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Fifty years of excellence

A well-defined vision coupled with unflagging determination towards the advancement of women's education that took shape half a century ago has today blossomed to become a premier institution in the city. Yes. From humble beginnings in August 1947, the Stella Maris College has come a long way. And as the college enters its Golden Jubilee year, it is all set to add lustre to its glorious history.

Started with 32 students in a single-storey building, with the objective of "preparing young women to grow into mature and responsible citizens, ready to face challenges at home and in society," Stella Maris has burgeoned into a multi-discipline institution with an enrolment of 2,300 students housed in spacious buildings on the 18-acre sprawling campus of "The Cloisters."

According to Sister Annamma Philip, Principal, "the focus is on all-round development of the students. The college aims at inculcating social awareness, even while laying emphasis on academic excellence. It grows students to become catalysts of change when they pass out."

The plethora of projects and programmes undertaken on the campus with the intention to create social awareness and hone the faculties of the students is testimony enough of this "holistic approach" to education. The environment awareness programme, functional literacy programme, movement for establishing gender justice, National Service Scheme, women's entrepreneurship development programme, project on writing skills ... all offer the students a range of experience and exposure.

The college has also incorporated Value Education Courses in its curriculum, under which several value and growth-oriented programmes such as "Family Life Education" and "Enter-faith Dialogue" are organised.

The academic record too has been



consistently impressive. Academically weaker students are helped through "remedial teaching programmes." The unique one-year Bridge Course to prepare such students face examination with ease has been highly successful. Having become autonomous in 1987, Stella Maris frames its own course of studies and constantly adopts innovative methods of teaching and evaluation.

To mark its Golden Jubilee year, the college intends to bring about certain changes in its curriculum, keeping pace with the changing needs and trends in the educational firmament. A significant introduction in the academic year 1997-98, according to the Principal, will be the "broad-based credit system of education that ensures greater

flexibility to students." The 117-strong faculty of the college is "actively preparing for the introduction of this system at the under graduate and post graduate levels," she adds.

Other plans to mark the Golden Jubilee include organising of college-level national seminars, public cultural performances by students, introduction of new scholarship schemes, etc.

The celebrations will be inaugurated on August 15 at 8-00 a.m. by Ms. Jayanthi I.A.S., one among the illustrious band of the college's alumni, which has spread out with distinction in the country and abroad.

T. KRITHIKA REDDY