CHAPTER - III

ESTABLISHMENT AND FUNCTIONING OF ROSARIAN ASHRAMS IN TIRUCHIRAPPALLI DIOCESE
Chapter III

ESTABLISHMENT AND FUNCTIONING OF ROSARIAN ASHRAMS IN TIRUCHIRAPPALLI DIOCESE

3.0 Introduction

3.1 Pushpavanam Ashram - Manapparai
   3.1.1 Socio-Economic Condition of Manapparai
   3.1.2 Conditions of the People
   3.1.3 Rules and Regulations of Manapparai Rosarian Society
   3.1.4 The Mission of the Pushpavanam Ashram
   3.1.5 Ashram and Agriculture

3.2 Sirumalar Ashram - Tiruchirappalli
   3.2.1 The Rosarian Philosophate
   3.2.2 Academic Activity

3.3 Rosarian Monastery - Mullippatti
   3.3.1 Resource for Maintenance
   3.3.2 Never worry about the next day
3.0 **Introduction**

This chapter discusses the multiple dimensions of the different service centres of the Rosarian Congregation. Because of their modesty, simplicity, humble approach and service mentality, the Rosarians have won the hearts of the people, wherever they go.

3.1 **Pushpavanam Ashram - Manapparai**

September 8th, in Christian Calendar has been the feast of Nativity of a Holy Virgin Mother. 8th September 1952, has been another milestone of the Rosarian Congregation. On this auspicious day the solemn inauguration of the Rosarian house, 'Pushpam Ashram' was conducted. It is located 42 km from Tiruchirappalli on the outskirts of Manapparai Municipal Town. Bishop James Mendonca of Tiruchirappalli was pleased to grace the occasion and offered the Holy Sacrifice and blessed the house. After the Eucharistic celebration, voiced the grateful sentiments of Rosarians to his Lordship the Bishop of Tiruchirappalli. Bishop James Mendonca had been bending the epistles to Fr. B. A. Thomas to open a Rosarian Centre in his diocese. Hence his prolonged desire had been fulfilled on 8th September 1952, with the opening of Pushpavanam Ashram of Manapparai. Fr. A. Soosainathar was the prior of the house. After two years of initial spade work the Ashram could get the services of Fr. K. John, who was appointed prior of Pushpavanam Ashram. Br. Swaminathan, Br.

---

1. Codex Historicus of Pushpavanam Manapparai Ashram, 8th October 1952, p. 3.
Arul Pragasam, Br. Paul, Br. Royappar, Br. Gnanapragasam Leo had been the pioneers of this first Rosarian house in the diocese of Tiruchirappalli.³

Pushpavanam Ashram is located in the serene surrounding of Velaikkai just one kilo metre from the municipal town of Manapparai. The Ashram could acquire the land of nearly 35 acre in which a grotto, a chapel and the residence of the Brothers are surrounded by the agricultural lands. Today the Ashram has a spacious building and more than a dozen cemeteries of the brothers.⁴ The people in and around the town of Manapparai used to call the ashram, 'Mouna Madam'.⁵ Because of the silence observed by the Rosarians as a basic phenomenon, even today the name of Mouna Madam is more popular through sign board bears the name 'Pushpavanam Ashram'. The Grotto of Holy Virgin Mother, Mary is found on the very entrance of the Ashram. All the passers by mostly Hindu villagers spot there for a moment and submit their petitions and acquire peace and blessings of the Holy Mother Mary.⁶ All the times candles are lit in this grotto, as a token of devotion of the villagers.

A small and elegant chapel was put up in the ashram on 3rd October 1954, in the feast of Little Flower St. Theresa of Child Jesus, the patroness of this monastery Br. C. Bernard of Tiruchirappalli. Pushpavanam Ashram was growing day by day with the voluntary contributions of the people of

³ Ibid., p. 48.
⁴ Ibid., p. 50.
⁵ Ibid., p. 50.
locality. On 29th July, 1996, Fr. L. Francis who was the Provincial in India took charge of Pushpavanam ashram as the new prior Fr. Dominic was appointed as a visitator to the congregation. On 8th September 1997, the Silver Jubilee of Pushpavanam Ashram is mark the mile stone for the services of the Rosarians.

On witnessing the selfless, dedicated service of the Rosarian Brothers the faith of the people was enhanced. The Rosarians were looked with respect and reverence by the people of the locality. To add feathers in the cap of Rosarians, Pushpavanam Ashram came forward to help the poor people of the locality by building new houses at the cost of the Congregation.

From the very inception of the Pushpavanam Ashram, the social services rendered by the Rosarians envisioned the people of the locality. To help the Rosarian in their agricultural operations, dairy farm and the cottage industries of manufacturing, as the permanent labourers. The family of Mr. Raju from Ayyalur and Mr. Selvam along with a Muslim family of Abdullah are still working in the ashram. Though they are paid nominal wages they get job, throughout the year. And they are proud to serve with the Rosarians for the past four decades. In an exclusive interview by the researcher by the incumbents of these families expressed their job satisfaction and gratitude to the Rosarian. With their own funds, the Rosarians have met the marriage

7 Ibid., p. 38.
8 Ibid., p. 39.
9 Codex Historicus of Pushpavanam Ashram.
10 Interview with Abdullah at Manapparai on 17th April, 2005.
expenses of Mr. Raju's daughter. They have taken the responsibility of education Raju's son. Mr. Abdullah and his daughter, both are still working in the Pushpavanam Ashram with a sense of gratitude. The Rosarian not only get the labour of these permanent workers at times they engage the poor people of the locality as additional workers. The Rosarian Brothers also work with these workers as a part of their manual labour as instructed in their constitution.\(^{11}\)

Pushpavanam Ashram renders not only spiritual services but also a solace to the mentally tortured people. The people in and around Manapparai used to visit Pushpavanam Ashram for seeking peace and solitude whenever there is a problem in their families they come for counselling with the Rosarians.\(^{12}\) And they are much satisfied with the useful suggestions given by the Rosarians. A number of family disputes have been amicably settled by the Rosarians. The people find contentment on getting their moral advice. The same way Pushpavanam Ashram become a picnic spot for the school children and for the laymen. The very atmosphere found in Pushpavanam Ashram makes them happy and provides mental peace. Fr. James the Superior of this Ashram and Br. Oliver had made this Rosarians centre more popular. In spite of being a handicapped person Br. Oliver has toiled a lot and has served as an exemplary Rosarian in hospitality charity manual labour and friendly behaviour with the laymen.\(^{13}\)

\(^{11}\) The Rosarian Codes.

\(^{12}\) Codex Historicus of Pushpavanam Ashram.

\(^{13}\) Ibid.
The arrival of Br. Alphonse to Pushpavanam Ashram has been a turning point to the Rosarian house. In spite of his blindness Br. Alphonse is working very hard as a dedicated selfless Rosarian. He has written a number of book about the activities of the Rosarians and about the social service of the Congregation. Br. Alphonse was born in Sri Lanka and he had a golden opportunity to serve with the founder of the Rosarians Fr. Thomas. A casual chat with Br. Alphonse would benefit the visitors in many a way. He had acquaintance with all the personalities and all the important events in his fresh memory. His Golden Jubilee feast was celebrated in the year 2002, in which his services were honoured.

Pushpavanam Ashram has a dairy farm to supply milk to other neighbouring institutions. The fruit crushing unit has a good demand from all the people of Manapparai. The agriculture became failure, because of the intermittent failure of the monsoon. Yet for the sake of providing jobs for the families depending upon them the Rosarians continue the agriculture.

Dr. A. I. Pandian has been a regular visitor to the Pushpavanam Ashram. On finding the selfless social services of the Rosarians, Dr. Pandian treats all the inmates of the house free cost. Besides this he has contributed his mite for the development of the Rosarians. Being a Hindu by religious, Dr. Pandian has been rendering his helping hands to the Rosarians in every possible way. His entire family used to visit the Rosarian very

---

15 Interview with Br. Alphonse at Manapparai, on 17th April, 2005.
16 Codex Historicus of Pushpavanam Ashram.
17 Interview with Dr. Pandian at Manapparai, on 6th May, 2005.
often. They used to get relaxed by visiting the ashram and chatting with the Rosarians.

Since the chapel built in the year 1954, has been erected recently, and the buildings have also been expanded. In short the Pushpavanam Ashram of Manapparai serves as a model for the social service of the Rosarians. At present Fr. Jeyakumar is serving as the Superior of the Pushpavanam Ashram. The Rosarian services flourish day by day under his able guidance in Manapparai Region.

3.1.1 Socio-Economic Condition of Manapparai

Many people of this area are agriculturists and agricultural labourers. They depend entirely upon the agricultural works for their daily wages and subsistence. This area is noted for its backwardness in all aspects, that is socially, educationally, economically, etc. Illiteracy is about 50% unemployment is a major problem as farming works are available only during the rainy season.

The Pushpavanam Ashram, in their traditional spirit of helping the poor has tried to rescue at least some of them by engaging them in their farms has giving them reasonable wages and also other living conditions such as clothing, housing, education etc. People in general, are very religious minded, but sometimes they fall victims to superstitions.

---

19 Rosary Alphonse, op. cit., p. 158.
3.1.2 Conditions of the People

The existence of the Ashram is a blessing to the locality and its surroundings. It plays a vital role in creating amity and good relationships among the people of different religious facts. People who were once fanatic and fundamentality in their religious outlook are changed and become broad minded. Hence conflict that arise sometimes between different religious groups are slowly reduced. The labour force engaged in the farm and other cottage units are reasonably paid and given awareness education. The awareness education rendered by the ashram has made considerable changes in the minds of the people living around. Their frequent visits to the ashram have improved their mental and spiritual life. The children are the more privileged groups, who are encouraged in many accept for their education. The youth too are given counselling and guidance for the betterment of their lives. The young girls are helped for their marriage. The condition of the poor around is improved due to the helping hands extended to them by the ashram. The poor who turned to the ashram are never denied food and other care. The dairy and agri-farms that follow the modern technology serve as experimental centre for small farmers. They are allowed free access to the farms and enlightened on different technical through demonstration. The farms in this ashram increase the natural beauty, which in turn helps enormous number of visitors to become one with nature and there upon experience the ultimate reality and attain peace and serenity. The poor mass are shown the ways and means to avail the benefits of the government

---

20 Project Report to CARITAS, p. 6.
21 Ibid., p. 6.
schemes and projects earmarked for their good and welfare. The sanction of their project well certainly enable the ashram to intensity and extend their service to the visitors and those poor folk living in the surrounding the villages.²²

3.1.3 Rules and Regulations of Manapparai Rosarian Society

It is important to know about the society if a person wants to know about the services offered by the Manapparai Pushpavanam Ashram. Being a registered society, it has proper rules and regulations.

Objectives of the Society

➢ To take over and manage the affairs of the Manapparai Pushpavanam Rosarians Ashram which is a Catholic Church, a Religious Institution of public nature, a charitable, non-profit and social welfare institution promotes the overall development of its members and those of the public who opt for its irrespective of caste, creed, sex etc.²³

➢ To promote literature, prayer and meditation and yoga and other spiritual science, and to conduct researches and experiments in these fields.²⁴

➢ To impart informal education and industrial knowledge and training in scientific farming, cattle-breeding, poultry, pig breeding, bee-keeping and other cottage industries to the members and others.²⁵

➢ To provide a free opportunity for counselling and religious life to those who desire and seek for it.²⁶

²² Ibid., p. 7.
²⁴ Ibid., p. 6.
²⁵ Ibid., p. 7.
➢ To improve the economic, moral and social standard of villagers in the area of operation of the institution.\(^{27}\)

➢ To alleviate poverty and bring about better living conditions, mutual cooperation and unity among the villagers and the members of the institution, and in general rural development by implementing khadi village and industries commission programme.\(^{28}\)

➢ To start, encourage, assist and carry on such other activities which are incidental for the implementation of khadi village and industries commission and other social welfare programme within the nature of the institution.\(^{29}\)

➢ To initiate and encourage women development and to organize community action in the field of social welfare for the integrated development of human resources, without deterioration and exploitation of natural resources and without any profit motive, within the nature of the institution.\(^{30}\)

➢ To acquire, by gift, purchase, exchange, lease or hire or otherwise, any land, building, basement and any property movable or immovable for the furtherance of all, or any of the objects of the institution.\(^{31}\)

➢ To construct and maintain houses, structures or buildings and alter, extend, improve, repair, enlarge or modify the same, including any

\(^{26}\) Ibid., p.7.

\(^{27}\) Ibid., p.7.

\(^{28}\) Ibid., p.7.

\(^{29}\) Ibid., p.7.

\(^{30}\) Ibid., p.7.

\(^{31}\) Ibid., p.8.
existing buildings, and all other necessities for the use to which such
buildings is to be put up or held.\textsuperscript{32}

➢ To sell, manage, transfer, exchange, mortgage, lease or let out or dispose
of the properties whatever, belonging to the institution.\textsuperscript{33}

➢ To open and conduct branches and to undertake such other activities for
the furtherance of all or any of the objects of the institution within India
and shall not carry out any of its activities outside India.\textsuperscript{34}

➢ To do all other lawful things incidental or conductive to attainments, or
any, of the objects of the institution and to incur necessary expenditure
there on.\textsuperscript{35}

➢ To promote the safety of the environment and ecology.

➢ Generally to execute and perform such acts, deeds and things as are
incidental or conductive, or may be deemed fit by the society to the
incidental or conductive, to the attainment of the above objects of the
society or any of them.\textsuperscript{36}

\textit{The Chairman}

The chairman or the president is authorized to sue or to be sued on
behalf of the society. The chairman of the society is empowered to give
directions in regard to the business of the society.\textsuperscript{37}

\textsuperscript{32} Ibid., p.8.  
\textsuperscript{33} Ibid., p.8.  
\textsuperscript{34} Ibid., p.8.  
\textsuperscript{35} Ibid., p.8.  
\textsuperscript{36} Ibid., p.8.  
\textsuperscript{37} Ibid., p.9. 
Membership

As per the rules and regulation of the society the qualification of the members are prescribed as given below:

- The persons who are signatories to the memorandum of the association.\(^{38}\)
- Such other persons inducted and initiated into religious order of the congregation of the Rosarians or otherwise working in India and are admitted to the membership of the Society by the Governing Body whose decision shall be final admission of members shall be at the absolute discretion of the Governing Body.\(^{39}\)
- Neither entrance fee nor subscription shall be collected from the members.\(^{40}\)

Termination of membership

Membership of the Society shall be lost, if any members of the congregation of Rosarians, ceases to be such a member as a result of renunciation, removal, death, resignation or goes out of India permanently. Once any one ceases to be a member as provided, he has no right for appeal. However, such deletion of membership shall be at the absolute discretion of the Governing Body of the Society.\(^{41}\)

Rights, Obligation and Privileges of Members

All the members of the society shall have the right to receive notice of the meeting of the General Body and to take part in the General Body

\(^{38}\) Ibid., p.9.
\(^{39}\) Ibid., p.9.
\(^{40}\) Ibid., p.9.
\(^{41}\) Ibid., pp. 9-10.
Meeting, and shall exercise one vote each at such meetings. They have right to elect the members of the Governing Body. They have right to inspect all the records and accounts of the society and every member shall abide by the rules and regulations of the society and the Tamil Nadu Society's Registration Act 1975 and Rules 1978, and the decisions made or taken by the Society in the General Body or Governing Body Meetings.\(^{42}\)

**Manner of Transacting Business**

The affairs of the Society shall be administered by the duly elected Governing Body of the Society, appointed under clause 11 below.

- The management and administration of the Society shall be vested in the Governing Body consisting of seven members in which one shall be Chairman, the Secretary and five Executive Members and their term of office shall be three years.\(^{43}\)

- The Governing Body shall be responsible for the proper administration in furtherance of the objects of the society.\(^{44}\)

- The Governing Body Members shall be elected by the General Body once in every three years by two-third majority of votes. The retiring members are eligible to be re-elected.\(^{45}\)

- Any vacancy in the Governing Body, shall be filled by the General Body within one month, at a special meeting from the date such change. However, the Governing Body shall be entitled to function not with


standing any vacancy, and no act or proceedings of the Governing Body
shall be deemed to be invalid merely by reason of the existence of a
vacancy or vacancies among its members.\textsuperscript{46}

\textgreater{} The Governing Body shall meet as often as exigencies or circumstances
require, or in any event, once in six months at such time and place as the
Chairman may determine from time to time.\textsuperscript{47}

Duties and Rights of Office Bearers

\textit{Chairman}

The chairman shall preside over all the meetings of the Governing
Body and General Body and lead all deputations. Ordinarily the chairman
shall have one vote, but shall be entitled to a casting vote in case of equality
of votes. The chairman, is the chief executive of the society. Any nominee
of the Chairman, shall have and exercise all the power of the chairman
during the latter's absence. Such nomination shall be in writing.\textsuperscript{48}

\textit{Secretary}

\textgreater{} The Secretary shall convene all meetings of the society and attend and
record all proceedings of such meetings in the Minute Books.

\textgreater{} He shall directly control all staff and workers of the society and shall
prepare the agenda of the various meetings and circulate the same.

\textgreater{} Shall carry on all correspondence in the name and on behalf of the
Society and shall promptly carry out the orders and resolutions of the
Governing Body.

\textsuperscript{46}\textit{Ibid.}, p.11.
\textsuperscript{47}\textit{Ibid.}, p.11.
\textsuperscript{48}\textit{Ibid.}, p.11.
The Secretary or the Chairman shall sign all documents, contracts, agreements on behalf of the Society.

He shall maintain all account books vouchers and receipts of various forms of income and expenditure of the Society.

Shall have powers to receive and disburse money on behalf of the Society under the direction of the Governing Body and also shall have powers to keep in hand a maximum of Rs.10,000 as cash, for day-to-day expenses.49

**Filling of Documents**

It shall be the duty of the Secretary to attend to the preparation and filling with the Register of the Societies concerned, of such records as annual or other statements which are specified in the Tamil Nadu Society's Registration Act 1975 and Rules 1978, made there under.50

**Audit and Accounts**

The accounts shall be maintained by the Treasurer in such manner as required under Rule 18 and 19 of the Tamil Nadu Registration Rules 1978. The financial year of the Society shall be from 1st April to 31st March. The accounts of the society shall be audited by a chartered accountant or by a firm of chartered accountants.51

**Supply copies of By-Laws etc and exhibition of Registers**

The Books of Accounts and Records of the Society shall be kept at the registered Office of the Society and shall be open to inspection by any

49 Ibid., p.12.
50 Ibid., p.12.
51 Ibid., p.12.
member of the Society during the office hours, whenever required, free of charge.\textsuperscript{52}

\textit{Imposition of Fines}

Any member of the society convicted shall be liable to be punished in like manner as any person who is not a member would be subjects, and liable to in respect of the offence.\textsuperscript{53}

\textit{Investment of Funds}

The Governing Body shall invest the money and funds of the society not immediately required, in Nationalized, or Scheduled or Cooperative Banks and Government and approved securities in accordance with the provision of section 13(1)d..., read with section 11(5) of the Income Tax Act 1961.\textsuperscript{54}

\textit{Utilization of Funds and Income}

Funds earmarked specifically for the fulfillment of the object of the Society shall be applied for the purpose for which they are ear-marked. The funds and income of the Society shall be solely be utilized towards the achievement of the objects, and no portion of it shall be utilized for payment to members by way of profit, interest, dividend etc. No payment shall be made from the funds of the society to any dependent of deceased or disabled member.\textsuperscript{55}

\textsuperscript{52} Ibid., pp. 12-13.
\textsuperscript{53} Ibid., p.13.
\textsuperscript{54} Ibid., p.13.
\textsuperscript{55} Ibid., p.13.
Arrangements for transaction of day-to-day business

The chairman and secretary shall be in-charge of conducting the day-to-day business of the society, the expenditure to be incurred there of. The bank accounts of the society, in Current Account, Savings Account or deposit Accounts shall be operated by the Chairman and the Secretary jointly.  

The chairman is empowered to appoint and to remove the staff required for attending to the business of the Society and in such matters, the decision of the Chairman shall be final.

Execution of Documents

All deeds, agreements, lease or release mortgages or documents of whatsoever nature relating to or affecting the alienation of movable or immovable properties of the society or rights or privileges there of or by seeking financial assistance under recognized schemes for development of khadi and village industries as loans and grants and subsidies from khadi and villages industries commission, central or state governments and other corporate bodies established by Central and State Governments, Banking Institutions and any other Financing Agencies or Institutions for the Development of Khadi Village Industries Commission or State Board shall be executed by the Chairman or the Secretary or such members of the Governing Body who has been authorized in writing to do so by the Chairman or by the Governing Body. 

57 Ibid., p.15.
Annual General Body Meeting

➢ The Annual General Body Meeting of the Society shall be held within six months from the close of the financial year of the society or within such other period as may be allowed by the Act and Rules from time to time.

➢ All the meetings of the society shall be presided over by the chairman and in his absence by such person nominated in writing by the chairman.

➢ The purpose of the Annual General Meeting are:

   a. To receive and adopt / approve the report of the Governing Body, if any and the audited balance sheets and income and expenditure account of the society for the year ending 31st March, proceeding the date of the meeting.

   b. To elect the members of the Governing Body.

➢ To consider the audit report and any other communication received from the Khadi Village Industries Commission / State Board or from financial agencies in respect of the matters concerting the business of the Khadi Village Industries Commission and Cottage Industries programme.

➢ To lay down policies within the nature of the society.

➢ To transact any other business which may be brought forward by any member of the society, with the prior permission of the chairman of the meeting.

Extraordinary General Body Meeting

➢ All General Meetings other than Annual General Meeting shall be called 'Extra Ordinary General Body Meeting'.
The Governing Body of the Society may at any time call an extraordinary General Meeting of the Society by giving at least 21 days notice.\(^{58}\)

**Notice**

Notice of the meeting of the Society or of the Governing Body or of any committee may be given by the Secretary to the members there of respectively at least 21 days prior to the day of the meeting.\(^{59}\)

**Quorum**

The quorum for all such meetings whether General Body or Governing Body or extraordinary General Meeting shall be two-third majority of the total members. Three-fourth quorum should be adhered in passing special resolution.\(^{60}\)

**Arbitration**

In the event of any difference of opinion, arising out of the stipulation contained here in or any other matter pertaining to the Society, the same shall be referred to an arbitrator who in the case shall be the chairman of the society and the decision taken by the chairman shall be final and binding.\(^{61}\)

**Amendments**

The Memorandum of the Association and the rules and regulations of the society may from time to time be varied added to or revoked, re-enacted by a majority of not less than three-fourth members of the society present at


the general Meeting called for such purpose and such amendments shall be carried out only with the approval of the Commissioner of Income Tax.  

**Dissolution**

The society may be dissolved out a General Meeting convened for the purpose by a majority of at least three-fourths of the members present and there upon all the funds and assets remaining after discharge, of all liabilities shall be transferred to any other society or institution having similar aims and objects. Any such surplus remaining as on the date of dissolution shall not be distributed among the members of the society under any circumstances.

3.1.4 **The Mission of the Pushpavanam Ashram**

The life of the Rosarians is a reproduction of silent life of Jesus, Mary and Joseph at Nazareth with humble occupation and above all union with the God. The more urgent needs of the Church in India are prayer and penance in order to move the hearts of believers and non-believers to Christ as Indian culture is deeply rooted in inferiority.

The life of a Rosarian is dedicated to the service of God and to his fellow citizens. As a result, apart from the special contribution, the ashramites make their prayer and the missionary church in particular, the ashramites do profess a social purpose. They promote employment scheme and propagate the ways and means to the poor to become self-sufficiency. It also helps people to bring about a green revolution in the area and save the

---

64 Codex Historicus of Pushpavanam Ashram.
environment. Besides these, many sundry helps are provided to the poor for their marriages and for the education of their children etc. At present 25 families depend upon as for their livelihood. All these activities are conducted from the small income from their hard labour.

3.1.5 Ashram and Agriculture

The entire ashram maintenance is met from the income derived from the agricultural field in the ashram premises. The total extent of the land available for cultivation is 26 acres.\(^{65}\) The agriculture does not stop with supplying our physical need but its beauty of green mellow satisfied aesthetic sense of men. It helps the monks and other outsiders who visit the ashram for one reason or other to enjoy the natural beauty and to become one with the creator and supreme power of God. The farm gain importance by creating a good and favourable atmosphere for contemplative and meditative life in the Ashram, through the supply of uncontaminated food, increase of natural beauty and fauna, preventing pollution of the acres and moderating the wind force etc. Further this ecological farm will demonstrate to the rural mass how to improve their agro system and educate the people the nobility of many work.\(^{66}\)

The outcome of agriculture in the past was not a quite considerable one due to the failure of monsoon rain every now and then and illicit grazing of cattle in the farm as there is no fence around. In spite of the fact that the monks exert their whole energy in cultivating the field is not so encouraging sometimes. The spiraling prizes of fertilizers, pesticide etc. and

\(^{65}\) Ibid., p. 8.

\(^{66}\) Ibid., p. 8.
at the same time low price fixed for the agriculture products lesson the net profit further.\textsuperscript{67} There is every possibility for the rise of the prices of these products in the near future leading to the increase of income of the Ashram. As a result of these factors the income derived in the past from hard labour and effort in the farm has been the bare minimum.

The blessing of the Ashram is the good soil. It is neither highly alkaline nor acidic but more natural. So it response very well if the Rosarians can afford to provide the soil with organic manure and chemical fertilizer. The organic manure collected from the dairy is more than enough and only for chemical fertilizer, they have to look outside.\textsuperscript{68}

\section*{3.2 Sirumalar Ashram - Tiruchirappalli}

The area is located to the South and West of Tiruchirappalli Corporation Limit. It is on the Tiruchirappalli-Dindigul Road (National Highways 45) 8 km from the Tiruchirappalli Bus Station. The whole Tiruchirappalli city is situated on the Southern Bank of River Cauvery. It is a fast developing industrial city. Roadways, link the city to other major cities of India. Pirattiyur (Eniyanoor),\textsuperscript{69} where the Ashram is placed being far away from the city is cut of from the link to the main city and is constructed as a separate Panchayat and bounded by other rural panchayats. Its looks as an isolated pocket and keep its rural character still. Urbanisation is yet to make inwards to the area and agricultural lands still preserves their

\textsuperscript{67} Ibid., p. 8.
\textsuperscript{68} Ibid., p. 9.
\textsuperscript{69} Ibid., p. 3.
pristine purity. Access to the main city from the area is a difficult problem due to lack of frequent transport facilities.

Tiruchirappalli Sirumalar Ashram is one of the religious centres of the congregation of the Rosarians. The charism of the congregation is to make reparation for the sins of the whole world by incessant prayer, penance and practice of charity.

The congregation and very particularly Sirumalar Ashram is known for its austerity, complete silence, hospitality and twenty four hours prayers before the blessed Sacrament exposed, contemplation, penance and practice of charity. Impressed by way of life the lay outsiders, priests and other religious are frequenting this Ashram for prayer and meditation. It is functioning as a source of spiritual energy to all Catholics as well as to the non-Christians.

A philosophy college for the formation of the Seminarians to the priesthood in conformity with the charism of congregation was started in the year 1991 and began functioning in the complex of this Ashram.

During the last few years the income derived from the Agricultural and dairy farms was considerably low due to the failure of monsoon every now and then. The Ashram is running on a tough time to meet even their bare minimum need.

The New House in Tiruchirappalli was started formerly at the RC school campus in an old engineering shed by the solemn blessings of His

---

Excellency, the Most Rev. Thomas Fernando, the then Bishop of Tiruchirappalli on 20th June 1983. Sirumular Ashram was established as an Aspirantate for the school going students. The Rosarian life began with the recitation of the Holy Rosary Fr. T. Michael and Fr. Soosairaj were the patrons of this house. Sirumalar Ashram is rendering an appreciable service of the Rosarians. Fr. M.C. Alloysius, the Novice Master and the first Counsellor General has been the first Director of Sirumalar Ashram with the cooperation of Br. Michael Raj and Br. Gabriel, the Rosarian brothers commenced their regular life in this Ashram. A number of student joined the group to spread the mission of the Rosarians. Fr. James has been in- charge of the students in this Ashram. He was succeeded by Fr. V. J. Augustine, Fr. J. B. Packianathar initiated the recitation of the divine office for the students on 30th May 1985.

On finding the exemplary services of the Rosarians, prefatory place for Sirumalar Ashram was donated by Mr. Daivasahayam from Iniyanur residing at Karumandapam. Br. Michael Raj was given the responsibility of preparing the place by removing the thorny bushes and made the land fit for the erection of buildings. Meanwhile on June 24th 1985, the Father General John Baptist Packianathar had expired Fr. Packianathar had been

---

72 Ibid., p. 14.
74 Ibid., p. 15.
75 Ibid., p. 15.
76 Ibid., p. 16.
77 Ibid., p. 16.
78 Rosary Alphonse, op. cit., p. 510.
extremely fond of Sirumalar Ashram and its inmates. His demise happened on his very patronal feast day though the Rosarians were very sad on the demise of Fr. Packianathar. They consoled themselves with a abundant faith and advocacy of him. 

Fr. M. C. Aloysius considered to be the Prior General visited Sirumular Ashram and made arrangements to improve the Ashram. He was instructed that the Apostolic boys should be provided free boarding and lodging, books and note books for their studies. Finding the donated land at Piratiyur in Iniyanur village to be a congenial place for the community services. Fr. Aloysius blessed and laid the foundation stone on 2nd March 1988. A small thatched shed was erected and blessed by Fr. Ephraem. At the occasion of the Holy Mass, Fr. Peter and the benefactor Mr. Devasahayam were also present. The later had donated twelve acres of land, and the rest of them adjoining land was purchased by the congregation. 

Nine Junior Brothers after successfully completing their novitiate came and occupied the new building on 2nd December 1989. The Most Rev. Dr. Thomas Fernando, the then Bishop of Tiruchirappalli Diocese, blessed the ashram on 2nd February 1990 at the 62nd anniversary of the foundation of the Rosarian Congregation. 

---

79 Ibid., p. 510.  
80 Ibid., p. 510.  
81 The Rosarian Contemplative Religious Order, op. cit., 38.  
82 Ibid., p. 38.  
83 Ibid., p. 39.  
84 Codex Historicus of Tiruchirappalli Sirumalar Ashram, p. 49.  
85 Codex Historicus of Sirumalar Ashram, p. 49.
Fr. James, the new Prior Continued the erection work. The Rosarian Philosophate was shifted to Sirumalar Ashram. The inauguration of the Philosophy classes began with the *Veni Creator* and the *'Scola Brevis'* presided over by the Rev. Dr. Peter Fernando, the Rector of St. Paul's Seminary.\(^\text{86}\) A new Grotto of the Blessed Mother was erected in the central part of the Ashram over the water tank.

On 30th September 1998, the construction work for the new chapel was started. On 20th September 1998, Sirumalar Ashram had to face devastating floods in and around the Ashram. It had been a boon in disguised for the Ashramites to extend their social services.\(^\text{87}\) The Rosarian prepared food for all the people of the locality who were affected by floods. As the people of the locality lost their hope in the flood they were sheltered in the Ashram generously. The construction work of the new chapel was completed on 1st October 1999, Fr. Maria Soosai had taken much interest in the erection of the new chapel with the help of Mrs. Steiner, a generous benefactor to the Ashram.\(^\text{88}\)

Again in the year 1999, the Ashram was flooded with torrential rain. The people of the locality suffered a lot. A number of huts, along with cattle were washed away. The Ashram provided food, cloth and medical aid to the affected people.\(^\text{89}\) Mrs. Steiner generously donated to erect the enclosure which was blessed and inaugurated on 26th April 2000. Thus the Sirumalar

\(^{86}\) Codex Historicus of Sirumalar Ashram, p. 50.
\(^{87}\) Codex Historicus of Sirumalar Ashram, p. 52.
\(^{88}\) Codex Historicus of Sirumalar Ashram, p. 53.
\(^{89}\) Codex Historicus of Sirumalar Ashram, p. 53.
Ashram has been rendering charitable services to the poor and needy of this locality.\textsuperscript{90}

\subsection*{3.2.1 The Rosarian Philosophate}

The Sirumalar Ashram with its special character of Ashramatic life is added with further importance of embodying within it the Rosarian Philosophate. The Rosarian Philosophate was established in the Sirumalar Ashram Complex and started functioning from the year 1991.\textsuperscript{91}

Prior to that the Seminarians were sent to other seminaries. These seminaries were interested in the formation of the Seminaries to the priestly ministry with different charism. The special charism being making Reparation for the sins of the whole world through the life of absolute silence, prayer, contemplation and penance, the formation given in other seminaries was not found fit.\textsuperscript{92} There have been many instances that those formed in other Seminaries found difficult to adopt to the life style of the Rosarian Congregation. Few of them had to leave the priesthood. Hence they were forced to start the Philosophate of their own so that the brothers could be trained in strictly atuned to the contemplation spirit following the footsteps of Lord and Blessed Mother. Thus Philosophate was started in the year 1991 and appended to the Sirumalar Ashram.\textsuperscript{93} The Priests, qualified in the subject matters are taking classes in the Philosophate. In addition to that help of priests from other seminaries are availed. Very often seminarians are

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{90} Codex Historicus of Sirumalar Ashram, p. 54.
  \item \textsuperscript{91} Rosary Alphonse, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 511.
  \item \textsuperscript{92} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 511.
  \item \textsuperscript{93} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 511.
\end{itemize}
encouraged to go and attend courses and seminars on contemplative life conducted in other religious centres and seminaries too. Now all are quiet satisfied that the formation given to the seminarians is in conformity with the spirit of the founder and the charism of the congregation.

3.2.2 Academic Activity

The inauguration of the academic year will take place at the first week of the July month every year. It will be started with a Holy Mass. It is the Prior General who declared open the academic year at the special programme that followed the mass.94

In the first semester English language will be the main concern, as students come from North India, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, and Karnataka.95 English is the common medium of their instruction. These English classes will be conducted for all the first and second year students.

A good number of Philosophical subjects altogether 13 of them will be taught in a year. Introduction to Philosophy, Methodology, Introduction to Indian Philosophy, Logic, Cosmology, Phenomenology and Existentialism, Ancient Greek Philosophy, Islamism, Indian Spiritual, Social Ethics and Seminar96 subjects will be handled by the various subject experts in the academic year.

Written and oral examinations for the above subjects will be conducted immediately after the subjects were taken. On the basis of their

---

95 Ibid., p. 1.
96 Ibid., p. 2.
performance in these examinations will be admitted for their higher studies. The third year students, those who are finished their philosophical studies successfully will be transferred to various houses for their regency. During their study days, they will be involved in the variety of entertainments on various events like dance, songs, skits and other cultural programmes.

The Juniors will be assigned different assignment such as library works, kitchen, farm, dairy, manual labour etc. During transplantation of paddy and harvesting, they are expected to extend their service enthusiastically.

They are expected to offer the adoration to the Blessed Sacrament day and night, besides the daily celebration of the Eucharist. Divine office, other community prayers and living experience of fraternal love in community are the sources and foundations that make the students grow in the Rosarian way of life day by day. The house Superiors will conduct every month Bible service to strengthen the spirituality of the novitiates.

3.3 Rosarian Monastery - Mullippatti

Bishop Thomas Fernando who had been the Bishop of Tuticorin, later became the Bishop of Tiruchirappalli paved the way for a house in Tiruchirappalli. The selected area was called Nazareth. From 1983 several

---

97 Ibid., p. 2.
98 Ibid., p. 3.
99 Ibid., p. 4.
100 Ibid., p. 5.
101 Rosary Alphonse, op. cit., p. 463.
years with a lot of hardships six sisters lived in a small cottage given to them. Rev. Sr. Jebamalai who was an efficient person for cultivation irrigated the land digging large wells and converted it to a green field.\textsuperscript{102} With the financial help received from foreign benefactors the convent was built and the sisters could settle down only in 1989.\textsuperscript{103} Rev. Sr. Rose Mary strenuously laboured to make it a complete house and all the Indian Junior Sisters were brought to Tiruchirappalli for an all round formation. Single handedly Rev. Sr. Rose Mary tried her best to organic classes to develop their artistic and literary talents.\textsuperscript{104} The chapel was completed and the final touches of the whole building was done only in 1994. Nazareth is a village in Tiruchirappalli district and recently taken with the revenue district of Pudukkottai.\textsuperscript{105} It is unknown place having poor resources. Yet the people in this villages are generous and eager to quench their spiritual thirst.\textsuperscript{106} People are living with love and unity. The people in Nazareth earned bread through manual work living a simple life accepting the will of God at all times and ready to surrender themselves to Almighty God.\textsuperscript{107} The serenity and silence of Nazareth teach and leads the people to recollection, and offer the disposition to listen the word of God.\textsuperscript{108} It is an ideal for meditation, and contemplation. Therefore, it has been proved to be the suitable spot to establish a Rosarian centre there. Nazareth reminds the simple, humble and

\textsuperscript{102} Ibid., p. 463.
\textsuperscript{103} Ibid., p. 464.
\textsuperscript{104} Ibid., p. 464.
\textsuperscript{105} Project Report to CARITAS, p. 2.
\textsuperscript{106} Ibid., p. 2
\textsuperscript{107} Ibid., p. 3.
\textsuperscript{108} Ibid., p. 3.
Therefore, the Rosarian selected Nazareth for their spiritual fulfillment as well as for manual labour.

He selected Nazareth to be a congenial place for expanding the services of Rosarians. The convent for the Rosarian sisters was started in the year 1983. Six sisters lived in a small cottage allotted to them by the Bishop Rev. Sr. Jebamalai with the hard works and efficiency started a farm house in Nazareth. Her efforts began to bear the fruits, a large well was dug for the irrigational purpose. Local labourers could get job in this Rosarian monastery and the Franciscan sisters who are mostly foreign benefactors rendered their helping hand to develop this monastery. The convent was erected and the regular services were began in the year 1989. Rev. Sr. Rose Mary strenuously laboured to make it a full pledged Rosarian centre. All the Indian Junior Sisters were brought to this Rosarian monastery for all round formation. Sr. Rose Mary toiled a lot to organize class to develop their artistic and literacy talents. The chapel was built in 1994. The convent buildings were also expanded. Though it is an interior village located 7 kilo metre from Tiruchirappalli-Madurai main road, Nazareth attracted the people. The Bishop of Tiruchirappalli started a High School in Nazareth. It has been a great help for the Rosarian Sisters. The Sisters were no more isolated, because of importing religious training to the

---

109 Ibid., p. 4.
110 Codex Historicus of Mullipatty Ashram, p. 1.
111 Ibid., p. 1.
112 Ibid., p. 7.
113 Ibid., p. 8.
114 Ibid., p. 15.
novices among the Sisters Nazareth became an important centre. Agricultural operations thrived well in Nazareth.\(^{115}\) The Sisters took part enthusiastically in the manual labour. The poor laymen of Nazareth found it as a boon to have the Rosarian monastery in their village. As they were economically backward, spiritually poor and socially neglected had a revival of their life with the arrival of the Sisters. Finding the selfless dedicated services of the Rosarian Sisters, the people of Nazareth shared the labour and cooperated to make this monastery a thriving one very often the Sisters invited the people of the locality counselling and for their own upliftment.\(^{116}\) Apart from meditation and manual labour the sisters of the Rosarian Monastery could offer the medical services to the poor and the needy irrespective of their caste, colour and creed.\(^{117}\) In short the dream of the founder has been fulfilled by the services of these sisters.

Being a novitiate for the junior sisters the Rosarian monastery in Nazareth could be served as a model for all the members of the Rosarian community. Living in this remote village itself has been a great sacrifice. Serving the people and enlightening them to live a life of contentment has been a great achievement.\(^{118}\) The poor villagers could not afford the costly medical treatment of their people. But the sisters encourage them by providing medical treatment.\(^{119}\) The Pushpavanam Ashram, the Sirumalar Ashram and the Rosarian Monastery at Nazareth are considered to be the

\(^{115}\) Ibid., p. 15.
\(^{116}\) Ibid., p. 19.
\(^{117}\) Ibid., p. 27.
\(^{118}\) Ibid., p. 29.
\(^{119}\) The Rosarian Contemplative Religious Order, op. cit., p. 39.
three strong pillars of the Rosarian mission. These three Rosarian centres in Tiruchirappalli diocese serve as a forerunner regarding the services to the poor at the same time leading a successful life in the path of their founder Fr. B. A. Thomas.

3.3.1 Resource for Maintenance

As already stipulated the Ashram daily programme is so scheduled that the Ashramites are given ample time to work hard manually in the agricultural farm. The income from agriculture is the main source to meet the daily needs of the Ashram. Besides to meet the daily needs of the Ashram. Besides they are engaged in the dairy farm installed in their complex. In these agricultural and dairy farms which are the only source of income of brothers and fathers totalling 30 nos. are the main labourers. Most of the brothers who are students in the Philosophate are pleased to spend their energy in this manual jobs in addition to their learning and prayer that occupy most of their time. The Brothers and Fathers never grudge to work in these fields but on the contrary they take an immense joy in it. Apart from the brothers, many poor who remain unemployed also given chances to work in the Agricultural and dairy farms and are paid reasonable wages.

3.3.2 Never worry about the next day

The entire congregation lives on the trust in God's providence. The monks never worry about the next day. By the earning of their hard work in

---

120 Ibid., p. 40.
121 Codex Historicus of Mullipatty Ashram, p. 40.
122 Ibid., p. 41.
the farms they manage their upkeeping. The marginal income obtained from syrup pickle and wine manufactured for the good of the people and the church supplement their income to some extent.\textsuperscript{123} No monks undertake any earning profession to augment the income. Neither they keep any corpus fund from which the interest could be make use of simply the monks depend on the income of the farms, and the cottage works and wine preparation.\textsuperscript{124} Their day-to-day sustenance is in God's hand. Their daily bread never fails. The lives of the monk are ideal one, strictly following the spirit of the Lord.

During the past few years failure of monsoon rain or had an effect on them. The spiraling prizes of the fertilizer, pesticide etc. and the low prices for the agricultural product brought the profit to the marginal level. Steps are being taken now by the government to the raise the price of the produces and hence the situation is expected to be bright in the future.\textsuperscript{125} Hence the revenue from the Agricultural farm was not a considerable one. In the dairy too the income was less as they were selling milk to the poor families at a very nominal rate without any big margin for profit. The establishments of Rosarians in Tiruchirappalli diocese are less in number. Their activity in social service sector and other vital sectors also very minimum. But, in the spiritual side, they are very perfect and cooperate with the pastors of Tiruchirappalli diocese in offering their prayers and meditative efforts.

\textsuperscript{123} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 42.
\textsuperscript{124} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 42.
\textsuperscript{125} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 43.