

THE STELLA MARIS ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED FACULTY – THE SMART

2017 – 2018

It is a pleasure for The SMART members, with Dr. Geetha Sridharan and Dr. Thilagavathi Joseph as office-bearers, to get-together on the College campus to cherish a few moments of togetherness and friendship.

The first meeting of the academic year 2017-2018 was an informative one as Ms. Shankarasundari, a retired bank official and an expert in financial planning, had an interactive session about investing wisely in saving schemes that offer maximum benefit to pensioners.

Ms. Vasugi Ram Manohar, an alumna of the Department of English, and a member of 'The Chennai Story Telling Association', did a demo-narration of 'Learning through Storytelling', attended by the retired faculty, and some of their grandchildren. With puppets and pictures, when she narrated stories in Tamil and English, some of the smart grandmas wowed to revive the oral tradition.

Dr. Ashrafi Bhagat, the former head of the Department of Fine Arts enlightened the SMART members with her talk on "Buddhist Philosophy through Art and Architecture" with amazing pictures of Buddhist architecture and paintings. Buddha's love and compassion for humanity, presented through Jataka stories, and painted on the walls at Ajanta, which today is the World Heritage site under UNESCO, and the two types of Ajanta caves - Vihara, or monastery for living, and Chaitya, the prayer shrines containing the stupa - are some of the highlights of her talk. Ashrafi's presentation, with pictures and vivid descriptions left the audience awe struck.

The Christmas get together was a happy occasion when SMART members, clad in shades of red, merrily sang a few carols and listened to the message of Love, Peace and Joy delivered by Sr. Susan Matheikal, fmm, the Secretary of the College. The SMART members fulfilled another major requirement of linking their pension accounts with Aadhar and received their 'Jeevan Pramaan' certificates.

It was a joyful experience for three of the SMART members, Dr. Agnes Fernando, Dr. Annie Philip and Dr. Thilagavathi Joseph when they participated in the heritage tour organised by the College. The Thanjavur Temple, the Church of the Lady of Velankanni, the Tharangampadi heritage site, and Pitchavaram lake will be forever etched in our memory, as we had a happy time visiting these places along with the 'young' faculty members of various departments.

A workshop on Meditation was conducted by Mr. Vijayaraghavan of Heartfulness Foundation. With closed eyes as we followed his instructions to look inward to connect to our inner self, we could just relax our body and mind.

These home-coming events infuse us with renewed energy and help us remain connected with each other and with Stella Maris family.

Dr. Thilagavathi G Joseph
Secretary
SMART



Dr. Ashrafi being felicitated after her talk



Felicitation



Felicitating Dr. Christina after Xmas Message



Macrame Workshop



The SMARTies in front of the statue of Seigan Balg