

# **THE TWIN SOULS**

**St Mary of Jesus Crucified and  
Venerable Mother Veronica of the Passion**

**Sister M. Sylvette A. C.**





**The Pioneers of Carmel from Pau who set out to found the Carmel of Bethlehem in 1875**

*(St Mary of Jesus Crucified and Mother Veronica are next to each other,  
2nd and 3rd, from left, in the back row)*

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**of the Passion**

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**The Apostolic Carmel**  
**Provincial House**  
**St Ann's Convent, Mangaluru**

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The life of Venerable Mother Veronica of the Passion has been a great source of inspiration to me ever since I read “*The Turn of the Road*” by late Sister Rosemarie A.C. Thereafter I greatly relished the books on Venerable Mother Veronica written by Sister M. Carol A.C. and late Sister M. Valeria A.C. The “*Autobiography*” of Venerable Mother Veronica, however, helped me to understand the strong supernatural bonds between her and St Mary of Jesus Crucified, making them twin souls. Both had lived at St Ann’s, Mangalore, for some time and I felt that the people would like to know more about them.

To God Almighty, I owe my gratitude for guiding and helping me directly and through various people:

- My Superior General, Sister M. Susheela A.C. who has always encouraged me;
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Sister M. Sylvette A.C.

## FOREWORD

When Mother Veronica of the Passion saw Mariam Baouardy for the first time at La Capelette, Marseilles and the latter spoke to her, a flash of interior light made her perceive that Mariam was a chosen soul who shared in the Passion of Christ. It struck a chord within her as she herself was very much drawn to the Passion of Christ. Listening to Mother Honorine, her mistress, strengthened her conviction. She observed her closely from Thursday morning to Friday evening and saw for herself how Mariam's whole being was experiencing the various phases of the Passion of Christ. This was the beginning of their spiritual journey, which in God's own design led them through paths of misunderstanding, contradiction, humiliation – utter death to self. During the years to come, one would support the other to reach the heights of sanctity.

For Mother Veronica, “Obedience was her life”. It was the same with Mariam Baouardy (St Mary of Jesus Crucified). When Mariam had to leave the Congregation of St Joseph of the Apparition and Mother Veronica was recommending her to the Prioress of Pau, she wrote, “she (Mariam) was obedient even to a miracle”. Obedience was the cornerstone of their lives and in this way they walked in the footsteps of Christ.

God in His plans had deemed that both these chosen souls should leave their imprint on Mangalore, each in her own

unique way. Both lived in Mangalore for a short time. Both left behind a legacy. Sister Mary of Jesus Crucified was indirectly the Founder of Sacred Heart Monastery at Kankanady. Mother Veronica founded a Congregation - The Apostolic Carmel - to provide Catholic education for girls. Since then the Sacred Heart Monastery has been a powerhouse of prayer and the Apostolic Carmel sisters pioneers in education.

The Church has recognized the sanctity of Sister Mary of Jesus Crucified. She was canonized on May 15, 2015. Mother Veronica was declared Venerable on July 9, 2014. It is now the turn of St Mary of Jesus Crucified to intercede before God that her '*Mother*' too be raised to the honours of the altar.

In her book, "The Twin Souls", Sister Sylvette has beautifully unfurled the spiritual bond between the two consecrated souls, hailing from different cultural and ethnic backgrounds. Beside the historical facts, the readers will find in this book a deeper understanding of God's marvelous ways of drawing souls to Himself. The book will also inspire the reader to draw inspiration for one's own life.

Sister Maria Shamita A.C  
Provincial Superior  
Karnataka Province  
St Ann's Convent,  
Mangaluru 575001

# **The Oratory of St Mary of Jesus Crucified (St Mariam Baouardy)**

**A visit to St Ann's Convent, Bolar, Mangalore** will lead you, her devotees and pilgrims, to the Oratory of St Mary of Jesus Crucified. The original Chapel and the first floor of the building, which the pioneer group of Cloistered Carmel Sisters had occupied when they came to Mangalore in 1870, are still preserved. The Altar at this Oratory is the place where our dear Saint pronounced her First Vows. Her life-size statue is placed on this Altar. The cell (room) where our Saint lived, during her sojourn in Mangalore is adjacent to the oratory. A photo copy of the vows she pronounced on November 21, 1871, is preserved in this room. **The words inscribed on her tomb in Bethlehem are depicted on the wall.**

When the three pioneer sisters of the Apostolic Carmel Congregation trained by Venerable Mother Veronica, the Foundress, arrived at Mangalore from Bayonne, France, on November 19, 1870, the Cloistered Carmel Sisters from Pau, France, also accompanied them and both groups had their abode at St. Ann's Convent. The Novice, Mariam Baouardy, our Saint, was one of the latter group. While she was given the room adjacent to the Oratory, the Floor above the Oratory was occupied by the other Cloistered Carmel Sisters. The Apostolic Carmel Sisters lived in the outhouses in the campus.

The cot, stool, a small statue of Infant Jesus of Prague and the rosary used by the Saint were preserved in her room and were handed over to the Cloistered Carmel, for the shrine, very recently. Photo copies of the same are mounted on the wall of her cell.

There is a reliquary (Colour Page 4) which contains a tiny piece of her bone. It is authenticated by Fr Simeon of the Holy Trinity, the Postulator General, as given on November 13, 1983, on the occasion of her Solemn Beatification. This proof is also placed at the back of the reliquary.

The details of the major events of her life, in chronological order, are put up on the wall. The precious thoughts which flowed spontaneously from her, while in ecstasy (which had been written down by the sisters) are artistically displayed on the walls of the Oratory.

In the garden, to the North-East of the Oratory, is the bust (sculpture representing the head, shoulder and upper chest) of the saint. It marks the location of the rose-apple tree in the garden, on which St Mary of Jesus Crucified had her levitation.

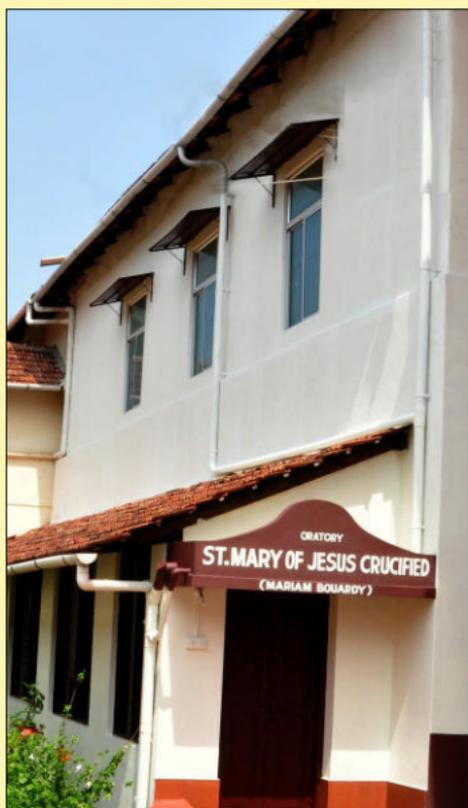
A visitor (devotee) to the Oratory can sit and pray in its serene atmosphere, read and reflect on her sublime thoughts on the walls and experience the presence of the humble flower of Palestine.

The Oratory is open from 7.30 a.m. to 5.30 p.m.

**The Apostolic Carmel Sisters are happy to welcome everyone who visits the Oratory.**



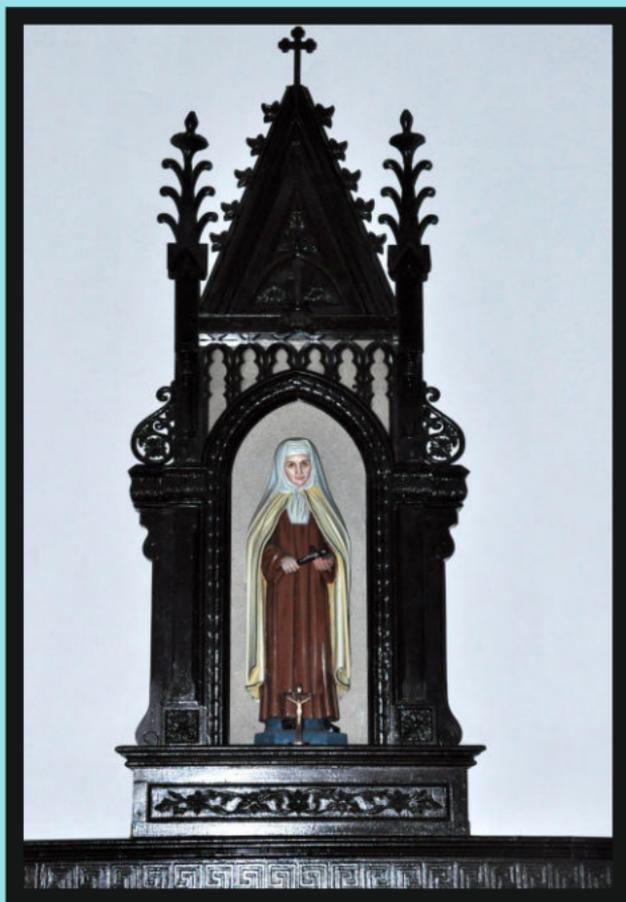
St Ann's Convent in 1870



The Oratory of St Mary of Jesus Crucified  
(part of the two-storeyed block  
of St Ann's Convent  
where she lived for two years)



The spot of the rose-apple tree where  
St Mary of Jesus Crucified had her levitation  
(1)



**SAINT MARY OF JESUS CRUCIFIED  
MADE HER PROFESSION BEFORE BISHOP MARIE EPHREM O.C.D.  
AT THIS ALTAR, IN A STATE OF ECSTASY, IN NOVEMBER 1871**

**The statue of St. Mary of Jesus Crucified in the Oratory  
and the altar where she pronounced her First Vows**



Photo of the Statue of Infant Jesus of Prague which had belonged to St Mary of Jesus Crucified



Photo of the Rosary of St Mary of Jesus Crucified



The cell where St Mary of Jesus Crucified lived for two years at St Ann's Convent



Photo of the Cot and Stool used by St Mary of Jesus Crucified when she was at St Ann's Convent in Mangalore

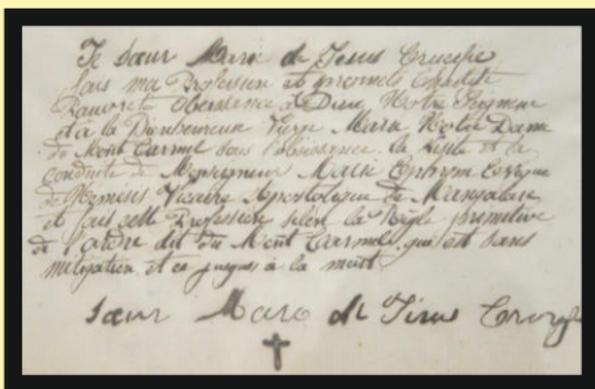


## The Reliquary

A bit of the bone  
of St Mary of  
Jesus Crucified,  
in the centre



Linen soaked with  
a drop of blood of  
St Mary of Jesus Crucified  
(in the center of Cross)



The formula of Vows of St Mary of Jesus Crucified  
of her First Profession

(only the signature is of St Mary of Jesus Crucified)

## PROLOGUE

Jesus laid the foundation of His Church on the ‘*twelve stones*’ of the apostles who were mostly uneducated fishermen. But He used an educated firebrand, Saul, an enemy of the Church at one time, to become a vessel of election among the Gentiles and thus to spread His Church.

Time and again, in the history of the Church, we have examples of ordinary, simple, even illiterate people as well as highly accomplished persons, used by God to renew and revitalize His Church. Some of them were born in devout Catholic families others, converts. Yes, God fulfils His plans in most mysterious ways.

Mariam Baouardy (St Mary of Jesus Crucified) and Sophie Leeves (Venerable Mother Veronica of the Passion) are among the more recent examples. They are of special significance to us because both of them had, at one time, lived in Mangalore and served the local Church. While our Saint lived as a cloistered nun on the campus of St Ann’s Convent, Mangalore, Venerable Mother Veronica, the Foundress of the Apostolic Carmel, whose cause is with the Holy See for canonization, was sent to India by her Superiors. She arrived at Mangalore, as a Sister of St Joseph of the Apparition, on her way to Calicut, to start a new Convent and School.

God brought together these two diverse individuals and forged a strong spiritual bond between them, akin to the bond between the mother and the child. In fact, Sister Mary of Jesus Crucified addressed Mother Veronica as ‘*Mother*’, till the end of her life.

The Rosario Cathedral Parish in particular, can truly be proud that St Mary of Jesus Crucified was welcomed by the people with '*Te Deum*' at Rosario Cathedral, after her landing at the Bunder, Mangalore in 1870. Along with her were the other Cloistered Carmel and Apostolic Carmel sisters. They were then taken in procession to St Ann's Convent where she lived for two years. The Oratory at St Ann's Convent bears witness to this and is now a Pilgrimage centre. The Cloistered Carmel and the Apostolic Carmel were the first women religious orders to have served in the diocese of Mangalore.

Mariam Baouardy (Sister Mary of Jesus Crucified) and Sophie Leeves (Mother Veronica of the Passion), hailed from different cultural backgrounds but were drawn to each other like a magnet by the Holy Spirit. Mariam Baouardy was an orphan of Lebanese origin from the hill country of Upper-Galilee. Though uneducated, she was filled with the wisdom of the Holy Spirit and endowed with supernatural gifts. Sophie Leeves, on the other hand, came from an affluent, cultured family, well-educated but also deeply spiritual and attuned to the workings of the Holy Spirit in her.

Several books are written on the lives of St Mary of Jesus Crucified and Venerable Mother Veronica of the Passion and are available in English and in Konkani. This book, however, is an attempt to show how, in God's inscrutable designs, the two kindred souls were brought together and how they supported each other in carrying out God's plans.

## **Chapter I**

### **Background of the Two Mystics**

*St Mary of Jesus Crucified (Mariam Baouardy)* was from Palestine. She had been adopted by her paternal uncle after the death of her parents. She had great devotion to our Blessed Mother because her parents had prayed for a girl child at the grotto of Bethlehem and she had been the Blessed Virgin's gift to her parents. In her honour, from the age of five, she fasted every Saturday. The Blessed Virgin surrounded her with great tenderness.

Her uncle and aunt took care of her with great love and affection. As responsible guardians they had arranged for her marriage and were furious at her refusal to get married. After this they ill-treated her. She wanted to contact her brother Boulos (Paul) who had been adopted by her maternal aunt. She had not met him since their separation after their parents' death. She approached a former Muslim servant, who at first sympathized with her, then enticed her to become a Muslim. Her refusal enraged him and he slashed her throat and left her in an alley.

A lady in blue, took her to a grotto, looked after, her and restored her to health. She then, outlined to her, her life's program: *"You will never see your family again; you will go to France, where you will become a religious. You will be a child of St. Joseph before becoming a daughter of St Teresa. You will receive the habit of Carmel in one house, you will make your profession (of Vows) in*

*the second (convent) and you will die in the third (convent), at Bethlehem.”* We will see how these events took place as revealed to Mariam.

Later, Mariam would say that it was the Blessed Virgin who took care of her and restored her to health and gave her a program of life. The first part of it was fulfilled when she worked as a domestic in France and then joined the Convent of St Joseph of the Apparition in Marseilles, France. The remainder part of her life’s program was fulfilled after Mother Veronica took Mariam with her to the Carmel of Pau.

***Venerable Mother Veronica of the Passion***, nee Sophie Leeves, was an Anglican convert to Catholicism and later a religious of the Congregation of St Joseph of the Apparition. She had been sent to India, to be the superior of the new convent which was to be opened in Calicut by Bishop Michael Antony O.C.D. She first came to Mangalore where the sisters of St Joseph of the Apparition had a convent, namely, St. Ann’s Convent.

Before starting her mission at Calicut, she decided to make a retreat under the direction of Fr Marie Ephrem O.C.D, at Mangalore. During her retreat she was asked to pray for the cessation of the ‘*Goan Schism*’ connected with the double jurisdiction of the Padroado (under Goa) and Propoganda Fide (under the Vicar Apostolic), which was a great scandal to the Christians and a source of division. During three nights she endured severe diabolical obsession and on the following morning she reported everything to

Fr Marie Ephrem, O.C.D. He sustained and supported her and gave her absolution, which gave her great courage to continue her fight.

At Calicut, Mother Veronica started a new school and was very happy with her work at St Joseph's Convent, Calicut. However she heard an insistent call, "***I want you in Carmel***". Meanwhile Fr Marie Ephrem O.C.D. had been transferred to Calicut as parish priest and chaplain of the convent. He was anxious to have a teaching congregation of sisters for the education of girls in the Indian Mission. He spoke to Mother Veronica of the need felt by the Carmelite mission for the establishment of a congregation of Carmelite sisters who would devote themselves to the education of girls along the West Coast of India.

Mother Veronica loved her Congregation and her Congregation wanted her, but God's will was discerned by those in authority and she waited for the answer from Rome to enter the Carmel of Pau and prepare for the starting of the Carmel for the Missions (Apostolic Carmel Congregation).

While waiting for the reply from Rome she was asked to accompany her Superior General, Mother Emilie Julien, to Marseilles, France, where the Mother house and the Novitiate of the Congregation of St Joseph of the Apparition was located and where **Mariam Baouardy was a postulant** (*first stage in the religious formation of sisters*)

## Chapter II

### The TWIN SOULS meet

At Marseilles the Novice Mistress, Mother Honorine, was ill and could not carry out her duty. Hence, there was need of a replacement. A couple of days after the arrival of Mother Veronica, Fr Olive the clerical superior of the house, in the presence of the Superior General, told Mother Veronica that they wanted her to be the novice mistress. She explained that there was an obstacle because her cause was in Rome before the Congregation of Bishops and Regulars in order to enter Carmel. Fr Olive replied that it was no obstacle because she could give to the novices the spirit of Carmel – the spirit of prayer and penance. Mother Veronica bowed her head in submission. The will of God was her guide and He would accomplish His designs.

The next day (Wednesday) while entering the chapel, Mother Veronica was stopped by a little Arab postulant who said in broken French, that she had to do the washing of the clothes that day. Since she was regularly ill on Thursdays, she needed the novices to help her to finish the work that day itself. *Mother Veronica looked at her for a moment and a flash of interior light made her perceive that the young girl participated in the Passion of Christ.* Mother Veronica told her that she would send the novices. ***This was the beginning of the spiritual bond between Mother Veronica and Mariam.***

Mother Veronica immediately went to Mother Honorine to know more about the little Arab postulant, Mother Honorine told her several things about Mariam, also that on every

Friday she got the stigmata. She came to know that Mariam was misunderstood by some of the sisters who suspected that evil influences were responsible for her mystical experiences. Mariam herself did not understand what was happening and thought it was a '*malady*'.

Mother Veronica witnessed for herself the mystical phenomena of the stigmata unfolding itself from Thursday morning to Friday evening. On Thursday evening she saw the blisters form on the palms of her hands and on the feet. The next morning blood flowed from the hands, feet, her left side and her head. All the time she suffered terribly. At midday the stigmata began to dry up and by evening she was able to go for supper with the others.

Mariam was also gifted with prophetic utterances which were often verified by later events. For example, on the day that Mother Veronica had arrived, Mariam had told Mother Honorine that a sister had arrived with Mother General, that she loves her very much and that she would be the Novice Mistress. Mother Honorine knew that Mother Veronica was to go to Carmel, so she told Mariam that it was not possible. Mariam replied that she would see it for herself.

Later she told Mother Veronica that she would die in her arms, but Mother Veronica could not understand how that was possible because she was soon to leave for Carmel. One day after Holy Communion the Lord told Mother Veronica that He wished that Mariam should go with her to Carmel, She told the Lord to arrange for it, as indeed He did, in a most marvelous way.

The time came for Mariam to be admitted to the Novitiate but she did not get the required number of votes to be admitted to the Novitiate and had to be sent back. Hence, Mother Veronica was free to suggest to Mariam that she could accompany her to the Carmel of Pau. With great joy Mariam replied, almost in the same words as of Ruth, to her mother-in-law Naomi, in the Bible, *“Mother, where you go, I shall go, and where you are, I shall be, and where you die, I shall die.”*

Mother Veronica then told Mariam to ask Our Lord not to let the outer signs of the stigmata to show. The next morning Mariam came with a radiant face, saying that the Holy Virgin had told her that she would not have the ‘malady’ until the next year during lent. And so it was.

Mother Veronica wrote to the Prioress of the Carmel of Pau for permission to bring Mariam to the Carmel of Pau, adding that the child was very virtuous and obedient. When her former confessor, Fr Philip Abdon was told that Mariam was going to Carmel, he said, *“She needs to be in a cloister and I thank God that she has found someone to protect her.”* Yes, Mother Veronica would do all she could to protect her. They were destined to grow together in the love and experience of God, supporting each other.

The second part of programme, given to her at the Grotto of Alexandria, that of *“becoming a daughter of St. Teresa”* (meaning that she would become a Cloistered Carmelite) was to be fulfilled when she left Marseilles for the Carmel of Pau, with Mother Veronica.

## Chapter III

### At the Carmel of Pau

On June 14, 1867, Mother Veronica and Mariam arrived at the Carmel of Pau. It was the Feast of the Most Holy Trinity. For Mother Veronica, it was a time of great graces. Prayer was her delight. Mariam, too, was accepted with great love and respect by the community and given the postulant's dress. On the feast of St. Elias, her own countryman, finding that she was in ecstasy, Mother Veronica told the prioress, "*You have only to tell her to come back to herself out of obedience. She will do it instantly.*" When the prioress did so, Mariam obeyed and came back to herself.

On the octave of the feast of St Elias, Mariam was given the holy habit and the name Sister Mary of Jesus Crucified. However, she called herself, '*the little nothing*'. Mother Veronica found her in an ecstatic state on that day. The third part of the program of her life marked out by the Lady in blue had been fulfilled – ***You will receive the habit of Carmel in one house*** – It was at the Carmel of Pau.

The community thought that Sister Mary of Jesus Crucified would draw down more blessings if she learnt to recite the Divine Office with the sisters. Hence, she was given a breviary. But she found it very difficult, even though Mother Veronica, kneeling by her side, tried to help her. Finally it was clear that God did not want her to be a choir sister. She remained a white veiled sister.

In September, after a shortened novitiate ending with a retreat, Mother Veronica made her profession in the Third Order Regular. During her retreat, she had seen a vision of a globe in which a portion was lacking. Thus she was made to understand that this void would be filled by the foundation of an active Carmelite order – the Apostolic Carmel.

At the profession ceremony, Sister Mary of Jesus Crucified saw a huge cross over the prostrate form of Mother Veronica. The cross was to be her portion until her death. It was to be the same for Sister Mary of Jesus Crucified. Their devotion to the Passion of Christ knit them together. *“I was like her”* says Mother Veronica, *“All that we saw, all that we heard was delicious to us.”*

After her profession, Mother Veronica was asked to draw up the Constitutions for the New Congregation. Ten days before Christmas, in obedience to her superior, she set out to start the new foundation. She went to Annecy (France) first and was directed to La Roche, in Savoy (France). The bare cross awaited her in Savoy. After five months of fruitless search to start a foundation for the Apostolic Carmel Congregation, she returned to Pau, utterly dejected.

Finally she was asked to try at Bayonne (France) and there she found a place to start the new foundation. Permission of Monsignor La Croix, the Bishop of Bayonne, was obtained. The prayers, penances and the sufferings of Sister Mary of Jesus Crucified must surely

have gone a long way to help Mother Veronica, to found the Apostolic Carmel Congregation

Mother Veronica got permission to re-enter the Carmel of Pau and stay there until the opening of the Little Carmel (the Cradle of the Apostolic Carmel) at Bayonne. To quote Mother Veronica from her autobiography, “*I found Sister Mary of Jesus Crucified going through terrible trials. The devil had received power to torment her, to obsess her and even to take possession of her body. This monster even tried to kill her and put into her food, bits of pointed glass, bent pins etc that she may be choked when eating her soup.*”

Here we can bring to our mind the Book of Job in the Old Testament. God allowed Satan to have power over Job when He said to Satan, “*Behold he is in your power, only spare his life.*” Job remained faithful to God. Later God restored the fortunes of Job. A similar thing had happened in the life of Sister Mary of Jesus Crucified. She remained faithful to God in the midst of all her trials. .

## Chapter IV

### **Little Carmel at Bayonne and the New Foundation in India**

After a month at Pau, on July 14, 1868, Mother Veronica left for Bayonne. She took possession of the outhouse, which had belonged to the Carmel of Bayonne and started the Carmel for the Missions (Apostolic Carmel) on July 16, 1868 with two postulants. Many candidates came, and those who were not suitable, had to leave. And those who remained, she trained in the spirit of Carmel. There was great poverty but peace and joy also abounded. They called the house '*Little Carmel*'.

Meanwhile in India, Fr Marie Ephrem had been made the Vicar Apostolic of Mangalore. He wanted not only the Third Order Regular of active Carmelites (the Apostolic Carmel sisters) but also a Foundation for the Great Carmel at Mangalore. Mother Veronica had prepared three sisters to send them for the new foundation in Mangalore. Mother Elias, with four other sisters and Sister Mary of Jesus Crucified (who was a novice) were selected from the Carmel of Pau, for Mangalore. Accompanied by two Carmelite priests, Frs Lazare O.C.D. and Gracian O.C.D., they set out on August 19, 1870 for India.

The voyage was disastrous – two Great Carmel sisters died en route and were buried at Aden. They stopped at St Joseph's Convent, Calicut on their way to Mangalore. There in the convent, where Mother Veronica had been

the first superior, Mother Elias breathed her last. Her death was a great loss because she was a woman of great faith and experience. The rest of the weary travelers reached Mangalore on November 19, 1870.

They received a warm welcome at Rosario Cathedral from the Prelates, Priests and the people of Mangalore and were led in procession to St. Ann's Convent, the very place where Mother Veronica had stayed for some time before proceeding to Calicut.

St. Ann's Convent had been vacated in 1867 by the sisters of St Joseph of the Apparition, after the roof over the school had given way during the heavy monsoons. It had been repaired by Bishop Michael Antony O.C.D., the predecessor of Bishop Marie Ephrem O.C.D. The Carmelite Tertiaries who had been trained by him and were living at St Ann's Convent, welcomed the sisters.

Beginnings are always hard and more so when three different categories of people, with different backgrounds and training, live side by side, as a single community, which they did for seven months. The Cloistered Carmel sisters needed seclusion and hence they were later given a newly overhauled two-storied building where they had enough privacy to carry on their regular cloistered life.

The sisters of Third Order Regular (Apostolic Carmel) trained by Mother Veronica and the Tertiaries of Bishop Michael Antony O.C.D., lived in outhouses with cracked walls, little furniture and very few facilities, until more suitable accommodation could be arranged for them. After

a short period, two more sisters were sent by Mother Veronica to Mangalore and four sisters came from the Great Carmels of Pau and Bayonne.

At first everything went on well; peace and unity reigned in the two communities. Mother Veronica was consoled to hear from Bishop Marie Ephrem that he was very happy with her sisters in India. However, the responsibility as mother and foundress, with her children far away in India, weighed on Mother Veronica heavily and she expressed her feelings in a letter to Sr Mary of Jesus Crucified.

Sister Mary of Jesus Crucified worked hard in the kitchen, garden and laundry. Her mystical experiences also continued. During the season of Lent in 1871, her stigmata re-appeared. Besides, she was found in a state of prolonged ecstasy. Several times the sisters saw her in a trance on a high branch of a rose-apple tree near the convent.

But though her mystical experiences were strange and wonderful, her obedience was religious. When asked to come down from the tree in the name of obedience, she came down. The story got round that there was a living saint in the Carmel of Mangalore and there were repeated requests to see her.

Bishop Marie Ephrem had been hesitating a little to permit her to make her vows, because of the extra-ordinary phenomena connected with her life. During her 21 days retreat, given by Fr Lazare O.C.D., he examined her daily

and was satisfied with her spiritual life. He was even impressed by the account of the trials she had undergone.

On November 21, 1871, she was almost constantly in ecstasy. At the moment of pronouncing her vows, she had to be awakened from her ecstasy. After pronouncing her vows she was once again in ecstasy and transformed. The fourth part of the program outlined by Our Lady “***you will make your profession in the second*** (Mangalore) was realized. The Bishop preached a glowing sermon thanking God for His mercies towards her. It was a festival of ecstatic joy for Sister Mary of Jesus Crucified on that day.

But soon after the solemn profession everything changed for her. It began a day after the solemn profession when one of her superiors asked her, when she was in ecstasy, to open her heart to her. She had replied that Our Lord had told her to tell everything to the confessor (Fr. Lazare) and to the Bishop, if there was need, but to no one else.

However she also added that, if the superior told her under obedience, she would do it. Such was her attitude to the vow of obedience. However the superior was upset and concluded that the supernatural phenomena was from the devil. The Bishop too felt offended and forbade her to tell him anything. He too attributed everything to the devil.

In the two convents – the Cloistered Carmel and the Third Order Regular (the Apostolic Carmel) - there were both favourable and unfavourable comments regarding Sister Mary of Jesus Crucified, thus splitting the communities.

She was going through her own Gethsemane - a period of suffering. To make matters more difficult for her, Fr Lazare, her confessor, was transferred to Mahe, later to France. She was alone, with no help from her confessor and was surrounded by those who mistrusted her and were hostile to her.

Mother Veronica, however, did not lose her faith in Sister Mary of Jesus Crucified. In her letters to Fr.Lazare she writes that she was not surprised that her devoted child had to suffer, because through suffering she could resemble Jesus.

Finally the superiors decided to send her back to the Carmel of Pau on November 5, 1872. Sister Mary of Jesus Crucified was not sure whether she was wanted at Pau. But she got a resounding welcome from all, especially from Mother Veronica. The community at Pau tried to make up for the harsh treatment she had received in Mangalore.

Meanwhile there was trouble brewing among the sisters of the Third Order Regular (the Apostolic Carmel) in Mangalore because of certain decisions taken by Bishop Marie Ephrem, without consulting Mother Veronica or even disregarding her requests. Of the five sisters sent by Mother Veronica to India, two had been sent back by Bishop Marie Ephrem and she herself was not allowed to come to India. After being appraised of the affairs in Mangalore, Bishop La Croix of Bayonne refused to allow any more sisters from Bayonne to go to Mangalore.

Before leaving Mangalore, Sister Mary of Jesus Crucified had told Bishop Marie Ephrem that he would die in six months. Sure enough on April 10, 1873, he died of malaria. It was a stunning blow to the infant Apostolic Carmel Congregation and it came to the verge of dissolution. Would God abandon the work begun under obedience with so much self-sacrifice and suffering? Surely not, but Mother Veronica had to '*suffer*' that the Apostolic Carmel Congregation might '*live*'.

After her return to Pau, Sister Mary of Jesus Crucified had sent word to Mother Veronica at Bayonne, "*that all would be swept away*". That is what happened. Mother Veronica could not send sisters to Mangalore, nor could she go. So with agony akin to that of death, she had to close the Little Carmel at Bayonne and return to Pau, physically broken and empty handed, on October 10, 1873.

## Chapter V

### Onward Move - Crushed but Not Defeated

The heart-broken Mother Veronica was received at the Carmel of Pau with much affection and sympathy. Sister Mary of Jesus Crucified was now her guide and protector, directing her '*old mother*' along the way of perfection. Soon after her arrival, Sister Mary of Jesus Crucified told her that the Lord wished that she be known as Sister Marie Therese of Jesus and no more Sr Veronica of the Passion. She had knowledge of Mother Veronica's thoughts and actions. In her ecstasy she gave directions to Mother Veronica.

Mother Veronica had to make her novitiate again to become a Discalced Carmelite. She made her Solemn Profession on November 21, 1874. Her mother had taken ill in England and as she was telling about this to her Novice Mistress, Sister Mary of Jesus Crucified told her that her mother had died. A few days later, during her ecstasy, she told Mother Veronica that her mother was saved because of the prayers of her children.

From the time of her return from Mangalore, Sister Mary of Jesus Crucified had dreamt of a Carmel at Bethlehem. She had predicted that she would die there - the last part of the program given her at Alexandria – '*that she would die in the third convent- Bethlehem*'. The Carmel of

Bethlehem had been planned but there were numberless difficulties before the permission was obtained. Among those chosen for the new foundation were Sister Mary of Jesus Crucified and Mother Veronica. They had found a benefactress for the new foundation in the person of Mlle Dartigaux. Mother Veronica on her part had been ready to offer all the inheritance she expected as well as the things she had brought (after closing the Little Carmel at Bayonne) for the Carmel at Bethlehem.

The little band of ten Carmelites accompanied by Fathers Bordacher and Estrate and the foundress Mlle Dartigaux set out for Bethlehem on August 10, 1875. On the way they stopped at several places:

- Montpellier (where they met Fr Lazare O.C.D. who was the confessor of Sister Mary of Jesus Crucified in Mangalore),
- Marseilles (where the group paid a visit to the sisters of St Joseph of the Apparition, where Sister Mary of Jesus Crucified had been a postulant);
- Alexandria (at the grotto where Our Lady had taken care of Sister Mary of Jesus Crucified after the former Muslim servant had slashed her neck)

Finally they reached Jerusalem. They spent 15 days in Jerusalem, visiting with great devotion all the places connected with the life, death and resurrection of Jesus.

The new monastery was not yet built; hence they were installed in a temporary house by the Patriarch of

Jerusalem. Sister Mary of Jesus Crucified selected a spot on the hillside for the building. She had an inner vision of the plan but she was illiterate and could not draw it. Without an architectural blueprint, the Polish Franciscan priest, in charge of putting up the monastery, could not go ahead. Mother Veronica using her skill and resourcefulness prepared a cardboard model after listening closely to the description given by Sister Mary of Jesus Crucified. But measurements were needed. She was not an architect, hence she begged the Lord for understanding and with interior enlightenment, she drew a plan which was found to be sufficient.

During the season of Lent of 1876, the stigmata of Sister Mary of Jesus Crucified had appeared and she suffered intensely on each Friday. And it continued until Good Friday and then stopped.

On November 21, 1877, a part of the monastery was completed and blessed by the Patriarch of Jerusalem. The sisters shifted from the temporary house to the new monastery where they had once again, the joy of living in solitude and silence.

The spiritual ties that bound Sister Mary of Jesus Crucified and Mother Veronica had grown stronger and deeper over the years. While gathering flowers for the chapel, Mother Veronica had a fall and dislocated her wrist. It was badly set and it gave her much pain; hence she found it difficult to follow regular community life. One day in ecstasy, Sister

Mary of Jesus Crucified told her that Jesus wished her to follow community life and give good example to the younger sisters. From that day Mother Veronica says that she had the grace to return to regular community life.

Mother Veronica's love and concern for Sister Mary of Jesus Crucified was so great that she feared that the extraordinary gifts and graces may make her proud. However she realized that when God gave her the most marvelous graces, it was then that people and demons had permission to torment and humiliate her. On the contrary, when people exalted her, God plunged her into desolation.

Sister Mary of Jesus Crucified always loved Mother Veronica and stood by her steadfastly. She defended her when anyone spoke against her. She continued to call Mother Veronica, "*Mother*" even when she was just Sister Marie Therese of Jesus, after she joined Cloistered Carmel, the second time. For Mother Veronica, Sister Mary of Jesus Crucified was her cherished child. Their affection for each other was supernatural.

Sister Mary of Jesus Crucified had received the knowledge of the death of Pope Pius IX in ecstasy and also of the election of Pope Leo XIII, his successor. She loved the saintly Monsignor Bracco, the Patriarch of Jerusalem, who was humble and mortified.

In the meantime, the sisters from Mangalore had repented for misjudging her and asked for pardon. Sister Mary of

Jesus Crucified had replied, “*All that has taken place, was willed by Jesus. May His name be praised ! It is God who has permitted everything*”. As she had predicted, the Mangalore Mission had passed into the hands of the Jesuits.

Meanwhile the time of her earthly sojourn was coming to an end. On August 22, 1878, around mid morning, she went to bring a bucket to take drinking water for the workers and while climbing a steep slope, she fell and fractured her arm in several places. It was badly set by an Arab bone-setter. Soon gangrene set in and she suffered excruciating pain. They realized that she was sinking and gave her viaticum.

Towards the end, she wanted the Prioress and Mother Veronica to be with her. Fr. Chirou came and gave her the last absolution. He said, “My God, mercy” She replied “Yes Mercy” These were her last words. She was given the crucifix to kiss, one last absolution, then she fell back in Mother Veronica’s arms, as she had predicted in Marseilles, and gave up her beautiful soul to God. The date was August 26, 1878. The Prioress closed one eye, and Mother Veronica, the other eye. Her face had taken on an expression of peace and heavenly beauty. The whole community was present at her beautiful death.

Dr. Carpani removed her heart as she had desired that it should be sent to Pau. It was placed in a beautiful niche in the wall of the chapel at Pau. After her body was interred,

Mother Veronica was crushed with grief and overcome with fatigue. What a void she felt in her heart! She had led this child of grace to Carmel. Her child was dead, but she, the mother, was still alive. She longed to follow her as she felt that she could no longer live on this earth.

Shortly after the death of Sister Mary of Jesus Crucified, Mother Veronica began to hear an interior voice, “*prepare yourself for suffering*”. Thus began a period of darkness, sufferings of every kind, of humiliation and misunderstanding. The greatest of these were the interior afflictions, a feeling of helplessness, feeling the weight of her sins and a sense of abandonment by God.

Sister Mary of Jesus Crucified had predicted it before her death, “*Now people flatter you later on it will be just the opposite. You will suffer both in soul and body, but in the midst of all your trials Jesus will not abandon you...*”.

Finally Mother Veronica spoke to the Patriarch of Jerusalem, who guided and supported her. Then he gave her permission to go back to the Carmel of Pau. The terrible period of purification had lasted for nine years. Sister Mary of Jesus Crucified had predicted that after the period of suffering, “*the little birds will sing in your heart.*” This came true in the years which followed.

Mother Veronica was welcomed once again at Pau with open arms. She felt she had a mission in keeping alive the

memory of Sister Mary of Jesus Crucified in France. Almost all the sisters who had known her were dead. Mother Veronica began collecting material on the life of Sister Mary of Jesus Crucified. Fr Lazare O.C.D., her spiritual director, asked her to write her own autobiography, where she could give some details about Sister Mary of Jesus Crucified. She completed it in 1889.

She gave material on the life of Sister Mary of Jesus Crucified to Lady Herbert, the sister of Fr Kenelm who had been miraculously cured by a relic of Sister Mary of Jesus Crucified. Lady Herbert wrote the book, "*Life*" on Sister Mary of Jesus Crucified. Later Mother Veronica herself wrote, "*The Marvelous Life of Sister Mary of Jesus Crucified*", in French, in 1903 (in three volumes). She also had the joy of looking after the niche where the heart of the mystic had been enclosed.



**Rosario Cathedral, Mangalore, where St Mary of Jesus Crucified and the other Pioneers were received after they landed at Bunder**



**St Ann's Convent Chapel and the entrance to St Ann's Convent, Mangalore**



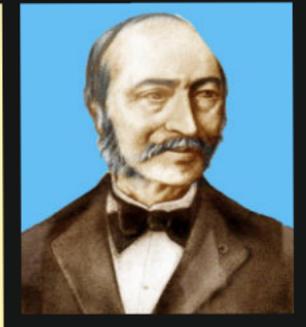
**Sacred Heart Monastery of Kankanady, Mangalore  
which St Mary of Jesus Crucified was instrumental in founding**



**The beautiful sanctuary of the Sacred Heart Monastery, Mangalore**



**The Shrine at Kankanady, Mangalore where the people honour St Mary of Jesus Crucified**



**The portraits of Mlle Matilda and  
Count George de Nedonchel  
- Founders of Sacred Heart Monastery** (7)



**The statue of  
St Mary of Jesus Crucified  
at the shrine in Kankanady**



**Carmel of Pau where St Mary of Jesus Crucified and Venerable Mother Veronica had lived for several years.  
Venerable Mother Veronica died at Pau on November 16, 1906**



**The Sisters of the Apostolic Carmel and the Congregation of Carmelite Religious at the Grave of Venerable Mother Veronica at Pau, on July 16, 2018**

## Epilogue

*“Unless the grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies,  
it is left alone; but when it dies, it bears abundant fruit.”*

### ***The Apostolic Carmel Congregation***

Mother Veronica had returned to Pau, broken hearted and empty handed. The offshoot of Carmel – the Apostolic Carmel – that she had planted at Bayonne, under obedience to God’s will, was uprooted. Its tiny shoot which was transplanted at Mangalore was likely to wither away and die because of the strong winds of adversity that wilted the tiny sapling, threatening to destroy it because of the irregularities that had crept in after some time, at Mangalore.

Mother Veronica’s hands were tied, she could do nothing to help the sisters whom she had trained and sent to India. Bishop Marie Ephrem O.C.D. was in full control and he had taken certain decisions that were detrimental for the unity and steady growth of the young sapling. Before the storm could cease and the plant could revive, he died suddenly of malaria on April 10, 1873.

But God, who had allowed the seeming total failure of Jesus on Calvary and the scattering of His disciples before His Church could be stabilized and flourish, did not allow the wilted plant of the ‘***Apostolic Carmel***’ to die but rather to grow tall and strong. However it took many years for the storm to subside. Meanwhile the plant had sent deep roots into the soil, watered by the prayers, tears

and sacrifices of Mother Veronica in the cloisters - at Pau and Bethlehem. Today the tiny sapling - the Apostolic Carmel Congregation - has become a mighty tree, sending shoots in all directions.

Just as God chose the humble parish priest, John Mary Vianey, the Cure de Ars, to become a model pastor and revitalize the church, so too did He choose Mother Marie des Anges, a simple village girl from France, not much educated and with little knowledge of English, to stabilize the congregation and guide it for the first forty years. She was one of the pioneers who had arrived in 1870.

Mother Veronica had learnt in Bethlehem that the Apostolic Carmel Congregation, which had weathered the early storms, was still surviving. She had heard that Mother Marie des Anges had been appointed the Superior General over the four convents – Mangalore, Cannanore, Calicut and Tellicherry. She had also come to know that the Jesuits had taken over the jurisdiction of Mangalore Diocese and that Bishop Pagani S.J. had guided the congregation during the time of internal turbulence and with God's grace and proper guidance, the young sapling had weathered the storm.

While in Bethlehem, learning that Mother Marie des Anges was sick, she wrote to her a very affectionate letter and from then onwards, communication between her and Mangalore remained open. In 1890, Bishop Pagani S.J. visited Mother Veronica at Pau and gave her the joyful news that the Apostolic Carmel was flourishing. He spoke

in great appreciation of Mother Marie des Anges and the sisters and the wonderful work they were doing.

In 1892, Mother Marie des Anges had to go to Europe because of ill health and she went to Pau to meet Mother Veronica and this brought great comfort to the latter. Thereafter the correspondence between her and her beloved children in India became more regular.

In 1896, Mother Marie des Anges was bitten by a mad dog and was asked to go to Europe for treatment, as treatment for rabies was not available in India. She met Mother Veronica again at Pau. Mother Veronica inspired the son of Madame Gil de Morena, her old faithful friend at Bayonne, to pay the bills of the Pasteur Institute for the treatment. So great was her love for Mother Marie des Anges and for the Apostolic Carmel.

Meanwhile Sr Elias Divine, who was also one of the A. C. pioneers and was in the convent in Quilon, had preferred to be under the Carmelite jurisdiction and she had opened a house in Trivandrum, thus founding a new congregation, now known as the CCR (Congregation of Carmelite Religious). She too kept in contact with Mother Veronica and visited her regularly.

Mother Veronica's painful labour to bring the Apostolic Carmel to birth had not been in vain. The Lord, who had acted through her to give it birth, had given it new life without Mother Veronica's physical presence and active participation. She rejoiced at its growth and vitality. However the congregation could not have grown without

her hidden prayer and her life of self-abnegation. Her seemingly fruitless sowing had borne abundant fruit.

Mother Veronica's life had been a life of vibrant faith which flowed out in constant obedience to God's will and her prayer-filled contact with God. Her longing for heaven grew more and more intense as she grew in age. Physical infirmities increased with the passage of time. On November 16, 1906, when the community was at evening prayer and singing the 'Te Deum', Mother Veronica went to her eternal reward. She was eighty three years old.

*A unique phenomenon occurred at the time of her death, some distance away. A young woman, the sister of a Carmelite nun at Pau, was getting ready to go to bed. She took her candle and left the room. She returned after some time and told her mother, "I have seen a Carmelite. Something seems to have happened at Pau". For above the candle flame, she had seen a halo of light form around the face of a Carmelite nun, who looked at her smiling. She had not known Mother Veronica or about her illness, but her description of the Carmelite nun, perfectly coincided with the face of Mother Veronica.*

*"Was it an illusion or a reality?" That does not matter. However it confirms our faith that there is Life beyond death - a Life rewarded when lived only for God.*

### ***Cloistered Carmel in Mangalore***

Sister Mary of Jesus Crucified had known that she would make her religious profession in Mangalore where the

Great Carmel Convent would be opened. In a vision she had seen Mlle Matilda de Nedonchel and had come to know that her father, Count George de Nedonchel from Belgium, would be the founder of Carmel in Mangalore. However, the sisters of Great Carmel, when they landed in India, did not have a place of their own.

They lived alongside with the sisters of the Apostolic Carmel. Their staying in the same campus was a source of confusion for the people. The Great Carmel sisters lived in a separate building (a two-storied building with a chapel and all other facilities required for a cloister). They lived strictly within their cloister. But the people confused them with the teaching sisters of the Apostolic Carmel. Hence, reports had reached Europe that the Cloistered Carmelites were not keeping strictly to the cloister and were engaged in teaching work.

Bishop Pagani S.J. understood the situation and erected a monastery on a plot bought at Kankanady where the Sacred Heart Monastery was built. The Cloistered Carmelites shifted there on March 19, 1882, twelve years after their arrival in India. The relics of Mother Elias who had died at Calicut and of Bishop Marie Ephrem O.C.D., which were buried at St. Ann's, were shifted to Sacred Heart Monastery at Kankanady.

From March 19, 1882, St Ann's became a convent of the Apostolic Carmel and the Mother House of the Congregation. Earlier the Apostolic Carmel sisters had no proper quarters of their own but after the cloistered

Carmelites shifted, they could occupy the block used by them. They used the same chapel until the new beautiful chapel at St Ann's was completed in 1898.

Shortly after Sister Mary of Jesus Crucified had been sent back to France, because of the misunderstanding of her mystical phenomenon, there had been a wave of repentance in Mangalore. On the day of her death and many days following her death, mysterious perfumes were noted not only in Bethlehem and Pau but also in Mangalore.

After the Cloistered Carmelites shifted to Kankanady, the sisters of the Apostolic Carmel found certain things which had been used by Sister Mary of Jesus Crucified and had been left behind by the Cloistered Carmelites, namely, her cot, stool, a small statue of Infant Jesus of Prague and her rosary. The Apostolic Carmel sisters preserved them very carefully. More recently the Apostolic Carmel sisters handed them over to the Great Carmel at Kankanady who have placed them in the Shrine dedicated to St Mary of Jesus Crucified.

**While the devotees will have grace-filled moments of visiting the relics of the Saint at her own Cloistered Carmel Monastery, Kankanady, they are invited to continue their pilgrimage from there to the HOLY PLACE where the Saint lived and made her First Profession, namely, the ORATORY OF ST MARY OF JESUS CRUCIFIED, at St Ann's Convent, Bolar, Mangalore.**

## **List of Important Dates**

- 1823 Birth of Mother Veronica (October 1)
- 1846 Birth of Mariam Baouardy (January 5)
- 1850 Baptism of Mother Veronica (February 2)
- 1851 Mother Veronica joins the Congregation of St Joseph of the Apparition (March 19)
- 1862 Mother Veronica sets out for India
- 1863 Mother Veronica hears an interior voice, at Calicut  
 “I want you in Carmel”  
 Fr Marie Ephrem and Mother Veronica envisage the founding of the Third Order
- 1867 Mother Veronica meets Mariam Baouardy (April)  
 Both enter the Cloistered Carmel (June 14)  
 Mother Veronica receives the Carmelite habit and Mariam becomes a postulant (July 7)  
 Mariam receives the Carmelite habit and the name Sr Mary of Jesus Crucified (July 27)  
 Mother Veronica makes her Profession (Sept. 15)
- 1868 Foundation of the Apostolic Carmel at Bayonne, France (July 16)
- 1870 First batch of three AC sisters and six Cloistered Carmel sisters set out for India (August 21)  
 Establishment of the Apostolic Carmel and Cloistered Carmel at St. Ann’s (November 19)
- 1871 Sr Mary of Jesus Crucified pronounces her vows at St Ann’s (November 21)
- 1872 Sr Mary of Jesus Crucified returns to Pau (Nov.5)
- 1873 Bishop Marie Ephrem dies (April 10)  
 The Little Carmel is closed at Bayonne and Mother Veronica re-enters Carmel of Pau (Oct. 11)
- 1874 Mother Veronica’s Solemn Profession (Nov. 21)
- 1875 Sr Mary of Jesus Crucified and Mother Veronica set out for the foundation at Bethlehem (Aug. 20)
- 1878 Mother Marie des Anges appointed Superior General of the Apostolic Carmel Congregation by Fr. Victor of St. Antony OCD (January 14)

- 1878 Death of Sr Mary of Jesus Crucified at Bethlehem Carmel (August 26)  
Monsignor Pagani S.J. takes over the mission from the Carmelites (December 31)
- 1879 Monsignor Pagani S.J. confirms the appointment of Mother Marie des Anges as the Superior General. of the Apostolic Carmel Congregation (January 14)
- 1882 The Cloistered Carmelites leave St Ann's for Sacred Heart Monastery at Kankanady (March 19)
- 1892 Mother Marie des Anges visits Mother Veronica at the Carmel of Pau (April)
- 1896 Mother Marie des Anges visits Mother Veronica at the Carmel of Pau, a second time.
- 1906 Death of Mother Veronica at Pau (Nov. 16)
- 1983 Beatification of Sr Mary of Jesus Crucified (Nov. 13)
- 1999 Mother Veronica declared Servant of God. (July 16)
- 2014 Mother Veronica is declared Venerable (July 9)
- 2015 Canonization of Sr. Mary of Jesus Crucified (May 17)

## **Books on St. Mary of Jesus Crucified and Venerable Mother Veronica**

1. *Mariam "The Little Arab"* : Rev. Amedee Brunot SCJ
2. *Thoughts - Bl. Mary of Jesus Crucified* : Rev. D. Buzy SCJ.
3. *Bl. Mary of Jesus Crucified - Anthology* : Carmel of Bethlehem
4. ಪಾಲೆಸ್ತಿನಾಚೆಂ ಫುಲ್ : Sister M. Tharsilla A.C.
5. *God Alone Suffices* : Autobiography of Ven. Mother Veronica
6. *The Turn of the Road* : Sister Rosemarie A.C.
7. *A Strange Destiny* : Sister M. Carol A.C.
8. *As Clay in His Hands* : Sister M. Valeria A.C.
9. *Leap into Love* : Sister M. Valeria A.C.
10. *A Life in Letters - Vol. I, II.* : Compiled by Sr M. Carol A.C.
11. *The Relentless Quest* : Sister M. Carmilla A.C.
12. *The Flight of the Eagles* : Sister M. Carmilla A.C.
13. ಮದರ್ ವೆರೋನಿಕಾ : Sister M. Tharsilla A.C.



**Venerable Mother Veronica  
of the Passion  
Foundress of the Apostolic Carmel**



**Monsignor Marie Ephrem OCD  
Bishop of Mangalore, 1870-1873  
Co. Founder of the Apostolic Carmel**



**Mother Marie des Anges A.C.  
First Superior General  
1876-1909**



**The A.C. Cradle**

**St Ann's Convent built by Mother Marie des Anges A.C.  
It is the Foundation House of the Apostolic Carmel Congregation**