



BENO ZEPHINE

A Proud Stella Marian Who Has Done Us Proud



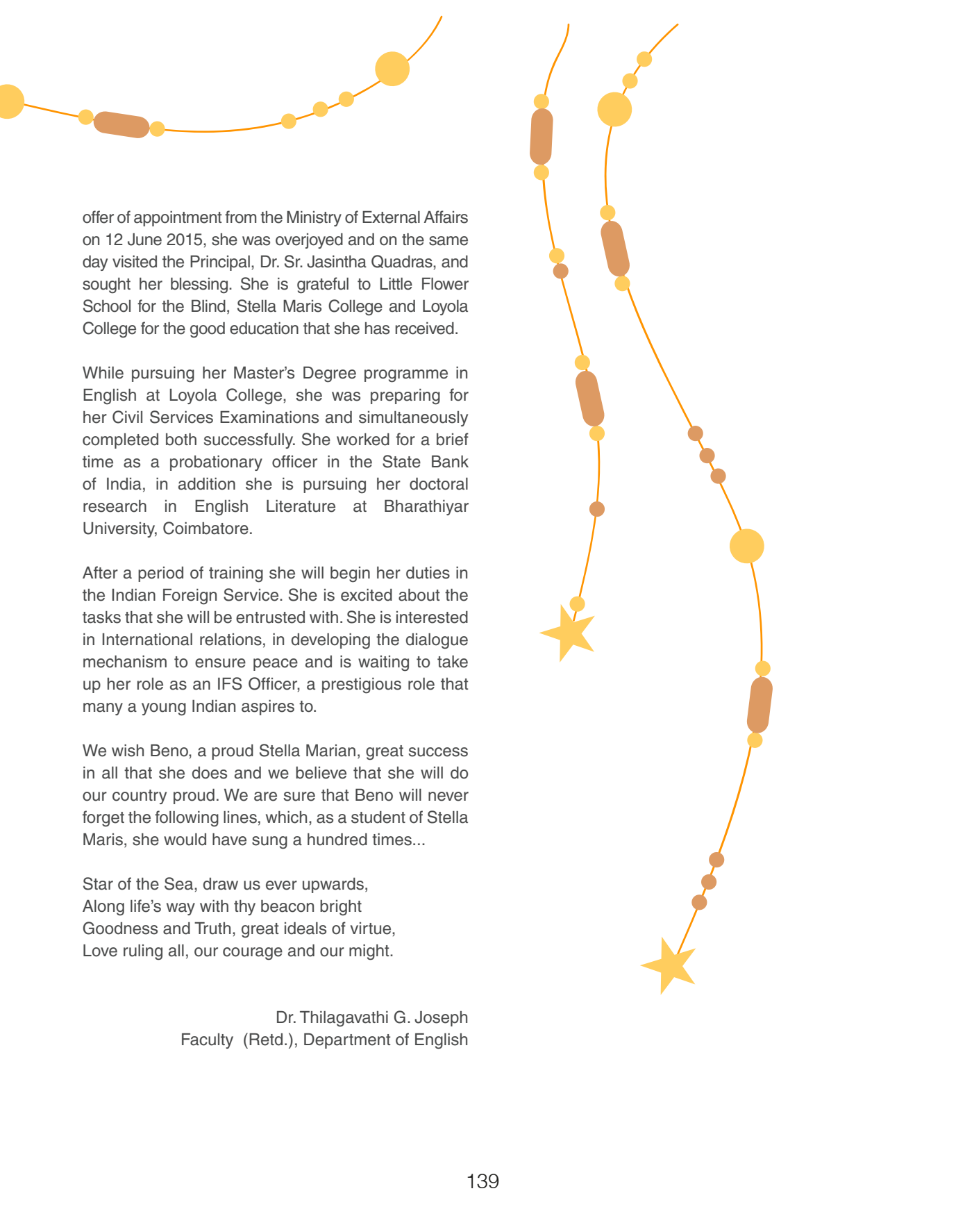
“I might not have vision but I had a vision to become an IFS officer” - Beno Zephine

The first B.A English class of 2008 had this sprightly, spectacled girl sitting in the front row, listening intently to every word that the teacher uttered. I was their teacher for the course in Fiction and every now and then I could hear a loud ‘ma’am’, followed by a question. She never took down points in braille and tried to store all details in her memory: as she herself says, she is a good listener. The fact that she was visually challenged was never a hindrance to her involvement in any activity, curricular or extracurricular. When a group of students presented a ‘rewritten version’ of Jane Austen’s *Pride and Prejudice* for internal assessment, she played the role of Darcy’s son.

In the second year again, when I was their teacher for “Literary Criticism”, she acted as King Lear.

She remembers her days at Stella with fondness and gratitude as she could never forget the encouragement she received to participate in many events, especially in public speaking, the most memorable being her address to the students at the Pongal celebration, and the Valedictory function.

Beno has secured the three hundred and forty third rank at the all India level in the Civil Services Examination and she is India’s first 100% blind to qualify for the Indian Foreign Service. When she received the



offer of appointment from the Ministry of External Affairs on 12 June 2015, she was overjoyed and on the same day visited the Principal, Dr. Sr. Jasintha Quadras, and sought her blessing. She is grateful to Little Flower School for the Blind, Stella Maris College and Loyola College for the good education that she has received.

While pursuing her Master's Degree programme in English at Loyola College, she was preparing for her Civil Services Examinations and simultaneously completed both successfully. She worked for a brief time as a probationary officer in the State Bank of India, in addition she is pursuing her doctoral research in English Literature at Bharathiyar University, Coimbatore.

After a period of training she will begin her duties in the Indian Foreign Service. She is excited about the tasks that she will be entrusted with. She is interested in International relations, in developing the dialogue mechanism to ensure peace and is waiting to take up her role as an IFS Officer, a prestigious role that many a young Indian aspires to.

We wish Beno, a proud Stella Marian, great success in all that she does and we believe that she will do our country proud. We are sure that Beno will never forget the following lines, which, as a student of Stella Maris, she would have sung a hundred times...

Star of the Sea, draw us ever upwards,
Along life's way with thy beacon bright
Goodness and Truth, great ideals of virtue,
Love ruling all, our courage and our might.

Dr. Thilagavathi G. Joseph
Faculty (Retd.), Department of English