done single handed for the birth of our Congregation. His name stands very high on the role of our benefactors and will forever be engraved on our hearts.”

The pioneers of Holy family, being true to their dedication they were receptive to the training and adapted themselves at Mangalore. Not only did the Bethany train the Holy family Sisters but with the special permission from Rome,
they deputed two of their Sisters to accompany Goa’s girls back to Sancoale Goa, to help them to start their novitiate along proper lines and so continue to attend the ongoing formation and remained in Goa for three years. Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas also extended his support to Archbishop Gee Varghese Mar Ivanios OIC, the founder of Bethany Sisters of Imitation of Christ of Malankera Catholic Metropolitan Eparchy, Trivandrum, Kerala. Through the above incident we conclude that, Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas was generous to share his ideas and also was an inspiration to others who sought his advice and guidance. Inspite of the hardships, the congregation made a steady growth of which we will discuss here in brief.

Table No. 6. The information of the convents (1921-1934) and its mission in South Canara.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SL No.</th>
<th>Date of Estd.</th>
<th>Names of the Convent</th>
<th>Place</th>
<th>First Superior</th>
<th>Invited by</th>
<th>Apostolate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1921</td>
<td>Bethany Convent</td>
<td>Bendur</td>
<td>Sr. Clare</td>
<td>Felt the need by the founder, Msgr. Raymond</td>
<td>Teaching, Social work and Pastoral work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1925</td>
<td>Lisieux Convent</td>
<td>Puttur</td>
<td>Sr. Lourdes</td>
<td>Fr. Joseph Aloysius Rodrigues Parish Priest</td>
<td>Teaching, Pastoral work and Visiting families</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1930</td>
<td>Providence Convent</td>
<td>Balkunje</td>
<td>Sr. Margaret</td>
<td>Fr. Marian Castelino Parish Priest</td>
<td>Social Work, Teaching, and Boarding for girls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1930</td>
<td>Nazareth Convent</td>
<td>Bajpe</td>
<td>Sr. Josephina</td>
<td>Fr. Saldhana Parish Priest</td>
<td>Formation for Candidate Pastoral and Teaching,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>1931</td>
<td>Maryvale Convent</td>
<td>Kinnigoly</td>
<td>Sr. Rapheal</td>
<td>Fr. Emmanuel Rebello Parish Priest</td>
<td>Orphanage for children, Concetta Hospital, health Centers Sanjevini, KOS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>1931</td>
<td>Bethel Convent</td>
<td>Permanur</td>
<td>Sr. Micheal</td>
<td>Fr. Piadade D’Souza Parish Priest</td>
<td>Teaching, Pastoral work and Visiting families</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A Brief History of the Houses between 1921 – 1934 in the Diocese of Mangalore

Bethany became a welcome place for many ever since the day, it was founded. Many questioned the survival of Bethany because it was purely an Indian Sisters were a part of educational and pastoral ministry. Within a short period of three years the students number of St. Margaret Mary School from 8 girls was raised to two hundred fifty four girls, in eight grades taught by fourteen teachers. This has always been considered as the particular work of the Bethany sisters. The success of the school both numerically and in the development of the children of the poor, who otherwise, mostly would have, had to attend non-catholic schools or go without schooling at all, has brought great credit on the members of Bethany both in outside the parish. It has elicited the desire to have similar schools in other parishes both in and outside Mangalore.

A boarding house for girls was soon attached to the Bethany residence to provide lodging primarily for student – teachers training in the Government Girls’ School, and the girls who attended St. Margaret Mary’s or the other schools in the parish. As the institute entered into its second decade, it showed several signs of vitality. There were many candidates asking for admissions to Bethany. The first batch of fifteen novices made their first profession of vows on May 15, 1934.

In spite of the growing numbers the apostolic needs of the diocese of Mangalore demanded more and more evangelizers. Pressing invitations from
various parishes requested the services of the sisters. Bethany had already opened a branch house in Puttur in 1925 under the title of “Lisieux Convent”. Now there were invitations from Balkunje, Bajpe, Kinnigoly, Permannur, Gurpur, Kulshekar, Bantwal, Taccode, and Borimar.\textsuperscript{88}

Puttur is the mother Parish of Kadaba, Kokkada, Uppinangady, Sampaje, Sullia, Vittal, Punja, Borimar and Nidpalli parishes. It is situated at a distance of 50 Kilometers to the east of Mangalore, on the Mangalore Madikeri highway. It is the first branch house of Bethany Congregation and also the first mission station. Fr. Joseph Aloysius Rodrigues the Parish Priest of the church of Puttur, invited the sisters to teach in the newly established school of his parish. Accordingly Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas opened the convent in Puttur in 1925 May 29\textsuperscript{th} with three sisters, Srs. Lourdes, Margaret and Anne. Sr. Lourdes was the superior. Sisters were involved in the work of evangelization and visiting the families. Sr. Gertrude a very zealous missionary worked among the Tulu Christians. The sisters had to face many hardships, but they did face it with courage. They serve in the locality by visiting the sick and the lonely, teaching Christian doctrine to the students and in the neighboring parishes. They attend meetings and direct the associations children and women associations to become good mothers in the society.\textsuperscript{89}

Providence Convent Balkunje is situated at a distance of 40 kms from Mangalore city.\textsuperscript{90} Fr. Marian Castelino the then parish priest of the church of St. Paul invited the Bethany sisters to this parish as they acquainted with them at Puttur as an assistant Parish priest and had seen the work of sister’s there.\textsuperscript{91} Accordingly the convent was opened on 8\textsuperscript{th} June 1930.\textsuperscript{92} Sr.. Margaret as the first superior. Sr. Lazarus was the headmistress of the school. The sisters started teachings in the lower Elementary School attach to the church teaching the Christian doctrine and visited the families in the villages. At present there is a boarding with twenty two boarders, studying in the high school and People and the parishioners are happy with the sisters.\textsuperscript{93}
Nazareth Convent Bajpe came into being on September 29th 1930. Originally the sisters occupied a small rented house. Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas who saw the helpless condition of the poor and illiterate people here, wanted to extend his charism of service to Bajpe. Rev. Fr. Saldana the Parish Priest invited the sisters. Accordingly Sisters Josephine, Raphael, Emilda and Dolores became the pioneers, of the fourth convent of the Congregation... Sr. Josephine was the first superior and Sr. Raphael assisted her in the school. The sisters served in the parish and the local community. Within three years the sisters began to experience some trouble as the parishioners wished their daughters to teach in the local school. Since this was not possible people of the locality began to harass the sisters. As the problems increased the sisters closed down the convent for the time being. After a couple of years Mr. Paul Britto a pious man came to help the sisters once again. The new parish priest with the support of Mr. Cyprian Aroza Pai and Mr. Paul Britto requested the sisters to re-open the convent. This made the sisters again resume their teaching work. On 1st May 1940 sisters took charge of the school and continued their noble teaching in the school and attended to the pastoral ministry of the Church, such as, teaching Christian doctrine in the school and in the church visiting the poor the sick and the aged. Bajpe became the cradle of vocation as many young girls joined Bethany. The selfless services of sisters was duly recognized and appreciated by the people of the locality.

Maryvale Convent Kinnigoly came in to being in the Kirem parish on June 1st 1931 at the invitation of Fr. Emmanuel Rebello the pastor of the church. Sisters Raphael, Petra, Placid and Assumpta were warmly welcomed by the Parish Priest and the parishioners. The sisters resided in one of the houses of Mr. Benjamin D'Souza at Damaskatte. Sr. Raphael was the first superior. The sisters were asked to open the school for the girls of both the parishes. Sisters had to face many hardships, sickness and problems. Sisters found the need of school for the girls, who had stopped going to school because of the distance. The compassionate heart of Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas felt the pain of fatherless and poor children as he had a
special love for them. This brought the birth of Maryvale orphanage on 1st June 1935. Girls from remote areas got an opportunity to get education. At present there are eighty three students in the orphanage.

To take care of the sick and the ailing people Concetta Hospital was started in the parish in 1954 by Rev. Fr. Jacob Lobo who availed an opportunity for the sisters to serve in the hospital. On 1st September 1986 the management of the hospital was handed over to the sisters by Msgr. Aloysius D'Souza the parish priest of Kinnigoli. Dr. Sr. Lilian BS. was appointed as the first directress of it. Many doctor sisters and nurse sisters are serving, presenting the compassionate face of Jesus to all the suffering people. The sisters are reaching out the people through teaching, health care, social work, orphanage ministry and pastoral work in this place. Efforts are made to empower women through Mahila Mandals, Self-empowerment schemes and through other such projects. The High School building is used to take up tailoring classes for the poor, non-school-going girls and school dropouts. KOS was opened in January 1996 for many boys and girls from the surrounding villages who were school dropouts. There is Sanjivini Community Health Project’ at Kinnigoly. Thus the Founder’s vision of reaching out to the poor is realized throughout all these institutions whose common motto is “service born out of love”.

With a small group of Srs. Michael, Berchmans and Baptist the Bethel Convent in Permanur was started on June 30th, 1931. Sister Michael was the first superior. Fr. Piedade D’Souza the Parish Priest of Permanur had approached Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas to send the sisters to look after the parish school. Sisters actively participated in the parish work, liturgical services, teaching Christian doctrine, organizing the associations for children and women, visiting families and educating the poor and the marginalized.

Santa Cruz Convent Kulshekar was opened on 9th June 1932 as a response to the appeal of Fr. Francis D’Souza the Parish Priest of Kulshekar through Rev.
Victor R. Fernandes, the then Bishop of Mangalore. Sr. Zita was the first superior of the convent and Sr. Clare was the Headmistress of St. Joseph’s Elementary School. Infant Mary’s Orphanage was started on 8th May 1943. Sr. Verena was the first in charge of the orphanage. The hostel was vacated to accommodate the students of the English Medium School. The sisters were engaged in educational apostolate and few are involved in social work, pastoral work and in prison ministry. Enthused by the Founder’s vision and ministry, zeal and, his love and compassion for the less privileged, specially girls and women, Jeevandhara Social Service Trust was started in the year 1998. It has been working for the empowerment of women and the children in fifty villages on Mangalore. It has more than hundred Self-help groups and Mahila Mandals. Sr. Michelle is the Coordinator and animator of the programme of this centre. Many types of trainings are given to them to empower women. The Bethany Community College was started on 1st August 2006, caters to the empowerment of the disadvantaged and underprivileged boys and girls of Kulshekar.

Rosa Mystica Convent Kinnikambla was started in 1932 with Srs. Bartholomeo and Agatha as the members of the community. Sr. Benigna and Sr. Julia joined the little group later, and Sr. Benigna was appointed as the first superior of the house. The little band of sisters worked together in love and unity to cultivate the barren land with various fruits, vegetation to support the community. Prayer and work went in hand in hand. Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas paid special attention to their Religious, moral and spiritual formation. Speaking about Rosa Mystica, Fr. John D’Souza S.J had this to say “A den of tigers and wild animals has been transformed into a beautiful garden of Eden”. The compassionate heart of the man of vision read the signs of the times and of the places by encouraging sisters to visit the houses, seeing the need of a primary school of St. Joseph’s primary school which was opened on 14th June 1939. For the better growth of the children, an orphanage was started on 14th June 1939, named as St Joseph’s orphanage for both little boys and girls. Sr. Succursa was the first sister in-charge. There were one
hundred thirty girls and forty boys. St Joseph’s Industrial School also was inaugurated on 21st April 1942 as a weaving institution. In 1945 teachers Training Institute was started on 2nd July 1945. It was attended by many sisters belonging to different Congregations. Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas who was interested in the all-round growth of his spiritual daughters, gave attention to the formation. On 31st May 1952, a group of thirteen novices entered the novitiate here with Sr. Aurora as their Novice Directress. On 4th September 1994, a Self Employment Training centre known as Vanitha Vocational Training Centre was opened. Karnataka Open School also was started to help the dropouts and the Computer Centre is a part of the technological development on the campus. A Community College was opened in 2005, to help the poor. Now Rosa Mystica, has about one hundred fifty orphans, six hundred forty students, fifty Novices twenty five Tertians and forty sisters.98

According to the records available the Epiphany Convent was opened in Kokkada in the year 1930, but due to certain circumstances it had to be closed eventually.99 About Epiphany convent Kokkada different sources give different dates of opening and closing the convent. The following are the houses of Bethany founded during the life time of Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas in the diocese of Mangalore, Epiphany Convent was closed in Kokkada 1929.100 In 1927 Sr.M.Gertrude BS. One of the four pioneers of Bethany congregation, Srs. Margaret, Philmena, Berchmans, Gonzanga and Bernadetta became the pioneers of Epiphany convent readily co-operated in the missionary work of Fr.R. D’ Sousa. Sr. Gertrude was the superior of the convent and Sr. Phinomena was the Headmistress of the school.101 About the above convent, no mention is made in the statistics 1921- July 16th – Dec 1971 in the Golden Jubilee Souvenir,102 Again in the platinum jubilee souvenir of 1996 under the Mangalore Province Genesis, all the houses of the Mangalore province in South Canara are mentioned. In it is said i.e in 1930 there were few more convents opened, such as Epiphany Convent Kokkada.103 The Epiphany Convent is not recorded in the report.104 After verifying the various records available we conclude that this convent was founded in 1930 and closed in
1932. Hazy clouds began to gloom over the skies of Kokkada convent as some misunderstandings was created concerning the allegiance of sisters to the past and present local manager. As a result sisters finally had to give up the Kokkada mission in 1932.\textsuperscript{105}

Inspite of hardships and unpredictability regarding the survival of the congregation many young girls entered Bethany. To quote founders words’’ Bethany in Gods Providence has been a tree planted by the running water. Waters of the borrowand affliction, which all along have nurtured it. It has been the planters privilege to be a sign of contradictions. Founder being the gardener through his courage and acceptance of suffering in the form of misunderstandings, receptions and humiliations from the ecclesial authorities and even from the congregation nourished Bethany. The History of the congregation of the sisters of the little flower of Bethany congregation being an indigenous one in nature, he carried on, with the labours and sacrifices of sisters and not an iota of foreign help.\textsuperscript{106} To conclude the above contribution of Bethany to the society, we have in brief the no. of Institutions of Bethany between(1921-1934) in a table form.

\textit{Table no .7. The number of institutions (1921 – 1934) of Bethany Congregation in the Diocese of Mangalore. }\textsuperscript{107}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>1921</th>
<th>1922</th>
<th>1923</th>
<th>1924</th>
<th>1925</th>
<th>1926</th>
<th>1927</th>
<th>1928</th>
<th>1929</th>
<th>1930</th>
<th>1931</th>
<th>1932</th>
<th>1933</th>
<th>1934</th>
<th>total</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No of convents</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>02</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>08</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<td>06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boarding</td>
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<td>01</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Industria 1 school</td>
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<td>01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the table no.seven we briefly saw the contributions of the houses, which were opened from 1921-1934. Altogether there were sixteen institutions opened.
including convents and a boarding. Of which Bantwal, Borimar, Uppinangady and Kokkada were closed, reasons are not very much clear except at Kokkada, of which we have discussed in the phase one, of chapter three of our study and Uppinangady convent which was closed when the lay people could meet the needs of looking after the orphanage there. 108 All the houses have made a lot of contribution to the society wherever they were opened.

3.1.7 Canonical status of the Organization

The above History of the convents and number of institutions between 1921 - 1934 helps us to understand, that within a short period of 11 years, Bethany had done a lot of contribution to the society. Thus Bethany became the crowning glory of Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas. This work has been always one of the continuous growths, though not without its initial difficulties and setbacks. From 1921-1934, the Congregation inched forward painfully, adding only three recruiters to the originally four. From 1925 the strength of the Congregation grew rapidly and in 1934 and it had to its credit one hudred twenty three members. Thus under Bishop Victor Fernandes, it received the decree of its canonical erection on July 28th 1932... Bethany thus became a religious Congregation in the full sense with all its rights duties and privileges prescribed by the canon Law. 109 This was just, ten years after its foundations. 110

The quick growth of Bethany was one of the reasons to grant of canonical erection to the Congregation. With the span of seven years “ At Bethany Bendur they have the charge of the junior section of St. Sebastian’s School with four hundred forty boys and senior section one hundred nighty two boys under the care of men teachers .St. Margaret Mary higher Elementary with three hundred forty seven girls ,St Joseph Co-education with one hundred sixty three boys and forry seven girls .The Bethany Boarding house has thirty girls. At Putter they are entrusted with St. Francis Xavier's Elementary School with one hundred boys .The little flower school has fifty six girls and St. Joseph ‘s school for Adi- Dravidas
with twenty children. At Kokkada they have the care of St. Johns School with fifty children and the little flower school for convent children with twenty pupils. At Bolkunjé they teach in St. Paul’s School which has one hundred eighty children. To sum up they are now working in elven Institutes and devoting themselves to the service of one thousand five hundred children. Many call for their service, but they cannot respond because of their limited number. Their own poverty, as also the poverty of those, whom they work, like very much to utilize their services, is in the way they are contributing much to the society at present.\textsuperscript{111}

First constitution (Rule Book) was printed and was given to the Sisters as a rule of life in 1932. The institute began with four members had a total number of eighty six Sisters in 1932 with a communities in nine parishes and eleven schools of the Mangalore diocese. Msgr. Raymond was receiving further invitations from within and outside diocese to open more Convents.

\textbf{Table No .8. The membership of the Bethany Sisters (1921-1934).}  \textsuperscript{112}

| Year | 1921 | 1922 | 1923 | 1924 | 1925 | 1926 | 1927 | 1928 | 1929 | 1930 | 1931 | 1932 | 1933 | 1934 | total |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|-------|
| Admission | 4 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 8 | 5 | 8 | 4 | 6 | 14 | 17 | 24 | 17 | 24 | 123 |
| Died | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 04 |
| Left | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 07 |

As we have gone through the History of Bethany, like most of the Congregation Bethany too had a very simple beginning, it had ideals rooted in Indian
philosophy. Self-reliance, dignity of labor, simplicity of life, education in the vernacular, vocalization of education, focus on primary education, adult education, development of villages for the progress of the country and emancipation of women were some of the ideals that the founder and founding members that upheld.

Today after thirteen years in 1934 the number of the members is increased to one hundred twenty three out of which four have died and seven have left. So the members of the congregation, at present number one hundred thirty four as recorded above, are distributed as follows- Professed Sisters-seventy, Novices- ten, Postulants-sixteen, and Aspirants- twenty four. On May 26, 1934, with the permission from the sacred congregation, Rome, fifty four sisters who had spent several years in Bethany and undergone required training made profession of vows and became the permanent members of the Congregation.\textsuperscript{113}

Bethany with its small beginning made a big contribution not only through the formal education but also through the industrial side of education, in which they were teaching tailoring, needle-work, and weaving. They were also good at farming and cultivation of land\textsuperscript{114}, of which we will be discussing in detail, in the chapter six under the non-formal education. Thus here comes the end of I Phase (1921-1934) in 1934, the year Msgr. Raymond was retired as a Vicar General who moved his residence from the Bishop’s house to the Mother House of Bethany in Bendur.
3.2 Phase II (1935-1960)

3.2.1. Growth and expansion of Bethany Congregation in South India

Table No.9 The information of the convents (1935-1960) and its activities in the second phase

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SL No.</th>
<th>Date of Estbt</th>
<th>Names of the Convent</th>
<th>Place</th>
<th>First Superior</th>
<th>Invited by</th>
<th>Apostolate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1937</td>
<td>Ganazzano Convent</td>
<td>Taccode</td>
<td>Sr. Pia</td>
<td>Fr. A. Piedade D'Souza parish priest</td>
<td>Teaching, Pastoral work, Orphanage, Visiting the sick, Mahila Mandals, Tailoring and Needle Work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1938</td>
<td>Eudes Convent</td>
<td>Calicut Kerala</td>
<td>Sr. Angella</td>
<td>Bishop Leo Proserpio</td>
<td>Teaching, Pastoral work, Orphanage, Visiting the sick, Tailoring and Needle Work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1939</td>
<td>Presentation Convent</td>
<td>Dharwad</td>
<td>Sr. Pricilla</td>
<td>Bishop H. Doring S.J Arch - Bishop of Pune</td>
<td>Needle work, Vocational centre and Visiting the houses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1939</td>
<td>Christ King Convent</td>
<td>Guledgudd</td>
<td>Sr. Lazarius</td>
<td>Fr. G.F D'Souza Mangalore</td>
<td>Orphanage, Pastoral work, Visiting the house Villages and girls hostels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>1945</td>
<td>Ave Maria Convent</td>
<td>Sirsi</td>
<td>Sr. Macra</td>
<td>Fr. Alvaro Figueiredo and Parishioners of Sirsi</td>
<td>Pastoral work, Schools, Tailoring embroidery, weaving and, Preparing carpet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>1946</td>
<td>Fatima Convent</td>
<td>Madanbhavi</td>
<td>Sr. Anunceita</td>
<td>Fr. Armando S.J</td>
<td>Teaching, visiting, pastoral hostel for girl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>1947</td>
<td>Madeleine Convent</td>
<td>Londa</td>
<td>Sr. Priscilla</td>
<td>Fr. Aloysius D'Cruz S.J a missionary priest.</td>
<td>Teaching, visiting, pastoral and hostel for girl 2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Convent</td>
<td>Place</td>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Bishop/Person</td>
<td>Activities</td>
</tr>
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<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>1649</td>
<td>Lourdes Convent</td>
<td>Pallikunnu</td>
<td>Sr. Joseph</td>
<td>Fr. James Nazareth</td>
<td>Pastoral activities, Hospital now return after 25years to the Diocese, visiting, worked with the daliths and tribals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>1950</td>
<td>St. Josephts Convent</td>
<td>Sagar</td>
<td>Sr. Lazarus</td>
<td>Bishop Feuga</td>
<td>Teaching orphanage/boarding Jeevan Jyothi Ashram Vocational Training Center Shishu Vihar, Assist to get Widow pension and Sumanitarian work for backward section</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>1950</td>
<td>Mother of Mercy</td>
<td>Gadenahalli</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>health care, Agricultural land, teaching and looking after orphanages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>1953</td>
<td>St. Martha's Convent</td>
<td>Mudigere</td>
<td>Rev Fr. E.B Aranha</td>
<td>Visiting, education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>1957</td>
<td>Fatima Convent</td>
<td>Dornahally</td>
<td>Fr. I H Lobo</td>
<td>Visiting, education</td>
<td>school, dispensary, Health care, Agricultural land and village visit Pastoral care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>1958</td>
<td>Madeleine Convent</td>
<td>Malik</td>
<td>Sr. Angella</td>
<td>Fr. Joseph Noronha P.P</td>
<td>Education, pastoral, social</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>1959</td>
<td>Mary Queen Convent</td>
<td>Karkal</td>
<td>Sr. Sylvia</td>
<td>Teaching, pastoral and visiting sick elder</td>
<td>Education, pastoral, social</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>1960</td>
<td>Queen of Mission Convent</td>
<td>Sampaje</td>
<td>Sr. Gertrude</td>
<td>Rev. Fr. Leo Antony Cutinho</td>
<td>Teaching, pastoral, orphanage Health centre, Tailoring and self-employment scheme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>1960</td>
<td>Bethany Convent</td>
<td>Bangalore</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>Archbishop Thomas Pothecamury</td>
<td>Teaching, Visit slums, each one teach one and pastoral work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>1960</td>
<td>Loyola Convent</td>
<td>Gadag</td>
<td>Sr. Greta</td>
<td>Fr. Manuel Alaric Belgaum Diocese</td>
<td>Teaching, visiting and pastoral activities.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In this second phase, we see that the first branch house outside the diocese was in the Malabar mission of Calicut diocese in Kerala in 1936. Responding to the invitation of the then Bishop of Poona in 1939, Bethany also extended its services to north Canara by opening convents in Dharwad and Guledgudd mission areas, then belonging to the Diocese of Poona. In all these mission ventures Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas was a true father, guide and an inspiration. Bethany organization was purely India and the work of an Indian priest with purely Indian material and means. Bethany Sisters are generally drawn from the poorer classes willing to help the poor and do selfless work having the main objective of helping the poor, who otherwise, do not have such facilities for elementary education and the economic upliftment of the poor. As we journey in the second phase, we see in 1937 many of the sisters mostly those in twenties were stricken with tuberculosis. Despite of the special care given four of the sisters died. From 1928 to 1937 number of sisters expired were nine. Public sentiments began to question the institute’s right to existence. Many people were hostile to this indigenous congregation. Many wondered the survival of Bethany. By this time the congregation was moving from its adolescent years into adulthood. Along the expansion it also had tasted bitterness of pains, sufferings and humiliations

Inspite of all these trails the Congregation number increased in 1937. As the number increased, the editor of the diocesan weekly “The Ange” after giving the numbers and names of the candidates received into different congregations in the diocese remarked, “Bethany has a bumper crop this year” This was the answer for the question of the people, “Will Bethany survive?” Once again the gloom came over Bethany, during the II World War time between January 1940 to November 1949 about forty sisters died. Because those were the war years, food was rationed and medicine was imported from abroad. The institution took loans to make sure that good food and enough of it was available to sisters. Most of them were college students. Few had finished their studies, and others were studying. Now the secular and clergy began to question. Priests, lay people and friends, even
the family members of the sisters began, discouraging the candidates to join Bethany as a result the number decreased.\textsuperscript{123}

In spite of the hardships, Bethany along with the founder, who trusted God, all through his life from the beginning till now, extended the services of Bethany sisters by opening new convents (which we will be discussing in brief later as our study continues). Five more convents were opened between (1937-1960) in South Canara and sixteen houses were opened outside Mangalore South Canara in the different parts of Karnataka with exception of 3 houses in Kerala. There were four hundred sisters in twenty seven convents working in seven dioceses of South India, when Msgr. Raymond the founder of Bethany died in 1960.\textsuperscript{124}

Here we discuss about the contribution of Bethany in the second phase. Genezzana Convent, Taccode in South Canara came into existence on July 11\textsuperscript{th} 1937 at the request of Fr. A . Piedade D’Souza the Parish Priest of Holy Cross Church Taccode. The main mission was to teach in St. Joseph’s Higher Elementary School. With Sr. Pia the first superior, the sisters taught in the school, catechism, needlework, singing. On 2\textsuperscript{nd} June 1941 orphanage was started. Sisters are engaged in teaching catechism, doing all the works in the church and were visiting the sick. Mahila Mandals and tailoring centers were started to uplift the girls and women.\textsuperscript{125}

As per the call to work outside the diocese of Mangalore, in the diocese of Calicut Eudes Convent in West Hill was opened on September 12\textsuperscript{th} 1938. The sisters taught in the existing St Michael’s School and took up apostolic work in those areas. Here begins the saga of Bethany’s mission in the southernmost corner of the motherland. Sr. Angela was the first superior and Sr. Dulcis was the Headmistress. Sisters taught in the school and involved in the apostolic activities, such as religious instruction in the church, to look after church, conduct liturgical music, visiting the houses and preparing for the sacraments. Though they did not know the language after a hard struggle they became one with the people. In order to help the poor students, an orphanage was opened and to help the women tailoring
centre was started. Thus the lamp lit by the Founder in 1938 has illuminated the dark recesses of Calicut in Kerala.\textsuperscript{126}

In the diocese of Poona, two houses were opened at the invitation of Bishop H. Doring, S.J the Archbishop of Poona in 1939, at Dharwad and Guledgudd. The Presentation Convent Dharwad was opened on 4\textsuperscript{th} November in 1939 as Sr. Priscilla as the first superior. Srs.Gertrude, Crescentia and Placid were the members. Since they felt that the need of education the school with ten children was started for the poor working class Catholics and Hindus. Under the leadership of, Sr. Antoinette the needle work to the rich and poor married and unmarried girls non-formal education was started The vocational centre was visited by many department officers. Sisters helped in all the parish activities, such as teaching, visiting the houses and comporting the sick and lonely .They gave religious instruction in the church, and prepared to receive the sacraments.\textsuperscript{127}

Fr. G.F. D’Sa, who was assigned the Guledgudd mission in 1915 felt the need for Religious sisters to assist him in his missionary work by taking charge of the orphanage, school and to visit and the mission station. Thus, the convent was opened on 5\textsuperscript{th} November 1939 and was named Christ the King Convent. The valiant pioneers were Srs. Lazarus, Lucina, Maura and Benigna. The sisters had to fight with the weather, adjust to the new culture, food habits and water problem. The school and the orphanage which were opened by the parishioners 1921 were taken care by a certain congregation from Bellary, for a few years and they later they discontinued. Later when Bethany took over this work, a teacher named Kumari Agnes Ullagaddi volunteered to help the sisters to take care of the orphans. Inspired by the life of Bethany Sisters she joined the Bethany Congregation in 1940 and was named as Sr. Alexander. She managed the boarding with two hundred children. The sisters devoted themselves whole heartedly to teaching, formation of children in the orphanage, visiting the houses, taking care of the church, visiting villages and mission stations like Bagalkot, Karadi and other sub-stations. From 2001 to 2004 Bethany sisters resided at Karadi to look after the girls in the hostel started by
Bishop Bernard Mores, to cater their physical and spiritual needs. Sisters continue to attend to the pastoral activities and cater to the all-round development of the society. There is a social work centre which caters to development of women and handicapped through various programmes like self-help groups and tailoring centre

Gratia Plena Convent in Santibastwad was opened in 1945 on May 14th, in the Belgaum mission of the Jesuits, requested by Fr. Alvares SJ. Srs. Philomene, Marian and Felix were the members. They had to visit Balekundri and Madanbhavi by the bullock cart, nearly thirty to forty miles the mission stations with Fr. Alvares and learnt the peoples’ customs, language and religious practices. Sisters thought them on health and hygiene under the tree. They took good care of the children in the Remand Home, the orphanage and the Home for the destitute children under the management of the Belgaum Diocese. In 1966 a dispensary was opened to serve the health needs of the children and the people. Sr. Mida who returned from USA as trained nurse took charge of the dispensary on June 12th 1969. Abayudaya Kendra a registered Social Service Society came into existence in 1994 for the benefit of the needy and the poor unemployed. Community Health centre, women development programmes, personality development of children were given more importance. Akshara Kalika Kendras, Self Help group have empowered women to learn various skills.

In the 1945, Ave Maria Convent at Sirsi was opened at the kind request and earnest appeal of Fr. Alvaro Figueredo, the then Parish Priest of St. Antony’s church and Parishioners of Sirsi. Sr. Macra was the first superior. They started both English and Kannada Medium schools on 4th January 1945. After five years, English Medium School was closed because of certain unforeseen difficulties. The opening of the convent ushered in the dawn of educational endeavours at Sirsi, which is now in the North Canara District of Karnataka. Fr. Figueredo asked the sisters to look after the church, help in the mission work, pastoral work and to visit the families. Sisters started the tailoring, embroidery classes, weaving of sarees and
preparing carpets, to raise the funds for the buildings. Sister’s kindness, generosity and affectionate service influenced the people. Sisters were visiting many mission stations, staying with them and helped them in their needs, praying with them, teaching them to pray, singing and hygiene.¹³⁰

At the request of Fr. Armando Alvares S.J, Fatima Convent at Madanbhavi was started on August 13th 1946 for the mission work in order to visit the far away villages. The mission was started by Fr. Rosario, S.J and later it had shifted to Madanbhavi. He had started a small school and a boarding house maintained by a catechist. To work in this mission area and also in the school, sisters were invited. Srs. Annunciate, Venera, Laura and Concilia joined the community. Two sisters taught in the school other two of them began to visit the villages, with small food package. Sometimes stayed in some poor houses. Sisters had to work with the Lingayats and Harijans. Since sisters had their contacts with low castes, often landlords would not allow them to drink water from well of the landlords. Sisters carried on with their work of teaching, and visiting the sick in the houses, villages and distributing medicines. The Lingayats found the customs of the sisters as foreign and they wanted to do away with them. So sisters were attacked and driven away from the village forcefully out.

The mission at Madanbhavi was blessed by the sweat, tears and toil of the missionaries. Fr. Gabriel Lobo continued the work of Fr. Alvares with the help of sisters. They supervised their studies and took care of their needs. Sr. M. Refuge BS. was a noted missionary. The children of this mission station were admitted here, in the hostel which was run by the sponsors. Many huts were built for the people with the team spirit revailed among the sisters, teachers, priest and the supervisors. The sisters took charge of the administration of the orphanage, school, fields, land and Sacred Heart Dispensary. The successful mission work was carried on by many dedicated sisters. It can be summed up as “Service born out of love”. The evangelization work continued in fourteen villages. The dispensary caters to the needs of the sisters and the orphanage children. Various development activities
are carried out in the villages as the realization of the dreams of the earlier missionaries and the fruit of their toil and suffering. There are four hundred children in the orphanage due to the hard and generous work of. Sisters is appreciated by the Priest and the people. 131

On May 31st 1947 the Madaleine Convent was opened at Londa. Fr. Aloysius D'Cruz, S.J, from Alnavar church, the missionary priest invited the Bethany sisters. Srs. Priscilla, Florelle, and Venera were the pioneers as Sr. Prescilla as their first superior. Sisters were engaged in family apostolate and Catholic instruction run the Holy Family School. When Bishop Michael Rodrigues visited the place, he was touched by their life of simplicity and their rapport with the people. Sisters took care of the church, singing, cleanliness of the church and visiting the families. Bishop, priest and the parishioners were pleased with the services of the sisters. Sisters visited the mission stations. A hostel for the girls has been started in 2004. People and the Parish Priest are happy with the presence of the sisters. Sisters even now continue their service with love and zeal to the needy and neglected and the backward communities of Londa. 132

Fr. James Nazareth the then Parish Priest invited the sisters to the parish at Pallikunnu in Kerala. Thus Lourdes Convent was started on May 21st. 1949, with four sisters under the leadership of Sr. Joseph. Sisters worked in the school, also served as doctors and nurses in the Parish Fatima Hospital, ministering to the sick, especially the poor patients. After working for twenty five years in the hospital the sisters handed over its administration back to the Diocese. Sisters worked to make the Pastoral activities and social activities vibrant in the parish. Sisters also continue to work for the welfare of the tribals by instructing them in hygienic living. They serve the people in their needs, in sickness as well as in health. Marriage counseling, guidance, and home visits form another part of their work for the parish. Through Mahila Samajams numerous activities are planned and executed for the tribals, women, children and youth, by the help of Central Government, the State Government, and other benefactors. The school at Pallikunnu has come a long
way from the little hut set up by Fr. Jefrino, treading the pathway of Msgr. Raymond the Founder of Bethany Congregation. In 1950 the Bethany Sisters accepted the invitation from Bishop Feuga to work in the Mysore Diocese. Sr. Lazarus with Srs. Rita, Clemence, Gemma and Presenta ventured into this mission, unmindful of the challenges, awaiting them in the initial years, they established St. Joseph’s Convent at Sagar on May 17th 1950, the first convent in this diocese. In July they took in charge of St. Joseph’s Primary School which belonged to the Parish. Sisters added a boarding school, and an orphanage was started. Jeevan Jyothi Ashram was opened in 1975, which has now turned out to be the vocation training centre for the girls of the neighbourhood. Apart from these, the sisters render their service to the poor little children of the ‘Shishuvihar’ at Janatha Gally, underdeveloped area of Sagar. Besides teaching, they instruct children and adults in Christian doctrine, and visit the poor in their homes. They also serve the poor in the General Hospital through visits and prayers. They assist people to obtain widow pension and other Government benefits for the backward sections. This has also become part of the humanitarian works, the sisters undertake, with all the situation of favorable and unfavorable conditions.

Mother of Mercy Convent at Gadenahally in Hassan District was opened on May 24th 1950, located in the remote, virtually inaccessible village of Gadenahally. It was the kind of mission, dear to the heart of Msgr. Raymond, who always opted to work among the poor. Teaching was their main apostolate. Sisters looked after the free boarding and the land and took care of the health of the children and the people. Poor children benefited from it. Now it has Primary school, High School and P.U. College, along with the small dispensary, with a trained nurse, serving the people even in the distant villages.

On May 23, 1953, St. Martha’s convent Mudigere in Chikmagalur district was started at the invitation of the then Bishop of Mysore. It was a remote village where the poor children and the Catholic community were deprived of basic education. Sisters were asked to take up the nursery class which was started by the
parish. Sisters supported their school and other apostolic works by cultivating rice and vegetable to support the mission. Sisters take in all the activities of the church and visit the families of the people they are happy with the service of the sisters.\textsuperscript{136}

The advent of Bethany sisters in the district of Mysore marked a new era in the life of the villagers of Dornahally as it opened avenues for education. Fatima Convent in the Mysore diocese took shape in a remote village called Dornahally at the invitation of Fr. I.H.Lobo, the Parish Priest. The sisters made their first entry into the village by bullock cart, on May 22\textsuperscript{nd} 1957. They began teaching in the existing four –grade, St. Rita’s Primary School which was handed over to the sisters. A dispensary was attached to this institution and Sr. Mida attended to the health care of the villager’s. Sr. Annunciate, the pioneer, with her dedication to uplift of the poor, toiled in and out of season with the co-operation of her staff. Sisters grew rice in the land to support them. The sisters helped in the church activities, teaching singing, prayers, visiting the village and the neighbouring villages. The presence and the service of the sisters have made deep impact on people.\textsuperscript{137}

In 1946 Msgr. Raymond opened Madeleine Girl’s High School at Mulki, South Canara. There was no convent as the permission was not granted by Bishop V.R Fernandes of Mangalore to open the convent. The school was run under the Madeline Educational Society. Mrs. Alice Pinto was the Headmistress. The Bethany sisters opened the convent in 1958. Sr.M. Angela BS became the first superior. The sisters are engaged in educational, pastoral and social apostolate. They are teaching the catechism, animate pious associations and other pastoral services. Mulki has seen this development because of the hard labour of Msgr. Raymond found members, Mother Martha, Petra and Sr. Magdalence and the pioneers. \textsuperscript{138}

Mary Queen Convent at Karkal in the Mangalore diocese came into existence at the invitation of Fr. Joseph Noronha, the then parish priest of Christ King church Karkal, on May 31\textsuperscript{st}. 1959. Sr. Sylvia was the first superior of the convent and Srs. Julia, Alfreeda, Rosine and Ancilla were the pioneers. Sisters
served the people through education, participating in the YCS meetings, visiting the sick and elderly.\textsuperscript{139}

Rev. Fr. Leo Antony Cutinho the Parish Priest of Sampaje, requested Msgr. Raymond to cater to the Spiritual needs of a few Tulu Christian families in Sampaje. In the beginning Sr. Gertrude the pioneer agreed to help the parish priest in his missionary activities. Thus the community was erected on 9\textsuperscript{th} January 1960, blessed by Bishop Raymond D’Mello. Srs. Gertrude, Columbo, Regina, Rose Marie were the pioneers as Srs. Gertrude was the first superior. The sisters were engaged in teaching the poor. The orphanage was started on 2\textsuperscript{nd} January 1966, under the management of the Parish Priest. One of the desires of Fr. Antony was to start a hospital to take care of the sick and the ill-disposed poor of the locality. Accordingly, Anugraha Social service and Health Centre on 24\textsuperscript{th} September 2003, was started as Herbal medicine center which caters many sick people. Many doctors visited the Centre and conducted many free health camps. Economic development programmes like gardening, tailoring classes, self-employment schemes are carried on.\textsuperscript{140} Bethany convent Bangalore was started in 1960. Besides teaching sisters are working in the parish and visit the families and console the sick and the poor.\textsuperscript{141}

Loyola Convent, Gadag in Hubli was started on 5\textsuperscript{th} June 1960 as Sr. Gretta was the first superior. Sr. Gertrude was teaching catechism and Sr. Pazien was handing the classes of English medium. The Christians in general were poor and backward in education. They were engaged in sheep rearing and carpet weaving. The sisters were happy with the people and worked for them selflessly. They visited the families and shared their joys and sorrows comforting them. Many railway employees were waiting for the sisters’ help, as People welcomed them open heartedly, so sisters started an English Medium School, to provide good education to them. Now there is a Primary school, High School and a Pre-University College. The valuable service of sisters in the field of education, pastoral work as well as social work is highly appreciated by the Priest, parishioners and the people of Gadag.\textsuperscript{142}
Table No. 10. The convents established (1935-1960) in the II phase in South India other than South Canara.\textsuperscript{143}

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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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In this table we glance upon the contribution of the houses established during the life time of founder in the dioceses of south India (1935-1960) other than Mangalore Diocese. The brief study of the houses and their contribution to the society is discussed above.

Table No. 11. The convents established (1921-1960) during the life time of Msgr. Raymond, in south Canara only.\textsuperscript{144}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>1921</th>
<th>1925</th>
<th>1930</th>
<th>1931</th>
<th>1932</th>
<th>1934</th>
<th>1937</th>
<th>1938</th>
<th>1939</th>
<th>1950</th>
<th>1960</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Place</td>
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<td>Mangalore</td>
<td>Puttur</td>
<td>Baliking</td>
<td>Bailpe</td>
<td>Kokkada</td>
<td>Uppinagady</td>
<td>Kimigoly</td>
<td>Permanamur</td>
<td>Kulshenkar</td>
<td>Gurpur</td>
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<td>No’s</td>
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3.2.2 Administration

The main purpose of the Administration of Bethany is to transmit the charism and spirit of the founder and founding members in order to keep up to the original spirit by adopting it to the signs of the time. Spirit of the founder and the
founding charism cannot be changed but the implementation and application of it will change according to the needs, time and space. Jesus their leader says to the Religious in authority, “I am in your midst as the one who serves you” 145.

As per his example of service in 146 the superior takes Jesus, as their model in the Administration. So they say, it is a challenge and often can be a burden and tension for them if the person stays term after term, she will have to pay the price of loss of interest, apathy, ministry burn out and often inability to get back to the routine of ordinary community life. Change brings freshness and vitality in the life of the Congregation 147. Speaking of religious authority and government, Pope John Paul II says, “This authority is received from God through the ministry of the Church 148. The authority of a superior, at whatever level, is personal and may not be taken over by a group….149 The governance in the congregation is carried on in the spirit of faith and of fidelity to the Gospel, the spirit of service, collaboration and unity with one another. 150 The General administration of the Congregation is more like a compass which points to a wider vision beyond itself towards the future planning, whereas the Provincial and local administrations are like the catalyst or leaven bringing about transformation through the execution of the different facets of the vision in the local communities 151.

The service of authority is carried on in this congregation in four levels (Government), i.e. General Government, Provincial Government and Local Government. In the first level, election of the Superior General is made in the General Chapter. A Superior General is elected by the members present for the General Chapter. She is assisted by the four councilors. 1st among them becomes the Assistant Superior General. They are also assisted by a Procurator General who looks after the financial matters and temporal administration. Superior General with other councillors sees to the general administration of the entire congregation, they monitor the administration at Provincial and local level. As we move to the provincial government we see that she is selected by the Superior General and her councillors among the delegates elected according to the norms laid down by the
Superior General and her council for the provincial chapter. She is also assisted by the four councillors. The first one becomes the Assistant Provincial Superior. She has certain province responsibilities to look after along with the councillors and Procurator General of the province. Local Superiors are selected by the Provincial Superior and her councillors and approved by the General Government. Local Superiors have two councillors, the first one becomes the Assistant Superior and they also have a local procurator to see to the local temporal goods and finance.  

General Chapter is an important event in the History of the congregation. In the beginning of the History of Bethany Congregation, the superior for the little group was appointed by the founder. In the first year in 1921 of their coming together Flora Mathias (Sr. M. Clare BS) was appointed Superior General by founder. On March 25th 1922 Sr. Martha replaced her as superior. Towards the end of 1930, the then Bishop of Mangalore had conducted the visitation of the institute in order to acquaint himself fully with the affairs of the congregation as the congregation was then under the Bishop of the Diocese, he then decided to hold its first General Chapter to elect the Superior General and her councillors according to the Canonical requirements. So on 28th September 1940, the first General Chapter was held with Bishop V.R. Fernandes as its president. In it Sr. M. Martha BS was elected Mother General for a term of six years.

September 28th, 1946 the General Chapter met once again to vote for the Superior General and Mother Martha was re-elected. As Bishop did not confirm her re-election, on March 29th, 1947 the Chapter was reconvoked with the Bishop as its president. In it Sr. M. Petra BS was elected the Superior General of Bethany. Then extra ordinary General Chapter was held on March 4th, 1950 with the following objectives, to review the general situation of the congregation from its beginnings-1921 to 1932 till its Canonical erection and from then to present and adopt measures for its further developments as the congregation had moved from diocesan to Plural -Diocesan Congregation and to analyse the adaptations Bethany had to undergo due to the above conditions. At the end of Mother Petra’s term, she called
for a new election to be held. In the fourth General Chapter March 29th, 1953 Sr. M. Priscilla BS, as the third Mother General was elected. In April 1959 in the fifth General Chapter Sr. M. Macrina BS. was elected as a Mother General, again in the sixth General Chapter held on April 26th, 1965, she was re-elected for the term of six years.

In response to the call of the Second Vatican council (1962-1965), a special Chapter was convoked to review and renew its original charism and adapt and update religious life. The Chapter met in II sessions (from December 24th, 1968 to January 5th, 1969 and December 24th, 1969 to December 31st, 1969). On April 20th to May 1971 the eighth General Chapter was called. Mother M. Macrina BS. Was once again re-elected for third term. She had a longest period of eighteen years of administration as Mother General. The congregation became international during her period by opening a house in Rome. Seeing these and other expansions, some people began calling this age as “the Golden age of Bethany”.

At the end of April 1977 Sr. M. Gemma was elected as Mother General in the ninth General Chapter. Due to ill health she resigned from her office and in the tenth General Chapter Sr. Sylvine was elected as Mother General on March 8th, 1980. She called for the eleventh General Chapter from 12th April of May 10th, 1986 and was re-elected. The second session of the eleventh General Chapter was from 2nd October to 20th 1989. Constitutions prepared by the special chapter and of 1971 chapter were revised. New Rule book was made available to all the members. From April to May 1992 in the twelfth General Chapter Sr. Angela was elected as the seventh Superior General for the period of six years and from then they decided to call the Mother General as the Superior General, perhaps, they wanted to consider every one equal in the Congregation and as she becomes the first among the equals she was called Superior General to keep up to the one class of sisters as we have discussed earlier.

The chapter delegates of 13th General Chapter met from April to May 1998. In it Sr. M. Jyoti BS. was elected as the 8th Superior General of Bethany again in
the election of 14th General Chapter of 2004 she was re-elected. She administered the congregation for twelve years. In year 2010, 15th General Chapter was called and Sr. Wilberta was elected as the 9th Superior General of Bethany. The past eight dynamic leaders of Bethany Congregation have left their own stamp and seal of governance and helped the institute to take its, next step towards growth and progress. Sr. Wilberta with her councillors sees to the steady growth of the congregation in line with the charism and spirit of the founder and founding members.

Table No.12. The General Chapters and Mothers General of Bethany Congregation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>General chapters</th>
<th>From- To</th>
<th>No. of the Mother General</th>
<th>Name of the Mother General</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>One</td>
<td>1940 – 1946</td>
<td>First</td>
<td>Mother M. Martha. BS.</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>Second</td>
<td>1946 – 1947</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>Third</td>
<td>1947 – 1950</td>
<td>Second</td>
<td>Mother M. Petra BS.</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>Extra- ordinary</td>
<td>1950 – 1953</td>
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<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Fourth</td>
<td>1953 – 1959</td>
<td>Third</td>
<td>Mother M. Precilla BS.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Fifth</td>
<td>1959 – 1965</td>
<td>Fourth</td>
<td>Mother M Macrina BS.</td>
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<td>7.</td>
<td>Sixth</td>
<td>1965 - 1968</td>
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<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Special</td>
<td>1968 – 1969</td>
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<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Tenth</td>
<td>1980 – 1986</td>
<td>Sixth</td>
<td>Mother M. Sylvine BS.</td>
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<td>15.</td>
<td>Fourteenth</td>
<td>2004 – 2010</td>
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<td>16.</td>
<td>Fifteenth</td>
<td>2010 -</td>
<td>Ninth</td>
<td>Sr. M. Wilberta BS.</td>
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3.2.3. Silver Jubilee

Bethany celebrated its Silver Jubilee on July 16\textsuperscript{th} 1946. Many greetings congratulating on the day of the Silver Jubilee of the congregation were received by the Founder and the Superiors General. Fr. Louis Furtado from Allipade in Mangalore wrote to the founder in 1946 on 15\textsuperscript{th} July “God bless Bethany institute. A Swadeshi institute like yours is bound to merit the highest encomiums of both church and the state in the near future… I congratulate your reverence and the ‘valiant women’ of Bethany on the success and achievements of the past…”\textsuperscript{161}

As per the record of Bethany Generalate Archives Mangalore Central Office\textsuperscript{162} When Bethany reached its silver years the membership of Bethany had increased to three hundred twenty members and countless children and adults in several dioceses were benefiting by their services. There were many invitations coming to Bethany to undertake apostolic service inspite of the problems, pain, sorrow, frustration and failures receded for twenty five years in Bethany.

3.2.4. News Letter (Chronicle)

“Chronicle” is a newsletter of Bethany, a bi-monthly news bulletin started in the year 1967, to inform the sisters of the Congregation, about the happenings, in the various parts of the country and abroad, where Bethany’s presence is felt in the society. In 1940’s a group of college attending student Sisters had started the amateur newsletter entitled “BETHANITE”. They at that time contributed to the articles. As a result couples of issues of the Bethany were produced. This project had a halt due to the pressure of university examinations and transfer of these Sisters to responsible positions they occupied in the newly started high schools. Mother Macrina was one among those students who was elected as the Superior General of Bethany in 1959 October. She felt it is a means to bring the houses together and in uniting the Sisters. She wanted the founder to write the opening article. Founder’s response was, “give me a pen”, and wrote the following, “Only those who love can know and experience what it means to suffer…” sine dolore
“nonvivere” (without pain no life) this was one year before his death. Sr. Violette, then suggested initiating a monthly newsletter. With the help of Srs. Verena and Potence, she brought out the first issue in April 1967 under the title “Chronicle”. In its beginning years it was published from St Theresa’s Convent Karnal in Haryana State as the said sisters were there in that school. Sr. Violette the headmistress returned to USA for her teaching job in the university. Sr. Esuria, the superior and principal of Karnal continued the work of the Chronicle till her transfer. Then newly appointed superior and principal, Sr. Jyothi continued till 1980. Then in 1980 it was shifted to central office Mangalore. Sisters in this Chronicle are informed about the formal, Semi-formal and informal news of the different houses and the institutions, in India and abroad of the Bethany Congregation. 

3.2.5. Demise of the founder and after:

Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas died in the year 1960 on 23rd December at 4.15 a.m. at the age of eighty years in his cottage in Bethany Mother House campus. After the funeral mass his remains were interred in the centre aisle of St. Sebastian Church, Bendur. Before the close of his life, he took great satisfaction in seeing how much Bethany was accomplishing. The record below says, the congregation had increased to about five hundred members working in several dioceses, in schools, orphanages, technical and craft training centres and dispensaries.

But, we have another record which says, “At the time of the demise of the founder there were about 400 Bethany sisters in twenty seven branch houses working in seven dioceses of India. After his demise, the Superior General had to stand on her own as the responsibility was awesome now, that there were five hundred twenty three Bethany sisters working in seven dioceses of India through their twenty seven branch houses.

December 1960, marked an important transition in the congregation’s life and development. From the time he had conceived an idea of an indigenous
congregation and laid the ground work for the institution in 1921, he played a great and significant role in its growth and administration. He personally guided all the decision taken by the Superior General who consulted him even during last years of his life.\(^{169}\)

After the demise of Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas the founder of the congregation began to grow far and wide. In 1961 sisters moved to northern part of India starting from Punjab to other states. They extended their services to the poor in those areas taking care of the children of the leprous parents, visiting leprosy colonies and slums. They opened a dispensary for the poor, empowered the tribals and Adivasis. Sisters walked miles and miles to carry the torch of literacy, assisting the sick and suffering with the pastoral care for the tribals and Dalit’s. When sisters opened a convent in 1993 in Uttaranchal, Bishop Anthony Fernandes of Barilley said, “It took two hundred years to establish the presence of the Catholic church in this mountain region.”\(^{170}\)

In 1962, the congregation’s branches spread to mission territories of north east India at the invitation of Msgr. George Breen, C.S.C., and the Prefect Apostolic of Haflong.\(^{171}\)Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas during his second visit to Rome in 1956 prophetically uttered these words, “God willing, Bethany congregation will one day be international and the indigenous congregation will be international!”\(^{172}\) These prophetic words came true on 13\(^{th}\) August 1970 when at Casa Domitilla, Rome opened a house with Sr. Oliva as its first superior.\(^{173}\)Bethany not only reached Europe but in 1997 it reached the continent of Africa by opening a house in a Muslim populated area too.\(^{174}\)

**3.2.6. Testing time of Bethany:**

Bethany had to suffer a lot from the evil talks of others, lay women and men, priests and nuns of other Congregations.\(^{175}\) As Founder had the difference of opinion with the Church Authorities because he was not always a ‘yes’ man. After the pastoral visit of Bishop Peres of Mangalore he encouraged the Sisters in 1957 to
take up the administration, financial dealings and see to the developments of the Congregation. So far Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas was doing all the major decisions and sisters were reluctant as it may hurt the sentiments of the aged founder who was eighty two years old. Bethany was thirty six years old in 1957. Though emancipation of women was in his mind but he was deeply grieved when change in the administration happened.

Suffering became part and parcel of his life. If we look into the Archives of the Congregation, one can perceive the very love for the poor on the part of Msgr. Raymond. This was the main cause for all the criticism he received. As per the purpose of the Congregation he provided an opportunity for girls who could not afford to enter other Congregation because of the high dowry, secondly to prepare a band of apostolic women to serve the cause of the poor in the church. Naturally most of the recruits of Bethany were not highly educated or did not come from the elite of Mangalore town with strong financial backing. So the Bethany lacked finance at times. A sizable number of clergy of the diocese had a poor estimation of Bethany because they were not up to their expectations. But it was useless to compare Bethany the indigenous Congregation with other existing fifty or hundred years or more and which imported fully developed traditions from across the shores.176

The effects of the World War II found the majority of the people in hardship and poverty. They had to struggle hard not only to make both ends met, but it was the question of their survival. Around this time, that many of the Bethany’s young Sisters fell victims of tuberculosis and died. This was a shock to founder and talk of the town that Bethany Sisters died as they have no proper food to eat. But Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas, choked with emotions, he would humoursly say, “Bethany has opened its largest branch houses in Heaven.” Simple living and high thinking was his motto like Gandhiji. Though highly intellectual, there was simplicity in his character and he could come down to the level of simple, ordinary people as they approached him and he dealt with them. Here is what Sr.
Antoinette said; “he was a man of convictions and was simple at heart. Any ordinary people could approach him and converse freely with him.”

Due to the financial difficulties Higher Education for Sisters posed a problem. In spite of this hurdle Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas educated sisters. Though Bethany had the teachers training institution at Kinnikambla, Gurpur, Mangalore, Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas sent the Sisters to Capitanio and to St Ann’s Training Schools in Mangalore with the intention that they pick up the best elements from their training too. Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas had reached the height of success of his life, by doing extraordinary activities, facing challenges, conflicts, sufferings and sacrifices. Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas was worried in the initial stages on account of the anxiety of the uncertain candidates and uncertain future of the Congregation. Financial difficulty was another threat to the founder in buying the land and constructing convents schools and orphanages. As the Congregation grew the earning members were less and members in the formation, students and sick were more. This led to financial crisis. He had lot of criticism from all the side.

Will Bethany survive was the question of many. As Sr. Rosebel says, one day I said, to Msgr. Raymond “people say Bethany and Olivet Brothers-, these two institutions will not live long. For this Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas replied “if you people are good, blessed mother and Jesus will continue this work. I have put my hand into this work and it cannot withdraw. People may say anything, but God will look after everything.” Realizing his responsibility in this situation, he directed the authorities to go out of their way, to safeguard the health of the Sisters, by providing better health and food facilities and care for the Sisters. This caused a lot of debt to the Congregation since it had no other fund coming from abroad. They had to generate the fund and meet day today’s needs. Another source of anguish for both founder and Bethany regarding in reputation. He wanted to explain regarding his misunderstanding in clerical and diocesan circles. So he prepared a small booklet which he circulated among the significant people in his life. ‘My Apology’
actually he meant ‘Apologea’ reproving all the official letters his letters, Mother General’s letters to the Bishop and the reply of the Bishops… 180

In this he had revealed the painful episodes concerning some Convents opened and closed in 1930s as well as other controversial issues involving parish priests and Bethany had explained. The forward in the book reveals that he was upset not so much by the defamation that he suffered, but the fact that he would tarnish the name of his family, the Congregation of Bethany with which he was associated as its founder. He says, “I would have charitably passed over this bitter statement, but for the fact that my reputation does not concern me individually, but it is bound up with the reputation and future well-being of Bethany Sisters Congregation of which I am the founder.”181 Within a short period, a counter booklet appeared entitled “The Revenge of Monsignor Mascarenhas”. It was a vicious attack on his character and many of the Bethany Sisters. Being hurt by this scandal he wrote another booklet. Titled ‘Apologia pro-vita-sua’ fourteen stations of the cross of Bethany, he defended himself by quoting from relevant letters and other documents. In this book he mentions of each house, how it became a stations of the cross… 182

The diocesan authorities were more upset by this second book than the first. They accused him as liar, and demanded a public retraction under the threat of suspension as a priest. He was also ordered to recall all the booklets he had sent out. Though completely broken yet he obeyed the authorities and retracted under stress and collected the booklets going from house to house. Seeing the state of this aged Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas one prominent layman of the Milagres parish commented: “it was a sad, but spectacle to see this, eighty four year old priest going from house to house with a little bag in hand to collect that little booklet which he had sent them. It made us to respect more than ever, because of the submission to, what he was ordered. If his great deeds in Mangalore won’t make him a saint, certainly his humility should win him a crown of glory.” A priest of some influence in the diocese who wishes to remain anonymous had this to say, “what he said in his
booklet was the truth,. But no one had the courage to back him up, not even his brother priests.”  

His deeds speak louder than his words. We can see today when the canonization process is going on the words of the prominent young man, comes true of Msgr. Raymond’s great deeds will one day make him a saint.

Great mystics are always obedient. Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas was not an exception to this. As he was misunderstood by the diocesan authorities he was forbidden to exercise his duties. Sometimes he was misunderstood by his books and gestures, and nevertheless he remained obedient. It was a great humiliation for a man of his prominence to go round, bag in hand asking back the booklets he had distributed. But he subjected to it in obedience and with great dignity and fortitude.”  

He was ageing and during the last years of his life he was stripped off all the status, power and relationship with the Congregation he founded. He was also rejected by all and abandoned by the Sisters of the Congregation as it was asked by the then, Bishop of the Diocese. It looked that his life was a sign of living martyrdom. One of the Jesuit friends of Msgr. Raymond remarked “His greatest sufferings came from his Sisters, who deserted him.” As we have discussed earlier that Msgr. Raymond Mascarenhas was a mystic and a prophet in the midst of sufferings.

NOTES AND REFERENCE

1.  

2.  
   _Ibid._

3.  
   _Ibid._

4.  
   _Ibid._

16. Ibid.


18. Ibid., p.7

19. A 134.1, “The History of Bethany”


23. Sr. M. Violette D’Souza BS., Ph.D. The vine that he planted…, A Brief History of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Little Flower of Bethany, Mangalore (1921-1989), Bethany Publications, Printed at Codialbail Press, Bangalore, 1989, p.15, also Platinum Jubilee Souvenir, 75 Years (1921-1996), The sisters of the little Flower of


29. Ibid., pp.37-38.


33. Ibid.,


36. A.134.12.“History of Bethany” p. 7

37. *Bible.Lk.4:18.*

39. Msgr. Rev Fr. Mascharanhas, reply to the farewell address by CASK on 27th March 1941, in Mangalore magazine ‘CASK’ vol. XIV; No. 10, April 1941, p. 183

40. Sr. Esperie B S, “one with the meek and the humble”, in Bethany my joy and my crown, 2003, p. 69

41. F 111.4.2, “Msgr. Raymond F.C Mascarenhas and Bethany as reported in various journals 1927-1937 also A. P. P. Saldanha, “Echoes from far and near in Mangalore” August 1927. Archives of Catholic club Hampankatta collected by Sr. M. Benedict BS, p. 33

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