

STELLA MARIS COLLEGE



2005 - 2006

Cover Page : Bonaventure Block, the oldest building on campus, housing the Department of Commerce.

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STELLA MARIS COLLEGE

(AUTONOMOUS)

(Accredited at the Five Star level by
the National Assessment and Accreditation Council)

17, Cathedral Road,
Chennai - 600 086.



ACADEMIC YEAR
2005 - 2006

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Editorial

Every institution has a history, a past that serves to anchor the beliefs and values that direct the destinies of those who live and work within it. The traditions and customs that develop with the passing of years, promote a common language that gives the institution its particular character, and help support its mission.

This compilation documents a continuing tradition that reflects the total collegial experience at Stella Maris during the past year. It represents the achievements, the joys, the growth-producing and capacity-building processes, the journeys and quests that make life here meaningful and challenging. The constant drive to break through boundaries, expand knowledge bases and experiment with innovation and change is highlighted in the reports of the activities of the departments and the various clubs. The articles and creative writing bear testimony to the enhanced learning

and compelling vision that such a complete academic environment can encourage and impel.

Students and faculty at Stella Maris strive to seek truth and meet ethical and professional obligations in their spheres of activity. We are always aware of the need to revitalise and expand existing parameters of the teaching-learning process, and to meet the challenge of arriving at a common understanding. In effect, therefore, collegial life is one in which pathways are constantly redesigned, road-maps re-charted. It is this which makes Stella Maris such an empowering environment in which to study and work. It shapes our sense of who we are as individuals, of how we come to be as a community. As we approach the Diamond Jubilee of the foundation of the college, our individual and collective odysseys continue to shape and affirm our identities.

EDITORIAL BOARD

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Ms. Bernadine Joseph, Department of English
Ms. Mallika Madhavan, Department of Fine Arts
Ms. R. Shanmugasundari,
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Student Members

Ms. Sowmya Rajendran, III B. A. English
Ms. Maria B. C., III B. A. English
Ms. Namrata Kartik, I B. A. English

Rev. Mother Proinsias fmm

1915 - 2005

A TRIBUTE

“Every believer in this world of ours must be a spark of light, a centre of love, a vivifying leaven amidst his fellowmen.” Mother Proinsias (Sr. Anne Marie Daly), quoted these words of Pope John XXIII in her message to Stella Maris on the occasion of the celebration of its Golden Jubilee in 1997. This year, 2006, as we move into the Diamond Jubilee year we remember the “spark of light” to whom Stella Maris owes its present existence on Cathedral Road.

Mother Proinsias was born on 7th August 1915 in Ireland. As the second Principal of Stella Maris College, she steered the institution from 1955-61 with her indomitable zeal, enthusiasm and great vision of empowering the women of India, only 23 percent of whom were literate. The period of her stewardship also saw the construction of the new building on the beautiful grounds of ‘The Cloisters’ on Cathedral Road. On the occasion of the annual day celebrations after the foundation stone was laid for the new college building on the present campus, she had this to say: “In these days of space exploration, with rockets soaring off to the other side of the moon, Stella Maris is solving her own space problem in the modern way – by launching out from her old orbit in Mylapore, to the new skies of ‘The Cloisters’. The venture, like any flight into space, is a daring one, but with the help of God with Whom all things are possible, we trust that the college with all its equipment and over 800 students aboard, will make a



happy landing at Cathedral Road for its reopening in June.”

Over four decades have passed since the “safe landing” and Stella Maris has achieved national and international recognition. The pride of Stella Maris, the present library, owes its existence to Sr. Irene Mathias, the then Principal, and Mother Proinsias who called upon the munificent nature of its well wishers to generate resources to establish it. The library is today one of the best equipped in the city. A great organiser, she left no stone unturned in expanding the College and upgrading its facilities. To her goes the credit of acquiring a grant of Rs. 1 lakh from the University Grants Commission towards the construction of the hostels. She was instrumental in establishing Maris Stella College at Viyayawada and served as its first Principal.

She was a great visionary and is rightly one of the founding mothers of this institution. The excellent educational principles she set forth focused on imparting a “sound and broad” education to all students. Character training was given as much importance as academics and into all Stella Marians were instilled the powerful virtues of honesty, sincerity and humility in thought, word and action. In her own words, “Every opportunity was taken to inspire in them the spirit of service, generosity, kindness and tolerance so that leaving the college they should not only be good

themselves, but should also be imbued with the desire and determination to do as much as good as circumstances, talents and education allows them. Thus, they will contribute to the spread of happiness and charity around them and so help to give the world a little more peace and unity which is the crying need of our day.”

The spark of light is no longer with us. She departed for her heavenly abode on 10th November 2005.

We remember Mother Proinsias with gratitude. Her vision is realised everyday with our every achievement as individuals and as successful women. The Franciscan Missionaries of Mary continue to navigate the ship of Stella Maris with the dedication and zeal of its founding mothers.

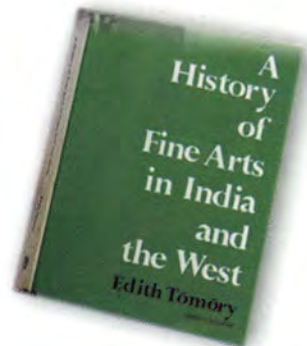
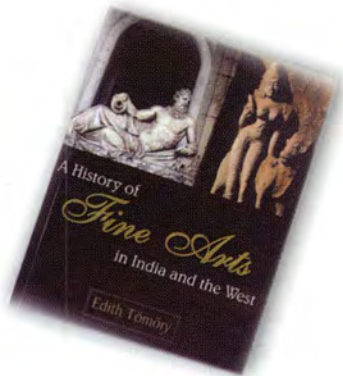
*Dr. Sr. Annamma Philip fmm
Principal*





*Dr. Sr. Edith Tömöry fmm
1905 -1998*





Dr. Sr. Edith Tömöry fmm A Celebration of Her Life and Legacy



1905 - 1998

She lit a small candle that cast its light, and divined the way for the women in Madras to an art education otherwise unthinkable in a conservative, tradition-bound, orthodox society.

It was a small beginning, with art education introduced at the Pre-University level, expanding to include B.A., M.A. and eventually blazing an

academic trail with the introduction of the M. Phil. programme in 1986. The Department of Fine Arts in Stella Maris is a testimony to this great woman's vision, dedication, passion, integrity and consistent hard work. It is today acknowledged as the only department that offers a structured curriculum in Fine Arts, and continues to be the only one of its kind in the state of Tamil Nadu.

To celebrate her achievements, the Department of Fine Arts organised a get-together of its alumnae on 15th July 2005. A large gathering of more than one hundred alumnae from the 1960s to the present came together to celebrate Sr. Edith's enduring legacy. The air was thick with wistful reminiscing; eyes brimmed with fond recollections and happy times spent in the department. Former students like Leela Ganapathy, Mahima Manohar, Sharada, Sr. Maryanne, Sr. Angel Mary and Ramaa

Narayanan recalled with nostalgia the memory of their association with her. I felt Sr. Edith was back amongst us, amidst us, silently blessing all present.

A spiritual ambience invested the evening with peace and joy in every gesture, action, smile and glance, each a reminder of why we were gathered there. A power-point presentation tracing the development of the department from its very beginnings to its present renowned position enthralled the audience. As a tribute to her scholarship and the high academic standards that she had set both for herself and the faculty and students, an endowment lecture in Sr. Edith's name was initiated that day. Two lectures have already been delivered by eminent art historians, B.N. Goswami and Annapurna Garimella, in the field of Indian art.

Sr. Edith's memory lives on in the nature of work that is carried on by the Department of Fine Arts and her spirit continues to guide us in all our endeavours.

*Ms. Ashrafi S. Bhagat
Head, Department of Fine Arts*

Dr. Ashrafi S. Bhagat was a student of the Department of Fine Arts, Stella Maris College. She obtained her doctorate from the Department of Art History and Aesthetics, M.S. University, Baroda. In 2003, a research paper titled "The 'Madras Art Movement' and the Lineages of Abstraction" appeared in the book titled 'Towards a New Art History: Studies in Indian Art' edited by Shivaji K. Panikkar among others. She serves as an art critic for the national daily, 'The Hindu', and has contributed articles on contemporary art to various journals and magazines.

College Day: 11th March 2006

ANNUAL REPORT

Good evening and a warm welcome to all of you, our Chief Guest for this evening, Professor V.S. Prasad, Director, National Assessment and Accreditation Council, Sr. Rita Marneni, Superior and Secretary of the college, Sr. Florine Monis, Superior, Stella Maris Convent, dedicated faculty, respected members of the Governing Body and Academic Council, administrative and supportive staff, loyal alumnae, cherished students, dear parents, benefactors, well wishers, and friends.

I stand before you with a sense of pride on this the 59th College Day celebrations to reaffirm the mission and commitment of Stella Maris College towards building a knowledge society. The college has continually been extending its services towards a more universal participation, towards transforming the scale and social function of higher education.

We are aware that our traditional image of a 'community of scholars' is giving way to a more complex one, comprising diverse networks of 'communities of contributors' or 'knowledge professionals'. We are thus moving from a liberal world to a professional world.

The rise of mass education in such a context amplifies the problem of reconciling breadth with depth, intellectual development with practical achievement. In responding to these challenges the college has launched several educational initiatives that prepare students to live and work in a global environment and match rivals in the quest for quality, talent and competence.



Principal, Dr. Sr. Annamma Philip fmm

All our achievements in this are due to the blessings of the Almighty and to the untiring efforts and hard work of the management, faculty and staff. However, it is also that time of the year when we wish our senior faculty a restful, retired life. This year, five faculty members leave the college. It is for us here, a loss that will always be felt, a void that cannot be filled.

Mrs. Bharathi Ramanan, Department of Physics, Mrs. Saroja Krishnamurthy, Head, Department of Sanskrit, Dr. Usha Krishnan, Head, Department of Botany, Dr. Ramaa Narayanan, Department of Fine Arts and Dr. Malathy Kumar, Physical Directress, will be retiring at the end of this academic year. You have all been pillars of support, stalwarts in your own right and academicians par excellence. We, at

Stella Maris are immensely grateful to you for your invaluable contribution to the growth and development of the institution. We shall miss your presence in the days to come but we still feel empowered by the legacy you leave behind. Thank you and a fond farewell. I am sure you will carry with you memories that are dear to you, to reminisce over and cherish.

We would also like to place on record the 35 years of dedicated services of Mr. Thambiraj, Senior Assistant in the college office. We are also grateful to Mr. Ebenezer Daniel and Mr. Maria Francis, supportive staff who have served the institution with a loyalty and dedication that is indeed remarkable.

In their continuing commitment to the cause of higher education the faculty have participated and presented papers at national and international conferences, seminars and workshops, as well as published books and articles in reputed journals.

Ms. Sandra Joseph, Department of Social Work and Sr. Kochuthressia Paulose, Dean of Student Affairs, jointly presented a paper titled 'A Paradigmatic View of Drug Addiction in Youth', at the University of St. Joseph, Lebanon.

Dr. Mary Terry, Department of Chemistry, presented a paper relating to Anti-Cancer Studies at the 40th IUPAC Congress at Beijing, China.

Dr. Madhu Dhawan has written nine books on Hindi grammar which were published by Macmillan India. Two books by the faculty, Department of Fine Arts and one from the Department of Hindi have been submitted for publication to the University of Madras on the occasion of the 150 years of establishment of the University.

Dr. Ashrafi Bhagat has been commissioned by the Lalit Kala Academy, New Delhi, to write a monograph on the nationally recognised Chennai-based artist A.P. Santhanaraj.

Dr. Ordetta Mendoza received a fellowship from the Indian Academy of Sciences to attend a summer programme at the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) Bangalore. She continues to be a visiting researcher at the Molecular Biophysics Unit of the IISc.

Sharing of expertise in disciplines has become the need of the hour. The UBCHEA sponsored 'Artist-in-Residence Programme' of the Department of Fine Arts brought in internationally renowned artists C.F. John, Rekha Rao and Amitabh Sengupta.

Dr. Arabinda Acharya from the Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore, and Mr. Aravind Kumar, National Institute of Advanced Studies, Bangalore, were the scholars-in-residence who interacted with the faculty and students of the Department of International Studies.

Stella Maris College, in collaboration with USEFI hosted Dr. Robert Cavalier, Professor of Philosophy, Carnegie Mellon University and Fulbright scholar. He held workshops and seminars at Stella Maris College, Apollo Hospitals, IIT Madras and the University of Madras on 'Deliberative Democracy', 'Biomedical Ethics' and 'Teaching and Technology'. The highlight of his visit was the National Seminar on 'Computing and Philosophy'. The programme was co-ordinated by Dr. Sundari Krishnamurthy, Academic Dean and Head, Department of Sociology.

Faculty were also deputed for training programmes abroad to develop their leadership skills. Ms. Mary George of the Department of Chemistry was selected as UBCHEA Fellow to spend a semester at Ateneo de Manila University, Philippines.

In keeping with the trend of the knowledge development ideology in today's world many departments organised national workshops and seminars. The Department of International Studies organised a seminar on 'The Regional Security Order in South Asia: Issues of Debate'. The Department of Mathematics organised a national seminar on 'Fundamentals of Fuzzy Set Theory' in association with the Forum for Interdisciplinary Mathematics.

'Algae Biotechnology - Algins and Alginophytes', a DBT and Ministry of Environment and Forestry sponsored faculty workshop was organised by the Department of Botany to highlight the uses of algae and their by-products. 'Molecular Spectroscopy and Reaction Dynamics', a national seminar organised by the Department of Chemistry drew resource persons from national institutes and laboratories.

The Department of English organised a Refresher Course on 'Curriculum Design' under the auspices of the Academic Staff College, University of Madras. The national level workshop on 'The Pedagogy of Service Learning' sponsored by the UBCHEA drew accolades from participants.

Professor T. N. Ananthkrishnan, former Director, Zoological Survey of India and Entomology Research Institute, Loyola College inaugurated the Golden Jubilee celebrations of the Department of Zoology. Several seminars

and lectures have been organised in connection with this occasion.

The UGC sponsored add-on certificate courses have increased opportunities for students in the job market. The Department of Commerce, in collaboration with Scope International offered two certificate courses in 'Retail Banking' and 'Human Resource Management'.

Endowment lectures organised by various departments gave students and faculty an opportunity to interact with professionals and scholars. Dr. Roger W. Bernard, Professor, Department of Mathematics, Texas University, USA, delivered the Dr. J. Thangamani Endowment Lecture, while Mr. Sashi Kumar, Chairman, Asian College of Journalism, delivered the Smt. Indira Gandhi Endowment Lecture of the Department of History.

Dr. Annapurna Garimella, Art Historian and Researcher gave the Dr. Sr. Edith Tömöry Endowment Lecture and Dr. Parasuraman, Director, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai, delivered the Sr. Thecla Endowment Lecture.

The college celebrated the birth centenary of Dr. Sr. Edith Tömöry, Foundress of the Department of Fine Arts. We remember with deep gratitude the yeoman services rendered by her to the department and the college.

Congratulations to the five faculty members who were awarded Ph.D. degrees this academic year - Sr. Jasintha Quadras, Mathematics, Ms. Ashrafi Bhagat, Fine Arts, Ms. Shiny John and Ms. Sunaja Devi, Chemistry, and Ms. Priscilla Jebakumari, Botany. Ms. Jannet Selvakani, administrative staff also received her Ph.D. degree this year. Several

other faculty members are currently pursuing research for their doctoral programmes under the UGC's FIP scheme or on part-time basis.

Dr. Ulaganayaki Palani was awarded the 'Bharathi Pani Selvar Award' by the All India Writers' Association, and the 'Thirukkural Ayyu Selvar Award' by the World Thirukkural Research Centre.

The project on 'Low Cost Processing and Preservation of Horticultural Produce' sponsored by the Department of Science and Technology, Government of India, has brought economic growth and social upliftment to many rural communities. Dr. Geetha Swaminathan and Ms. Mary George, Department of Chemistry have been instrumental in this area of service.

Sangamam, the community extension programme of the college has continued to operate in Kasimedu and Royapuram areas since 1992, co-ordinating several developmental projects. *Sangamam*, in collaboration with the Women's Development Corporation of the Government of Tamil Nadu has also initiated and maintains several Self-Help Groups involving 1200 women.

The Participatory Child Development Project with Caritas India has initiated the Children's Forum where 600 children are involved in community development, and the Transit Schools project with the Corporation of Chennai where several school drop-outs are given alternative education.

The Tsunami Rehabilitation project supported by ActionAid International is working at regaining lost livelihoods and identifying newer avenues of income generation for women.

An important aspect of our educational process is to inculcate in students strong values that will uphold them throughout their lives. The Department of Value Education offers courses which are an integral part of the curriculum. The Campus Ministry continues to strengthen the faith formation of the students.

The Foundation for Academic Excellence and Access (FAEA) funded by the Ford Foundation has initiated the 'Pathways Programme for Higher Education' in the college to address the special academic needs of students. The programme, co-ordinated by Dr. Ms. Thilagavathi Joseph, Department of English, organises skills development workshops and offers scholarships to meritorious, deserving students.

In its continuing endeavour to build new learning communities among students the college has signed MoUs with five Australian Universities and the Institut Catholique d'Etudes Superieures, France. These agreements allow for credit transfer between the institutions under the Credit System. Three French students have made Stella Maris their preferred academic destination for one year and are currently pursuing courses at the Department of International Studies. Four of our students are currently taking courses at various universities in Australia as ambassadors of the Global Peace Scholarship.

Co-curricular activities have enabled students to realise their innate potential and creativity.

At the 'Katha Asia Utsav', five students of the English Department were chosen to present papers at New Delhi where they interacted with writers from all over Asia.

A few of our students were awarded summer fellowships - Nandini Mani II year Physics, was selected for the Young Scientist Fellowship Programme of IISc, Bangalore. Anuradha R. Department of Physics went to the Raman Research Institute, Bangalore. Sharanya R. Department of Chemistry, to the JNCASR, Bangalore and Keerthana Mahesh Iyer, the Rajiv Gandhi Science Talent Research Scholar, of the Department of Zoology, also went to JNCASR, Bangalore. Shanthi of M.Sc. Chemistry and Deepika Vishwanathan of B.Sc. Chemistry spent one month at IGCAR, Kalpakkam.

Anupama Sekhar, Department of International Studies represented the International Labour Organisation at an International Workshop on 'Combating Child Labour in Asia', and at the United Nations Commemoration of the first anniversary of the tsunami in Tamil Nadu. She was also awarded the ICCR Library Fellowship by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations, to research 'Women in Natyashastra', for a monograph to be published by the Government of India in April 2006.

Nischinta Amarnath, III B.A. Economics was one of the three recipients of the Habitat Young Visionary Award 2006. She has also co-authored a book titled "The Voyage to Excellence" featuring the success stories of 21 women business leaders of India.

Lavanya Venkateswaran and Radhey of I B.A. Economics attended the World Federation of United Nations Association's Second Asia and Pacific Regional Conference in New Delhi.

Anwasha Das, III B.Com. is the first recipient of the 'Natya Sudar Award' from Kartik Fine Arts.

The students' academic excellence has been matched by their high levels of competence in sports and games, NCC, NSS, and other extra curricular activities.

In the area of sports and games, several of our students have represented Madras University 'B' Zone and have participated in All India Inter University Tournaments in Basketball, Cricket, Table Tennis, Lawn Tennis, Hockey, Athletics and Chess.

Priyanka Moorthy, III B.A. Economics won the Rowing Competition at the 'Summer Regatta' organised by the Madras Boat Club while Samyukta Rajagopal, III B.A. Economics won the gold and silver medals at the inter and intra club swimming championships held at the Cosmopolitan Club, Chennai.

Our students also participated in several State, All India, Intercollegiate and Open Tournaments and secured several prizes.

J. Swarna, II B.Sc. Botany, ace Table Tennis player, needs special mention as she has represented both the State and the country at several international and national level tournaments.

The NSS unit with 309 volunteers worked in 19 welfare agencies across the city under the dynamic leadership of Dr. Poppy Kannan. A special feature this year has been the introduction of the rural children's health camps organised at schools in Villivakkam Panchayat in which 1400 children participated. Four students participated in the National Level Training Programme on 'Capacity Building for Youth' organised by the Youth Red Cross. One hundred Red Cross volunteers worked at the Outpatient Department of the Government Ophthalmic Hospital and the Government

Kilpauk Medical College Hospital. Student volunteers also served as scribes for visually impaired children in three schools. Twenty-five volunteers assisted 800 visually impaired persons during a programme organised by the Office of Public Affairs, US Consulate General for South India and the Shakti Foundation. The NSS unit received the Tamil Nadu Government Hospitals Blood Bank Association Award for donating more than 100 units of blood annually.

The NCC unit of the college has done us proud with their achievements. Five cadets participated in the All India Trekking expedition to Ootacamund. Cdt. Ramya and Cdt. Nithya represented the state at the *Thal Sainik* Camp at New Delhi. Sgt. Rebecca Franklin won the first place for flying at the *Vayu Sainik* Camp and was selected as the Directorate Representative for the All India *Vayu Sainik* Camp held at Bangalore.

Flight Cadet Annie Priscilla represented the college at the Republic Day Camp and participated in the Republic Day Parade on Rajpath. POC Anuradha Nair went to Vietnam in November 2005 on a Youth Exchange Programme. Our cadets also participated in the National Integration Camps held in Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Nagaland and Jammu and Kashmir. SUO Marian Antony and POC Sowmya Ravindran were selected for the SSB Capsule Training Camp at Gwalior. Cadet Rekha has been selected for the Para Jumping Training Camp at Agra while Flight Cadet Niveditha and Cadet Vanitha were part of the Sikkim Trekking Camp. SUO Sonya and Flight Cadet Jennifer Ketsia were selected for the All India Mavlinkar Firing Competition.

The Students' Union lived up to its motto, 'Fully Alive' with an event-filled calendar.

ADSUM, the Freshers' Talent Day, *Tarang*, the inter-years cultural fest and *Aquila*, the inter-collegiate cultural fest were major events during the year. The activities included *Alaapana*, a light music show, World AIDS Day, Human Rights Day, MTC Day, Workers' Day, Teachers' Day and Ethnic Day. At intercollegiate cultural programmes held at other colleges, our students were winners in several events. Involvement and participation in various club activities in the college has also honed the talents of students.

The Annual College Play, *Antigone*, directed by Deesh Mariwala was staged at Sivagami Pethachi Auditorium in February 2006.

The Alumnae Association has been a pillar of support to the college. A team of eight determined and dedicated members form the Career Guidance Cell which has been responsible for conducting career counseling programmes. They have also conducted several workshops on Capacity Building – 'Creating my Future' and Pre-recruitment. They were also instrumental in inviting 30 well-known companies for campus recruitment.

The Autonomy Mid-term Review Committee of the University of Madras visited the college in January 2006 and strongly recommended the extension of autonomous status to the college.

Several groups of faculty and administrators from non-autonomous colleges across India have visited Stella Maris to study the functioning of autonomy here.

The management's commitment to improving infrastructure facilities has resulted in an

additional computer lab for the Department of Computer Science and setting up of a Reverse Osmosis plant for drinking water.

The Stella Maris College Extension Counter of the Indian Overseas Bank has been given a face-lift with improved customer facilities.

As I near the end of this report, we place on record the many organisations especially the UGC, DBT and DST, Government of India, the National Assessment and Accreditation Council, Bangalore, the Department of Higher Education, Government of Tamil Nadu, the University of Madras, the United Board for Christian Higher Education in Asia, International Federation of Catholic Universities, and Foundation for Academic Excellence and Access (FAEA), for supporting us in our mission of educating the youth.

To the several public sector undertakings that have continued to support us, we extend our gratitude.

It is now my pleasant duty to express our gratitude to all those who, with their support, guidance and commitment have made these achievements possible.

Sr. Cecilia Joachim, Provincial Superior, Sr. Rita Marneni, Secretary, Sr. Florine Monis, Superior, Sr. Colleen North, Ms. Geetha Sridharan, Sr. Jasintha Quadras, Vice-Principals,

Ms. Margaret Clarence, Controller of Examinations, Ms. Sundari Krishnamurthy and Ms. Jesurietta Sathian, Academic Deans, Sr. Kochuthressia, Ms. Geradette Davey, Ms. Sharada Bhanu, the Deans of Student Affairs, and to all our faculty, without whom this institution would not have been a place of knowledge generation and learning.

Thank you Sr. Ann Mathew, Bursar, Ms. Felcy Romio, Office Superintendent and the administrative staff, Sr. Hilda and the supportive staff. Your generosity and hard work contribute to the smooth functioning of the institution.

We realise that several factors continue to shape the landscape of education. But, at this juncture as we approach the Diamond Jubilee year of the college, we reiterate our commitment to quality education that meets the challenges posed by a modern knowledge economy, and to establishing a socially just environment.

May the Star of the Sea be the beacon that guides us as we look towards the vast vistas of the future and what it may bring; for, to soar we must toil tirelessly in the service of God and the nation and bring to fulfillment the cause of higher education in India.

Thank you and God Bless!

College Day: 11th March 2006

EXCERPTS FROM THE CHIEF GUEST'S ADDRESS



Professor V.S. Prasad, Director, National Assessment and Accreditation Council, Bangalore.

Esteemed Principal, Dr. Sr. Annamma Philip, distinguished invitees, staff of the college, present and the past, parents of students, dear students present and the past, ladies and gentlemen, *Vanakam* to everyone.

I'm very happy to participate in today's College Day celebrations. College Day is usually an occasion for celebrating the annual achievements of the college and is also an occasion for self-reflection, to meet old friends and to say farewell to the final year students. Certainly it is not an occasion for lectures.

I was happy when Sr. Principal invited me to participate in today's programme. I readily agreed because it gives me an opportunity to represent the national organisation which has the responsibility to promote quality in higher education. It permits me to express our sense of appreciation and gratitude to all the people

associated with the college, for the great achievements of this college.

• • •

Stella Maris is a great institution not only because it has been accredited with the highest grade in the country by the National Assessment and Accreditation Council and not only because the government and the University Grants Commission recognise it in different ways, but because of the acknowledgement by the parents, staff and students that it is really a great institution. To promote quality in higher education,

we are looking to colleges like Stella Maris to be role models.

• • •

The problem of quality of higher education in India is of serious concern to everyone because education plays an important role in the 21st century – a century that has been described as a knowledge century or knowledge society. From an industrial society and from an agricultural society we are now moving to a knowledge society. In a knowledge society, education plays an important role. Hence quality is very important. We are fortunate to have in India, a number of institutions which can be compared to any of the best in the world. But we are also unfortunate in that we have a large number of institutions whose quality is very poor. The best institutions in the country have the responsibility to provide good

education to students. They also have to be role models for all other institutions – in teaching, research, community and service activities.

The Principal's report highlights many great achievements of the college. I'm very happy to know that the college is helping many other institutions in developing their own quality improvement strategies. I take this opportunity to express my sense of appreciation to the Principal, staff and all others who work here. I also congratulate all the students studying in this institution. I must say that you are fortunate to study in the best college in the country.

• • •

It is a coincidence that the foundation day of this institution and Independence Day is celebrated on the same day. Education is considered freedom from ignorance, prejudices and deprivations.

When the institution is considered as a role model for higher education, the students of this college also must act as role models in society. When you enter different walks of life such as public life, government services or family life you have to be role models. Social life is complex. I'm sure education will help you to obtain a balanced view of life.

All of us are simultaneously living in five zones. The personal zone denotes our personal likes, dislikes and interests. The second zone is the family zone because it is the basic social institution and all of us spend ample time with our family. The third is the work zone. It may be different types of work. People may be self-employed or they may be working in the public or private sector or engaged in other kinds of activities. The fourth is the social zone. All of

us are part of the social life; hence Aristotle calls us 'social animals'. We all live in a society and we have a social responsibility. The last one is the spiritual zone. When we are expected to stand in all the five zones simultaneously, our challenge is how we are going to divide our time between all five activities - personal, family, work, social life and spiritual activities. I'm sure education will help us to have a balanced view of life.

A book published by UNESCO identifies the challenges of the 21st century. They are the challenge of poverty, challenge to peace, challenge to sustainable development and challenge of governance. When we are living together we must develop some systems which will help us to live together as honourable citizens. So, as educated people, all of us have a responsibility to lead honourable lives and contribute towards social peace, eradication of poverty, sustainable development and collective living. If education gives us some abilities to lead this life, I think the purpose of education is achieved. With the devotion and education with which the Sisters and teachers are working, it must result in a more enlightened and liberated society. I hope all the students of this college will be role models in society.

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An institution is a great institution when the people consider it not only as a workplace but also a home. I think this is one of the criteria which NAAC also should follow in identifying an institution as a great institution.

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In India, in the higher education sector, there are more than 330 University level institutions and 16,000 college level institutions. So far we

have assessed 3000 institutions. Of these, 10% come under the higher category or higher grade institutions with an A - grade or Five Star grade. Around 60% come under the middle level and around 30% constitute the lower grade institutions.

In India we have the problem of higher education opportunities in spite of many developments and efforts of the society and government. Even today the higher education opportunities are limited only to 7% of your age group. The women are the disadvantaged category but you are fortunate to have good higher education opportunities. You are also

fortunate and twice blessed in the sense you are studying in the best institution in the country. You have a social responsibility to repay to the society.

James Mason stated that education has two objectives; education for making a living and education for living. When you look at the opportunities provided by the society, certainly you would be grateful to your parents for the educational opportunities and to your teachers for the education they provide. But we have a social responsibility because education is considered a liberating activity.



COLLEGE

DAY





IN UNISON
THEY SING TO HER BEAT





**'THE DANCER BECOMES
THE DANCE'**



A Celebration of the Past Moving Towards New Beginnings

Ms. Saroja Krishnamurthy

An alumna of Delhi University, Ms. Saroja joined Stella Maris College, in the year 1976 after completing an M.Litt. in Buddhist Studies. She was involved in transliteration of *Saangitya Vansa* from Burmese to Pali in a UNESCO funded project 'Buddhism in Central Asia' before joining the Sanskrit Department of the college.



As a dedicated teacher she has motivated and inspired many students with in-depth knowledge in the subject especially *Ithigasa* and *Purana*. Her students fondly recall her dramatic rendering of the subject. She reaches out to all her students and has helped many of them outside class hours. The general elective courses *Abhinaya Darpan* and *Ayurveda* of the department are very popular with the students.

Her thorough knowledge enhanced by her multilingual skills has made her a source of reference for queries and discussions pertaining to ancient history, literature, culture, philosophy and mythology. She is well versed with Burmese and Pali scripts, Hindi, Tamil, Malayalam, Punjabi and English.

Spiritually inclined, Ms. Saroja has a sense of balance in life and this, perhaps, is the reason for her being a friend, guide and philosopher to many of her students, friends and colleagues.

Dr. Ramaa Narayanan

Dr. Ramaa Narayanan has an association of more than four decades with Stella Maris College.

After completing her B.A. in the Department of Fine Arts in 1967, she went on to do her Masters in 1969. She obtained her Ph.D. in 1992 under the guidance of no less a person than the legendary, Dr. Sr. Edith Tömöry, the foundress of the Department.



Ms. Ramaa has authored *Ezhuthata Diary* a novelette in Tamil which won the first prize in the *Amarar Ramanatha Kurunovel Potti* in 1978. As an academician of repute, she has been a resource person for several refresher courses organised by the Academic Staff College. She was also a resource person for the two-day programme on Art conducted for the Computer Engineers of Tata Consultancy

Services on Art awareness at Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala.

She has many publications to her credit, including reviews in The Hindu, Metro Plus. They include a review of a photographic exhibition by P. Sainath, the renowned journalist and an Installation by Shailesh, on "Living Wall, Living Cultures" at the British Council in December 2001.

Ms. Ramaa has published a number of research papers. To name a few: "Flowers in Hindu Rituals", "The Role of Museums in Showcasing Art History" and "Portrait of Muktabal".

She has also held exhibitions of her paintings, a notable one being a one woman show of ink paintings at the gallery of Hotel Chola, Chennai in December 1992. She has also exhibited her paintings at the Lalit Kala Academy, Chennai 2001 and at the Government Museum, Chennai 2002. In July 1994 she won the "Artist of the Month" award at Max Mueller Bhavan.

Her participation in professional activities both in and outside the college has been extensive. She also had her share of administrative assignments in the college. She was the Dean of Student Affairs from 1995-1997. She brought expertise and professionalism to her guidance of the cultural activities of the students for which she was greatly respected. Her students, some of whom are now her colleagues in the Department of Fine Arts describe her as the epitome of a Guru whose life has been dedicated to imparting knowledge, not in order to leave behind an impression but to leave behind students of calibre.

The world that Ms. Ramaa inhabits is that of a seeker of knowledge and researcher par

excellence, who constantly strives to deepen and widen her areas of learning.

She is a woman of deep faith, a philosopher, one who reverses tradition, is progressive and modern in her outlook and is a fiercely independent thinker. In short, Ramaa cannot be contained in categories. She is creative and innovative, an artist in the truest sense of the word.

Ms. Bharathi Ramanan

Ms. Bharathi completed her B.Sc. in Queen Mary's College in 1967, M.Sc. in Presidency College in 1969 and M.Phil. in New College in 1988. However, having spent the best part of her life here, she has a great love and loyalty for Stella Maris.



Before joining Stella Maris, she worked for a year in SIET College, for five years in Providence College, Coonoor, and for one year in Stella Matutina College of Education. She has been part of the Department of Physics, Stella Maris College since June 1978.

Ms. Bharathi has authored Physics Text Books for standards VI, VII and VIII for the Tamil Nadu Matriculation schools. Macmillan has published these under the new Millennium Series.

She has held important administrative responsibilities in the college. She was Dean of Student Affairs from 1997 to 1998 and Vice Principal from 1998 to 2000. She was also the treasurer of the College Staff Club. An excellent organiser, she works very systematically and is meticulous in her planning and execution.

She is a dedicated teacher with a profound knowledge of her subject. Students have said that Ms. Bharathi had the capacity to take a class along with her, balancing between the average and the brilliant students. She always took special care of the weak students and was a compassionate teacher. At the same time, she was always just and fair in her dealings with them.

Ms. Bharathi has been a role model for her students and colleagues and a teacher par excellence.

Dr. Usha Krishnan

Dr. Usha Krishnan joined the Department of Botany in 1980. As the Head of the Department, she has efficiently steered the activities of the department.

In the ever-expanding field of biosciences she has kept pace with current trends by presenting papers, attending summer schools, training programmes, workshops and seminars both in India and abroad. She has also organised academic programmes at the regional and the national levels for the department, benefiting students and faculty.

As an organiser she plans meticulously much in advance, pays attention to detail and is fully involved with the task on hand. A firm and understanding teacher, Usha has always been there for her students who needed help and



this she has been doing very quietly without seeking any publicity.

Dr. Usha is an all rounder with artistic inclinations. She can paint, do embroidery and has keen interest in music. She has been involved in the production of many cultural programmes in the college.

A meticulous, diligent teacher she has contributed richly to the growth and development of the department and to generations of students who have passed through its portals.

Her contribution to the cause of science and in particular, botanical sciences, through teaching and research is highly commendable. The department has learnt much from her that books cannot contain. A pillar of strength, she leaves an indelible imprint in the annals of Stella Maris College.

Dr. Malathy Kumar

Dr. Malathy's career began as a Lecturer at the Alagappa University of Physical Education. She joined Stella Maris College in the year 1988 after a service of 11 years in Rosary Matriculation School and two years in Anna Adarsh College.

Students of the college have won several trophies and medals at the state and national levels in major games like basket-ball, tennis, table tennis, swimming and rowing and so on under her tutelage. She has been instrumental in motivating the faculty members of the college to participate in the inter-collegiate throwball, table tennis, shuttle and ball badminton matches.



As the convenor for Madras University 'B' zone, she organised many tournaments for three consecutive years. She was selected to accompany, as an official, the Indian team to Kuala Lumpur for the Veteran Athletic Meet. Madras University has appointed her as the team manager for various sports and games throughout her career. Special mention must be made of the World University Championship held in Kuala Lumpur in the year 2004-05 when she went as the Team Manager with the University Chess team.

She has been an active member of the Madras University Sports Committee and Advisory Committee for the past three years before her retirement. She has also been an official for the prestigious A.L. Mudaliar Athletic Meet.

Her discharge of her duties as the Physical Directress in the college is commendable. The

introduction of Yoga, Karate, Folk Dance and other electives has been one of her major contributions to the college.

Mr. A. Thambiraj

Mr. Antony Thambiraj has put in 35 years of dedicated service in the college office. A hard worker with a strong work ethic, he carried out his responsibilities which included preparation of pay bills, papers related to career advancement, pay fixation, pension, re-employment, faculty going abroad, typing question papers meticulously and has also performed several other jobs. It was his special mission to ensure that the retired faculty received their pension, gratuity, etc. on time.



A friendly and generous person with a great sense of humour, he is also a talented composer of lyrics and has a fine ear for music. He has performed in more than 2000 functions – at marriages, temples and *sabhas* – from the age of 17. He has composed several Christmas carols and taught them to colleagues and others. Thambiraj has also been the Secretary of the Non-teaching Staff Association and is an active member of the Parish Council.

Mr. Y. Maria Francis

Mr. Y. Maria Francis joined Stella Maris College in 1974 where he began his career as a Lab Assistant. Mr. Francis learnt his work very quickly and from then on there was no looking back. He worked under the leadership of three heads – Dr. Ms. Meera Paul, Dr. Ms. Jilly Joseph and Dr. Ms. Chitralkha Ramachandran. He was in charge of preparing the laboratory for the practical sessions for the undergraduate students of Zoology as well as for the students who took Zoology as an Allied subject.



He was responsible for procuring specimens for the laboratory which he always did one week in advance of any practical session. He also accompanied students and faculty on excursions.

His diploma in Museum Keeping from the Madras Museum kept him up-to-date in knowledge and skills which he put to good use in the maintenance of the Department Museum.

Thirty-two years of selfless service drew the appreciation of all on campus when at the function organised on the occasion of his retirement he was honoured by the presence of a large number of people including the Principal, Secretary, the members of the management and former students.

Mr. Francis will be remembered by many others on campus for the services he rendered as the 'tapal' delivery person to the government offices and the University as well as to other places.

A responsible and committed person, he has won the hearts of the faculty and students with his cheerful countenance and readiness to complete tasks given to him.

Mr. P. Ebenezer Daniel

Mr. Daniel has served Stella Maris College for 36 years in several capacities. Friendly, hardworking and generous, he has been called upon by many of the faculty to undertake jobs ranging from collecting and delivering mail to maintenance of buildings on campus and performing other jobs in the examination office. He was admired by all for his patience, consistence and humour.

In the course of his service, Mr. Daniel became familiar with every nook and corner of Chennai as he cycled to deliver and receive 'tapal'.



Although not attached in particular to any department, Mr. Daniel was known to both students and faculty alike. Quiet and unassuming, he gave of his best for the progress of this institution and it is with gratitude that he is bid a peaceful and well-earned retired life.

Convocation 2005

CHIEF GUEST'S ADDRESS

Dr. Anne Mary Fernandez, Registrar, University of Madras, the first woman to hold this post in the 150 years of the University's existence was the Chief Guest at the Convocation Ceremony held on 4th February 2006. The following is the text of her address on the occasion.

Most esteemed Principal of Stella Maris College, Dr. Sr. Annamma Philip, members of the management of this college, faculty members of this esteemed institution, parents, guests and the graduates and postgraduates of the class of 2005.

At the outset, I must say that I am very happy to be present here at this premier institute of higher education, to be delivering the Convocation Address to a group of illustrious graduates and postgraduates who will be

receiving their degrees today, and who have already commenced their role in real life.

Stella Maris is a well-acclaimed institution; it is known both nationally and internationally for the quality higher education it provides to the young women from the state of Tamil Nadu and also from different parts of the country. I have been going through your magazine and find that very creditably you have adopted all that needs to be done, and all that is done internationally to make higher education quality-oriented. You have adopted the choice-based credit system which makes it possible for students of one department to interact with the faculty and students of other departments: in other words, adopting an inter-disciplinary approach towards the curriculum. Your faculty are extremely hardworking and conscientious and have put in a lot of effort to conduct seminars and conferences which have brought to you the best in the world of scientific development and also development in the humanities and social sciences. Several of them have undertaken projects, both nationally and internationally, and they have visited international locations, both as resource persons and as



Dr. Anne Mary Fernandez, Registrar, University of Madras delivering the Convocation Address

faculty and this indeed has added to the glory and the fame of this great institution.

So, therefore, at the outset I should congratulate all of you for having chosen to graduate from such an esteemed and glorious institution. All of you know very well that as far as women in higher education are concerned, it is only a privileged few who have the opportunity of studying in the higher education stream, and more so, the opportunity of studying in as distinguished an institution as Stella Maris College. I wouldn't be wrong in pointing out that you must be one in a thousand to have achieved this rare distinction of graduating from one of the most distinguished institutions of higher education in this country. Madras University is indeed proud to acknowledge the premier role of this institution and the pioneering efforts taken by it to introduce new and innovative concepts like the international transfer exchange of credits which has been made possible by your institution. And this is indeed going to pave the way for more institutions to follow your path-breaking efforts and emulate you in making higher education international and seamless.

On this occasion it is appropriate that we look at the role of graduates and postgraduates in society. As a matter of fact, it is very important to see what it means to be an educated person, or rather, what education means in society. Education refers to the transmission of civilisation. And when you talk of transmission of civilisation then there are two very important components of this: one is to create enlightened understanding and the second is to have an enriched character. I'm sure these two things have been given to you in abundance by this institution where you

have studied. Yet, at this moment, when you step out with your degrees, it is very important for you to once again understand the importance of being educated persons in the light of being people with enlightened understanding and people with enriched characters.

Enlightened understanding calls for a critical ability to think for yourself. Very often, educated people forfeit the responsibility to think for themselves and hand it over to others like the media which is forever telling you what is right and what is wrong, what is to be done and what is not to be done. In a democracy, we do follow the precepts of the majority, but then the precepts of the majority will certainly not provide leadership to society. And as I told you, you are one in a thousand and each one of you is a leader in her own right. And therefore you have this responsibility of critical thinking and what we call enlightened understanding on different issues.

The society we live in is very complex and complicated. Scientific progress and developments have not made it easier. Our daily life is becoming more and more complex, although apparently they say it is becoming more and more simple. You have the computers, the digital machines, automation all around you and it would be very easy to hand over life to these gadgets. But as one in a thousand, you have this responsibility to maintain humanity and the human touch amidst so much of automation, mechanisation and digitalisation that is going on. And this is an onerous responsibility which all of you should keep in mind, because if you hand over your life to machines, then you would become nothing short of a machine, and you would lose track of the destiny which the

good Lord set out for you when He created you. Therefore it is very important to desist from populist thinking. It is commonly said that in economics and politics, the popularity of an idea is inversely related to the value of that particular idea. And therefore whenever you have populist leanings and you need to speak out your mind on what the real value of these things are, as graduates of Stella Maris, you should not be deterred from the truth and you should stand by the values which this institution has given you.

Enriched character refers to intellectual integrity. It is the ability to speak up when others refuse to do so. We live in a vibrant democracy and the vibrancy of this democracy can be maintained only if we uphold the quality of life vis-à-vis the standard of life. The quality of this life is ensured by the basic fundamental rights which are enshrined in our Constitution - human rights and also the rights of political freedom, economic freedom, social integrity and national integration. These are things which are very dear and things we cannot compromise on. These are the things we should stand by so that you ensure that you provide the rest of the country leadership as far as the quality of life is concerned. The Gross Domestic Product is certainly a method by which we measure the welfare and well being of a society, but it does not contain the measurement of the overall well being of society. And the overall well being of a society lies in the quality of life, which you as leaders can create for the future of India.



Academic Procession

It is in this context that you need to develop a scientific temper and adopt a methodology of living which caters to life-long learning. Our societies are fast developing, fast emerging. I just told you about automation which is taking place. There is a big scientific revolution taking place in the area of gene ecology, in the area of bioinformatics, in the area of neuro-degenerative diseases and all the progress that is being made in this area is ensuring greater longevity of life and bringing new choices for you to make.

So, as citizens of the 21st century you have to make difficult choices. For example, it is very much within your purview to choose the characteristics of the baby you want to have. You can have a blue-eyed baby with brown hair and light skin, and science and technology have made this possible. Now, what are the choices that you are going to make? Are you going to go in for such kinds of choices? Is it possible for you to keep a person alive on artificial support systems for however long you want, to achieve whatever you wish? Are

you going to choose between that or the natural forces that exist? So, the moral choices that confront you in today's society call for a very special type of enriched character in order to maintain humanity and humanism, which the good Lord has given us. In the turmoil of life, please don't forget that life is to be enjoyed and it is here that the simple things in life should give you a lot of pleasure. Do not forget to cultivate the good habits of reading which you developed on campus. Books are the best indices, which give you the best type of ideas of the best people who have lived on this earth. So the message is please continue to read books and please continue to develop an intellectual mindset that you can bequeath to your children. Good books, good music and the joy of nature - these are things to which you should not become insensitive, because they are things for which we are created, they are things which you need to enjoy so that we fulfil the destiny of our creation.

Today we say that India is a global economic powerhouse and there is a promise that it is going to be the destiny of the country. And what is spearheading India today is the revolution in the field of Information Technology, scientifically trained man power, especially in the areas of biotechnology, genetics, pharmacology, medicine, defence and space research. As such we are the knowledge power house of the world. But we do have our problems. We have a large percentage of our population who live below the poverty line. We have very low literacy levels and we have low access to productive resources for a vast majority of the people who live in rural areas. As exceptional people, as one in a thousand, as leaders, you have this onerous responsibility of catering to the have-nots in

our society, for the simple reason that islands of prosperity cannot exist in an ocean of poverty. And therefore it is my humble appeal to you that you join hands with the nation builders in order to see that the country develops and progresses, and becomes a developed country in the 21st century. To undertake this, it is essential for you to involve yourselves in things like building up institutions, especially educational, health and other social service institutions which will serve the less privileged and the marginalised people in society.

It is very important to work towards connecting India. India is a vast country with several nooks and corners that are still unconnected, still without power supply and water supply. And as educated graduates and postgraduates you should join hands to see what you can do to bring connectivity to these remote areas. They are in need of roads, bridges and other amenities like proper water supply, power, etc. Again, in the knowledge economy, if our villages need to survive, it is very important that information and knowledge should reach these people. There are significant developments in these areas where knowledge kiosks are being opened by graduates and postgraduates like you to provide some kind of knowledge service to the rural poor, wherein they could harness their resources to enhance productivity in the global markets.

If you are able to involve yourself in ventures which link the rural people to the world market, you will be bringing economic connectivity and you will be effectively linking local resources to production in world markets. And then we can forget about the evils of globalisation. It is very much within

your hands to see that globalisation works in favour of the poor and the marginalised. It is better to use your influence in order to change things rather than to use your protest in order to stop progress. It is in this area that educated people like you really need to forge ahead and take bold steps and measures to create a better world and a better India.

Before I conclude, the only thing which I would like to tell you is that each one of you has a destiny; the good Lord hasn't created anybody without a destiny. And each of you will achieve that destiny if you follow the opportunities that come your way. In this context, I would just like to narrate a historical anecdote from the life of one important world politician and one important world scientist.

Once upon a time in England, there was a peer who lived on a vast estate and he had a favourite son. This boy was a fat, round and naughty chap. He was educated at home and therefore he did not have to go outside the estate. He played around the estate the whole day. Living on the same estate was a poor gardener who had another son who was very industrious and went around the estate doing a number of odd jobs. One day while the gardener's son was out working in the garden, the house owner's son came out and began chasing the ducks in the pond. It so happened that he stumbled and fell into the pond. The gardener's son immediately jumped in and rescued the house owner's son. And the house owner was very happy and he said, "What can I do for you?" and the little boy said, "I would like a good education." The English peer said, "It's done. You will be sent to the best school and best university." He did go to the best school, he went to the best university and in his research he discovered a very important drug.

Years later, the son of the peer became a political leader. It was during the Second World War when the world was in turmoil, looking for leadership from this particular person. Unfortunately he happened to fall critically ill with pneumonia. At this juncture the gardener's son was sent for and he came with his drug that cured the leader and helped him become healthy once again and could provide a solution to the problems of the time. Now guess who these two people were? Yes, Churchill was the son of the peer and Alexander Fleming, the inventor of penicillin, was the gardener's son.

Here were two people who followed the opportunities which came their way. If Fleming had not rescued Churchill he would not have had an education and penicillin would not have been discovered. If penicillin had not been discovered Churchill's life would not have been saved to make those crucial decisions during the Second World War.

This is just a simple example from history to show how opportunities chart out your destiny. Therefore, opportunities will come your way and it is up to you to make use of them in order to achieve your destiny, which I'm sure each one of you will do in the best possible manner. I would like to conclude with the words of Longfellow, who says,

"Each is given a bag of tools,/A shapeless mass,
A book of rules;/ And each must make –
Ere life is flown –/ A stumbling block
Or a stepping stone." /

Thank You.



Planting a commemorative tree before the commencement of the Valedictory



Chief Guest Uma Krishnan lights the lamp



Taking the oath



Let this little light shine all the time, let it shine



At the Grotto of the 'Star of the Sea'



'Fully Alive'

STUDENTS' UNION EVENTS CALENDAR

OFFICE BEARERS

President:	Rashmi Gautham
Vice President:	Navsree Cindu
General Secretary:	Treasa Kuriala
Treasurer:	Amrita Rao
Cultural Secretaries:	Shweta Mohan Aarabi Veeraraghavan

The Students' Union commenced their activities on campus with all the energy and enthusiasm that was reflected in their logo and motto for the year. The freshers were welcomed into the college on the opening day with an Open Air Assembly. The prayer read by Dr. Sr. Rita Marneni fmm, the Secretary of the college was followed by the Principal's address to the college community. The Union President's welcome speech was followed by a cultural programme.

An important activity during the month was the Students' Union Orientation on 23rd June for the first year students. The points discussed were:

- Objectives of the College
- General Rules and Regulations
- Role and Functioning of the Students' Union
- Election and Role of Class/Assistant Representatives
- Functioning of Clubs
- Inter and Intra collegiate activities



Union 2005 with their logo

The college T-shirts of the previous year were sold at the Union Room on the same day. The elections of Class and Assistant Class Representatives of the first year classes were held on 30th June.

The Freshers' Talent Day 'ADSUM '05', held on 8th July, was the first major activity organised by the Union. The performance of the first year students was outstanding and set the tone for future events.

A few days later, on July 11th, the Union logo was unveiled and the motto 'Fully Alive' displayed, to the graceful, symbolic movements of contemporary dance. Student Council Orientation programmes were conducted on 12th and 20th July. The objective was to develop leadership and communications skills. 'Friendship Day' celebrations were held on the 29th with music and food. A Hollywood film "Hitch" starring Will Smith was screened at 1.15 p.m.

On August 1st, the MTC staff were felicitated and thanked for their invaluable services to the college on 'MTC Day'. The Chairman and Managing Director of MTC addressed the gathering. A special address on 'Road Safety' was made by the Assistant Traffic Commissioner of Police. This was followed by a short cultural programme by the students. The Principal presented mementos to the staff of MTC and for the first time, merit certificates were distributed to the drivers and conductors. The entire staff of the MTC was touched by the appreciation shown to them by the college.

Independence Day and Stella Maris Day were celebrated on 15th August. The flag hoisting ceremony by the Chief Guest Ms. R. Saraswati, Indian National Army (INA) was followed by her address to the students. A cake was cut to celebrate the anniversary of the founding of the college on the same day 58 years ago.

Costumes, cultures and languages that mark the diversity of India's peoples were highlighted on 17th August with the celebration of "Ethnic Day". But



Ms. R. Saraswati, Veteran of the INA with (L to R)
Dr. Sr. Florine Monis fmm, Superior, Dr. Sr. Rita Marneni
fmm, Secretary, Dr. Sr. Annamma Philip fmm, Principal

the biggest and most significant project of the Union was the light music show *Aalapana* held in order to raise funds for scholarships for under-privileged students.

An open-air assembly was organised to honour the teachers on September 5th. Rashmi Gautham, President of the Students' Union, paid tribute to the teachers in her welcome address which was followed by a cultural programme. The College Magazine 2004-2005 was also released by the Principal, Dr. Sr. Annamma Philip and the first copy was presented to the Secretary of the college, Dr. Sr. Rita Marneni. Scholarships were presented to deserving students by the faculty. As a token of their gratitude the Students' Union presented mementos to the faculty members.

Tarang, the inter-year cultural festival held from September 16 - 18, spread waves of joy and excitement on campus. The third years emerged overall winners and the trophy for the best cheering squad was grabbed by the second years who demonstrated their ability to achieve incredible decibel levels. The first years proved to be very tough competition, and at one point of time they were in the lead position! New events like 'Moot Court', 'Historical vs. Hysterical' and 'Fancy Dress' were a treat to watch.

It was a day off for the workers on 5th October. An open-air assembly was organised in appreciation of their invaluable services. On behalf of the workers,

Mr. Joseph thanked the management, staff and the students. The screening of a popular Tamil movie brought cheer and delight to the workers. They were presented mementos and the celebrations came to a close with a lip-smacking lunch.

A special programme was arranged for the third years and the postgraduate students on the occasion of World AIDS Day on 1st December. Dr. Aishwarya Rajalakshmi who is actively involved in the treatment of HIV infected children, delivered the special address. A documentary film on AIDS was screened and the sharing of their experiences by HIV infected women working for the 'Prevention of Parent to Children Transmission Programme' moved the audience. Truly, their courage and confidence set them apart from ordinary persons.

Stella Maris College opened its gates to participants of other city colleges for the annual intercollegiate cultural fiesta that was held on the 16th and 17th December. MOP Vaishnav College emerged overall winners and they deserved it too! The various food stalls enhanced the flavour of the event. Celebrities walked into campus and the audience strained to catch a glimpse of them. The Stella Marians clapped with gusto, especially for the various host shows. The



Aalapana

rain did play spoilsport but in the end we had no complaints at all for we had a gala time.

Towards Christmas time, the mood was upbeat on campus in spite of the dull weather. It was a new approach to broadcast the Christmas programme through the public address system on 22nd December,

but the students enjoyed the experience. Father Francis Gonzalves, a Jesuit priest and theologian impressed the listeners with his anecdotes that explicated the Christmas message. All of us were special in our own way was the inspiring message he delivered on the occasion. The carols brought alive the spirit of Christmas. The Principal wished the Stella Maris family a "Happy Christmas and a Happy New Year."

An open-air assembly was organised on January 20, 2006, 'Environment Day' to create environmental awareness among students. World famous environmentalist, Mr. Sunder Lal Bahuguna, one of the founders of the Chipko movement, delivered the Special Address. He spoke on the value of trees and emphasised the need for conservation of forests. He asked the students to live in harmony with nature and also bring down their consumption practices to a minimum. A mime presented by the students depicted how human beings had exploited nature for their own selfish needs.

An open-air assembly was organised to celebrate Women's Day in college on March 7th. Ms. Rashida Bhagat, Associate Editor, Hindu Business Line, delivered the Special Address. She stressed the

continuing need for female empowerment. A mime depicting the equality of the sexes was also performed. The newly elected office bearers took the Oath of Office during the special open air assembly on March 22nd. The outgoing Union members read out their report for the academic year. Sr. Kochuthressia, the Student Dean, lauded the outgoing Union members for their commendable performance throughout the year. The class representatives and assistant class representatives were awarded certificates for their valuable services.

On 27th March, a special programme was organised to thank the administrative staff for their invaluable services rendered to the college. Ms. Felcy Romio, Office Superintendent, addressed the gathering, and the Principal, Dr. Sr. Annamma Philip, presented mementos to the staff.

All in all, it was an eventful and fulfilling year for all of us. We wish the new Union all the very best for the next year.

*Ms. Rashmi Gautham
III B.A. Sociology, Union President*



Student's Union Office Bearers with the Principal, Secretary, Vice-Principals and Deans of Student Affairs.
(Middle row from L to R) Navsree, Treasa, Aarabi, Rashmi, Swetha, Amrita

NSS Report

COMMUNITY SERVICE AND LEADERSHIP INITIATIVES - THE NSS MISSION

This academic year saw a change of guard at the National Service Scheme (NSS) office. After bidding farewell to Ms. Prabha Nair, who had been the NSS officer for more than two decades, Dr. Ms. Poppy Kannan, Department of Social Work assumed charge along with Ms. Annie Cherian, Department of Zoology and Dr. Ms. Millie Nihila, Department of Economics. With 309 students on the rolls registered as volunteers, the NSS operating in the college consists of three units in all.

NSS volunteers have rendered yeoman service in the various communities in which they have been placed, and their achievements in all sectors of their activities are laudable. Lily Maria Jennifer, III B.A. Sociology was one of the four selected to represent Madras University in the pre-Republic Day Parade Camp at Thiruvananthapuram from 11 - 20 November 2005.

Four students were selected to represent Madras University to attend the National Level Training programme on Capacity Building for Youth, organised by the Youth Red Cross, Chennai Chapter. Two of our NSS volunteers, G. Chitra, II B.Sc. Zoology and Pinky Jacob, II B.A. English, had the honour of attending the training programme at Tirunelveli.

The AIDS Prevention and Control Society, Chennai organised a street theatre training on HIV and AIDS control. Bhargavi, of I B.A. English and Jency of II B.Sc. Botany, were selected to



Prof. N. Raja Hussain, Co-ordinator, NSS, University of Madras with (L to R) Ms. R. Seethalakshmi, Regional Officer, Southern Region and Educational Advisor, USEFI, Chennai; Dr. Sr. Annamma Philip fmm; Dr. Sr. Rita Marneni fmm, Dr. Poppy Kannan, NSS Co-ordinator

attend the training programme. They are part of a team of college NSS students who have performed nearly 20 awareness programmes in the various city colleges from January 2006.

The NSS is proud of two of its volunteers who have brought laurels to the college. Vasugi of II B.A. English was awarded the Global Peace Scholarship for studies at Murdoch University, Perth, Australia and Maria Rosalin of II B.Sc. Physics has been elected the Vice President of the Indian Catholic Youth Movement for the period 2006-2008.

The NSS unit of Stella Maris College has been conferred an award by the Tamil Nadu Government Hospital's Blood Bank Association for its exemplary work in donating blood annually to government hospitals. This award has been instituted for the first time and Dr. Ms. Poppy Kannan received it from the Health Minister Thiru. N. Thalavai Sundaram on behalf of the college.

Nineteen welfare agencies in the city of Chennai have utilised the services of our volunteers outside college hours every day throughout the year. Our volunteers have helped as scribes during exams for the visually impaired children at the NKT School, Little Flower Convent School for the Blind and Ramakrishna Vidyalaya. Fifty of our volunteers helped in the Independence Day celebrations organised by the Government of Tamil Nadu at the Secretariat, Fort St George.

Twenty-five volunteers assisted nearly 800 visually impaired people during a programme organised by the Office of Public Affairs, US Consulate General for South India, and the Shakti Foundation. Ms. Joyce Cane, President of Southern Connecticut Chapter, National Federation of the Blind, USA, on this occasion spoke on 'Visual Disability Issue: Handling Your Dependency and Expanding Your Independence.'

Twenty-five volunteers were ushers for the college light music programme *Aalapana*. Forty volunteers assisted in the games stalls and food stalls sponsored by the corporate companies for nearly 1000 physically and mentally challenged children during a sports meet



Street Theatre

organised by the Shakti Foundation on World Disability Day at Rajaratnam Stadium. The Stella Maris College NCC contingent led the March Past on the occasion. As part of the youth Red Cross activity, 100 of our volunteers worked for a period of ten days in the outpatient departments of the Government Ophthalmic Hospital and the Government Kilpauk Medical College Hospital, guiding and helping the patients. During the General Body Meeting of the college students and Graduate's Association of the Blind, 30 of our volunteers helped in the entire proceedings of the meeting from 8.00 a.m. to 6.00 p.m.

Important Days observed by the NSS

Literacy Day: On September 8th, the NSS volunteers rendered songs and folk dances related to the theme of literacy. The message of the fourteen-year old chief guest, Master Srinivasan from YMCA Boy's Town was, "Let's make the best use of the educational opportunities given to us."

Rose Day: September 22nd was observed as Rose Day. An exhibition on the causes, symptoms, signs, treatment and prevention of cancer was inaugurated on that day. Stickers reading *Friends of CANSTOP* were sold during break time and in twenty minutes our volunteers had collected Rs. 2000. The same was gifted to CANSTOP at Sundaram Medical Foundation, Anna Nagar.

Blood Donation Camp: On 4th October 2005, the NSS unit along with the Madras Voluntary Blood Bank organised a blood donation camp. One hundred and twenty-four units of blood were donated to the Government Stanley Hospital. Dr. Sr. Jasintha Quadras, the Vice-Principal, inaugurated the blood camp by being the first donor. On this

occasion, the nursing students of the M.A. Chidambaram College of Nursing performed a mime on the myths and realities of blood donation.

World AIDS Day: The third year volunteers performed two skits titled *Pudhiya Jaadhakam* and *Paadhukapum Aravanaipum* on HIV AIDS prevention for our college students. An exhibition of posters on AIDS was also held to create awareness of the disease amongst the student community.

Flag Day: This was observed on 7th December 2005. The collection of donations on that day provided us with an opportunity to express our gratitude to ex-servicemen.

Training and Orientation Programmes attended by our Volunteers

An orientation on the NSS was held for all the first year students of our college. It focused on Beveridge's definition of 'Voluntary Action' which is the feeling of discomfort on the part of the people in comfort about the people in discomfort. Dr. Ms. Poppy Kannan conducted the workshop.

Ms. Annie Cherian attended a one-day workshop for programme officers organised by the Centre for Social Initiative Management on the theme of 'Social Entrepreneurship, a New Dimension in Social Service'.

Six volunteers, Nancy of II year Maths, Puneetha Jennifer of II B.Sc. Maths, Abhilasha of II B.Sc. Chemistry, Bhargavi of I B.A. English, Jayarakkini of I B.Com. and Jemima of I B.Com. were selected to attend a training programme on HIV/AIDS awareness organised by APAC, Chennai. This has enabled them to work as peer educators. Other volunteers were also trained in *Nattupura Kalaigal* and choir singing.

Twenty volunteers attended a lecture on 'The Role of Youth in Disaster Management' by David Liebersbach, Director, Alaska Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, organised at the Madras School of Social Work.

Five volunteers attended a seminar in observance of 'The National Day for the Mentally Retarded' organised by the Parents' Association for the Mentally Retarded.

As part of the Red Ribbon Club programme, NSS volunteers attended a talk on AIDS awareness by Dr. Ashok Babu, Programme Officer, APAC, VHS Hospital, Chennai. Twenty volunteers attended an HIV/AIDS programme organised by the Red Ribbon Club at the Madras University. The third year volunteers performed a skit on the occasion.

NSS volunteers along with the postgraduate SAP students and the BSW students attended a lecture on 'Youth Service and Leadership' by Susan Stroud, Executive Director, Innovation in Civic Participation, Washington DC, USA.

Fifty of our volunteers attended the celebrations held to mark the Rajiv Gandhi Renewable Energy Day. The third year NSS volunteers performed a mime at the International Workshop on Skill Training organised by the Department of Adult and Continuing Education, University of Madras.

Sales Organised by the NSS

The NSS has organised sales of different items with the objective of creating awareness of the abilities of the disabled and the marginalised. In collaboration with the Tamil Nadu Science Forum, the NSS organised a campaign to promote village-made products as an alternative to MNC products. Women did

this through a display and sale of items and a street theatre performance from Self-Help groups.

A sale of khadi sarees was also organised in collaboration with the Gandhiji's Weavers Association in commemoration of the death anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi. Within three hours the weavers had sold products worth Rs. 30,000.

Rural Health Camp

A very special feature of the NSS cell this year has been the rural health camps organised once in two months in the Villivakam Panchayat. The Panchayat Elementary School Board, Government of Tamil Nadu, had given permission to organise school health screenings and impart health education in all their schools in Villivakam Panchayat. There are 18 schools in 22 villages. So far the schools in Numbal, Vellapanchavadi and Nulambur villages have been covered.

One thousand four hundred children have been given health education and have had a general health check-up done. One hundred and ten volunteers have had the experience of working in these villages. This is a long-term project of the NSS and we are very grateful to the Mehta Charity Trust for sponsoring the medical aid and for sharing the services of their medical personnel. We also wish to place on record our thanks to the History Department of our college for their street theatre performance on environmental issues at Vellapanchavadi village.

NSS Special Camping Programme

The ten-day special camping programme was conducted from November 14-24, 2005.

At the camp the volunteers organised Children's Day celebrations at the Holy Trinity Primary School. Three hundred primary school children were gifted with a school bag, notebooks and a stationery kit each. This was possible through the assistance of Dr. Sr. Florine, Superior of the Convent.

The volunteers observed National Integration Day at the Nulambur Primary School. They organised drawing, craft making, story telling and group games for the children. A rural health camp was organised at the Nulambur village where 400 children, 60 women and 35 men were given medical assistance. The low cost Health Care Centre under the dynamic leadership of Sr. Muriel Fernandez offered a training session on the principles of holistic health.

A big feat performed by the campers was the collection of nearly 700 kilograms of old newspapers. They sold it for nearly Rs. 4000 and contributed the amount to sponsor a health drink for poor school-going children on a daily basis, for a year.

While participating in a number of inter-collegiate NSS activities such as essay writing, slogan writing, oratorical events, solo and group music events, folk dance events and rangoli our NSS volunteers won many prizes.

NSS community service activities and leadership training enhance the holistic development of students and give them necessary skills to face the challenges of the world outside.

NCC Report

TRAINED TO SERVE THE NATION

On August 15, 1947, India awoke to a new dawn of freedom in the midnight hour. We made a “tryst with destiny” to grow from strength to strength in order to become a great nation and a great people. Nehru’s vision of an empowered India included the formation of the National Cadet Corps (NCC), a youth organisation that would train young men and women in citizenship, leadership qualities, and inculcate in them a spirit of service, nationalism and patriotism.

From modest beginnings, the NCC has grown into a massive organisation and is recognised as an established avenue for channeling the physical resources of our youth, constantly inspiring them to meet greater challenges in life. The Stella Maris NCC Company was one of the earliest to be established and has since then been in the forefront of all cadet activities at the state and national levels.

Adventure is the food a cadet feeds on and the year’s activities for the cadets of the college began with an exciting and fun-filled All India Trekking Expedition to Ooty in which five of our cadets participated. The combined annual training camp began in the first week of June in which 23 cadets participated. This was followed by four training camps leading to the Inter Group Competition – Republic Day Competition (IGC-RDC) in September 2005. The freshmen were enrolled in June 2005 and were initiated into NCC activities at the annual inaugural camp held on 29th and 30th July 2005 at the Besant camping site. The camp included numerous competitions



The outgoing batch of NCC Cadets with Lt. Dolly Thomas, NCC Officer

such as Line Area, Flag Area, NIAP, Quiz and Cultural activities. Our chief guest for the occasion was Col. K. Bhaskar, Group Commander, Madras Group A. Four cadets were selected for the Thal Sainik training camps - Cadet Sharmila and Cadet Nithya of the Department of Mathematics, Cadet Rekha of the Physics Department and Cadet Ramya of the Zoology Department. Cadet Ramya and Cadet Nithya went on to represent the state at the Thal Sainik Camp held in Delhi in September 2005.

The Combined Annual Training camp for the naval cadets was held in July. L/c Shreya Vijaykumar was selected for Nav Sainik Launch I. L/c C. Jeevitha was selected for the Nav Sainik Launch I and II. The Combined Annual Training camp for the air wing cadets also began in July. The Vayu Sainik camp inter-group competitions were held in September. Sgt. Rebecca Franklin of the English Department won the first place for flying and was selected as the directorate representative for the All India Vayu Sainik Camp at Bangalore. L/Cpl Preethi



Rifle Shooting Demonstration

Nancy of the Commerce Department was also selected for the same. Sgt. Rebecca Franklin has been selected for the flying licence and is training for the same. Flt/Cdt Dharshini was selected for the Air Force Attachment camp in Hyderabad.

The RDC Inter-group competitions were held in September 2005. Cadet Annie of the Commerce Department, Cadet Meera Rajan of the Zoology Department, Cadet Subha of the Chemistry Department, Cadets Aparna, Sharmila and Anu Abraham from the Mathematics Department participated and contributed towards winning the Chief Minister's banner for Madras Group A.

One of the primary aims of the NCC is to foster the spirit of unity and integration amongst the youth of today and therefore every directorate conducts National Integration Camps (NIC). Cadets from Stella Maris participated in the NIC held in Chennai, Maharashtra, Nagaland and Leh. At the Republic Day camp 2006 held at New Delhi, Flt/Cdt Annie Priscilla of the Commerce Department represented the college. She participated in the NIAP and the Prime Minister's rally, both events in which the Tamil Nadu contingent did extremely well. She was also selected to march on the Rajpath. Students of the college also participated in the Madras Republic Day Parade.

The Youth Exchange Programme of the NCC provides cadets with a lifetime's experience of visiting foreign countries as youth ambassadors. Petty Officer Cadet Anuradha Nair of the Commerce Department, who was part of RDC 2005, was selected for the Youth Exchange Programme to Vietnam in November 2005. SUO Marian Antony of the Sociology Department and POC Sowmya Ravindran of the Mathematics Department who were part of the RDC 2005 were selected for the Service Selection Board Capsule training camp held in Gwalior in January 2006.

In order to develop in cadets the spirit of adventure and sportsmanship, adventure camps are conducted. Cadet Rekha of the Physics Department was selected for an adventure of a lifetime when she attended the para-jumping training camp held in Agra in November 2005. Flt/Cdt Niveditha of the Commerce Department and Cadet Vanitha of the History Department were part of the Sikkim Training camp in November 2005.

Rifle Shooting is probably what every cadet finds most thrilling. We have a few sharp shooters on campus. SUO Sonya of the Commerce Department who won the silver medal for firing at the Inter group competitions in 2004 and Flt/Cdt Jennifer Ketsia of the Mathematics Department who has a silver medal for Microlight Flying were selected for the All India Mavlankar Firing competition.

Through the social service programme, *Jeeva Sparsham*, the Stella Maris NCC Company reached out to the less fortunate in society. The cadets organised street plays on AIDS awareness and promotion of hygiene and sanitation for the residents of Nochhi Kuppam. The floods caused by the rains last year had resulted in

untold misery for thousands of poor people in the city of Chennai and the cadets of the college lent a helping hand by distributing flood relief material which included rice, pulses, clothes and toiletries. For the little angels at Shanti Bhavan, we gifted books and stationery. The cadets also conducted an eye donation campaign in college. With the National Service Scheme wing of our college, the cadets participated in a special sports meet conducted by the Shakti Foundation in commemoration of World Disability Day for differently-abled children in the city of Chennai. The cadets led the marching contingent. At the A.L. Mudaliar Intercollegiate Sports Meet held in October 2005, the Stella Maris NCC Company won the first place for the March Past.

The CATC was conducted in December 2005 along with the RDC launch camp. Cadet Sridevi of the Sociology Department won the first place for drill, the second place for solo dance and the first place for leadership.

The inter-company competitions among the four companies, Alpha, Bravo, Charlie and Delta, were held on the 20th and 21st of December. The various competitions for the best company of the year included contingent drill, individual drill, cross country, communications, first-aid, map reading, best cadet competitions, best Thal Sainik Competition, GK, General Service Knowledge and IQ. Alpha company emerged the overall winners and walked away with the trophy for the best company of the year 2005-06.

At "Vis-a-Vis" cadet competitions conducted by JBAS College, the Stella Maris NCC Company won the second place for contingent drill. Cadet JCS Jennifer won the second place as Best Cadet. Cadet Nithya A. won the first place for communication and Cadet

Nithyalakshmi won the second place for First Aid. The cadets also won the first place for group song, second place for group dance, second place for solo song and third place for solo dance.

At Cadofest 2006, Cadet Meera Rajan won the second place for the Best Parade Commander. Cadet JCS Jennifer won the third place for the Best Right Marker. Nithyalakshmi won the third place for 'Acolyte'. We won the first place for group song, the second place for GK, GSK and IQ and second place for Map Reading and Communication.

Former Cadet Pramila Toppo of the batch of 2003 completed her Short Service Commission from the Officers Training Academy, Chennai in March 2005. Former Cadet Sony Maria Joseph of the batch of 2004 completed her Short Service Commission from the OTA, Chennai, in September 2005. Former Cadet Vandana of the batch of 1999 was commissioned as an IPS Officer in October 2005.

The second year Naval and Air Wing cadets appeared for the B certificate examination on the 18th and 19th of February. Two hundred and eighty-seven cadets of the Army Wing appeared for their B Certificate and 20 cadets appeared for the C Certificate examination in March 2006.

Two cadets participated in a state level seminar on 'Vision 2020' for the NCC conducted by the Sastra Deemed University at Thanjavur on the 3rd and 4th March and were awarded the first place.

*Lt. Dolly Thomas
Faculty, Department of History*

Lt. Dolly Thomas has been the Associate NCC Officer of Stella Maris College since 2001. She was commissioned at the Officers' Training Academy, Gwalior in 2003 and was awarded the Commandant's Silver Medal for Best All-Round Lady Cadet.

Sports and Games Report 'Higher, Faster, Stronger'



Dr. R. Thirumalaisamy, Vice-Chancellor, Tamil Nadu Sports University lighting the torch to mark the commencement of the Annual Sports Meet

The achievements of our students in Sports and Games during the academic year 2005-2006 is highly commendable. Many students brought home laurels after having participated in games with great enthusiasm and vigour and in a spirit of healthy competition.

In the inter-collegiate tournaments, our college Tennis and Table Tennis teams bagged the Winners Trophy and the Hockey and Basketball teams got the third place. Several of our students have represented Madras University 'B' Zone in the following major games and athletics.

Basketball	Mercy Margaret, II BCA Diya Susan Pallikal, II B.A. Fine Arts Jeevitha M., II B.Sc. Maths V. Nishchala, III BCA Shanmugapriya K., II B.Com R. Madhumitha, II B.Sc. Chemistry S. Sethukkarasi, II B.Com Vidhya P., II B.Sc. Chemistry
Cricket	A. Vishvaa, III B.Com Roselita, III B.A. Economics

Jacquellin, II B.A.
Tamara Silver, I B.A. History
Poorani, III B.Sc. Physics
Roshini S. Hemdev, I B.Com
Anila Grace, II B.Com

Table Tennis J. Swarna, II B.Sc. Botany
N. Aishwarya, III BCA
B. Sivaranjini, III B.Com.
Preetha M., II B.Sc. Chemistry

Lawn Tennis Harini, II B.A. English
Viba, II B.A. Economics
Vandana Viba, I B.A. Fine Arts

Hockey P. Thilakavathi, II B.Com
J. Jennifer Ruby, I BSW
Rathi R., I B.Com.
S. Sharmila, I B.Sc. Physics
M. Mohitha, I B.A. Fine Arts
A. Chithra, I B.Com.

Athletics Tanya, II B.A. Sociology
Vanitha, II BSW

Chess Madhushree V., III B.Com.

Some of our students represented Madras University and participated in the All India Inter University Tournaments in the following games.

Basket Ball	Diya Susan Pallikal, II B.A. Fine Arts
Table Tennis	J. Swarna, II B.Sc. Botany N. Aishwarya, II BCA
Lawn Tennis	Viba, II B.A. Economics Harini Kumar, II B.A. English
Swimming	Saba Sait, II B.Com.
Shooting	Jahnvi Mahalingam, III B.A. Fine Arts
Rowing	Sudakshna, III B.Com
Hockey	J. Jennifer Ruby, II BSW

Some of our students represented the Tamil Nadu State in the following games.

Table Tennis J. Swarna, II B.Sc. Botany
Aishwarya Narasimhan, II BCA

Swimming Saba Sait, II B.Com

Shooting Jahnvi Mahalingam, III B.A. Fine Arts

Golf Uthara, II B.A. Economics

Volley Ball J. Krishna Priya, I BCA

The Madras University Table Tennis team won the South Zone and All India Tournament conducted at Gulbarga and Ahmedabad respectively in which J. Swarna II B.Sc. Botany and Aishwarya Narasimhan III BCA of our college were the main players.

J. Swarna II B.Sc. Botany represented Tamil Nadu State for the Senior National Championship where she won many medals. She was also selected for the Indian Camp held at China.

This year our college teams participated in several State and All India Inter-collegiate and open tournaments where they won prizes.

The high level of performance of the students in sports, games and athletics is due to their unstinting hard work, sustained practice and commitment, and the continuous support and encouragement of the Principal, Faculty and Management.



The 'Ice-breaker'

Classical Myth Revisited

THE COLLEGE PLAY



Antigone

The college play for the academic year 2005-2006 was *Antigone*, an adaptation of the classic Greek tragedy by Jean Anouilh (translated from French by Lewis Galantiere). Directed by Deesh Mariwala, *Antigone* is a serious, tragic, rather wordy play – very ambitious for a cast consisting mostly of newcomers. But the director's passion and faith in the script was communicated to the entire cast and crew, and we all approached the play eagerly with our interpretations.

Creon, the King of Thebes, has ascended the throne after a bloody civil war. His nephews Polynices and Eteocles had killed each other over a fight to seize the throne. Creon gives Eteocles, a royal funeral, leaving Polynices' body outside the city for the vultures to feed on. Antigone, Polynices' sister and Creon's niece, sneaks out at night to bury her brother's body, even though she knows that the punishment is death. She is caught and brought before Creon. Why did she do it? Was it love for a brother she barely knew, was it mere teenage rebellion, or was it a desperate yearning to stand up for

what she believed in? The focus of the play is a lengthy confrontation between Creon and Antigone, where Creon tries to assess his niece's motives. Antigone demands that she be put to death, which Creon is forced to do. Creon cannot change his niece's fate, nor his own, for this is a tragedy, where everything is preordained, and events uncoil like a spring.

The cast and crew worked rapidly within a very limited time frame. We barely had five weeks to put the play together. The workshops and casting process were intense. We focused on physical movements and improvisations dealing with serious, emotional issues in keeping with the play's theme. Emphasis was placed not on learning one's lines or remembering one's positions but really getting into the head of the character and trusting our instincts. We frequently switched roles and tried out different approaches to the script. A week before the first show, we even tried re-doing the whole play as a black reggae musical! The rehearsal process was tremendous fun and liberating at the same time, and the final shows were deeply satisfying for us.

Antigone was staged at Sivagami Pethachi Auditorium from 10-12 February 2006.

*Ms. Madhuri Shekar
III B.A. History*

Ms. Madhuri Shekar caught the acting bug from the college play in her first year at Stella Maris and loves everything to do with theatre.



Bonaventure Block: A view of the interior

Pathways to Higher Education: A Life-Skills Training Programme

Stella Maris College had the privilege of being selected as an associate college of the Foundation for Academic Excellence and Access (FAEA) funded by The Ford Foundation in August 2005. The FAEA in Stella Maris, operates on the basis of the combined mission statements of the FAEA which focuses on “emphasising on the equality of opportunity to help students become what they want to become, so that they have a choice and are not dictated by necessity,” and the mission of Stella Maris College which aims “to promote a learning community in which all, especially those from less privileged backgrounds, feel part of the collaborative high quality educational process which is value based and leads to holistic growth”.

The Pathways Programme was launched in November 2005, with 120 first year undergraduate students. The objective of the programme is to enhance the capacity of students by helping them acquire specific skills, especially communication skills, through a series of workshops and activities. The students selected to participate in the programme belong to the disadvantaged sections of society, and need personal and professional development.

The major activities under the FAEA programme undertaken in the college included three training programmes for the students, i.e. a Life-Skills Training Programme, Basic Computer Skills and English Communication Skills. The programme also identified strategies for expanding the operations of the Career Guidance Cell of the college in order to provide follow-up and placement opportunities for the Pathways students and other socially disadvantaged students of the college. A Multi-Media Language Laboratory will soon be set up and specialised software for visually challenged students will be



A participant shares her views on the workshop. FAEA members Dr. Padmanaban and Dr. Nagabushanam and Dr. Sr. Rita Marneni fmm, Secretary of the College look on.

installed as part of the on-going programmes for capacity building of students with special needs.

The Life-Skills Training Programme held in November 2005 for four batches focused on enhancing self-confidence and English communication skills.

The resource persons were Ms. Usha Ravishankar, Ms. Nalini Ravindran, Ms. Sabitha Sridhar, and Dr. Nirmala, experienced trainers from *Sahaja*, an NGO conducting workshops for public and private sector corporate houses and educational institutions.

FAEA members - Prof. V.R. Mehta, Dr. Padmanaban, Dr. Nagabushanam and the Finance Manager Mr. Subash were present at the valedictory programme. Their presence and their words of encouragement cheered the students and instilled in them the confidence that with FAEA's support they could reach great heights.

Four of the participants who shared with the audience their experience of the workshop stated that the sessions helped rid them of their diffidence in communicating with others and led them towards a realisation of their own capabilities.

Realising the need of the Pathways students for computer literacy, a basic course in Computer Skills was organised in December 2005 for 45 students. The resource persons for the course were the faculty and students of the Department of Computer Science.

The participants were awarded certificates at the completion of the course. They were very happy at being given hands-on training in computer skills. For many, this was their first time at working on a computer.

As a follow-up to the Life-Skills Programme, 80 students attended classes in Communication Skills held in February and March 2006. The Pathways students who registered for the course were given a Diagnostic Test to assess their level of language competency. A needs analysis was also done to find out the needs of the students. They were then graded and the three groups were taught simple conversational skills, effective communication and public speaking respectively.

Two of our visually challenged students, Karkuzhali of I M.A. English, and Aruna of I M.S.W. are being assisted through audio-enabled software programmes, JAWS, for Windows and Open Book. These programmes enable the students to listen to the information as well as access scanned material through a text-to-speech programme. The software will be ready for use from June 2006 and will be a boon to the students who now rely on scribes and friends to assist them in their academic programme.

The existing Career Guidance Cell of the college is being strengthened and expanded to provide follow-up and placement opportunities for the Pathways students and other socially disadvantaged students of the college. Thirty-eight companies visited the college for recruitment this academic year and 260 students

have been selected for job placements. The Cell has appointed a full-time Placement Officer and a Secretary to coordinate the activities.

The college recommended three highly deserving students for the FAEA Scholarship. They are Renjini Jose of I B.A. History, Thilagam of I B.Sc. Plant Biology & Plant Biotechnology and Sagaya Selva Jothi of I B.Sc. Mathematics. The scholarship has provided the students much needed financial support to pursue their higher education and will certainly help them reach greater heights in future. All three students have excellent academic records. The proposed activities for the summer vacation include computer-based training programmes and training in interview skills and office etiquette. Students will be trained on campus in two batches of 35 each, and the resource persons will be from NIIT.

The programmes conducted this year have been in keeping with the overall mission of the college and have served to enhance the hidden potential of students. Students from the weaker sections of society and first generation learners have benefited from this programme and have revealed increased confidence and shown personal growth. The College hopes to continue its collaboration with FAEA in its mission to reach out to the less privileged.

*Ms. Thilagavathi Joseph
FAEA coordinator*

Dr. Thilagavathi Joseph is a faculty member in the Department of English. Her area of research is Semiotics and her area of interest is English Language Teaching: Theory and Practice. She is also actively involved in conducting English Language Competency workshops for students especially from the disadvantaged sections of society.

Translating Learning into Action

THE FUNCTIONAL LITERACY PROGRAMME

The Functional Literacy Programme, 'Education for All' is on the educational agenda for the Government of India. Functional literacy assumes special significance in this regard. The programme operates with eight staff co-ordinators and 180 undergraduate students from all disciplines. It focuses attention on women and children in the rural areas.

The focus for the year was on total sanitation and total literacy campaigns. Students were prepared for the programme through an orientation by Ms. Anbu Priyavadhini from the state resource centre for Adult and Non-Formal Education. Sessions provided inputs on the various aspects of the programme ranging from health and environment to procedures on applying for grants to build toilets, etc. The village administrative officer and Panchayat union president of Kuthambakkam, Mr. Ellango, clarified doubts on the aforementioned issues.

Students embarked on the programme in the villages of Athanancherri, Manimangalam in Padappai Panchayat and Kuthambakkam Panchayat, Thiruvallur district. They were instrumental in creating awareness on health hazards and the importance of constructing and using toilets. The field visits enabled the students to gather first-hand experience in

this aspect of the programme. They received feedback on reasons for not constructing a toilet, for not using the toilet constructed, etc. Problems regarding construction and usage were also discussed with the villagers. The whole programme was an enriching experience for students. It provided them insights into the schemes of the government, actual implementation of the schemes and practical problems faced by the villagers and the Block Development Office.

Opinions and random thoughts of students : "There is a lot of difference in me after the visits. Every time I see people suffering I recall the Panchayat Head's speech."

"You are the future of our country so at least try to help the needy."

"I have changed a lot. I have inculcated a helping tendency within me.

"I have always felt that Panchayat offices do not function properly. I have changed my opinion after seeing the Kuthambakkam Panchayat office."

*Ms. Punitha
Faculty, Department of Economics
Co-ordinator, Functional Literacy Programme*

The year that was . . . paves the way for the year to be

THE CAREER GUIDANCE CELL

A very good place to begin the report of the operations and achievements of the Career Guidance Cell (CGC) would be the regular, but highly popular training programme held at the beginning of the academic year 2005-2006. This is offered to the final year students covering topics ranging from motivation and goal setting to creativity and team building.

We call it 'Creating My Future' and this does pave the way for a bright future!

The appointment of a final year Economics student as the Campus Ambassador for PROGEON (the BPO wing of Infosys) was a tremendous achievement. Stella Maris can indeed lay claim to and boast of a good interactive relationship with the corporate world.

November, once again, ushered in a highly sought-after training programme offered to the final year students which focused on preparing the students to appear successfully for interviews.

The videography method of assessing the students' performance during group discussions was an innovation we introduced to enable the students to critically view their strengths and weaknesses with the expert advice of the resource persons. This training was imparted in a timely manner, just before our recruitment drive in November.

Records, they say, are meant to be broken. And our recruitment drive scaled newer heights

as this year we were able to attract all the top companies and get our students plum jobs as well. To name a few important companies - Goldman Sachs, D.E. Shaw, Cognizant Technology Solutions, Infosys - the list goes on.

Among its newest initiatives of the CGC is the collaboration with the English Department to carry forward the FAEA Programme of the college (Foundation for Academic Excellence and Access). This programme is sponsored by the Ford Foundation and is termed 'Pathways'. Its vision is to accompany economically weak, but academically competent students on the journey through the three years of undergraduate studies in the college, and prepare them for campus recruitment.

Our achievements apart, appreciation and acknowledgement from the Principal Dr. Sr. Annamma continues to be a key motivating factor. In addition, our team leader Dr. Sr. Colleen North gives us the freedom and space that we truly appreciate.

Ms. Hema Ramkumar

Ms. Hema Ramkumar graduated from the English Department in 1978. Her favourite hobby is reading. She is a member of the Madras Book Club. The creative streak in her led her to design silk sarees. Hema is part of the Career Guidance Cell of Stella Maris College.

Homecomings and New Seasons

THE ALUMNAE ASSOCIATION

“To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven.” And so, after a few years spent studying in Stella Maris, her students walk out, to fresh woods and pastures new. But they part, only to meet again. To borrow the words of John Gay, their hearts are the faithful compass that still point to their Alma Mater. They look homeward and ask themselves what they can do for their college.

They come in large numbers as members of the Alumnae Association, resurrected ten years ago on the occasion of the Golden Jubilee of the college. Since then this Association has been going strong, with the number of its activities increasing exponentially every year.

A review of the activities of the past year bears testimony to the generosity of the alumnae. They have given generously – of their time, of themselves. After the well-deserved holidays of summer, the month of July witnessed a music programme by the noted violinist Lalgudi Jayaraman’s daughter, Vijayalakshmi. Her mellifluous voice and superb rendition of classical songs left the audience spellbound.

Whoever believes that “East is East and West is West and never the twain shall meet” has obviously not encountered the art of Aparna Ramesh which followed the virtuoso performance by Vijayalakshmi. Artiste extraordinaire, Aparna runs a dance school in Washington D.C. and counts a lot of illustrious people in her audiences, among whom mention must be made of the former President of the United States, Bill Clinton. She does a lot of work on how Indian classical dance can be adapted to Western dance forms, resulting in a truly

harmonious fusion of East and West. On this occasion she played the role of Sita and depicted scenes from the Ramayana, showing how highly empowered a woman Sita had been, connecting the idea seamlessly with the contemporary state of the modern liberated woman.

In keeping with the spirit of the season of dance and music which takes place every year in December-January in Chennai, the alumnae had Roja Kannan, an acclaimed dancer, giving a scintillating performance in January. The same evening also saw the felicitation of another alumna who had won laurels – Prof. Eugenie Pinto, the Principal of Queen Mary’s College.

On the threshold of the occasion of the Diamond Jubilee of Stella Maris in 2007, the alumnae, whose youthful hearts sing of their love and loyalty to the Alma Mater, are planning a celebration. They look forward to the event with enthusiasm, with pride in all the accomplishments of the college in furthering the cause of women’s education and with hope - hope that the Star of the Sea will shine on radiantly.

Ms. Bilkhis B. Sait

Ms. Bilkhis B. Sait has a postgraduate degree in English from Stella Maris College. After an M.A. in French at the Alliance Française, she did a one year University course at the Sorbonne. She teaches at Alliance Française and has also taught in schools, colleges (Stella Maris and Women’s Christian College) and at the University of Madras. She is currently engaged in doing translations and is a resource person for seminars. Her most recent project was the translation into French of the book ‘The Chettiar Heritage’ by the noted historian, Mr. S. Muthiah.

Lasting Contributions

ENDOWMENT LECTURES



Dr. Kalpana Kochhar, Asst. Director, Research Dept. IMF with (L to R) Ms. Mary Abraham, Ms. Usha Ramani and Dr. Sr. Helen Vincent from

The Dr. Sr. Helen Vincent Endowment Lecture organised by the Department of Economics for the year 2004-2005 was delivered by Dr. Kalpana Kochhar. The topic of her lecture was 'Globalisation, the IMF and India.'

This accomplished alumna of the college is the Assistant Director of the Research Department of the International Monetary Fund (IMF). After her undergraduate studies in Economics from Stella Maris College, she did her postgraduation from the Delhi School of Economics. Her doctoral degree is from Brown University in Boston.

Dr. Kochhar defined the term globalisation as a "free flow of goods and services, finance, people, technology, culture and ideas". Pre-1914, there had been a high level of global integration but the period 1914-1944 saw a reversal with many countries following the "beggar thy neighbour" policy. This reversal was due to the Great Depression and the Second

World War. At present, the global community was returning to its pre-1914 level of integration.

The next section of her lecture focused on the IMF's role in this globalised world. According to Dr. Kochhar, the main mandate of the organisation was to avoid the past mistakes of extreme protectionism while working towards global financial security, assisting countries in dealing with balance of payment difficulties and participating actively in the global war on poverty. In order to fulfill its mandate, IMF required funds which it acquired through quota subscriptions from member countries. As on 31st December 2003, IMF's lending capacity was \$81 billion, with the US's quota amounting to the largest at 17.6% of the total. Since the quota determines voting power and access to finance, this point seems to be very important.

Dr. Kochhar then highlighted the three major functions of the Fund, namely, surveillance, technical assistance and financial assistance. The first function, she pointed out, was concerned with monitoring economic and financial development of countries and providing policy outlooks and solutions to financial difficulties of member states. The second function was concerned with providing training in areas of fiscal and monetary policy design, institution building and statistical techniques. The last function dealt with providing concessional and non-concessional assistance to low-income countries to help them deal with their balance of payment problems.

Dr. Kochhar then moved on to discuss the emerging challenges for the organisation.

According to her, the IMF needed to use its tools more intensively. There should be a more coordinated private sector involvement, new financial instruments, and appropriate scale of assistance and streamlining of conditionalities. With regard to globalisation, she acknowledged that it had led to increased life expectancy, a more equitable distribution of income and a fall in the level of poverty. However, she pointed out that the phenomenon of globalisation was not free from pitfalls as could be seen by the South Asian crisis. Also, certain countries, especially those in the African continent, had missed the benefits of globalisation and have experienced increasing levels of poverty. Research has shown that liberalising trade in agricultural products is critical for a more equitable distribution of the benefits of globalisation. However, the reality presents a contrasting picture where most developed nations use farm subsidies and tariffs to protect their agriculture sectors.

While on the subject of poverty, Dr. Kochhar reiterated the importance of the 'Millennium Development Goals' set by the United Nations Development Program. In order to achieve these goals, she said that countries needed aid and trade as established by the Monterrey Consensus. The fiscal budgets had to be made more pro-poor and pro-growth. Any anti-poverty programme had to be country-driven, comprehensive and outcome-oriented. In fact, for heavily indebted poor countries, the joint World Bank and IMF initiative focused on debt relief and aimed to reduce debt in such countries by \$50 billion.

The latter half of the lecture focused on India's experience with globalisation. India's trade in goods and services had risen from 7% in the 1970s to nearly 35% of its GDP in 2004. Even

the foreign exchange and per capita income had increased over the years. The growth in GDP and the inflation rate had become more stable and less volatile; the level of poverty had been reduced. She attributed all these changes to the effects of globalisation and the Indian Fiscal Reforms of 1991.

However, India lagged behind China, Malaysia, Sri Lanka and Thailand in terms of growth and share in world trade. Even the level of financial integration and foreign direct investment flows were much lower in comparison to these countries. She listed the major problems faced by India which included increasing levels of interest payments, fiscal deficit that was financed indirectly by private household savings, inadequate infrastructure due to cuts in capital expenditure on account of the deficit, bureaucracy, corruption, red tapism and labour market inflexibility. In fact, if these problems were addressed, India would be able to challenge not only its South Asian neighbours but also the developed Western nations.

The lecture concluded on a positive note and was followed by an interactive session. The role of America in the Fund's policy making and IMF's controversial structural adjustment programme were two topics that came under heated debate. This lecture gave the students an insider-perspective into one of the most influential financial institutions of the world and the experience proved to be instructive and enlightening.

Ms. Aarti B.

II M.A. Economics

Ms. Aarti was awarded the gold medal in her B.A. degree programme and has also won the proficiency prize in the first year of her Masters. She is an active participant in quiz, elocution, creative writing, dance and event management. Her career goal is to work for an international organisation.

The Dr. Thangamani Endowment Lecture was organised by the Department of Mathematics on 6th January 2006. The lecture was delivered by Dr. Roger W. Barnard, an internationally reputed mathematician who is also a professor in the Department of Mathematics, Texas Tech University, USA. The topic chosen, "How Far Can Convex Maps in the Three Classical Geometries Distort Regions From Being a Disc?" introduced an interesting and complex mathematical methodology to the students.

The lecture catered to the levels of both the undergraduate as well as postgraduate students of the department. They were exposed to hitherto unknown aspects of certain areas in complex analysis.



Dr. Savithri Sankaran addressing the gathering.
Seated: Dr. Sr. Annamma Philip fmm & Dr. Roger W. Barnard

Professor Barnard handled this rather complex subject with deceptive ease, provoking students into asking questions that dealt with the subject in detail. An offshoot of the lecture was that it inspired many students to pursue Complex Analysis as a research topic.

The Srimathi Indira Gandhi Endowment Lecture was organised by the Department of History on 21st January 2006. This endowment lecture was instituted by the college in 1985 in memory of Srimathi Indira Gandhi, the first woman Prime Minister of India. On previous occasions eminent jurists, administrators and academicians, such as former US Consul General Richard Haynes, Shri C. Subramaniam,

Justice Krishna Iyer, Dr. S. Gopal, Shri T.N. Seshan, Dr. Radhakrishnan I.A.S. and Dr. Vasanthi Devi have delivered the lectures.

This year's lecture was delivered by Mr. Sashi Kumar, Chairman, Asian College of Journalism. Speaking on the topic, 'Media Responsibility in the Changing Indian Scenario', he analysed the impact of the media on the youth, women and the public at large. He also fielded questions on the responsibility of the media today at the end of his talk.

*Ms. Patricia Gabriel
Head, Department of History*

Dr. Patricia Gabriel has been instrumental in providing 100% placement for the students of the Vocational Course in Tourism in the Airlines and Travel Agencies. She is also a Soft-Skills Trainer and has done voice-over for documentaries and educational CDs.



(L-R) Mr. Sashi Kumar, Dr. Patricia Gabriel, Ms. Vimala Stephen

From Classroom to Community

PEDAGOGY OF SERVICE LEARNING

Service Learning (SL) is based on a mutual relationship where learning reinforces and strengthens service and service enriches and expands the boundaries of learning. It helps students master important curricular content by allowing them to make meaningful connections between what they are studying and its many applications. Service Learning also helps young people develop a range of service skills, from acts of kindness and caring, to community stewardship and civic action. Service Learning enables students as growing individuals to look at themselves in all their capacities and the roles they play in society.

With the objective of liaising with like-minded colleges for the growth of the SL phenomenon, the management of Stella Maris College with support from the UBCHEA organized a national symposium on September 23rd and 24th 2005.

Faculty from 12 colleges, including Stella Maris, participated in the symposium. Several eminent educationists were resource persons at the symposium. The inaugural address by Dr. S. Parasuraman, Director, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai, focused on what service learning meant to the institution. Service Learning components are incorporated by the University into field action projects for better learning experiences by the student. Values like equity, justice and rights for people were explained in relation to tangible and real-life



Dr. Betty Abregana, South Asia Project Director UBCHEA explaining the learning process

experiences of students working in the community. Questions on the nature of 'development' in India and the attitudinal changes in the 'haves' were raised.

Dr. Betty Abregana, Program Director for South Asia, UBCHEA delivered the keynote address, in which she developed a comprehensive understanding of Service Learning, a specific learning strategy encapsulated in the phrase 'Learning Aided by Service for the Learner'. This reinforced the understanding of fundamental concepts learned in the classroom by ensuring continuity of learning through practice. Linking of community needs to skills at hand was the true philosophy of SL. Relevance to cares and concerns of the community was a crucial part of SL and in this manner text would come alive to the learner and result in reinforced learning.

Dr. Abregana pointed out that assumption of personal responsibility was what SL also hoped to cultivate in a student. It encouraged the building of scholars whose feet were firmly grounded in the community. A linkage was formed between two groups – the community and the student, leading to mutual benefit.

The challenge of SL was the proper integration of teaching methodology in the syllabus and curriculum, and orienting students towards inter-disciplinarity. An inter-disciplinary approach would build learning within the community, students, the faculty involved and the institution, ultimately making education relevant to society.

Dr. Patricia Stranahan, President Elect, UBCHEA, who delivered the Special Address stated that SL was an integral component of Higher Education. Service Learning's true mission was to educate students to be responsible members of the society they live in. Instilling in them a sense of civic responsibility would ensure learning by practice.

The input and interactive sessions which followed threw further light on SL as a pedagogy. In her introductory talk, "Service Learning: Some Pedagogical Considerations" Dr. Abregana pointed out that Professional Service, Institutional Commitment and Volunteerism were different from SL. In professional service, a staff member gave skills to the community to meet the needs of the community. In partnerships among institutions, a liaison was formed for mutual benefit of the two parties. In volunteerism, the primary emphasis was on service and not the learning component, which was arrived at only when skills learnt were put to practice thus enhancing the learning process.

She pointed out that SL comprised elements of a structured experience imparted to the students. It was linked with the academic coursework and entailed engagement in organized service activities where the needs of the community have been recognized. It was a collaborative partnership where the community had a voice in the change process. Reflection by students on their experience was used as an assessment strategy or evaluation tool.

The learning process was cyclic and commenced and ended in action with systematic interaction of analysis, reflection for evaluation and research and development. The implication of SL was the change in the philosophy of education and our comprehension of what education meant to us. Service learning in a sense is education of the heart where students are sensitised to the needs of people less privileged. Student participation was contingent to SL where students had opportunities to cultivate critical thinking.

The significance of SL to the triad of student, community and institution was emphasised. The most dominant component in the institutionalisation of SL was the commitment of faculty. She discussed the several ways by which the faculty could integrate the SL component with the subject and into the curriculum. It was also established that the agency's involvement with the institution and the institutional commitment were fundamental to institutionalizing SL.

The outcomes of SL could be measured on a personal level by the student, through social outcomes such as cultural and racial understanding leading to social responsibility, civic responsibility and a commitment to service

for society. The nucleus of the process was the learning outcome – the positive impact of the service on academic learning and in understanding the real world where theory was put to practice.

The second session, a panel discussion focused on SL and its impact. Ms. Maria Jayanthi, Associate Project Co-ordinator, Sangamam, an extension project of Stella Maris detailed Sangamam's approach to SL. The participatory stage, the heart of the experience, reflections by the student and the celebratory stage constituted the core of the SL experience at Sangamam. The mission of the project was "to be with . . . feel with . . . and work with the community for a better quality of life'. Sangamam has been working with the Kasimedu (Chennai) fishing community since 1994 and has till date been involved in urban poor community development, relief and rehabilitation post-tsunami and regaining of livelihoods since December 26, 2004.

Students had an opportunity to engage in learning experiences, linking theory and practice and found more fulfillment and meaning with the practice component. There were outcomes at the academic level and the community level as a result of this SL experience.

Mrs. Annamma George, trainer and health educator, Seyyar, Kancheepuram in her talk "Student Involvement Areas" described specific areas for the involvement of students. Tree planting for instance could rope in students of Botany, Environmental Science, etc. There would be specific SL components in this regard since their classroom learning of different types of plants or trees for different climates and terrain could be put to practical test and use.

Another highly needed field for SL to be incorporated was the field of health education. Students of various disciplines could be involved in this area of awareness creation since this was an area that involved the community. Further fields were outlined to give the audience an idea of incorporating SL in the syllabi of undergraduate and postgraduate students in order to enrich their learning experience.

Dr. Sr. Helen Vincent fmm, former Principal, Stella Maris College, observed that service when voluntary led to persistent learning with straight correlation with service and academic learning reinforcement. She pointed out that innovative ways to involve students on the field was the key to the SL process.

During the third session, Dr. Radha Paul, former Vice-President, World Vision International and former Head of the Department of Social work, Stella Maris College, spoke on the "Thrust of Service Learning in the Changing Scenario". She observed that a reflection into the past would give a clear understanding of SL and what it means to institutions. Service in the past was equated to exposure to reality for the students. This has evolved to the present definition of SL: "Service Learning combines experiential learning and community service opportunities for a student of an institution".

The evolution of this concept has laid a clear focus on the student. Curricular connections for the proper integration of learning into a service project is the key to successful SL. Academic ties should be clear and build upon existing disciplinary skills. Another tangible factor for the student involved her engagement in the project. He/she had the opportunity to

select, design, implement, and evaluate his/her service activity, thereby encouraging relevancy and interest.

'Structured opportunities' are created to think, talk, and write about the service experience. The balance of reflection and action allows a student to be constantly aware of the impact of the work. The thrust is on *learning* and NOT *service*. This is a process where content is translated into action and it is not an *outreach* programme of the institution but a programme to *reach out* to the students.

Session four comprised experience sharing by the participants from various colleges.

Ms. Sukanya Satish spoke on the Centre for Social Action (CSA) at Christ College, Bangalore. The objectives of CSA were

- To facilitate holistic development of students by involving them in social action
- To facilitate the college as a civil society organisation to assist the disadvantaged to access perceptible results in their quality of life
- To facilitate innovative practices in strengthening college-community relationships

The integration of learning and service in the curriculum is currently being worked on and the college was confident that what was now an out-reach programme, would soon be an essential component in the undergraduate curriculum so the student could apply class learning to the field and see the concrete benefits of learning and service going hand in hand.

Dr. Geetha Swaminathan spoke on the DST project of Stella Maris College which combined

learning, service and rural development of women so that it was mutually beneficial to all parties concerned..

Ms. Punitha spoke on the "Functional Literacy" in the college and Dr. Poppy Kannan on Social Awareness Programmes in the college. Prof. Stanley of St. Josephs' College, Tiruchirapalli spoke on Science and Humanities for People's Development (Shepherd) which was initiated in the college in 1986 for the holistic development of students passing through its portals. "Shepherd" sought to arouse social consciousness of students, leading to class practice connections. Ms. Chithra, Ms Priscilla, Lady Doak College, Madurai spoke on "The LDC Experience". Service Learning in Lady Doak College is viewed from a "three-component" paradigm which encompassed the academic, personal, social, cultural and intellectual development of each student. With the aim of 'taking science to villages' the college has embarked on a programme whereby students of Biology take aspects of their learning to the rural community.

The changes seen were attitudinal changes among the community as well as the students, reinforcing the idea that SL was in fact advantageous to the community.

Dr. Sundari Krishnamurthy, Academic Dean and Head of the Department of Sociology, Stella Maris College, spoke on "The Impact of Service Learning. She observed that learning was effective only when there is linkage with the 'real' world. Development Communication, a new course in the Sociology department of Stella Maris College, was used to bring about change and growth through exposure to urban and rural communities. Applying concepts in an empirical framework was the key to

complete learning of the student and a participatory approach to this learning was vital. Service Learning culminated in research projects leading to linkage of class to community and urban community to rural community.

The final session consisted of Group Report Presentations. All groups were unanimous in their view that SL was beneficial to all stakeholder. Some concrete suggestions as to the possibilities of institutionalising SL were also shared.

At the Valedictory session, Ms. Chithra Arumugam, IAS pointed out that the encouragement for innovative thinking and appreciation for creativity would lead to SL being gainfully internalised in a student's psyche.

The national symposium served to bring together faculty involved in SL from different institutions in India and helped reinforce understanding of the concepts and introduce innovative Service Learning pedagogies.



Ms. Chithra Arumugam IAS with (L to R) Dr. Sr. Jasintha Quadras, Dr. Sr. Annamma Philip & Dr. Geetha Sridharan

'Molecular Spectroscopy and Reaction Dynamics'

DEPARTMENT OF CHEMISTRY



Dr. S.P. Thyagarajan, Vice-Chancellor, University of Madras lights the lamp as (L to R) Dr. P.T. Manoharan, Dr. Sr. Annamma Philip and Dr. Rukmani Srinivasan look on.

The Department of Chemistry, Stella Maris College had the opportunity of organising the National Seminar on Molecular Spectroscopy and Reaction Dynamics with input sessions from eminent scientists across the country. The participants were exposed to a whole gamut of topics around this theme in the six plenary lectures and five panel discussions and had a chance to participate in a paper presentation competition.

The seminar was inaugurated by Dr. S.P. Thyagarajan, Vice-Chancellor, University of Madras. He stressed the need for the academic community to focus on value-based education and pointed out that chemists should gear research towards societal needs. Dr. P.T. Manoharan, Honorary Professor (JNCASR, Bangalore) at IIT Madras, delivered the keynote address. He stressed the three needs of higher education: student-teacher

rapport, research ambience and respect for scholarship.

The seminar opened with an interesting lecture by Dr. P.T. Manoharan which described how EPR spectroscopy revealed the mechanism of superoxide production in haemoglobin under hypoxic conditions. Dr. K. Mangala Sunder of IIT gave an overview of high resolution Ro-Vibrational spectroscopy in the characterisation of semi-rigid and non-rigid molecules. Dr. Pradeep of the same institute showed how Photo Emission Spectroscopy was used to study trends in physical constants in

order to determine the possible metallic nature of divided metals. The legendary Dr. K.K. Balasubramanian, Director, Shasun Chemicals, narrated with specific examples how the NMR technique could be used in the detection of unstable reaction intermediates. Dr. Ramakrishnan of IISc, Bangalore gave insights into the spectroscopic investigations of conformational modulation in synthetic polymers and described how the regular assembly of biopolymers like proteins was due to the intramolecular hydrogen bonds present in them. Dr. Narasimhaswamy, scientist, CLRI, Chennai, gave a talk on C^{13} NMR Spectroscopy to obtain the molecular axis and the use of magic angle spinning spectroscopy by eliminating anisotropic interactions in studying liquid crystals.

The second day started with an interesting talk by Dr. K.L. Sebastian, Head, IPC division of

IISc, who made the world of quantum chemistry seem less 'strange' with fascinating and meaningful animations. Professor P.K. Das of IISc, described the theory behind Molecular Spectroscopy and the use of Franck-Condon principles to obtain the absorption spectra. Dr. Subramanian of CLRI detailed the role of hydrogen bonding in macromolecules through molecular modelling and showed how Photo Electron Spectroscopy could be used to prove it. Dr. Siva Umopathy of IISc illustrated the invaluable contribution of the famous Indian spectroscopist, Dr. C.V. Raman and the importance of 'LASER and Time Resolved Spectroscopy' and their applications in forensic investigation. Prof. Arunan of IISc described the preparation of cold molecules by supersonic expansion method and described how microwave spectroscopy could be used to study them. Dr. K.S. Viswanathan of IGCAR, Kalpakkam discussed an alternative to the method of preparing cold molecules by matrix isolation technique which he regularly followed in his lab. Dr. Saurav Pal of NCL Pune described a new approach developed by his team in solving Schrodinger's equation other than the accepted Hartree-Fock model.

The final day's programme started with an interesting talk by Dr. Ajay Ghosh of RRL, Trivandrum. He detailed his work on chemosensor design and how Fluorescence Spectroscopy could be employed in tracking the signals generated by their interactions with the receptors. Dr. Aruna of CLRI explained how the thickness at surface interface could

be measured by Reflection Spectroscopy. Professor Ramamurthy of the University of Madras described TCPSC technique to study super fast and ultra fast biological reactions using transient absorption spectroscopy and fluorescence spectroscopy. We were fortunate to have Dr. K. Mangala Sunder again for a special lecture where he made a lucid presentation on the relationship between reaction dynamics and spectroscopy in unimolecular reactions.

At the valedictory function, the secretary of the college Dr. Sr. Rita Marneni fmm, described the seminar as a show of strength of the department. Dr. Ganga Radhakrishnan, Head, Polymer Eco Division of CLRI, who has contributed in terms of time, personnel, and summer lab training to our students, delivered the valedictory address with a visual presentation on the hazardous chemicals and the excellent work done in the EXCEL lab.

It was a wonderful spectrum of not seven but seventeen radiations of different wavelengths converging at Stella Maris College, illuminating the whole campus.

*Ms. Jesurietta Sathian
Faculty, Department of Chemistry*

Dr. Jesurietta Sathian is the Academic Dean of the college. She has a doctorate in Biopolymers from CLRI, Chennai. Her research focused on 'Grafting of Methacrylate Polymers onto Processed Bone and Fibrin as Bioactive Materials' which needed the use of spectroscopic techniques.

Fuzzy Set Theory

DEPARTMENT OF MATHEMATICS



Prof. Rangachari delivering the inaugural address
(L to R) : Dr. Felbin C. Kennedy, Dr. Rukmani Sridharan
Dr. Sr. Rita Marneni fmm and Dr. Sr. Annamma Philip fmm.

Mathematics underlying Fuzzy Set Theory has progressed in the last three decades and has impacted areas such as algebra, analysis, differential equations and topology. Recently, many Indian universities have introduced Fuzzy Set theory as an elective subject in their post-graduate programmes. Therefore, introducing the concepts of Fuzzy Set theory to the teaching community has become necessary.

Many-valued logic was largely viewed as an academic exercise and a mathematical curiosity. However Zadeh's seminal paper of 1965 brought about a paradigmatic shift in the study of multi-valued logic. Since the concept of Fuzzy Set theory is more general than Classical Set theory, the underlying algebra has to be more inclusive than Boolean algebra. Zadeh formulated the concept for quantifying subjective perception of non-deterministic

phenomena. He was primarily an electrical engineer. Hence his theory was taken up enthusiastically by technologists who applied Fuzzy Logic extensively to many areas of engineering. Fuzzy Logic controllers have been implemented in the chemical industry, in image processing, traffic flow, medical diagnostics and even market analysis. Zadeh also anticipated the application of fuzzy sets to probability theory, optimisation and computing.

A National Workshop on the Fundamentals of Fuzzy Set Theory (FFST) was organised by the department of Mathematics, Stella Maris College, in association with Delhi-based "Forum for Interdisciplinary Mathematics" (FIM), India, on 5th and 6th August 2005. Eminent professors like Prof. M. S. Rangachari, former Director, Ramanujan Institute for Advanced Study in Mathematics; Prof. S. Parvathi, Director, Ramanujan Institute for Advanced Study in Mathematics; Prof. Sankar K. Pal, Director, Indian Statistical Institute, Calcutta; Prof. K.N. Meenakshi, Former Head, Avinasingam Deemed University, Coimbatore; Prof. P.V. Subrahmanyam, Dept. of Mathematics, IIT Madras and Prof. Kamala Krithivasan, Dept. of Computer Science, IIT Madras were among the participants and resource persons for the workshop.

The participants, benefited from the workshop and the feedback was very

encouraging. Dr. Sr. Annamma Philip, Chairperson of the workshop delivered the Presidential Address. The Inaugural Address was delivered by Prof. M. S. Rangachari. Prof. P. V. Subrahmanyam spoke about the Forum and the focus of the workshop. Dr. K. N. Meenakshi, in her keynote address, spoke on the new approaches to the study of Fuzzy Topological Spaces.

The technical sessions on the first day began with an overview of Classical Set Theory and Logic by Dr. Rukmani Sridharan followed by Preliminary facts on Fuzzy Sets by Dr. Savithri Sankaran and a Representation and Extension Principle by Prof. K.N.Meenakshi. The post-lunch session began with a lecture on Fuzzy Arithmetic by Dr. Felbin C. Kennedy followed by a lecture on Fuzzy Logic by Dr. P. V. Subrahmanyam. A one-hour tutorial session each day was conducted by Dr. Felbin C. Kennedy, Ms. Kamala, Department of Computer Science and Mr. Murugan and Mr. P. Antony Kishore, Research Scholars, IIT Madras, wherein the participants had a real hands-on experience in solving problems. Worksheets were given to each of the participants and solutions to the same were handed over at the end of the workshop.

The second day's session began with a lecture by Ms. Kamala who elaborated on Operations on Fuzzy Sets. Dr. Felbin C. Kennedy continued on the same topic, incorporating Fuzzy Arithmetic Operations and suggesting areas for further study. Prof. Sankar K. Pal spoke on Pattern Recognition and Machine Intelligence, its relevance to computing. He also elaborated on Fuzzy Neural Networks and the use of Artificial Intelligence and its applications in Medicine. Prof. P.V. Subrahmanyam spoke on in-depth mathematics in Fuzzy Logic and its applications. Ms. Kamala delivered a lecture on Fuzzy Automata and also highlighted areas for further study.

An evaluation of the workshop was conducted during the valedictory function. Dr. S. Parvathi delivered the valedictory address and Dr. P.V. Subrahmanyam, Academic Secretary, gave a report on the workshop. Dr. Felbin C. Kennedy delivered the vote of thanks.

*Ms. Felbin C. Kennedy
Faculty, Department of Mathematics*

Dr. Felbin C. Kennedy did her research on Fuzzy Analysis, a topic close to her heart and one on which she speaks in different forums. She is co-author for the Plus Two Mathematics text book brought out by the Tamil Nadu State Board.

New Directions in Visionary Initiatives

GOLDEN JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ZOOLOGY



Dr. T.N. Ananthakrishnan lights the lamp as Dr. Sr. Annamma Philip fmm, and Dr. Sr. Rita Marneni fmm look on.

Established in 1956 under the leadership of Mother Proinsias fmm who was then the Principal, the Department of Zoology, is currently celebrating its Golden Jubilee year. The founder and the first Head of the Department of Zoology Dr. Sr. Eileen Riordan fmm (1956 - 68) was a visionary who sought to enrich and enhance the working and functioning of the department by introducing innovations in the teaching-learning process. The torch has been carried forward by the subsequent Heads of Department, Dr. Meera Paul (till 1996) and Dr. Jilly Joseph (till 2003). The department is currently under the stewardship of Dr. Chitrlekha Ramachandran.

The academic programme has been updated over the years with the introduction of new courses: Medical Laboratory Technology, Microbiology, Animal Behaviour, Immunology, Soil Biology, Biotechnology, Medical Parasitology, Aquaculture, etc.

In 2005, the programme title was changed to B.Sc. Advanced Zoology and Biotechnology with the introduction of new courses - Genetic Engineering, Industrial Microbiology and Molecular Biology.

The yearlong celebration was flagged off by the inauguration ceremony on 28th November, 2005. The inaugural address was delivered by Prof. T. N. Ananthakrishnan, former Director, Zoological Survey of India (Calcutta) and Entomology Research Institute (Loyola College, Chennai). His reminiscences about his association with the Department of Zoology since the early days of its inception were both enlightening and entertaining. Alumnae of the department also shared a few memories.

Dr. Kamala Parasuram (class of 1960), Director, Kappa Group of Companies, spoke about her college days. Dr. Shiranee Pereira (class of 1983), Senior Scientist, IGCAR, spoke about the need for using simulation as an alternative to dissections. She also spoke about setting up a library on alternatives, which could be used by zoologists who use animals in the laboratory. The third alumna to speak was Ms. Vidya Swaminathan of the class of 2003 who shared her fond memories of college days.

On 29th November, Prof. Arun M. Dharmarajan of the School of Anatomy and Human Biology, University of West Australia delivered a popular lecture on Fertility and Infertility. Earlier in the year, the Department conducted a daylong workshop in association with ICARE (International Center on Alternatives in Research and Education) on



Dr. Michael Arul Das Director, PGIBMS & HOD - Endocrinology, Taramani with (L to R) Dr. Chitralekha Ramachandran, Dr. Sr. Rita Marneni & Dr. Sr. Annamma Philip

the use of simulations as alternatives to dissection, to which the staff and students of other colleges were invited. The participants were given demonstrations on how simulation could replace actual dissections and demo CDs were given out at the end of the day. On 13th January 2006, the inter-collegiate Zoology festival, 'Synapse' was hosted on a much grander scale than usual. One of the changes this year was to invite the various schools of the city to participate in the exhibition, the theme for which was 'Recent Environmental Issues.'

Other events planned over the course of the year are a one day symposium on Advances in Medical Laboratory Diagnosis, paper

presentations by eminent speakers from the Tuberculosis Research Centre, Postgraduate Institute of Basic Medical Sciences and Hi-Tech Diagnostic Centre on the recent developments in the fields of Medical Laboratory Technology; the Dr. Ms. Hannah John and Dr. Ms. Meera Paul Endowment Lectures on Science of Alternatives to the Use of Animals in Cosmetic Testing and felicitations of Mr. Y. Maria Francis, our dedicated lab assistant who has served the institution for over three decades.

The celebrations for the Golden Jubilee year will continue beyond the month of July. There is to be a Wildlife Week celebration in October 2006. The department also plans to bring out a journal containing articles on issues of current interest contributed by the students and alumnae of the Department. The culmination of the yearlong celebration will be a National Seminar.

Fifty years have passed and the Department of Zoology has come a long way. With the changing needs of today and the subsequent progression of science, Stella Maris has a stellar role to play in the future. One of the aspirations of the Zoology Department is to establish a Postgraduate and Research Department in the near future and thereby establish the department as resource for service to science and mankind.

Algin and Alginophytes

DEPARTMENT OF BOTANY

The National Workshop on Algin and Alginophytes jointly organised by the Department of Botany, Stella Maris College and Krishnamurthy Institute of Algology was held from November 23 – 26, 2005. It was co-sponsored by the Department of Biotechnology, Ministry of Science and Technology, Government of India and the Ministry of Environment and Forests, Government of India. Dr. Ms. Usha Krishnan welcomed the gathering and the presidential address was delivered by Dr. Sr. Annamma Philip, Principal, while Prof. V. Krishnamurthy outlined the dynamics of the workshop.

Dr. Mohan Joseph Mudayil, Director, CMFRI, Cochin inaugurated the workshop and in his keynote address highlighted the importance of Seaweed Biotechnology, seaweeds in disease management and in bioremediation. This was followed by a special lecture by Dr. C.N. Ramchand, Director, Research and Development, Kemin Industries, USA, who stressed upon the enormous scope for research in drug discovery, adjuvant therapy, the unique metabolic pathways of marine algae and new avenues of research in marine organisms. His lecture was both impressive and educative and triggered much interest in the participants.

The technical session began with a lecture by Prof. M. Umamaheshwara Rao, from the Department of Botany, Andhra University, Vishakapatnam. His lecture focused on the biofunctional properties of algin and the abundance, variation of Alginophytes were brought out. The practical session began with

the identification of different Alginophytes and extraction of alginic acid from different species of Sargassum.

On the second day, a visit to the Natural and Alginate Products Pvt. Ltd., SIPCOT Industrial Estate, Ranipet, proved to be highly instructive. The group was divided into 3 batches and taken to different units - Production, Marketing, R & D and Effluent Treatment. This exposure was an eye opener to the wealth of information and the great potential that the algae hold for research.

The third day began with a lecture on the methods of extraction of alginic acid, sodium alginate and calcium alginate by Dr. N. Kaliaperumal, Scientist-in-Charge, Regional Centre, CMFRI, Mandapam Camp, Tamil Nadu. He highlighted the occurrence, properties, application and time of commercial harvesting of seaweeds. This was followed by an interesting lecture by Prof. V. Krishnamurthy who elucidated some simple easy tips on the extraction of alginic acid and the need to innovate and update technology in the management of waste disposal. Dr. M. D. Vijaya Parthasarathy, former Head, Department of Botany, Stella Maris College presented an exhaustive account of the several applications of alginates in the food, pharmaceuticals, paper, paints, rubber, textile and welding industries. Prof. V. Krishnamurthy added a few points on its usage in forest seedlings and in medical dressing thus emphasising its versatility.

The practical session that followed witnessed the participants analysing the viscosity of

alginates, extracting alginic acid and having a 'hands on' experience in the acid-gel formation. The participants showed keen interest and involvement in preparing the material for extraction and the calculations.

The final day of the workshop began with a lecture on chemical analysis of alginic acid by Dr. R. Rengasamy, Professor, Centre for Advanced Studies in Botany, Madras University, who highlighted the chemical composition of algin, its location and properties. He also explained in detail the experimental procedures for the fraction, estimation of blocks and their underlying principles. Dr. Rengasamy helped the participants calculate the estimation of M block, G block and GM blocks through standard graphs while simultaneously, Mrs. Anitha Thiruvengadam, an entrepreneur, demonstrated textile dyeing and block-printing using vegetable dyes. The participants took home a self-printed cloth as mementos of their work.

Dr. Ms. Lakshmi Nandhini Krishnan demonstrated the making of dental impressions with a few volunteers. The use of alginates in moulding and casting dental impressions helps dentists better understand the problem faced by patients and has become a powerful tool in dentistry.

Dr. E.R.S. Talpasayi, Prof. of Botany from Benares Hindu University demonstrated yet another practical application of alginates in encapsulation and the several uses of alginate beads.

Twenty-eight persons from across India attended the workshop. The participants included senior faculty, research scholars and postgraduate students. The overwhelming response, enthusiastic participation and energetic involvement of every participant is deeply appreciated.

The Department of Botany is grateful to the Department of Biotechnology, Ministry of Science and Technology, Government of India and the Ministry of Environment and Forests, Government of India and the Indian Overseas Bank, Stella Maris College, Extension Counter for their generous financial support.

*Ms. Beulah Vijaykumar
Ms. Ordetta Mendoza
Faculty, Department of Botany*

Ms. Beulah is an avid taxonomist. She has been instrumental in organising and conducting several programmes for the students of the department.

Dr. Ordetta Mendoza, Reader, Department of Botany is also the Head of the postgraduate Department of Bioinformatics. She has travelled widely across the world and has credentials in Bioinformatics from several institutions in Europe and the US including the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. A computer geek, she has used IT as a primary tool in all her academic endeavours and has organised workshops, conferences, refresher courses and seminars both at the international and national levels.

Changing Perspectives: Art Education and Curriculum Design

DEPARTMENT OF FINE ARTS



Mr. Sadanand Menon with (L to R) Ms. Alamelu N., Dr. Ashrafi S. Bhagat, Dr. Sr. Annamma Philip fmm, Dr. Sr. Maryann fmm, Dr. Sr. Colleen North fmm.

The workshop titled 'Changing Perspectives: Art Education and Curriculum Design', sponsored by UBCHEA addressed the agenda of art teaching in the arena of art history, creativity and design. Through engagement of this nature we sought to evolve a need-based curriculum that would enable us to transit successfully into a four year Bachelor of Fine Arts Programme from the existing B.A. Degree in History of Fine Arts and Drawing and Painting. Changing cultural milieus and globalisation of education including art education, necessitates discussions, debates and rethinking of strategies, structures and curriculum to make art education compatible, effective and relevant within the cultural and social context of our country.

Resource persons were drawn from various fields such as art history, design advertising, creative painting, art education and culture. The main thrust was to delineate and adapt the dynamics of advancement and progress made in these fields in terms of pedagogy, the use of technology, techniques, materials and tools.

The two day workshop began with a keynote address by Mr. Sadanand Menon, cultural critic. This was followed by separate sessions on Art History, Design and Creativity and Art Education.

The final session was a Panel Discussion chaired by Mr. Sadanand Menon. The panellists included Mr. Alexander Zachariah, Ms. Baishali Ghosh, Mr. Madhu Krishna, Ms. Malini Ghanathe, Ms. Sangeeta Prasad, Ms. Sharan Apparao, and Dr. Yashdatta Alone.

The workshop which was conducted by professionals in the arena of art history, graphic design and art education was well received. It created dynamic interaction among students and resource persons, opened a dialogue with professionals and stressed the need for industrial interface with art education. The main thrust was towards exhorting the students to adopt a posture of difference by thinking "out of the box", to be sensitive to various social and cultural issues, to maintain a sense of identity, tradition and culture, to be fully equipped technologically to meet the industry needs and to be ethical in their professional approach.

The workshop opened up space in thinking afresh the course content and challenged us to redefine and reframe the courses for converting the present B.A. Fine Arts degree into a four year B.F.A. Programme. The inputs from resource persons have offered opportunities to redesign the programme and also offer possibilities for developing entrepreneurial skills amongst the students.

The Department of Fine Arts remains indebted to UBCHEA for providing this opportunity, which has lead to rewarding experiences that have left both faculty and students enriched and fulfilled.

Globalisation and National Security

DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

Dr. T. V. Paul, one of the authors of the book 'Under Pressure: Globalization and the Nation-Security State' (the other is Norrin Ripsman) at his public lecture delivered on 16th August 2005 at Stella Maris College, stated that the book focused on one particular dimension which has been deeply affected by globalisation – the economic one.

The impact of globalisation in the economic arena involves the expansion of the scale of economic activity beyond the level of the nation state, bringing in its wake heightened economic interdependence and transnationalism. He elaborated the former theme using the asymmetrical relationship between the Canadian and US economies. The latter theme incorporated the increased ease with which goods, services, money, people and business cross boundaries due to the Information and Communication Technology revolution.

He pointed out that economic globalisation has been a process spread over a long period of time especially with the coming of the Industrial Revolution and the spread of capitalism had intensified in the contemporary/post cold war phase. In fact, it was now in its most intensified and deepened phase characterised by economic production being organised on a global basis, not bound by geographical or territorial constraints. There is today, a proliferation of financial news and a world consumer culture developing in his view.

As far as the political dimension was concerned, there has been a spread of liberal democratic ideas and systems across the world especially

since the fall of the former Soviet Union. Though "not all democracies are all that democratic", his opinion was that the world is witnessing a rise in fundamental ideologies simultaneously.

He pointed out that socially, there had been an expansion of relationships on the global scale with various NGOs, women's organisations, social movements, etc. emerging. Culturally speaking, he observed, identities were changing. There was no longer national allegiance but global allegiance.

The other factor, which made globalisation evident, was National Security.

He made the pertinent observation that a National Security State gave primacy to protection of national borders, physical assets, etc. All concerns were subordinated to national security. The states were the principal agents and have handled different threats to National Security through different means (main threat being from outside) eg. through mercantilism and increasing military strength.

In modern times (since World War II), Trading States have emerged with their focus on economic strength and development eg. newly emerging and industrialising South-East Asian States. China, USA and India were hybrids of National Security States and Trading States.

After elaborating on the key concepts with respect to their interrelation, he detailed the arguments put forth by scholars in the field. These scholars state that the countries were no longer waging big wars. The intensity of

conflicts as well as the number had reduced. Now, global assaults were ideological (terrorism), not between state actors but instigated by non-state actors. The nature and scope of the concept of national security and the threats to it were changing rapidly, he pointed out. It was now being viewed in economic, environmental, health and other terms.

National military strengths were declining and military ideologies had changed from offensive to defensive. No more were there big "Balance of Power games". No longer were there big alliances or military expansions. USA was the unipole and no one was in a position to challenge its power.

He outlined the framework that scholars had devised:

- 1) Major Powers - USA, China, and Russia
- 2) Institutional Cooperation-European Union
- 3) States in Competitive Regional Subsistence, rivalries, territorial differences, ideologies, etc. - South Asia, (India and Pakistan), Middle East
- 4) Failed/Failing States (weak) – Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, African countries. Not

able to assert themselves or protect their countries

The scholars have concluded that some areas are affected more than the others by globalisation. China, for example, has benefited greatly economically and aims to become the next super power. It talks of a 'peaceful rise' to power. A segment of the Indian population has greatly benefited from globalisation. Also, it has eliminated the Pakistani myth of keeping pace with India in the global market.

The weak states, however, have been the ones worst affected. African countries lack basic institutions and civil organisations to withstand the negative impact of globalisation. They are torn apart by ethnic strife and the petty conflicts of warlords. As Dr. Paul pointed out, globalisation was not socialism; it was no equaliser but was based on economic interests. The "trickle down" effect that was anticipated did not happen. Hence the asymmetrical distribution of benefits and differential impacted on the national security of states.

However, he stated that, in spite of the changes and the new challenges it had to face, the Nation-State was not a phenomenon that could be dispensed with in the near future.

Perspectives on Conflict and Security in South Asia

DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

South Asian security at the beginning of the twenty-first century stands at the threshold of both change and continuity. The study and analysis of the region from a theoretical perspective of International Relations Theory provides, therefore, multidimensional perspectives on the levels of analysis of the evolving nature of South Asian states in their internal and external aspects of security.

In this connection, a two-day National Symposium on 'The Regional Security Order in South Asia: Issues of Debate' was held from December 13-14, 2005, focusing on issues relating to systemic, functional aspects of conflict and the prospects of co-operation in the region.

Significant imperatives and issues included:

- the profiles of conflict and the prospects of peaceful resolution through bilateral and institutional aegis
- the extent and impact of extra-regional intervention in the region and the crucial imperatives of regional stability
- the intervening variables of nuclear weapons
- asymmetric conflict and maritime security predicated on regional order and conflict
- the evolving patterns of risk reduction and regional interdependence

The Symposium endeavoured to draw together these myriad perspectives into an informed debate and full-fledged analysis.

The panel of speakers came from the Institute of Defence and Strategic Analysis (New Delhi), Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies (New Delhi),



Chief Guest Mr. A.P. Venkateswaran, IFS (Retd.), former Foreign Secretary, Govt. of India, Chairman, Asia Centre, Bangalore, lights the lamp as Dr. Sr. Annamma Philip fmm, Ms. Priya Suresh & Dr. Sr. Rita Marneni fmm, look on.

National Institute of Advanced Studies (Bangalore), School of International Relations, Mahatma Gandhi University (Kottayam), Madras Christian College (Chennai), University of Baroda (Baroda) and Observers Research Foundation (New Delhi) and included the students of M.A. International Studies, Stella Maris College.

The Keynote Address was delivered by Shri. A.P.Venkateswaran, I.F.S. (Retd), former Foreign Secretary, Government of India and presently Chairman, Asia Centre, Bangalore.

The Symposium brought out a holistic perspective on various issues in South Asia ranging from traditional to non-traditional aspects of security. It provided its student audience with first-hand experience in the field of security studies and also gave them an opportunity to interact and share their views and ideas with renowned experts in the field of International Studies.

Towards a More Connected World

PROJECT UNDERTAKEN BY STELLA MARIS IN COLLABORATION
WITH EASTERN IOWA COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT, USA



Seated : Mr. Jeff Armstrong, Dean EICCD-USA with
Dr. Sr. Annamma Philip from Standing (L to R) : Ms. Pearl Paul,
Dr. Sundari Krishnamurthy, Dr. Millie Nihila

“To think globally and act locally” is a dictum which is equally applicable to the areas of Environment and Education. This was the moving spirit behind a collaborative effort between Eastern Iowa Community College District, (EICCD) and Stella Maris College, who already have been working together on a variety of projects for over a decade, to outline a project titled ‘Towards a More Connected World’. This project involves educators and community leaders in a professional exchange, and more importantly, economically, socially and ethnically diverse groups of students in the US and in India in virtual classroom based exchanges. Combining in-person professional interactions with the use of Internet-based communication technology, students and populations of different countries would be able to deal with common challenges and concerns.

The project was basically structured around three objectives:

- Through professional exchanges of faculty and community leaders from India and the US to plan joint courses and learning modules that promote cross cultural/cross national awareness and understanding
- Pilot the implementation of a full course with four learning modules
- Utilise two Community Colleges for International Development (CCID) member colleges and University of Madras to replicate and disseminate the cross cultural/cross national learning modules

Dr. Jeff Armstrong, Dean of Muscatine Community College (MCC) and EICCD visited Stella Maris College in the first week of November 2005, and outlined the various facets of the project. A brainstorming session on contemporary issues with faculty and experts elicited a variety of responses. From these, a selection was made in the areas of environment, religion and terrorism, economic issues and globalisation and current social issues in both USA and India.

A team of three faculty members from EICCD then visited Chennai in the third week of March 2006. They were Tom Williams, Superintendent of Schools, Paul Mayes, Science Department Coordinator and Jeremy Pickard, Faculty, Business Management, MCC. Discussions with faculty at Stella Maris College followed, with visits to villages and project centres at Kasimedu

and Padappai villages and other areas of historic and cultural interest. This gave the American team glimpses of the Indian scenario in which the EICCD project was to be embedded. Tasting South Indian/North Indian Cuisine in a thali meal, visiting a fishing village and beach resort, viewing the architectural monuments in Mahabalipuram were some of the experiences that allowed the team to absorb the cultural ethos of Chennai. The visit culminated in a completed outline of the syllabus for the course to be taught at Muscatine and Chennai. Both teams then agreed to proceed with the academic processes of submitting the syllabus to Boards of Studies and the Academic Council in their respective institutions and to obtain text books for teaching.

In May 2006, a team led by Dr. Sr. Annamma Philip, Project Director, accompanied by Dr. Sundari Krishnamurthy, Academic Dean, Ms. Pearl Rose Paul and Dr. Millie Nihila, faculty, Department of Economics visited Muscatine. The three-hour drive to Muscatine, provided the transition from a metropolis to the heart of a rural agricultural community. Guided by Tom Williams, Superintendent of Schools, the Stella Maris team visited a primary, middle and high school to get an insight into the K-12 system of school education. The uncrowded and well-equipped classrooms were very interesting to observe, as were the teacher-student interactions. The emphasis on skills, practical training and employability orientations were especially visible in the high school courses in IT, welding, automobile maintenance and special education. Jan Collinson, Director of Special Programs then took the team, at their request, to visit homes in and around Muscatine so that glimpses could be obtained about how

the average American lived in this part of US. Walking near the Mississippi river, the team also interacted with children and their families.

On May 4th, Jeremy Pickard and Marshall McDonald, faculty of MCC drove the Stella group to nearby farms. Many people who worked in farms often enrolled in MCC and students who studied farm management, translated what they learnt in the classrooms to the land which they worked. This way, there was a integration of theory and practice, knowledge and skills. Marshall McDonald introduced the team to several of his students, who were busy tilling or leveling the fields with tractors or working in other areas on the farm. A lunch at 'Eliza', a very rural farm-side eating place provided an insight into the cuisine and culture of a typical mid-western US farming community.

On May 5th Dr. Jeff Armstrong accompanied the group to the nearby town of Davenport, where they visited the Career Assistance Center, which assists school and college students in their choice of careers. Walking through the Kahl Educational Center, the variety of preparatory courses offered to youth to launch into careers was equally striking. The huge, well laid out Blong Technology Center had all the industrial, technological and business equipment for an industry-academia interface. Particularly outstanding was the long trailer-truck driving training which was imparted in this centre as there was not only a great demand for truck drivers but the pay for this job was quite good.

A visit on May 6th to Amish farms near Kalona brought to light a community in rural America which did not use electricity or modern gadgets. Clad in old-fashioned clothing, an elder of the

community described the Amish philosophy, religion and lifestyle to the Stella team, even as he took them on a buggy ride through his farm. He did not want his picture taken, as making of graven images was forbidden, but allowed his grandchildren to meet the visitors. Driving through Kalona, 'a one-light small town', we were struck by its simplicity and uncluttered atmosphere and the friendly conversation of the staff in the town's Italian restaurant.

Dr. Jeff Armstrong showed the group different places and sights along the Mississippi River on May 7th and in the evening Dr. Ed Stoessel, former Director of HRD at EICCD, introduced the Stella team to the Indian community living in the area by joining an Indian festival organised by this immigrant community. *Chat*, samosa and flavoured rice of various kinds with music, dance and cookery competitions were some of the events organised for the evening.

On May 8th we had a meeting at the University of Iowa with Dr. Scott McNabb, Associate Professor of Educational Policy and Leadership Studies, who was to assess this project in its final phase. This was followed by another interesting meeting with John Halder, President of CCID and Patricia Keir, Chancellor of EICCD, when various issues regarding internationalising curricula and courses were discussed.

A series of meetings with faculty at MCC in the afternoons and evenings led to the drawing up of the final syllabus with reading lists and lesson plans. A meeting between Victor McAvoy, President of MCC and Sr. Annamma Philip and the Stella team brought to an end this round of faculty exchange between the institutions.

On May 9th the group from Stella motored to South Bend, Indiana and visited Notre Dame University and St. Mary's College, with whom Stella Maris has had more than a decade of collaboration on the "Semester Around the World" programme. The gold-domed Town Hall, huge library and other facilities and amenities were truly inspiring as were the interactions with some faculty. On this high note the team visited Dr. Cyriac Pullapilly, who had led several groups of students to Stella Maris College on the last phase of their "Semester Around the World" programmes.

The visit to Muscatine truly highlighted the fact that the world has rapidly become an interconnected network of people, institutions and countries. The long history of people, countries and cultures existing in relative isolation has now been replaced by an environment of connectivity. This has inevitably posed challenges to people with diverse backgrounds in their engagement with one another. Muscatine Community College and EICCD with Stella Maris College have embarked on this project, 'Towards a more connected world', to enable students in two different parts of the world to communicate, using technology that cuts across geographic, cultural and other barriers.

*Ms. K. Sundari
Head, Department of Sociology*

Dr. Sundari is Dean of Academic Affairs. She was a Fulbright Scholar-in-Residence at the University of Hillsborough College, Tampa, Florida in the year 2000-2001. Her deep interest in research has led her to publish articles in national and international journals.

Low Cost Processing and Preservation of Horticultural Produce

PROJECT SPONSORED BY
THE DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, GOVT. OF INDIA

With the mission of extending science and technology to rural women, the Department of Science and Technology, Government of India, sanctioned Rs. 10.5 lakhs to Stella Maris College for conducting the project 'Low Cost Processing And Preservation of Horticultural Produce'. The two year project (Nov. 2003 to Nov. 2005) aims at imparting scientific knowledge and training to rural women and helping them to scientifically process and manufacture food products in an economically viable manner.



Dr. Geetha Swaminathan at the Low Cost Processing and Preservation Unit

The project is co-ordinated by Dr. Geetha Swaminathan and Ms. Mary George, faculty of the Department of Chemistry.

The nodal unit is at Padappai village which is about 40 km from Chennai and the satellite units are at Athananchery and Vadampakkam which are 5-6 km from Padappai. The field areas of 15 villages which are located around Padappai village, have a low socio-economic background with an average monthly income of Rs. 300. The local produce and the fruits and vegetables available in the village markets are seasonal and are not well utilised due to lack of knowledge in preservation and marketing. It was felt that through the intervention of Science and Technology, low-cost technology in fruit processing, preservation and skill development could be imparted to the women. This would help them in processing the fruits/vegetables in an effective and efficient manner.

The project emphasises training of the local village women and involving them in production and marketing activities with a scientific approach. These activities make the villagers who are involved in this programme more independent and self-confident and motivate the women from surrounding areas to work towards upgrading their socio-economic status. The project is also designed to impart skill development and technical learning to the village women to help them attain self-sustainability from field to marketing.

The faculty and students specialising in Food Science and Quality Control who have been given scientific knowledge of food processing, food chemistry, food microbiology and food packaging are involved in educating the women on nutritional aspects, health and hygiene, effective packaging technology, food analysis and preservation methods to enhance the usage of local horticultural produce. The training



Ms. Mary George, Faculty, Dept of Chemistry with
Ms. Fathima George, Lab Assistant

programmes were conducted at Padappai, at the premises of the nodal centre and at Stella Maris College. The programmes focused on the scientific aspects of fruit processing and technical details pertaining to the preparation and storage of fruit products. The students who were involved in the project gained a clear understanding of the transfer of scientific knowledge from 'Lab to Land'. They have also developed entrepreneurial skills by learning the processes involved in setting up fruit processing units.

The project has been successfully completed and has resulted in the bulk production of juices, jams and pickles by harnessing the local produce, aided by proper marketing. It has also reduced distress sale of produce and enhanced the economic status of the village women.

A work shed has been constructed at the nodal center of Padappai as per the FPO (Fruit Products Order) specifications. The equipment has been procured and has been installed at the nodal centre and also at the satellite units at Athananchery and Vadampakkam to

facilitate the manufacture of juice, jam, sauce and pickles. A Quality Control laboratory has been set up at the nodal unit to study the quality of the manufactured products.

The women have started bulk production of quality products like pickles (onion, mixed vegetable), jams (mixed fruit, papaya), squashes (grape, sweet lime, green mango) and Japanese Orange (kumquat) juice. The products, with the brand name MAGJOF, have found acceptability among local consumers and external markets. The products, especially Onion pickle, Papaya Jam and Grape Squash are in high demand. The project has helped in generating new products like Green Mango Juice and Onion Pickle.

A survey indicated that people preferred small packages of the products, 50g, 100g, 200g of pickle and jam, 200ml, and 500ml of the juice. Hence packaging is being done according to the requirements of the consumers. With the assistance of the college, the women have formed cooperative societies and Women's Self-Help Groups for marketing the products. The women have also been educated about entrepreneurship and the methodologies involved in procuring bank loans. One of the trainees has set up a shop for marketing the products. Some women have started packaging the pickles in sealed packages of 30g and 50g and started marketing them at residences and offices in the nearby areas. The women have also obtained local certification for sale of their products and have applied for FPO certification. With the support in marketing, there has been a marked improvement in the socio-economic status of the women and the average income of the women has risen to between Rs. 4000-5000 per month.

Modifications are carried out on the processing and marketing techniques based on periodic review. Vermicomposting is also being practised in the villages by using the fruit/vegetable waste from the bulk production thus encouraging organic farming.

The project has served as a model for motivating women from other adjacent villages/communities to take up similar ventures. The 100 trainees have begun training women from other villages to take up similar projects and the centre is being used for conducting skills development programmes.

The students have been exposed to rural realities and have developed a sense of satisfaction in helping the rural women. The outcome of the project on the village women indicates that there has been a marked improvement in the quality of life of women in the chosen areas. This project has helped in

reaching science to society and in educating the rural people about technological advancement and helping them work towards their betterment and that of the society in which they live.

*Ms. Geetha Swaminathan
Reader, Department of Chemistry*

Dr. Geetha Swaminathan has specialised in Environmental Chemistry and Food Analysis. She has devised a "Home Kit" to detect food adulteration which can be used to detect adulteration in about 25 essential food commodities like coffee powder, tea, etc. The kit has won her several awards at national and state levels. She has authored three books on Environmental Chemistry, Biochemistry, and Food Analysis. She is a recipient of the Vocational Service Award 1993 awarded by the Rotary Club of Madras Down-Town for her contribution to the cause of maintaining and promoting a clean, green and healthy environment.

Meeting the Needs of a Knowledge Society

CERTIFICATE COURSE IN DOCUMENTATION & INFORMATION SCIENCE



Seated (L to R) Dr. Fr. Vijay Kiran, Dr. Sr. Jasintha Quadras fmm, Chief Guest, Dr. Chitra Krishnan, Head, Dept. of Foreign Languages, Madras University, Dr. Sr. Colleen North fmm, Ms. Gita Balachandran, Coordinator, Ms. Meena & Ms. Gowri of American Information Resource Center, Chennai, Arokia Mary (Assistant) Standing : Students of the second batch

The Documentation and Information Science Course, the first of its kind in the college was introduced in the year 2004-05. It is a one-year certificate course sponsored by the UGC. The course is spread over two semesters and is a detailed 450 hour course incorporating both theory and practicals.

The courses cover a range of topics that take the students on a continuum from novice to expert, moving from basic information resource retrieval to information handling and the use of advanced software.

The theory is supplemented with practical work at college and at the American Resource Center Library. The students get an opportunity to explore archival documents and also to learn the various methods used in the preservation of these treasures at the Madras Archives.

The 2nd semester ends with a field trip to Bosco InfoTech, a Computer Centre at Yelagiri, Tamil Nadu. Here, after a three-day schedule of hard work and relaxation the students are allowed to let off steam on the hills.

The course equips students to work with the latest technology in the field and enables them to meet the challenges of the present day "knowledge society".

*Ms. Gita Balachandran
Librarian*

Ms. Gita Balachandran is interested in computers and has ensured that the College Library is fully computerised. She teaches MS Office to the Information Science & Documentation students. She also enjoys travelling.

Of Human Goodwill, Development and Justice

FLOOD RELIEF PROGRAMME, DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK

It was a monsoon that the whole of Tamil Nadu had eagerly awaited to quench the thirst of the persistent drought of recent years. But as the rains continued to lash the state incessantly the lakes and river banks overflowed wreaking heavy damage to crops, people and animals alike. One such village ravaged by the rains was Jagirmangalam, located in Tiruttani Block of Thiruvallur district.

The village has a population of 250 families consisting of landless agricultural labourers belonging mostly to backward communities. Sixteen families belonged to the Irula tribe. These families were isolated from the rest of the inhabitants of the area and had to trek seven kilometres and more every day to reach the nearest public transport system at Thiruvelangadu. The children, however, were fortunate in being able to attend the local village middle school. The village hardly had any basic amenities and a few cows and goats were all the assets they had. The tribals had nothing.

Health care facilities were totally absent and the nearest primary health centre was more than seven kilometres away. Thus, any eventuality, even the normal process of childbirth was often fraught with risks, easily avoidable in this modern age. It was unbelievable to hear of deaths due to snake bites as a result of lack of access to proper and timely health care.

The floods added to their misery and these poor folk were marooned. Some were forced to leave their homes and cattle and lost the precious little they possessed.

The Department of Social Work, received news of their plight through the efforts of a concerned Rural Officer. The support and encouragement for the effort to help this village was wholeheartedly given by our Principal, Dr. Sr. Annamma Philip.

Some basic relief material was collected with the generous help of the students of St. Dominic's Higher Secondary School, Chennai. Then, through further collaborations with Lions Club of Madras Leo City, All India Swetambar Sthanakvasi Jain Conference and an NGO - Shreyans Foundation, additional resources were mobilised, based on a preliminary visit in December 2005 by two faculty of the department to assess the needs of the people.

The visit had to be postponed several times due to the rains. Finally the group made it to the village on January 8, 2006, with a group of 47 first and second year MSW students, led by Dr. Cecilia Thangarajan, Head, Department of Social Work and some of the faculty of the department, NGO personnel and volunteers.

The visit was marked by many 'Firsts' as expressed by the people – a telling reality for all of us.

The Relief Programme commenced by invoking God's blessings and the purpose of the visit was explained. The veterinary camp was a prime need of the community. The treatment and well-being of the cattle was important for them to begin to earn their livelihood again.

The medical camp was very well organised and well attended by about 700 people. The students

surveyed their health problems and the people expressed the need for more such camps. They then arranged play activities and games for the children in which they participated enthusiastically. For them, it was the first time outsiders were visiting and interacting with them in this manner.



Creativity at work

Another group of students was busily engaged in participatory rural appraisal of the community to enable them to vocalise and illustrate their social situation accurately. A focused group discussion with the men also helped the students understand the stark realities of life of people living a few kilometres away. The final phase of the programme focused on distribution of the relief materials.

The effort was small but yet another to add to the resolve of Stella Maris College and the Department of Social Work to reach out to people affected by disasters. It went a long way in drawing attention to the plight of a marginalised group of people nestled away from public view like many other tribes in the invisible hamlets of rural India.

Much was the learning we drew from this experience of bringing together people from all

walks of life - children, NGOs, volunteers, the people of the village, and the faculty of the department - to help restore the lives of the disaster affected. A blend of compassion and professionalism of the students and faculty of the department marked the ethos of the entire programme.

We headed home late that evening tired but satisfied that we had accomplished the day's tasks well. However, we were left with disturbing images of the poverty and loss that we had glimpsed. It reiterated the right to development and justice for the millions in similar situations in other parts of India and fuelled the belief that it would not be difficult to change the face of small pockets of rural India if a more conscious sharing of resources was made possible by Governments, the corporate sector, philanthropists, NGOs and the ordinary citizen.

As Margaret Mead has said: "Never doubt that a small group of people can change the world. Indeed it is the only thing that ever has."

Ms. Benita Marian

Ms. Nirmala Alex

Faculty, Department of Social Work

Dr. Benita Marian, lecturer in the Department of Social Work since 1995 has specialised in Medical & Psychiatric Social Work. Her special interest lies in Child Rights, Mental Health and Disaster Management.

Ms. Nirmala Alex started her career in an NGO and later worked as Chief Counsellor at an All Women's Police Station. At present, a lecturer teaching different subjects in Social Work, her special interest remains Community Development, Human Rights and Disaster Management.

A Celebration of Life

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK

On December 9 and 10, 2005, UNNATHI, a forum of the students of the Department of Social Work celebrated 'Human Rights Day' by focussing on a special segment of the population of our country which is unrecognised, ignored, and even reviled by society and very often by their own families.

This segment comprises the roughly one million transgendered people who have been left in limbo, ignored by the body politic and unprotected by legislation because Indian Law takes cognisance of only two sexes. The implications of this are manifold. Transgendered people do not have voting rights, cannot marry and may not avail of the all important signifiers of identity and citizenship – a ration card, a passport, or a driving licence. In addition, they cannot make claim to employment or health benefits.

It was with the objective of creating awareness of and sensitising the college community to these issues that UNNATHI organised a series of events on these two days.

The students created posters illustrating various violations of rights faced by the transgendered people. These were displayed on 9th December 2005. On 10th December, there was a special assembly attended by the final year undergraduates and postgraduate students. Ms. Asha Bharathi, President of the Tamil Nadu Aravani Association shared her deep insights on issues relating to the plight of transgendered people.

Later that day, the discrimination they face and the violence that is perpetrated on them was well depicted in a play performed by the *Kannadi Kalai Kuzhu*, a cultural group of transgendered people. The play expressed the discrimination that they endure every day and how they fought their battles in life. The play was followed by an open discussion which was mediated by Dr. Cecilia Thangarajan, Head, Department of Social Work and Ms. Mangai, faculty of the English Department, who was also the director of the play. This was a platform for students to put forward their questions and doubts which were answered and clarified by the actors.

The response was astounding since more than 600 students were present for the assembly and around 250 attended the play. The most encouraging outcome of the day was that students became more sensitised towards the issue and many among them volunteered to work for the Sudar Foundation, which champions the cause of transgendered people.

The programmes were eye-openers in understanding the struggles encountered by this special group seeking their rights. The event gave them an opportunity to release their pent-up feelings and gain psychological support from the student community, who are the future policy makers of society.

Ms. Nirmala Alex
Faculty, Department of Social Work



North - East view

Dr. Madhu Dhawan: Scholar-Poet

A prominent name in modern Hindi literature, Dr. Madhu Dhawan's literary accomplishments encompass a range of genres. She has written songs, poems, novels, short stories and plays. She is also a critic of repute and has published several articles in journals and other publications.

While some of her songs and poems depict social and economic differences in the country, cultural diversity, Indianness and national consciousness, others explore the pain of separation and disappointment and also seek to weave delicate ties of human relationships. Written in Hindi (the language is symbolic in poetry), the poems have universal appeal and penetrate the landscapes of the mind, plumb the passions and emotions of humankind, and rejoice in the ecstasies of the heart and the soul.

As a novelist, Dr. Dhawan's thematic preoccupations revolve around social and moral values. Her novels depict contemporary events and situations and the problems faced by the young generation of today. They also present incisive analyses of man's emerging values, personal conflicts, psychological perversions and human emotions.

Dr. Dhawan's texts are open-minded and have multiple perspectives. The women in her novels are presented as realistic women. The language is lively and effective and moulded to suit the needs of the protagonist and the emotions depicted. A typical characteristic of her short stories is that they have a definite objective. These stories subtly describe the inner conflicts of human beings against the background of social life.

Dr. Madhu Dhawan has carved a special niche for herself as a dramatist. Her five plays - *Bhool*, *Maine Kab Chala*, *Shaheed Bhagat Singh*, *Traas*, *Bharat*

Kahan Ja Raha Hai and her 75 one-act plays for children are indicative of her prolific talent. Dr. Dhawan makes use of the social and educational thrust of her plays as a powerful means of creating awareness in society.

Dr. Dhawan is also a gracious, generous and compassionate human being who has been playing various roles in her life - as wife, mother, guide, friend, mentor and teacher par excellence. Eight M.Phil. students have done research under her guidance and she is also an examiner for Ph.D. scholars. Her urge for learning still continues and recently, she



Sri. V. Satyanarayana Reddy, Governor, Uttar Pradesh and Orissa
handing over the Best Writer Award to Dr. Madhu Dhawan

obtained a Distinction in the Punjabi Certificate Course offered by the University of Madras.

Some of her writings include plays like *Maine Kab Chala*, novels such as *Karnat Leta Waqt*, *Jurmana*, *Aakashya*, *Tufani Jhanja Ka Diya*, *Shikharoon Se Ooncha*, *Mahasagar Ke Shankh*, *Shakti Punj*, *Pyar Bhara Panchi Kalki*, *Main Shristi Ki Aatma Hoon*; a short epic *Kalchakra*, a collection of poems titled *Hutatma*, *Bharat Lalat*, *Kargil ki Lalkar*; *Amritmayi* a volume of songs and *Swarnim Bharat* a short story collection.

She has also written critical essays on writers, translated several books, contributed articles to magazines and written text books for schools. She has also compiled a multilingual lexicon.

On the occasion of the 125th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, Dr. Dhawan was felicitated by Bhilai Steel Plant for her literary works. Panipat Sahitya Academy awarded her with the title "Acharya". In 1998 the American

Biographical Institution honoured her with the Distinguished Leadership Award. In the year 2000, she was recognised for her contribution to Hindi literature by the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan. The Vikramshila Hindi Vidyapeeth, Gandhinagar conferred on her the title "Vidyasagar". At the World Hindi Conference she was given the "Millenium Award". Her name is listed in Sahitya Akademi and the Asia Pacific Who's Who.

Dr. Dhawan is the Head of the Department of Hindi, Stella Maris College.

*Ms. Srabani Bhattacharya
Faculty, Department of Hindi*

Ms. Srabani Bhattacharya works as a lecturer in the Department of Hindi, Stella Maris College, along with Dr. Madhu Dhawan. After graduating in Chemistry, she did her Masters in Environmental Chemistry and Hindi from the University of Madras. She is also an author and translator.

The Woman as Artist

AN INTERVIEW WITH THE ARTISTS OF "ANTARA - THE INNER DIFFERENTIATION"



From (L to R) Ms. Lakshmi Priya Daniel, Dr. Razia Tony and Ms. Anne Samuel

An exhibition of paintings by three faculty members of the Department of Fine Arts Ms. Anne Samuel, Ms. Lakshmi Priya Daniel and Dr. Razia Tony, was held from 10 - 16 September 2005, at the Lakshana art gallery, Mylapore. Entitled "Antara—the Inner Differentiation", the exhibition was inaugurated by Mr. Sadananand Menon, the renowned cultural critic who lauded the efforts of the three artists especially in terms of the fine balance that they had achieved between their varied commitments.

Ms. Anne Samuel has been teaching in Stella Maris since 1991. Her passion for art has motivated her to make "little sacrifices" in order to balance her teaching and her aesthetic instincts. She says, "It is always possible to create more time for what you want to do." In her work, Anne Samuel mainly depicts musical representations and dance figures. Her style includes the "leaf effect" which she says

emerged from much experimentation with other techniques. Music is depicted by the use of free flowing lines, an obvious harmony in colour, and a rhythm that is felt in the way everything seems to blend perfectly. Apart from this, her themes also include scenes from nature.

She started painting seriously in 1999 and she sees herself doing more shows like 'Antara' in the future, painting more and doing something that would provide an impetus for women artists in Chennai. She feels that young artists must have "self-motivation if they are to succeed." For her, the drive from within, and a sustained passion to paint are all-important for an artist.

Ms. Lakshmi Priya Daniel's ten year career in Stella Maris has been the fulfillment of a dream. She is inspired by the "freshness" and "vitality" of her students and feels that teaching and painting represent for her a "symbiotic" relationship. The "tightrope walk" of balancing home and work has never come in the way of painting and teaching.



Dr. Sr. Annamma Philip with the artists and visitors at 'Antara' Chennai.



The three artists with the Chief Guest Artist S.G. Vasudev at 'Antara' in Bangalore.

In 'Antara' her works make use of the *darba* [sacred reed] and the *darpana*, which she feels reflects the life cycle of each person. She has also painted the ten avatars of Vishnu who, for her, stands for the evolution of Man and Life itself. The commonality in all her painting is its form. She paints on grass mats and says that its texture, its unique way of reflecting light and its shape attracts her. The mat seems to be evolving as her favourite medium.

She wishes young people to know that creativity doesn't exist in artists alone – it was not just the realm of the artist. She feels that the "artist is not born, but is created" and points out that each person's creativity is expressed in different ways. In her next exhibition at Hyderabad, she plans to present her work titled 'Panchakanya'. This was inspired by five women of legend who for her have their counterparts in the real world – as her mother, her sister, her teacher in school, and her teachers in college - Ms. Rohini [former faculty, Stella Maris] and

Ms. Mallika Madhavan. She has dedicated this work to them.

Dr. Razia Tony has been teaching in college since 1999 and has been a professional artist since 1980. For her, being an artist influences her teaching as she is able to impart more knowledge to her students regarding real-world experiences. She feels that to work with students is "inspiring" and that her experience has "enriched" her. With her belief that "time expands according to the work in hand" she is able to make time for her painting.

Her themes have always been women's issues and her paintings reflect these concerns. She has done over 25 exhibitions both nationally and regionally.

She points to a promising trend in the world of art where people have begun to think of paintings as investments. It was therefore the right time for young artists to enter the field.

The exhibition 'Antara' drew a number of favourable reviews in the dailies and had a good reception from the public. This successful team of three held exhibitions in Hyderabad from 19 - 28 March 2006 and in Bangalore from 23 April to 3 May 2006.

Ms. Maria B. C.
III B.A. English

Ms. Maria Cherickal is interested in Event Management, Theatre (Direction) and Sports Journalism. An enthusiastic team worker, she eventually plans to find her niche in Human Resource Management.

The Name of the Game

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

Atima Srivatsava, an Indian-born author, currently residing in London, conducted a creative writing workshop for the students of the English Department on 20th and 21st August 2005 at the Hélène de Chappotin Centre. A winner of the Bridgeport Arts Short Story competition, the Arts Council Award for two of her novels and a recipient of the Hawthornden Fellowship, she has taught Creative Writing courses and lectured around the world in collaboration with the British Council.

The students were quickly put at ease by the energetic Atima who “got down to business” right away. The first exercise, ‘Free Writing’, was aimed at letting the words flow incessantly. Grammar, syntax, sense and meaning flew right out of the window and the only noise that could be heard was the frenzied scratching of pen on paper. At the end of the allotted time, most students seemed relieved that they were not required to share their writing with others - a task that would have established the need for almost everyone in the room to study Wren & Martin all over again.

The warm-up exercise was followed by ‘What’s in a Name?’ an exercise in which the participants were required to write at least

five things about their name and also share with the others one thing about them “that was not obvious”. The aim, Atima explained, was to encourage students to write about what they knew best and to draw out a narrative from something as familiar as one’s name! Though it seemed a daunting task to the students at the outset, most did come up with entertaining pieces and Atima seemed to laugh the loudest in the circle! Everyone enjoyed the workshop thoroughly, especially the discovery of all that untapped creative energy and the ‘tea and samosa’ breaks.

The participating students expressed their sincere gratitude to the faculty of the English Department and the Management for having provided them with such a productive workshop and also voiced their desire to take part in many more such programmes.

Ms. Sowmya R.
III B. A. English

Ms. Sowmya enjoys writing poetry and has an active interest in gender and gender-related issues. She has participated in many theatre activities and believes that art can be an effective forum for debate. She wishes to pursue a career in academics.

Katha - Ground Realities

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

On 3rd January 2005, we left for Delhi on a train that was three hours late. The usual “I want the upper berth” argument lasted two minutes since we didn’t know each other and everybody was ready to oblige. The seemingly boring journey included getting to know each other, eating without ceasing and reading as much as we could.

Night one was fine except for a mildly irritating TTE who refused to switch the lights off since he wanted to check his accounts. We went to bed on the second night, wrapped up in a sweater or two, expecting a slight fall in temperature and it was at 2:30 a.m. on the morning of January 5th, 2006 that “Katha” actually began for us. We stared at our frozen fingers and toes and realisation struck. The college had sent us here on purpose. We were to be martyrs to the cause of “english” and literature.

We were suddenly overwhelmed by this inexplicable love for Chennai which sustained us throughout our stay in Delhi. The train was seven hours late and as soon as we reached Bai Bhavan where we were to stay, we went in for our much needed baths. Perhaps you have heard of the saying: “It never rains, but pours.” We had two bathrooms for a dorm of 30 students and only one of them boasted a geyser and a drain. The geyser was subject to extreme mood swings and the drain was on strike. Consequently we had our baths standing in vast pools of cold murky water. That done, we decided to surrender to our hunger pangs and went out foraging for food . . . We found a hotel and had dosas in Delhi.

The next day, we got acquainted with IHC – the India Habitat Centre and all our unpleasant memories were wiped clean off the slate. IHC is a beautiful cluster of buildings that boasts several conference halls, tiny gardens, sculptures and a huge brass wind chime.

One of the best things of our stay was high tea with the Chief Minister, Ms. Sheila Dikshit. We were initially doubtful as to whether we were invited, due to the absence of a formal invitation. The relaxed security and the invitation *en masse* was a pleasant surprise. The much-awaited guided Heritage walk to Old/New Delhi didn’t take place, and this proved to be a disappointment. Hence we students decided to go on our own heritage walk across the streets in Pallika bazaar – window shopping and eating at McDonalds.

The evenings, usually after 6:00 pm were slotted for quick shopping sprees. After the initial running around for blankets and thermals we settled into a more organised spree of shopping. We visited places like Sarojini market and Dilli Haat and it was always a struggle to prevent one person or the other from buying up the whole shop.

Tired out after shopping and seminars we would troop back to our rooms at Bai Bhavan only to discover that the heaters had still not arrived. We would burrow underneath mountains of sweaters, socks and blankets and wake up every morning thinking that it was colder than the day before.

But more than this, we were concerned about the failure of the writers and other famous people to arrive at the venue. For instance, U.R. Ananthamurthy had fallen sick, Krishna Sobti had a bad cold, Navjot Singh Sidhu absconded for reasons unexplained, the whole Ali Khan family – Amjad, Amaan and Ayaan were indisposed and so on. Dinner with Dorji was an unforgettable experience for most of us. Now as to who Dorji is – Tshering Dorji is a civil servant, writer as well as poet from Bhutan and one evening a few of us took him out shopping. Dorji had a tendency to buy everything on sight, so we chaperoned him across stores bargaining and dragging him with us as we left. After a lively discussion on poetry among other things during dinner, we dropped him off at his hotel.

As to what happened in the nights as late as 12:00 p.m. or 1:00 a.m. at Bal Bhavan: we had what one would call cultural programmes. There were people from almost every state in our dorm and we sang and danced the whole

night through despite the cold. We discovered that Bollywood was one connecting factor for the whole of India – everybody knew a Bollywood number or two.

Soon enough Katha was over and we were on the train to Chennai. We had heard that this train was faster than the one we had come by and hence we would reach in time for college. We persevered in our faith in the Indian Railways and were rewarded when the train arrived four hours late. We were almost ready to kiss the ground – for we were in Chennai at last – alive, kicking and sweating.

Well, thereby hangs a tale – this was the one behind Katha.

*Ms. Deepthi Sebastian
III B.A. English*

Ms. Deepthi Sebastian is interested in writing and Literary Criticism. She has a flair for acting and is a good team worker. She wishes to do her Masters in English.

Creativity and Classical Theatre

*To live a creative life, we must lose our fear of being wrong.
- Joseph Pearce*

On the 3rd and 4th of March, 2006, the Department of English conducted a programme in memory of Bhavana Krishnamoorthy, a fondly remembered alumna of Stella Maris College. Two lectures on “Creativity” and “Classical Theatre” and a workshop on classical theatre was offered by Prof. Chandradasan, a senior lecturer of Chemistry at St. Albert’s College, Kochi, and founder and director of Lokadharmi, a centre for theatre training, research and performance. A creative writing competition in Bhavana’s name was also held on the 6th March 2006.

The first lecture, which was open to students from select city colleges, focused on the dedication and commitment one required in order to scale great heights in life. He spoke to the gathering about the commitment that Bhavana Krishnamoorthy had shown at every stage in her life. He also encouraged the students to actively participate in all kinds of discussions on various topics, so that they formed creative and original thoughts of their own. In his second lecture on Classical Theatre and its evolution through the ages, Professor Chandradasan spoke in detail about the glorious past of the theatre, with special reference to Indian Drama.

Prof. Chandradasan, along with Ms. Mangai, brought to life the Sanskrit play ‘Urubhangam’ by Bhasa. We had a wonderful time trying to choreograph a few scenes from the play which is a novel version of the end of the Mahabharata. Here, I must mention that Prof. Chandradasan has to his credit, the translation of another of Bhasa’s plays titled

‘Karnnabhaaram – The Anguish of Karna’, besides many other plays. His involvement with the emotion and mood of the play, rather than the script gave us the opportunity to view it from different angles and in different languages.

The terrible sight of a battlefield strewn with massacred bodies seen by two soldiers, the fallen hero Duryodhana unable to prostrate before his revered parents, unable to caress his only son – these powerful scenes evoked deep emotions in every person participating in the workshop. The manifestation of these emotions was done in original and individual styles. The group even succeeded in creating apt background music for the tragedy.

Through all the sessions, Prof. Chandradasan stressed that nothing – no action, thought or emotion – was wrong in drama, so long as it sprang from the depths of the heart. Ms. Mangai’s innovative warm-up session was extremely enjoyable, and it succeeded in lightening the apprehensive atmosphere. The hours flew as we moved deeper into the play.

It was a totally delightful experience. Our heartfelt thanks to Prof. Chandradasan, Ms. Mangai and to the Department of English for having organised such a brilliant workshop and equally enthralling lectures.

*Ms. Varsha Natarajan
I B.A. English*

Ms. Varsha Natarajan loves to involve herself in departmental activities. She is an active NSS volunteer and is trained and trains others in Carnatic Music.

A Leap of Faith

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

How it all began I'm really not sure. Some say it was the novel while others feel it was the movie. There are those who are convinced that it was Elizabeth's wit and others who believe it was Mr. Collin's antics. Then there are those who think that it's either Darcy or Colin Firth or both.

However, most of us agree that something happened at the beginning of the semester when we read the novel and then saw the movie. Some telepathic powers of inspiration were at work and soon we decided that the students of III B.A. English would stage Jane Austen's 'Pride and Prejudice' on... well...in the course of the semester.

Different Muses were at work – Darcy, Elizabeth, Jane Austen, Colin Firth. So, enter five enthusiastic, determined scriptwriters, namely, Lakshmy, Nadia, Nivedita, Saraswati, and Sowmya. These now famous five, had the incredibly tough job of chopping the novel into a play of five Acts that could be performed within a time frame of two hours, at the same time retaining all the genius that Jane Austen is renowned for. After several exhausting days of hurtling through an obstacle race of writers' blocks, the script was ready. Yes, the script was ready, but now arose the necessity of choosing the crew for the twenty-one-member cast. The process of casting was far simpler than it seemed. There was no need to search for the crew; students volunteered on their own.

We started practice on 8th September. These were, as Maria, our chosen director, warned



Pride and Prejudice

us, "you-better-be-prepared-to-stay-after-college" practice sessions. And they were tough. Most of us arrived, almost always, without having learnt our parts. Some of us, like me, were inaudible. Classrooms weren't available after two o'clock. On any given day we would have moved to a minimum of two practice areas.

We met under the Chennai sun and we met under umbrellas on very rainy days. We gathered together on working days and on holidays. All this, let me assure you, was getting increasingly difficult. If Maria said, "Okay guys, we are practising tomorrow from nine to twelve, all the acts", it was met with grumbles all around. All this might make us seem like terrible students, really lazy and lacking enthusiasm. But, believe me, that wasn't the case. Each of us had very active academic, not to mention social, lives.

As I said before, we hadn't decided on a date on which we would stage our play. We were doing this as part of our internal assessment

and we now made it known to Ms. Thilagavathi that we would present our play on 19th October. As it turned out, we weren't ready to stage the play on the scheduled date. The costumes were ready though, perfect and pretty. We asked her if the date could be extended and she said "no". Nineteenth it was and our fate was sealed.

Realisation dawned late as usual that we had a day left, and we decided to have a thorough rehearsal the next day. The following day, however, it turned out that the Chennai weather was evidently against us. It started pouring heavily around 4.30 in the evening when we still had two more Acts and the much-awaited ballroom and wedding scenes to be practised. The sky looked heavier by the moment and roads were getting water logged. We decided to make the leap of faith and leave.

We had decided to meet at 6.30 in the morning on D-day. Most of us arrived at seven and I reached at 7.30. With barely any time to breathe, we rushed into our gorgeous costumes and had our faces made up. Ten minutes before the show we 'practised' the final wedding scene. The rest of the class was of immense help to us. The audience slowly, but surely, filed into Room 0-1 and filled the chairs. It was us against an ocean of eager expectancy.

I know this information comes late, but of the crew of twenty-two, exactly five of us had formal training in dramatics and the rest of us were, to put things in a better light, amateurs. On stage the characters had the composed

and dignified exterior that Victorian English society is well known for. Backstage, it was an altogether different situation. Anticipated and repressed anxieties were let loose, lines were learnt last minute and we were shedding pounds by rapidly pacing up and down. We were far from relaxed.

We delivered our lines perfectly and acted out our parts with finesse, or so the audience felt. They felt the dance was good and the wedding scene grand. At the end of the performance I still remember the cheers of an elated audience. The crew was beaming all over. We joked later about how this was our first proper rehearsal.

Literature, as the Department of English views it, is not merely about finishing a four hundred page novel in a matter of eight hours or learning Wordsworth and Shakespeare by rote. It is an experience, and we final year students discovered it a little late. However, this has left its indelible imprint on our minds as one of our most cherished activities.

Oh, by the way, we scored a full ten on our internals, and, I know this is crazy, but the audience actually heard me during the performance. There were no mikes, and I am not joking...Come on, you've got to believe me...

*Ms. Benita Fernando
III B.A. English*

Ms. Benita Fernando is deeply interested in Greek Myth, Psychology and Classical Literature. She wishes to do her Masters in Literature.

Colour on Canvas

DEPARTMENT OF FINE ARTS



Artist Asma Menon inaugurating the exhibition by painting on a canvas

Creativity must find expression in some form, and the resultant work of art released into the world. Twenty of us from the Department of Fine Arts who had opted for Creative Painting displayed our works for public viewing from 16-19 March 2006 at Amethyst. Well-known artist Asma Menon inaugurated the exhibition.

The vivid, brilliant colours that filled our canvas were memorable. The sheer variety of textures augmented the beauty of the work. Many of the paintings revealed a certain seriousness of approach in terms of subject and technique.

Each of us had our own distinct styles and had worked on a specific theme or style. Jahnvi's work was mostly black and white and Varuna impressed all with her wax and water colours of the male and female forms.

Abstract emotion through figurative elements characterised Meera's work. Namrata on the other hand had used varied textural treatments. Preethi's 'My Friend Meera' depicted the saint singer with her tanpura. Aditi's work displayed brilliant colours and she also sold a couple of

her works. Nageswari had used mixed media and mirrors and Praveena had painted the 'Card Series'.

Dipika's triptych had extensive use of brushwork and was the focus of a lot of attention, while Sneha had played around with colour schemes. Shilpa's works portrayed model like figures. My inspiration was from Arabic calligraphy. Remya's figures depicted solitude and so did Inshiya's 'The Last Leaf.' Cindy's 'Silver Clandestine' conveyed a brooding feeling that contracted with Rumena's vibrant dancing figures. Sharanya's 'Rose' was brilliant while Neha's work was geometric. Niti created masks in mixed media and Viji in her 'Escape' predominantly used the colour blue. In the words of some critics the exhibition was a fine example of "art being affordable".

*Ms. Khadeeja Sayeed
III B.A. Fine Arts*

Ms. Khadeeja Sayeed is interested in music and glass painting. She aspires to become a textile designer.



Where Art Meets Fabric

DEPARTMENT OF FINE ARTS

'Coalesce – 2006', the annual textile show was organised by the II M.A. Fine Arts students specialising in Textile Design, from 17-21 April 2006 at Amethyst. The exhibition saw the coming together of six potential textile designers blending their unique creation on a common platform. A display of a surge of designs and creativity received much acclaim and approbation.

R. P. Preetha's collection 'Varnalaya', meaning rhythm of colour, is a unique collection of textile based room dividers, display units, magazine racks and key holders designed for contemporary interiors, to create a different dimension in the field of textiles. "The gorgeous coloured shadows of the translucent leather puppets, their textures and joinery have prompted this collection of mine," says R. P. Preetha.

According to Riti Negi, the famous *Manabhat-Kari* ornamentation on the Taj spurred her on to distill its essence and gently spread it in all its iridescence onto dining tables. Her table story collection (which included tablecloth, place mats, napkins and runners in cotton) called 'Nafees' very creatively and beautifully articulated her concept.

'Rangavali', a collection of hand block printed and machine embroidered bags and accessories by K. Sasikala, was an inspiration from traditional *Alpana* motifs of Bengal. The designs

give an aesthetic dimension to the bags made out of cotton. Slight customisation has been achieved with a sharp application by embellishing the printed designs with machine embroidery along the contours of the design.

'Allure' by Khushbu M. Jain, was a collection of home furnishing specially hand embroidered with the forgotten craft of ribbon embroidery. Her ribbons are strips of brocade carefully sourced from Benaras (Varanasi), the holy city of India. The value addition lay in the fact that her brocades were 50 years old which made the collection charming and appealing, with a touch of glamour.

J. Angelin Sheeba's collection of mats called 'Vanam' was inspired by the range of greens that lie on the sylvan lap of forests. They gently unfolded with subtle tonal changes on the mats made of Korai grass. The grass has been infused with carefully selected tones and shades of green. The range of products included tablemats, breadbaskets, table covers and runners.

'Echt' by Deepti Mehandru was a collection of authentic and genuine textiles, hand woven in jute, cotton and silk teamed with leather. Geometric designs both in woven and patchwork form were inspirations from Theo van Doesburg's paintings and were the focus of the collection. The collection was stylish, chic, elegant and sophisticated.



Varnalaya



Allure

Coalesce



Nafees



Rangavali



Vanam



Echt

Artist-in-Residence

DEPARTMENT OF FINE ARTS

Three eminent artists interacted with the students and faculty of the department at workshops, presentations and discussions during October and December 2005 and in February 2006.

The first workshop was the UBCHEA sponsored programme held from October 4 – 6, 2005 conducted by C.F. John an artist and social activist from Bangalore. Through his art he conveys the message of environmental degradation using the medium of prop-specific installations, performances and photography that are environment-related and community conscious. These concerns emerge with expressive force in his works. To communicate these concepts C. F. John makes use of diverse materials like natural fibres, waste silk, paper with acrylics on canvas. His exploration of various materials has marked his reputation as a successful artist and teacher.

C.F. John had emailed his project brief, spelling out his intention of working with 'space' as the theme. He had insisted on an open-minded approach regarding format, materials and final presentation. Innovation and freshness were two elements he was targeting. He had proposed that the entire project could be concretised only after he had a 'feel' of the 'space' as experienced at Stella Maris College and as comprehended by the students who would be the participants in the programme.

Day one was a curtain-raiser, with the artist making a presentation of his works relating to



C.F. John with Faculty and Students

his experience with space that clearly demonstrated his passion for the environment, art and creativity.

The action began with a brainstorming of the concept of 'space', after which the students were divided into seven groups. They ruminated over the experience of space on campus. Each group, after arguments and discussions, zeroed in on 'their' spaces, and over the next three days worked out their ideas.

Day two witnessed the students concentrating on the media or materials they would employ for the expression or communication of their ideas in relation to space. The materials ranged from paints to plastic sheets, kumkum to salt, and cotton thread to fabrics. They also picked up used teacups, leaves and twigs. Flowers, fresh and colorful, and water - the elixir of life - were put to good use. Some of the students went in for 'techie' solutions such as recording their installations digitally for the final presentation.

Day three was marked by rehearsals and modifications for final presentations. The spaces were personalised or dressed up for the appropriate expression of the group's ideas. At dusk the various spaces became the stage for the drama to unfold. From the personal to the universal, all the ideas emerged in an interesting array of presentations, one challenging the other in novelty and meaning.

C.F. John urged the students to remain sensitive to and creatively engage with their surroundings as they had done in the past few days.

The final presentations were deeply-felt experiences that touched the viewers' sensibilities. The process of creating site-specific installations for the participants was exhilarating and the students were creatively inspired. They appreciated the exercise of rethinking space with environmental concerns.

The second workshop was held from December 12 – 14, 2005 and was conducted by Rekha Rao, an eminent artist currently working in Bangalore. Twenty five students of the Department of Fine Arts drawn from the

second and third year undergraduate classes attended the workshop. Ms. Rekha is the daughter of the pioneering modern Indian artist, the late K.K. Hebbar.

Ms. Rao who was trained by her father, focuses on social issues in her work. Her concepts are woman-centric, and deal also with concerns pertaining to culture, terrorism, urban expansion and environment. Her sensitivity to the environment and culture has enabled her to focus on issues such as the Indus Valley Civilisation and its gradual degradation due to non-conservation of the site. Her humaneness on issues of terrorism also marks her expressions in art. Her technique is 'impasto', where she piles paint on the surface of the canvas to create textures that attract by their tactility. Her colours are vibrant and expressive.

Ms. Rao began the workshop with a movie presentation on her father K. K. Hebbar, which offered glimpses into the life and work of this great modern Indian artist. This was followed by an introductory lecture on various art periods pertinent to the theme of 'Portraits'.

Her brief on the subject included viewing several self-portraits by great artists from the West and from India. The students who divided themselves into groups researched the portrait style of the artist of their choice.

On day two, the students held a discussion amongst themselves and brainstormed with Ms. Rao on their researched choices. This interactive dialogue helped to clarify their preferences and to group themselves under various styles of the masters of modern art movements.



A Walk Down Creativity Lane

At this juncture Ms. Rao injected another dimension into the project to sensitise the students to colour. She restricted their use of colour in an unusual manner by placing four bowls containing semolina, turmeric yellow, kumkum and water. These bowls, heaped with the colours and the ever-changing water served as an intriguing yet challenging palette. Thus each student finalised on the second day, her choice, namely, either a self-portrait, portrait of a friend or any other individual. This would be executed based on the style of a great artist from the modern movement chosen by the group and with the specified colour palette.

Day three proved arduous yet fruitful. The students began early, with Ms. Rao monitoring every stage of the progress in painting by each student. In some cases, she had to direct students to work within the parameters. The results were outstanding. Five groups emerged, each different, yet drawn together by a common style. One group chose to work together as a team to execute individual pieces of a single portrait. Their attempt was unique in that they chose and planned to work in tandem the portrait of, not the physical person but the personality in a cubist style. The other groups worked out individual portraits in the styles of great artists such as Paul Gauguin, Modigliani, Henri Matisse and Amrita Sher-Gil. The portraits were displayed and the workshop ended with a critique that conveyed both the students' intent and experiences and Ms. Rao's positive feedback.

Intense yet flexible, the workshop was well-received by the students who felt that they had learnt the discipline necessary to create serious art. The group work proved a learning experience where different ideas, suggestions

and approaches helped the clarification of concepts, techniques, materials and methods involved in creating an expressive statement.

The workshop was documented through digital photographs and the final critique recorded on video.

The third workshop was conducted by Amitabh Sengupta, an artist of international repute, who is equally versatile as a writer, teacher, activist and a film-maker. A graduate of Government College of Arts and Crafts, Calcutta, he works in a style that is highly realistic and with concepts that are surrealistic. Involved in the constant process of exploration and experimentation, he is an intellectual whose restlessness comes forth with clarity as displayed in his latest series of works which involve the script as the protagonist. They mark a definitive departure from his earlier style and conceptualising, making the word express human communication through lines, textures and colours.

Mr. Sengupta conducted a three-day workshop on digital art in the department from February 7 – 9, 2006. The 25 participants included students from the second and third year undergraduate classes and a few faculty members. The whole programme was geared towards exposing the students to a new medium, that of digital art.

The workshop began with an introductory lecture by the artist who prompted the entire student body of the department to interact and think "outside the box". The sessions that followed, required the participants initially to create visuals of their own. He suggested that they could use media such as painting or photographs or their own bodies as images.

The bottom line was that every image had to be captured on digital camera, and would be manipulated later on the computer.

The students worked on individual projects initially. Then, the images they created were digitized and collaged together on the computer. Interestingly, the third year students undertook a very unique manner of visualising. They used painted images, but their support was not a canvas but walls and doors. This new form of expression was more like installation. These images were frozen on camera and then the participants collectively reworked the images using Photoshop software. Various filters transformed the images completely making them appear vivid and interesting. This morphing and transmutation with the aid of the computer was the focus of the second and third day's sessions.

The artist supervised the second year participants, who made a slide presentation that reflected a refined sensibility of their collective effort. The teamwork was directed towards sourcing images that showed them in a variety of poses. In addition, their paintings, which were digitized, were colour abstractions of brilliant hues, morphed into suggestive forms.

These concerted efforts of the students were presented using multimedia to mark the end of

the workshop. The workshop ended with the students expressing their views and giving their feedback. The artist too shared his experience of working and described it as fulfilling and challenging.

This residential programme has contributed significantly toward bringing an awareness, sensitivity, and exposure to various media in art, which can be explored productively to convey a social message or be culturally relevant. The artists who brought their experiences to bear upon the workshops generated an incalculable learning process for the students who identified with the efforts of the artists to make their creations alive and mark them out as works of art. Students and faculty enjoyed the opportunity of listening to perspectives that were informed by the world outside academia. Interactions of this nature, particularly outside the classroom, contribute significantly towards the learning process, opening up a world of opportunities for students to explore and experience. Programmes of this nature should become integral to art pedagogy.

The Department of Fine Arts is grateful for the financial support from the UBCHEA. The workshop has been a rewarding experience both for the faculty and students.

Past into Present

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

HISPLOSION

Students of the Department of History organised their annual inter-collegiate festival, HISPLOSION, on January 19th 2006.

The students introduced many innovative events and there was an overwhelming response from the students of History from city colleges. This year, students from 12 colleges participated in various events and displayed their histrionic and oratorical talents. Students of New College were the overall winners. Loyola College was declared the runners-up.

This department event was an opportunity for students of History to meet together and to interact and showcase their talents. It also gave the students of the department training in Event Management.

INTER-COLLEGIATE DEBATE

The Department of History and the Centre for Security Analysis, Chennai, organised the Second Annual Inter-collegiate Debate on National Security at Stella Maris College on March 24th 2006.

'Nuclear Agreement with United States is Favourable to India's National Security' was this year's topic for the debate. Twenty-four teams



From (L to R) Ms. Vimala Stephen, Mr. Beliappa, IAS, Ms. Visa Ravindran, Dr. Patricia Gabriel & General Raghava.

from Arts, Science and Engineering Colleges participated in the event.

The debate was held to enable students to reflect on National Security issues affecting our country and to give an opportunity for youth to voice their views on matters of national importance.

*Ms. Patricia Gabriel
Head, Department of History*

Aurora

DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICS

The annual inter-collegiate physics cultural event was organised by the Physics Department on January 20th, as part of AURORA 2006. The day began with the inaugural session, followed by the key-note address delivered by Dr. Palanisami, Head of the Physics Department, Anna University, who brought to light various applications of Physics in daily life that are often overlooked.



Dr. Palanisami, Head of Department, Physics, Anna University, with Ms. Suganthi Lark Josephine, Dr. Sr. Rita Marneni fmm.

The various cultural events then got underway with many city colleges participating in events like collage, crossword, paper presentation, quiz, pot pourri, with questions and topics for all events being Physics-based. The highlight of the day was the variety entertainment event in which the audience was entertained with

creative and amusing songs, dances and skits, all based on themes pertaining to Physics. Stella and Pachiyappa's College shared the overall shield at the end of the day.

On January 21st, the third year students attended a workshop on Advanced Microprocessor Technology conducted by Prof. G. Kumar Sathian, Head, Department of Physics, Madras Christian College, which included lectures on basic microprocessor functioning and a laboratory session which demonstrated the versatile functions that a microprocessor could perform.

As part of the Social Awareness Programme, the students attended a series of lectures on Water Management. The lectures were given by eminent scientists from Tamil Nadu Ground Water Board [TNGWB]. Their team comprised Mr. N. Varadharaj, Mr. P. Nandakumar, Mr. Ravichandran and Mr. Suresh Kumar and each of them spoke on the various issues associated with Water Management such as Water Quality, Artificial Recharge and Hydrogeology.

*Ms. Suganthi Lark Josephine
Head, Department of Physics*

Ms. Suganthi Lark Josephine has specialised in Electronics. Her interests include drawing, painting and photography.

FROM ACADEMICS TO INDUSTRY

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

In the context of the pervasive effects of globalisation, it is important to keep students updated with the business world of today if they have to stay "in the circuit". It does not stop with this; practical exposure to the theoretical concepts that they learn in the classroom and their applications in the real world are imperatives in the field of academics today. With this in mind, the Department of Commerce organised a series of workshops, seminars and guest lectures in collaboration with the relevant industry.

Certificate courses on Retail Banking and Human Resource Management are offered to the second year B.Com students. These courses are conducted in collaboration with Scope International, a wholly owned subsidiary of Standard Chartered Bank. The highlight of these courses is that the faculty is drawn from experienced officials from the banking and human resources division of Scope International. The students greatly benefit by the meaningful and insightful sessions and interactions since the faculty not only provide them with a theoretical foundation, but also give them value addition in terms of providing them with real life examples on how banking and HR practices are conducted in their organisation.

A workshop on Human Resources Management for a group 50 students was held in collaboration with Scope International. Students actively and enthusiastically participated in the various management games which brought out the various techniques and principles of management.



Panel Discussion on H.R. skills
Centre : Prof. Sriram, Director, Great
Lakes Institute of Management

Mr. Balasubramaniam, Director, TIME Institute, guided the students on how to prepare for MBA entrance examinations like CAT and XAT. He also gave them informative pointers on how to select a management institute, what the application procedures were, tips to tackle the examination and how to handle group discussions and interviews.

A guest lecture on "Economic Environment of Business" was held for the final year B.Com students. Dr. U. Jayalakshmi, Professor, ICFAI Business School was the resource person. In the course of her lecture, she highlighted the emerging trends in developing economies, the importance of globalisation and its impact on markets across the world and the role of India in this increasingly borderless economy.

Mr. K. Shanker Ram from National Institute of Sales (NIS) Sparta, conducted a two-day workshop for final year students on training methods for sales personnel. The sessions helped students to appreciate the fact that

companies invest money, time and effort in training their sales personnel and view it as an investment in the future success of their organisation and not merely expenditure. The sessions also brought to light the various innovative training methods and techniques used by the corporate sector.

A series of two-day workshops on "Effective Communication Skills" was organised for all the final year B.Com students. The workshop included activities on public speaking, conversation skills, and presentation skills, handling group discussions and interviews and the importance of non-verbal communication. The purpose of the workshop was to boost the students' self-confidence and sharpen their communication skills so that they would be better equipped to face similar situations in future. This workshop was well received and greatly appreciated by the students.

To give the students an insight into the work of advertising and ad designing, a one-day workshop was organised for the postgraduates. Mr. Freddy from the Chennai division of the world famous advertising agency J. Walter Thompson was the resource person. At the end of the seminar, the students were able to appreciate and understand the nuances of creating a concept and developing it into a full-fledged advertisement, the rationale behind every element that appears in an advertisement, the principles of advertisement designing and the importance and use of technology in advertising. The interactive sessions also included an activity where the participants were asked to create an ad copy using the concepts and principles they learnt during the workshop.



Ms. Asha Mathen with Ms. Leema Francis at the workshop

Dr. Ravilochanan, Professor, A.M. Jain College conducted a session on "The Application of Statistical Tools for Research Analysis" for the final year postgraduate students. The objective of this session was to guide the students in their research projects. The areas covered included guidelines on questionnaire formulation and testing, preparation for a market / consumer survey, important statistical tools used in research, their application, how to infer and interpret results and an orientation on how to use the Statistical Package on Social Sciences (SPSS) tool. This proved to be very useful to the students who were novices in the world of research.

The students of the department also participated in several inter-collegiate competitions and won accolades and several awards. Ms. Anwasha Das of III B.Com was the first recipient of the "Natya Sudar" award from Karthik Fine Arts Academy.

Tradition and the Individual Talent

Abhinaya Dhvani Club

The Abhinaya Dhvani Club was set up in Stella Maris about a decade ago. As the name suggests, the club aims to foster an interest in the classical art forms of Bharatanatyam (Abhinaya) and Carnatic music (Dhvani). The function of the club is to bring together talented students and practitioners of these art forms within college and motivate them to form teams that can actively participate in inter-collegiate cultural competitions.

With immense support from the college, the members of this club participate in the cultural activities on campus such as College Day celebrations, open-air assemblies and even some fund raising activities undertaken by the college. Every year the Stella Maris classical and contemporary dance teams walk away with numerous accolades at several competitions.

The club aims not only to foster available talent but also to encourage the college community to appreciate the rich tradition these art forms have to offer. It was with this vision in mind that we organised *Ragothsavam*, a music appreciation workshop conducted by the eminent Carnatic musician and former Stella Marian, Sangeetha Sivakumar. This pilot workshop was held on 16th January 2006. Members of the faculty and the student community who participated in this workshop were enthralled by Ms. Sangeetha's delineation of the basic aspects of the Carnatic recital format. The most interesting parts of the workshop were the interactive sessions which

proved the depth of the audience's knowledge and enthusiasm.

We recognised the need to set up a larger forum for such valuable exchanges. In the light of this, the club proposes to conduct another similar workshop preferably on a larger scale which could be thrown open to other colleges as well.

As students of the classical arts, the members of the club feel the need to spread awareness of our rich heritage to encourage participation and generate greater interest in these art forms. Each activity of the club is therefore designed to further this end.

The Western Dance Club

The year began with more than 50 students signing up for the club. An equal number was present for the auditions in which 20 dancers were chosen to represent the college.

The first event was at MGR Janaki College where the Stella Maris team secured the second place. The first year students were sent for two major cultural events - 'Jhankaar' (organised by MOP Vaishnav College) and 'Deep Woods' (organised by Madras Christian College). The team really caught fire at the event organised by Radio Mirchi called "War of the Colleges" and was awarded the title of the Best Women's Team in the city. Anju Shankar was awarded the "Ms. Spinz" award for Best Dancer. The team also got half an hour on air, courtesy Radio Mirchi as a result of their outstanding performance.

The team also participated in 'Festive', the cultural event organised by Women's Christian College and secured the first place. Just a few days later they geared up for 'Saarang' the mega cultural event hosted annually by IIT Madras. More than 20 teams participated in this event. The Stella Maris team was lauded for its performance and was feted by all the major papers. The event that wound up the season was Srishti '06 hosted by Ethiraj College where the team came third.

Folk Dance Club

The year started with the elections of the office bearers of the club. Tiya Jacob (III B.A. Fine Arts), Poojitha Balachandran (II B.A. Economics) and Sheethal Thomas (I B.A. Economics) were elected to the posts of President, Secretary and Treasurer respectively.

The club's first performance was for the Open Air Theatre Assembly (OAT) conducted in honour of MTC Day. During the month of September, the team took part in two inter-collegiate culturals - the first at Dr. M. G. R. Janaki College and the second at MOP Vaishnav College. The team came third in both competitions.

On 5th September 2005, the club performed in the OAT held to mark Teachers' Day celebrations. In January, they took part in the inter-collegiate cultural competitions held by Women's Christian College and came in third.

A *Dandia* workshop was organised as part of the Union Day celebrations and was conducted by the former President of the club, Ms. Niki Jain. It was attended by more than thirty students.

The last show the club put up was for the function conducted by the college honouring the administrative staff of the college.

The Rotaract Club

The purpose of the Rotaract Club is to provide an opportunity for young men and women to enhance their knowledge and skills that will assist them in personal development, to address the physical and social needs of their communities, and to promote better relations between all people over the world, through a framework of friendship and service.

The goals of Rotaract are

- i. To develop professional and leadership skills
- ii. To emphasise respect for the rights of others, based on a recognition of the worth of each individual
- iii. To recognise the opportunities to serve
- iv. To recognise, practise and promote ethical standards as leadership qualities and vocational responsibilities
- v. To develop knowledge and understanding of the needs, problems and opportunities in the community at large
- vi. To provide opportunities for personal and group activities to serve the community and promote international understanding and good will towards all people

Projects

We have successfully completed 20 projects this year. Our club was more active this year in comparison to the previous years, and this can be seen in the increase in the number of projects. We are geared up, fully prepared to do more

for our college, as well as the community. Some of our projects for the year 2005-2006 are detailed below:

In August, the Rotarians visited the Home for the Aged run by the Little Sisters of the Poor, Chetpet, as well as Andhra Mahila Sabha in Adyar. We sponsored and tied 400 friendship bands for the physically handicapped children at Nehru Stadium. The members of the club from Stella Maris participated in the District Rotaract Assembly at Ethiraj College, Chennai. Distribution of sweets to the street children at Mottukal and Naesam, and reading for the Blind at PSBB School, T.Nagar, were also part of the Rotaract projects in August.

In September, the club members participated in the Dance Competition in *Inaindha Kangal* event organised in support of the AIDS-affected children. In October, the club organised a visit to Shanthi Rehabilitation Centre, a home for the mentally challenged in Santhome. Rtr. Gnaneshwar enlightened the Rotaractors on 'The Monitoring of Health Care in Schools', at our college. In the course of the next semester, a medical camp was conducted for the Primary School children of St. Ebba's School. The Rotaractors attended a Personality Development Workshop organised by 'Vatsalyam', a Social Service Organization in T. Nagar, Chennai. The club members also distributed Crocin Syrup and multi-vitamin tablets and clothes to the children of Shanthi Bhavan, Stella Maris College.

On February 25th and 26th, the Rotarians participated in the District Rotaract Conference organised by the Council. The Faculty Advisor Ms. Priscilla was given a citation for her support in all Rotaract projects.

It is important to note that members of the Rotaract Club also held District-level posts

during the academic year 2005-2006. Rtr. Ishwarya was the Editorial Chairperson, Rtr Lakshmi Priya and Rtr. Mathangi were the Editors.

Western Music Club

The first event that the club participated in was the 'Freshers Welcome' OAT in July 2005 that showcased the various clubs and activities offered by the college. Previous club members from the second and third years took part in the OAT.

The elections for the various posts of the club were held in August 2005. The elections were conducted by Ms. Rashmi Goutham, President of the Students' Union 2005-06. The following students were elected to the respective posts.

1. President: Amritha Nair [III year]
2. Secretary: Shonali [II year]
3. Treasurer: Nishika [I year]

In the same month, auditions were conducted to select the western music college team [vocal] by the President, Amritha Nair and the Faculty Advisor, Ms. Anne Samuel. There was enthusiastic participation from students of all classes. The chosen singers have participated in events through the year and have also been trained in "a cappella" style of singing in the cultural programmes.

The western music college team took part in the western music event at the MOP Vaishnav College Cultural Festival held on 2nd September 2005. The team won the first place in the event.

The auditions for the instrumentalists for the college team were conducted in September 2005. The participation was not as enthusiastic as had been hoped for, yet some talented individuals did shine through. After the auditions

for the carol singing choir were held, the students who signed up were trained to sing various carols for upcoming shows.

On 8th December 2005, the western music college team participated in the Madras Christian College cultural programmes, 'Deep Woods', for the western music event.

On 13th December 2005, the choir participated in the 'Caroling Night' organised in the M.C.C school grounds. Many professional college and school choirs took part in the event. Several students were first time participants and they thoroughly enjoyed the experience.

The choir sang carols at the OAT assembly held in college for Christmas celebrations on 22nd December 2005.

Auditions for those who were interested in participating in the Women's Christian College cultural events were held in January 2006. Further, the western music club was privileged to perform in a video presentation by the University of Madras which was documenting the various activities in our college.

On 20th January 2006, the western music college team participated in and won the third place in the western music event at the W.C.C cultural festival. Also, the team won the first place in the Instrument Ensemble event in which a set of lyrics had to be put to tune on the spot.

On 8th February 2006, they won the first place in the western music event at the J.B.A.S. College cultural programme.



Detail of front verandah

Innovations in Chemistry in The Land of Dragons



Dr. Mary Terry and Prof. Peter Atkins with the IUPAC participants

The 40th International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry (IUPAC) Congress was held from 14-19 August 2005, in the land of Dragons, Beijing, China, on the theme 'Innovations in Chemistry.' The conference was attended by over 2000 delegates from all over the world.

IUPAC is a worldwide scientific organisation that objectively addresses global issues in the chemical sciences. Strengthening international chemistry at all levels, inspiring high standards of excellence and relevance in academic and industrial research, and promoting the service of Chemistry to the society are the elements that comprise the wide ranging vision that shapes the activities of IUPAC in the 21st century.

I was fortunate to get an opportunity to present a paper titled "Anticancer Studies of Copper (II) and Co (II) Schiff Base Complexes". Some of the questions from the delegates were very thought provoking and brought in fresh clarity to my core field of work.

I attended all the sessions of the six days of the

conference, and had the benefit of listening to some of the best Chemistry minds of the world, which included some of the Nobel Laureates like Prof. Alan J. Heeger, Prof. William N. Lipscomb, Prof. John E. Walker, Prof. Kurt Wurtrich to name a few. I also had the opportunity of attending Prof. Peter Atkins' lecture on 'Innovation in Chemical Education and Teaching Methods.' It was a dream come true, as for many like me Prof. Atkins is synonymous with Physical Chemistry.

I learned a few important lessons from my experiences at the conference. I realised that it was imperative to keep abreast of the latest developments, in one's field of specialisation, especially as a teacher. This conference has helped me to identify and bridge some of the emerging gaps in the context of rapid advances being made in the field of Chemistry. The following were some of the tangible benefits that I gained from the conference:

- Exposure to the use of advanced methods of analytical techniques and recent trends in the field of Chemistry
- Updating the scientific knowledge base with current trends in research at the National and International level
- Enhancing academic interactions with faculties from other institutions and collaborative research, with renowned institutions

It is important that we all keep abreast of the activities of IUPAC, as the overall benefits at an individual level and at the academic level are immense.

Dr. Mary N.L.
Faculty, Department of Chemistry

Silence Please!

Silence is said to be golden, but how many of us realize its value? In stillness, there is strength. In silence, there is sound. According to Pascal, most of a person's difficulties emerge from the fact that the person is unable to sit quietly in his/her room. All of us need silence to work, to reflect deeply on challenging and exigent problems at hand and to think and contemplate. Silence also helps us rest and be at ease.

St. Isaac of Nineveh, who wrote in Syriac towards the end of the 17th century, extolled the strength of silence. This is what he wrote: "Many are avidly seeking, but they alone find who remain in continual silence . . . Every man who delights in a multitude of words, even though he says admirable things, is empty within." As Mother Teresa has clearly pointed out, the value of silence is immense. She said, "See how nature - the trees, the flowers, the grass grow in perfect silence - see the stars, the moon and the sun, how they move in silence. Silence gives us a new outlook on everything. We need silence to be able to touch souls."

Yes, it is vital that we cultivate the habit of being silent, for in restlessness and noise there can be no growth. Yet the clamour and noise of our consumerist society deafens and paralyzes us. For some of us, our God is deaf. For others, their friends and colleagues are deaf, and for still others, all are deaf. Noise is destructive and isolates persons; it beats constantly on our eardrums and reduces efficiency levels in any work environment. In addition, it has the effect of tearing our hearts

apart, away from ourselves. Yes, we are truly citizens of a noisy democracy, creators and perpetrators of deafening noise pollution, besides visual, corporal, material and environmental pollution. Our productivity will surely increase if there is less chatter around us and our competence will be augmented, if the quiet around is complemented by inner peace and stillness. Inner stillness is necessary if we are to be in perfect control of our faculties. Little things like respect for another's space can be a great blessing indeed!

The next time we speak, let us remember that the sounds we create should not disturb others who have a right to their silent space. The ability to desist from using language often shows an excellent authority over it. Yet, we must note that there is more to tranquillity than the mere silence of the tongue. The silence of ignorance or absolute indifference is insipid and not edifying. There is also the silence within that, far from exuding tranquillity is to the contrary of what is shown on the outside; it could be just the opposite - turmoil within.

A story from Zen Buddhism gives us a good example of this. One day, it is said, two monks set out on a journey to another monastery in a heavy downpour. The road was muddy. All of a sudden, they saw a beautiful young woman dressed in a silk kimono, carrying an umbrella and trying to cross a muddy puddle. Tazan, one of the monks, understood her problem immediately and carried her over the puddle. The woman's dress remained unstained, as she had wanted it to be. The two monks continued

on their journey and neither of them spoke. There was perfect stillness. But Ekido, the other monk, could not restrain himself any longer. On reaching the monastery, he exclaimed, "What a dangerous thing you did! Why did you do that? We monks must stay away from pretty, young women!" Tanzan replied, "I left that girl there, why do you still carry her?" Ekido's disturbed silence is NOT stillness of heart!

Noise, vapid tranquillity and turmoil within, with the outer garb of silence and peace, are intricate

forms of noise pollution that pervade our very existence and rend our hearts asunder. We must save ourselves from the noise of senselessness - both outside and inside.

*Ms. Crystal David
Faculty, Department of Economics*

Dr. Crystal David's areas of interest are Women in the Economy, Gender, Theology, Epistemology, Feminist Methodology and International Economics.

Enjoy, Celebrate and Learn: Theatre in Education

July, 2004. A fire broke out in a school in Kumbakonam. About 99 children were charred to death. The incident shook everyone. The Department of Social Work, Stella Maris College decided to visit the bereaved families and share their grief, in however small a way possible. I was part of the group with a few students from other departments. We decided to share our experiences with the rest of the college community through a presentation in painting, of the expressions on the faces of the survivors. The text was a collation of what the surviving children and members of the family and the public told us. The presentation ended with us counting the bodies to 99 in the course of five days. It was one of the most significant and meaningful experiences in my life as a teacher and theatre person.

Education as an intrinsic life experience has both long and short term goals to achieve. In today's world, logical and scientific thinking have become the dominant discourses of the teaching-learning process. Anything that is learnt has to be verifiable and quantifiable. In such a context, what is at stake would be 'soft skills' that make the individual capable of holding her/his own in a competitive world. But almost everyone agrees that however laudable one's skills be what makes those skills accessible and transferable are the personality traits. It is this nexus of education, personality development and value-based approach that enables 'capacity building' in an individual. The arts in education is one means by which these components can be brought together. But this has to be distinguished from arts education. We are not discussing the making of professional artists here. What we have to

acknowledge is the need to inculcate creativity in all.

Art is a vast area of study and can be classified into many sub-groups as Fine, Plastic, Visual and Performance arts. I am focusing on theatre, which is primarily a performance art. Most Schools of Drama offer TIE, (Theatre in Education) as a specialisation, both in India and elsewhere. These courses deal with co-curricular and extra-curricular aspects of learning through theatre. Specific pedagogic modes have evolved in the teaching of different disciplines like science, maths, history, geography or languages. Theatrical games are used to hone the skills of concentration, focus, and engender collective and cooperative working among learners. Of course, there are the regular entertainment modes of dance, drama and music. All these are included under the rubric of TIE. Most schools, especially at the primary and middle school levels following the Montessori pattern believe in having theatre as their main pedagogic tool.

The issue of the relevance of theatre in higher education has not yet been fully explored in our country. Most often theatre, like dance and music, is seen as part of the development of histrionics. I am not denying the importance of the role of theatre as a medium of entertainment. My own concern however is informed by my practice of theatre as a means of empowerment of the marginalised. For me, the power of theatre to give voice to the voiceless is immense. The world over, practitioners of Theatre of the Oppressed (TO) as proposed by Augusto Boal,

see in theatre great potential to educate. Boal's concept of TO is shaped by Paulo Friere's "Pedagogy of the Oppressed". Conscientisation is the primary goal of education according to Friere.

I wish to dwell on what one could mean by being conscientised. It can range from awareness of one's self to awareness of burning issues in the world. Dealing with issues as matters of intellect would mean gathering information. But investing one's emotional involvement and sharpened sensitivity is another ball game altogether. PETA (Phillipines Educational Theatre Association), a leading radical theatre group has coined the word 'informance' (Inform and Perform) for their performances dealing with domestic violence. Much more crucial is self-awareness. Discovering one's self and coping with its peculiarities are considered the realm of counseling. The corporate sector today has accepted the need to have regular therapy for stress relief through theatre in their offices.

Therefore, theatre in our curriculum would mean 'coming to terms' with oneself. It begins at the very beginning - our body. In a country with contesting values of conventional beliefs and contemporary commercial cultures, there is a need to be aware of the importance of our body to ourselves, without dealing with it as an experimental product of the latest cosmetics, food, dress and accessories. The crux of theatre being body, voice and mind in live interaction with other bodies and minds as a group helps in understanding the needs and possibilities of the body. The discipline that theatre talks of in relation to body is different from other sports/dance disciplines. It tries to make one comfortable and relaxed with one's own body. In the process it makes us question the

normative notions of 'presentability,' often referred to as 'beauty'. What theatre demands is that we explore our potential and express it.

Apart from self-awareness in terms of body and voice, theatre also insists on collectivity as the axis of functioning. Though romanticised by many, collectivism is not an easy ideal to be achieved. It requires learning to 'unlearn', demystifying our own notion of ourselves. One cannot work collectively without shedding one's own ego and thinking in terms of broader frameworks. This does not mean giving up one's beliefs. It means negotiation. It is not compromise; it means accommodating.

In learning to work collectively, theatre instills a radical change in our concept of leadership. Leadership is not projecting one's own image. It is a means of drawing the best in all and being able to work together in whatever each one is good at. It also equips one with values based on ethical norms. In terms of punctuality, attendance, participation, sharing and stretching oneself, theatre calls for prioritising accountability over mindless obedience.

In all, theatre juxtaposes freedom and discipline, exploration and structure, fun and sensitivity knowledge and involvement. It becomes imperative for any higher order institution of merit to explore the possibilities of theatre as part of personality development, extension and outreach activities.

*Ms. A. Mangai (V. Padma)
Faculty, Department of English*

A. Mangai is the pen name of Dr. V. Padma, who has a Ph.D. in English with postgraduate degrees in English and Women's Studies. Active in the Tamil literary and cultural scene for over two decades, Mangai's real passion is theatre.

Is Your Axe Smart?

If an axe is dull and a man does not sharpen it, then he must exert more strength, says the Bible. Smart work is different from hard work. Smart men should think and sharpen the axe. But can the axe be made smart so that it may tell the cutter "I'm blunt. Please sharpen me?"

Yes, says today's technology

Some materials that are smart seem to think and memorise. Smart materials have the ability to perform sensing and actuating functions and therefore can imitate living systems. And where do we need such smart systems? Diabetics need medical devices to sense sugar levels and deliver the required doses of insulin. Architects are designing smart buildings with self-adjusting windows that control the amount of sunlight and heat that flows in and out. Tennis players will want smart racquets to make overhead smashes and delicate drop shots. Smart toilets are capable of analysing urine to identify health problems. Smart motion detectors will monitor authorised and unauthorised entries into buildings. Smart irrigation systems will be needed to optimise the world's food supply. Smart transducers can talk (send signals) to fish, a leading source of protein in many parts of the world.

How do smart materials accomplish all these?

Each of us reacts to the world around and within us by sensing and actuating. When our hand is in contact with a hot object, we sense the heat; our brain sends a command and our arm muscle actuates our hand away from the

object. Similarly, because of internal sensing, we will tend to favour the burnt hand until it is healed. As technology progresses it becomes reasonable to ask "Can we design an analogous mechanism that can intelligently interact with their environment? and can we develop structures that assess their own health?" The answer is yes. Such smart materials have a tremendous impact in advancing many fields including medicine, microelectronics and robotics.

Smart structures with sophisticated applications have a sensor, an actuator and processing/controlling units. A sensor receives a stimulus and responds with a signal; an actuator produces a useful motion or action. A sensor can receive a stimulus like change in temperature, pressure or illumination and transmit a resulting signal for monitoring or operating a control. An actuator can respond in the form of a change in mechanical property such as a dimensional (can the axe sharpen itself in the future?) or a viscosity change. By definition smart materials are both sensors and actuators because they have both and they may or may not have control systems.

Four wide classes of smart materials are piezo electrics, electrostrictors, magnetostrictors and shape memory alloys. Shape memory effect refers to change of shape of a material at low temperature (martensite state) by deformation and regaining of original shape (austenite) by warming it. Thus they retain their deformed state even after the removal of stress and come to the original condition only by heating. Thus

shape memory alloys are known to change their stiff characteristics with the change in operating conditions. They are used in dental braces, endo-vascular implants etc. Nickel Titanium and Copper Aluminium Nickel alloys are some examples of shape memory alloys.

World Future Society has given the following top ten predictions for the coming decade and most of them involve smart materials.

1. Cashless economy (smart cards)
2. Electronic immigration (tele-commuters)
3. Robots smarter than humans (inorganic evolution)
4. Automated parole (implants replaced prisons)
5. Voice driven furniture (smart chairs)
6. Population shift to north (smart houses)
7. Defective gene replacement (nano-sensors and nano-actuators)
8. Collision avoidance systems (smart automobiles)

9. Older generation families (smart drug delivery devices)

10. Automatic gardens (JIT Forming)

So, smart people make the axe smart. Is your axe smart?

*Ms. Sophia Rani I.
Ms. Estaline Amitha
Ms. Nissy Nevil
Faculty, Department of Physics*

Ms. Sophia Rani is an alumna of Stella Maris College. She is currently pursuing her research in the field of Titanium Alloys at Anna University.

Ms. Estaline Amitha is an alumna of Stella Maris College. Her aim is to pursue research in Material Science.

Ms. Nissy Nevil, an alumna of Stella Maris College, wishes to pursue research in the field of Solid State Physics.

Women in Medieval Times: A Look at Women in Advertising

Media women play a substantial role in advertisements today irrespective of the company's target audience. Whether the commercial is meant to draw the middle-class housewife to a bar of soap or the brand conscious college student to a razor, a woman is invariably present, cajoling the consumer to walk straight to the counter and ask for the brand. Nidhi Verghese of the Creative Department of Ogilvy & Mather Advertising Agency, Chennai, explains, "The male consumer expects women in the ad, and the advertiser very often chooses the easy way out and provides it."

The 'Feminine Mystique' is so firmly entrenched in the minds of the viewers that Lux shocked target audiences all over India by presenting Shah Rukh Khan soaking in a bathtub full of rose petals. Reactions varied from "Is he gay?" to "Terrible ad. Lux must have gone crazy!" Within a few weeks, however, the complete advertisement was aired on television featuring Shah Rukh in his bathtub with an entourage of all the previous Lux women [Hema Malini, Sridevi, Juhi Chawla and Kareena Kapoor]. A present day Browning may cheerfully sing: "Khan is in his tub, the women are back in the ad - All's right with the world!"

So where does stereotyping start? Aditi Nagarajan, a student of Visual Communications from M.O.P. Vaishnav College and an aspirant to the field says, "Advertising learns from real life. You would not have a Fanta ad using 'figure' in its voice-over if the word was not popular in reality." Marketing surveys, conducted before

the Creative Department begins to work on an advertisement, often show that the target audience either expects stereotypes or at least rejects unconventional depiction. The commercial could fail, however skillfully executed, if it does not cater to the tastes of its prospective consumers and that would mean a bad name for the agency in the corporate world. So far, there have been no government-initiated studies to research the impact of media on society and women in particular.

Ms. Mangai, a professor from the Department of English, Stella Maris College, is also a well-known theatre personality who has worked on gender and women related issues in several of her plays. She says that her experience in working as part of the AIDWA [All India Democratic Women's Association] and the Media Monitoring Committee has taught her that most people find it easier to make jokes about feminists than open up dialogue with them. The process of bringing in change becomes tougher and slower because of this unwillingness to look beyond the safe confines of media stereotypes.

The situation is a familiar story: Why didn't the advertisers cross the road? Because they are chicken! Why didn't the consumers cross the road? Because they are chicken too!

I am fair. Therefore I am. If commercials on fairness creams are to be believed, you'd better drown yourself in a bowl of chicken soup if you are dark, rather than face a terribly bleak future. Aditi says, "It is quite funny, really! The

dark girl is always in depression and when she becomes fair, the depression flies out of the window! We might as well declare counselling centres to be obsolete!" Fairness creams regularly use familiar faces from movies so as to attract consumers in droves.

K. S. Ramesh, CEO, CavinKare Personal Care Division, says, "Asin [Kollywood's latest heart-throb] represents youthful beauty that is aspirational and represents our brand values well." Predictably, CavinKare's 'Fairever' is doing great business! Ms. Mangai says that the concept of fairness creams [now for men as well - Emami's 'Fair and Handsome'] is an example of the basic underlying belief that the body is something to be engineered and manufactured. "I used to be quite conscious of wearing matching accessories and cosmetics when I was an undergraduate. But all that ended when my awareness turned into consciousness. As long as you are only aware, it just stays in your mind, but when you become conscious, you begin to act. You begin to wonder what goes into those cosmetics - animal protein, foetuses . . . and you begin to reject them, you develop the ultimate philosophy of your own body", she concludes.

Yes Boss. Even if advertising agencies are willing to break stereotypes, their clientele is not. Nidhi worked on the 'Chic Shampoo' commercial [CavinKare group] and had a tough time trying to convince her client (in vain) that it was all right to show a girl wearing track pants in a shampoo ad. Aditi has her priorities clear. "Personally, I abhor fairness creams. I wouldn't make a fairness cream ad if I could help it. And if I had to, I'd highlight some other aspect of the cream. But one must remember

that the product is for people who want a fairness cream. In that case, shouldn't the ad cater to that need? Tell me, will idealism help?" she asks. A pertinent question, that.

Advertising has, however, done its bit in bringing about social change. And not just through social awareness campaigns like 'AIDS Awareness' or 'Project Tiger' alone. Several advertisements for commercial products have, in fact, brought in silent revolutions in the social fabric. Advertisements for household appliances have contributed a great deal towards gender-neutralised division of labour within families. For instance, washing machine advertisements regularly feature men operating the system. Even ads for cosmetics have managed to break stereotypes! Nidhi cites the L'Oréal ad which has as its baseline, 'Because I'm Worth It', as an example of advertisements that portray confident, successful women who are happy with their own bodies and do not dress to please men [it is, of course, another story that L'Oréal sells fairness creams as well!].

While it is true that most advertisements do not project social consciousness, one must appreciate those men and women in the field of advertising who have been brave enough to experiment. Overnight change is impossible and before one hastily points a finger of accusation at ad agencies for damaging the image of women, it would help to understand the viewpoints of those in the field. Ad agencies exist to communicate and if we don't like how they communicate, we must perhaps place at least half the blame on audiences.

*Ms. Sowmya R.
III B. A. English*

Violaine Huysmans, Stella's 'French Connection'

The interview has just begun. Violaine Huysmans is animatedly telling me about her Indian experiences when Ms. Chandra Ilango pops in and asks her what she would like to eat. "Dosa," she says without a trace of hesitation and then specifies, "Onion dosa!" I break into an empathetic smile and Violaine nods vigorously as she says, "I love Indian food!"

Back home in France, Violaine had left engineering school to teach primary school children. Filled with wanderlust and the desire to explore the world, she approached Fidesco, a Catholic institution that helped her organise her trip to India and in time, become a part of the Stella Maris family. Though Violaine had initially planned to teach school children and not young adults, she quickly adapted herself to the situation. After all, she chuckles, the students are at the beginner's level when it comes to French!

True. I remember guessing my way through my French exams and enthusiastically writing the names of games when the question asked was "Name a few parts of the body". To most of us, learning French is only a guarantee for sufficient credits when we graduate. So how does Violaine motivate her students to take a more active interest in the subject? "I teach them songs and make up games . . . students often learn more through play. I also think audio-visual presentations will enhance their understanding because it is very important for them to get a feel of the language," she says.

During the Christmas fete, Violaine seemed to have become omnipresent. From bangles to

biriyani, I saw her visit every stall on campus. I mention this and she grins widely. The atmosphere in Stella Maris, she says, is so festive that it is impossible not to be social. She remembers the Inter-Year cultural programmes and the spirit of healthy competition that pervaded throughout the college. In France, she says, universities are so vast that students from different departments hardly know each other. The Stella Marian ID card, it must be admitted, does give us a sense of camaraderie apart from providing us with student discounts just about anywhere!

Violaine prefers walking all the way from Mahalingapuram where she stays, to college. The walks have helped her understand the spirit of the city and she says, "I now know where exactly I am!" The heavy traffic on the roads has never ceased to amaze her. She sees herself, at heart, a small town girl. In 2002, she visited Kolkata on a holiday and was struck by the thronging crowds and fast pace of life.

The culture shock is such a clichéd question that I wished to avoid it as far as possible. But inadvertently, it slips into the conversation. Before the trip, Violaine's India was a curious mix of elephants and computer savvy youth ("Indians are such good engineers!") but now, after seeing only one elephant in all these months, Violaine seems to have begun to understand India. "India is a land of paradoxes," she says thoughtfully. Stella Maris is perhaps a mini model of the mélange of tradition and modernity that best defines our nation.

Violaine will be here in Stella Maris till the end of the next academic year. I ask her what she would take back from India apart from the numerous salwar kameezes that she has collected on the trip and she says, "Leisure! Every time I get worried about things going wrong, there are always people telling me to

go easy . . . 'Don't worry, we'll manage', that's the most precious lesson I have learnt!" As the interview comes to an end, she asks me if her English was good enough to have communicated all that I needed for my article. "Don't worry," I say, "I shall manage!"

*Ms. Sowmya R.
III B.A. English*

The Opportunity that Changed Our Lives

DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

Life has never been the same for us after our experiences between April and June of 2005. This was our period of internship at the National Institute of Advanced Studies (NIAS) a nationally acclaimed institution located in Bangalore. Indeed, the invaluable experience jettisoned us with the speed of the Concorde into that utopian land where dreams become real and where goals seem closer, more lucid. We proudly credit this truly memorable and invaluable experience to the International Studies Department of the college, which, though only three years old, has carved a niche for itself in the academic arena by virtue of its being the only such department in the state of Tamil Nadu.

An Opportunity Seized: Mr. Arvind Kumar (Associate Fellow, NIAS) trained us for research, which included writing and submitting the research paper besides presenting it before a distinguished audience. As interns, we were granted the freedom to explore all that we wanted to; we could make mistakes, but producing a creative, individualistic result on the stipulated date was imperative.

We met experts from prestigious institutions and organisations like ISRO, JNU, CAOS, RAW, NSAB and rejoiced in the task of mailing high-flying diplomats for personal interviews. Even more incredible was the enthusiasm and willingness on their part to share views with novices like us.

An Opportunity Utilised: As students of Stella Maris, we received overwhelming attention and were treated almost at par with the Ph.D. students of NIAS. Of course, this meant we

utilised all amenities that we were entitled to - a cubicle with a personal computer, access to the library, timely snacks and lunch! We learnt the nuances of bureaucratic behaviour. As aspiring bureaucrats ourselves, we began to emulate their gestures, at least in the beginning. Being around such eminent persons was a learning experience for we acquired immeasurable maturity as students.

Our ability to establish contacts with experts was due in great measure to our guide Mr. Arvind Kumar's connectivity with the world around - the same reason as to why he was nicknamed 'The Five Continent Man'. He possesses autographed books of famous writers like Scott and Sagan, Hasan Askari Rizvi, Xue Litai and Stephen Cohen! A methodical, fastidious perfectionist, he was in sharp contrast to Prof. Chandrashekar, the Head of the International Strategic and Security Studies Programme. But, as the Director of our research, he was amiable, cool, humorous, flexible, creative and spontaneous. He had started his career as a representative of India at the UN at twenty-five and had gone on to work with ISRO where he had been employed in the same team as Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, now the President of India. This and so much more has been achieved by this ex-Loyolite and IITian.

An Opportunity that Showed Us the Real World: Our research experience began with feelings of great trepidation. Our confidence was put to the test on the very first day when we met Prof. Chandra who disarmed us with his easygoing disposition. But nonetheless, the

enormous stack of references that he smilingly extended to us sent our heartbeats racing in anticipation. This was serious business and we were indeed going to produce our own work. Reveries of gallivanting around the campus, making some interesting friends and going home by 4.00 p.m. and partying on weekends were shattered. How can one describe the tedium of writing several drafts to Pakistan and China expressing our disgust with their conspiracies and unthinkable demands as if they were personal letters?

Time flew by and we had to hasten up the research. The institute also had to provide us with just about everything that was required, including a suite to live in while we slogged. By mid-May, we had occupied a suite at NIAS. The office keys, too, were entrusted to us because we had to work round the clock. The working hours had now become flexible and we could spare enough time to contemplate our self-doubts, analyse reasons for our stress and work out solutions. The challenge in research is to remain focused. This thought alone guided us through our endeavour.

An Opportunity Cherished: June 24, 2005 signified the finale of our sweat and tears for D-day had arrived and all the key persons related to our field were present for the valedictory. We felt like timid lambs just before the feast of the ravenous wolves! Our presentation lasted for one agonising hour each. A moment of great jubilation followed. We received sincere applause that encouraged us to believe that our capabilities knew no bounds! The miracle did occur after all! The question-answer session was a winner; we were touched by the encouraging patience of the experts.

Every time we became too baffled by the probing, Professor Chandra proved to be our glorious saviour at the dais while Mr. Arvind Kumar nodded reassuringly from the audience.

An Opportunity Relished: On our return home, our handshakes became firmer, our smiles more confident. We, who had earlier squirmed at the very mention of volunteering displayed eager willingness to undertake any assignment. There was a paradigm shift in our vision and the world seemed magnificent. The happiness lingered on and our gratitude to NIAS strengthened. The surprise stipend and the personally autographed books by Mr. Arvind Kumar became our prized possessions.

This assignment of projects to each of us helped sculpt aspects of our individuality and the interviews added a professional touch and greater authenticity to our efforts. The paper presentation was a forum to present our analysis. There was a change in attitude, a pride in accomplishing, a finesse in researching. Most of all, the sincerity of our guides has inspired us to emulate them in all endeavours thereon. A new ray of self-confidence has uplifted our sense of selfhood and we feel we have achieved much and have grown in leaps and bounds.

*Ms. Sindhu G. Murthy
Ms. M.S. Pratibha
II M.A. International Studies*

Ms. Sindhu G. Murthy is an aspiring bureaucrat. She enjoys reading humour, philosophy and biographies. Her other hobbies include music and theatre.

Ms. M.S. Pratibha is an aspiring bureaucrat too. She enjoys reading thrillers, suspense and crime fiction. She is also interested in music and dance.

Children of God

“WE DO NOT INHERIT THE EARTH FROM OUR ANCESTORS;
WE BORROW IT FROM OUR CHILDREN”

Chief Seattle

An agonised wail emanates from a post-surgery recovery room, rending the cool night air. A pale-faced young mother clings to her grotesquely sick hydrocephalic new-born. The baby’s eyeballs are twisted grotesquely in their sockets. Its dilated scalp veins and peculiarly water-melon-sized head clinch the pathetic vision. The mother’s face contorts with horror as the baby’s face turns into a malevolent shade of blue. As the child breathes its last, its head lolling back lifelessly, the woman’s wild screams continue unabated, reaching an insurgent crescendo. She is unconscious of the doctor’s arm on her shoulder, unconscious of being whisked away on a stretcher with a grief-stricken husband in tow.

Isn’t it unarguably clear that we, the present generation, are enjoying ourselves immensely at the expense of our future progeny? The benefits we draw from the plethora of scientific and technological advancements which have bombarded the globe today is acceptable only if we do not, in the process, thwart the ability of our future generations to meet their needs. I care deeply about nature and humanity. I hereby make a personal pledge to the youth of the present era and the potential, yet-to-be-born global visionaries of tomorrow.

The human race is far from perfect. What can be achieved is a near-perfect trade-off between equity and efficiency through induced incentives – a second-best option, which in many an instance has proven to engender results substantially more promising than those of that elusive first-best solution. Given this scenario, humanity warrants my love, reverence and nurturing. The world will continue to evolve in

a positive direction, if each of us makes decisions, unfailingly keeping the future in view.

The tragedy of the hydrocephalic new-born in the prelude to my article symbolises the apathetic face of the nuclear ethos, which reigns supreme in all its turbulence today. My heart leapt to my throat when I saw coloured photographs of what in cold medical jargon is termed ‘congenital anomalies’ (which you and I would better understand as hideous birth deformities). Instances of babies being born with brains rotting outside their skulls, heads bearing deformed legs, half a head and nothing more than a head and two amphibian arms are numerous. Aren’t we responsible for these tragedies?

Birth deformities constitute merely the tip of the chilling iceberg. Hedonistic pursuits have led us to indulge in activities that have a devastating impact on the world ecosystem in the guise of cyclones, global warming, over-exploitation and exhaustion of resources, reduced soil fertility and loss of biodiversity on account of toxicity and high levels of air and water pollution. The disruption of the marine ecosystem along the Black Sea Coast, which is unceremoniously used as a drainage yard by six surrounding countries is unknown to few. Only six of the hitherto 26 species of commercial fish remain in sizeable numbers today, thanks to the cumulative destructive effects of 60,000 tonnes of phosphorous, which the sea was later found to contain. This action on our part also implies an abuse of common property and open-access resources. What can

we offer to our future generations if we deface the gift of the Divine that is Nature? Should they be left to pick up the shattered remnants of a disturbed ecological balance or rot in the wounds we have subjected our environment to?

Fortunately environmentalists, developmental economists and social activists are pitching in to influence policy makers to execute action-packed solution strategies with governmental support. The ban imposed on the sale of snakeskin which extended a profitable avenue to leather manufacturers and the Chipko movement, which, initiated en masse, moved deforesters so much that it weaned them away from felling down rows of trees, are cases in point that are to be chronicled proudly in the annals of Indian environmental history. However, blindly urging economic and environmental growth will lead us nowhere unless this oft-repeated multi-dimensional variable that we term 'development' encompasses another component - long-range planning - to ensure sustainability.

Charity begins at home, they say. So, what can I, as a core constituent of the population of tomorrow, do to alleviate the impact of wanton human activity on our planet?

To begin with, I would, when I become a parent, teach my children to be responsible for their actions, instill in them strong ethics, value systems and cultural beliefs that they could pass on to their children.

As a writer, media analyst and the mastermind of a media unit, I will play an integral role in repositioning the media sector as an engineer of a revolutionary change in the mindsets and attitudes of the masses. I would like to establish a nationally-based media enterprise and

contribute to the expansion of tangible and intangible wealth in our nation. As an entrepreneur in my own right, I will lay emphasis on increasing both human and non-human aspects of wealth for society, directing more focus on expanding human wealth, which we can harvest from the present value of earnings obtained by putting our intellect to constructive use as against non-human wealth, which is generated from the value of income acquired from financial and capital assets. While the non-human wealth resource pool would indeed endow us with the materialistic delights of life, it is human wealth, which is the sole key to spiritual enlightenment which I view as a sentinel of peace, love and harmony – three elements that would triumph over greed at a personal level and neo-imperialism at the international level. The latter can be seen in numerous examples that world history is replete with.

Another related question pops into my mind. Are the world's wealthy, developed nations today doling out grants and aids to backward nations because of a genuine concern for the less developed? Or do they take pleasure in reasserting their positions of superiority? If the syndrome of dog vs. underdog is at play, I can state with conviction that the trend will not continue for long. With the continuous foray of transnational conglomerates into the Indian economy, India is scaling newfound heights as a hard-to-rout competitor in the global market. If our nation keeps up this level of performance and develops its intellectual capital with emphasis on 'Quality Improvement', it would surely become a superpower by the year 2030.

But what prevents us from achieving this objective? Although India is welcoming change and producing platoons of intellectuals, she is

not able to mount the high-development status stallion, owing to mass corruption, squandering of resources, dissipation of disbursed state revenues into unintended zones, inefficient administrative machinery, and lack of prioritisation and streamlining of activities.

What is required is a judicious blend of creative and practical thought, which will revamp the standards of policy-making by infusing social and distributive justice into the body politic and encourage a more conducive global ambience for women, marginalised or otherwise. If I, as a first-generation media enthusiast, possessed the power to influence change at every level of society, economists and political analysts are the groups of persons I would first work on.

I would adopt innovative Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives to educate the downtrodden and marginalised. When I frame a budget for personal or professional purposes, I will balance my luxuries with the needs of humanity. I would plough back a portion of retained earnings from my company to set up a trust exclusively for the purpose of initiating awareness campaigns on prevailing social issues, funding meritorious but financially weak students and encouraging individuals from the lower economic strata to enroll at the tertiary level of education.

Growth should never be stagnant even in nations that have successfully attained high standards of living and an enriching quality of life. Constant innovation is necessary to accelerate the pace of dynamism of an economy. But in inventing and innovating, environmental concerns must not be forgotten. Resource exhaustion is to be handled effectively too. As

a writer, I would embark on projects that involve propelling producers and governments to create a pool of savings from exhaustible resources (like oil) and reinvest the percentage of returns obtained from their extraction into renewable capital assets (such as investments in large-scale water desalination projects, as Saudi Arabia is currently resorting to).

If we are to lead a discordance-free existence, bigotry and ethnocentrism must be fended off. An acceptance of and adaptability to diverse cultures and lifestyles is essential to keep at bay the evils of war, technology and insouciance, infusing the power of love in every soul. We are all Children of God. What each of us needs as the curtain of life draws to a close is the blissful knowledge of having made a difference to someone's life (no matter how small a difference it may be).

I will therefore be instrumental in bequeathing to the future generations a world which is technologically, economically and ecologically sustainable.

*Ms. Nischinta Amarnath
III B.A. Economics*

Ms. Nischinta has co-authored a book titled 'The Voyage to Excellence', featuring the stories of India's top 21 global women business tycoons. Kiran Mazumdar Shaw (CMD, BIOCON, India), Naina Lall Kidwai (Deputy CEO, HSBC, India) and Shahnaz Hussain (CEO, Shahnaz Herbals) are some of the women achievers featured in the book. The book has won critical acclaim countrywide and has been featured in www.amazon.com, the world-renowned book lovers' website.

This essay won her the Habitat Young Visionary Award in a three-tier competition conducted by the India Habitat Centre.

Dialogue Among Cultures: Why the need? Why now?

The current phase of conflict in the modern world has long been predicted. In the summer of 1993, Samuel Huntington observed in 'Foreign Affairs', "The clash of civilizations will dominate global politics. The fault lines between civilizations will be the battle lines of the future." Several doomsday-like predictions followed. Fukuyama announced the "end of history". Kaplan warned of "the coming anarchy in the world". Barber forecast a very imminent battle between jihad and 'McDonaldisation'. That this is going to be a century in which "global politics is shaped by cultural and civilizational tides" is no longer in doubt.

In his seminal 'The Clash of Civilizations', Huntington wrote:

"In the 1950s Lester Pearson warned that humans were moving into an age when different civilizations will have to learn to live side by side in peaceful interchange, learning from each other, studying each other's history and ideals, and art and culture, mutually enriching each other's lives. The alternative, in this overcrowded little world, is misunderstanding, tension, clash and catastrophe. The futures of both peace and civilization depend upon understanding and co-operation among the political, spiritual and intellectual leaders of the world's major civilizations."

It appears that we are rushing headlong towards the alternative. Only one route to lasting peace still exists in the contemporary pluralistic global village where permanent and constructive dialogue among the myriad cultures of the world can and should be encouraged.

Multiculturalism is a 21st century reality, but not one by any means new to the world. Society has long been a cultural mosaic in the Mediterranean world, the Middle East and India. Although multiculturalism does not necessarily translate into violence, history is replete with examples of cultural differences exploding into prolonged conflict.

Multiculturalism has emerged as a new type of ideology, as an answer to the emerging patterns of cultures in the modern world. The great cities of the world are more often than not multicultural, based on the belief that all cultures have an equal right to exist. Nevertheless, recognition and acceptance of multiculturalism have been slow in coming. They are conspicuous by their absence in many parts of the world, an absence that is doubtlessly costing the world dearly. In Huntington's words, "The security of the world requires acceptance of global multiculturality."

The first step towards achieving holistic understanding of multiculturalism, so vital for world peace, is by initiating dialogue among cultures and countries at various levels. Most countries are hardly isolationist when it comes to international relations and foreign policy. Civil and beneficial commercial dialogues of different sorts have long existed between cultures and civilisations. Such dialogues need a paradigm shift from being "mere exchange of information on a purely technical level" to a "deep communication between convictions", as Peter Kemp has argued in 'Towards a Dialogue of Learning and Criticism' (2001). The need of

the hour, elaborates Kemp, is existential dialogue: "A purely technical dialogue does not contribute to mutual understanding of basic human experiences; only existential dialogue makes possible approaches between cultural and moral strangers from different civilisations. Only this type of dialogue makes it possible to learn wisdom from another." Inspired by the dialogues recommended by Michael Amaldoss, SJ, in 'Studies in Inter Religious Dialogue' (1988), Kemp defines four levels of existential dialogue: dialogue of life, dialogue of intellectual exchange, dialogue of spiritual exchange and dialogue of common action.

The first is a dialogue in ordinary life and practice; a dialogue at the most fundamental level. This is a dialogue of life among ordinary people about common, banal things of everyday life. The dialogue here lies in experiencing the other as a fellow human being. It is this fundamental dialogue that forms the basis for all other dialogues.

The second level of communication is the dialogue in the intellectual exchange of interpretations of life and practice. This is essentially a dialogue of specialists attempting to understand ways of thinking and expression in foreign cultures.

At the third level is the dialogue in mutual effort for discovering common experiences and complementary interpretations despite different geographical origins, education, lifestyles etc. This dialogue hopes to find some common ground in experience, a kind of universal ethos shared by human beings from different cultural backgrounds.

The final dialogue is the dialogue between human beings sharing the same historical experiences of values and beliefs. This arises

out of participating in common projects. The common ground will help to convert dialogue into communication, one that includes both learning and criticism.

Such dialogue is by no means a new concept in world history. Throughout the globe, people of different cultures have engaged in dialogue far more and much longer than they have in conflict. Thus, Confucians, Hindus, Muslims and Christians have lived side-by-side and participated in mutual dialogue or 'multilogue', traded, even migrated and inter-married with each other. In the past, many empires deliberately sought out individuals and groups for the technical, artistic, political and cultural contributions they could offer. This tradition of dialogue, as showcased in history is an encouraging sign for the present and future generations.

Every civilisation has something to contribute and must be given the opportunity to make that contribution to the New World Order. A strong pluri-civilisational component must emerge in all aspects of thinking and reveal multiple influences at work. But, as Felix Marti of the Centre UNESCO de Catalunya, Barcelona points out, "Mutual enrichment is possible if the different parties recognise their limited nature. Dialogue does not mean betrayal; it means recognising other points of view and other experiences in their honesty and coherence. It also implies the integration of valuable elements from other traditions, without fear of a loss of identity." And, rightly so. At the same time, there is a need to expand commonalities.

It is crucial that all sections of society participate in the various levels of dialogue among cultures. From policy makers and business leaders to

homemakers and students, opportunities must be presented to all demographic sections to participate in the dialogue. Youth, often the neglected partners in peacemaking, must be given multiple doors of dialogue to explore.

The role of the internet and communication technologies in facilitating such dialogue cannot be overlooked. New technologies can - in the words of Ayotullah Mohajerani of the International Centre for Dialogue Among Civilisations, Teheran - help create "tidal waves around islands of culture."

Ultimately, dialogue cannot succeed unless accompanied by an open mind that has discarded prejudice. New cultures must be approached with respect and equality. "If cultures are seen as 'superior' and 'inferior' conflictual relations are inevitable", warns Marti.

In today's multicultural world, the ultimate goal of all such dialogue should be the creation of a new, peaceful international order based on cultural diversity and a common human identity, of humanity, in the words of Peter Kemp, "seen as one big family, a family sharing - despite

great differences, a common historical life and showing mutual respect of the other."

*Ms. Anupama Sekhar
II M.A. International Studies*

Anupama Sekhar worked with the International Labour Organization, as she studied for her M.A. degree in International Studies. The experience, she says, provided her with important insights about life in the 'global village'. One of the most valuable lessons she learned – especially from the multicultural setting of the United Nations – was the importance of understanding cultures outside of one's own. In her view, embracing multiculturalism is crucial to enhancing prospects of world peace and security in the highly charged contexts of 21st century life. A first step in this direction could well be 'existential' dialogue among cultures.

This article is a shorter version of her essay, 'Dialogue Among Civilisations: A Way to International Peace and Understanding', which was awarded the First Prize in the Abdul Kalam Azad South Asian Essay Competition 2003 organised by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India.

Life, Loss and Lhasa in Dharmasala

I have never been to Tibet. My experience of its multiple realities come from the delightful words of that early traveller to the roof of the world, Alexandra David Neel and the more distressing ones of journalists reporting (rather infrequently, I must add) the Chinese occupation.

Wanting more and wanting it first-hand, I journey to a small Himalayan town in India. Where I am is certainly not that “immense void, resplendent under the sky of central Asia,” the image of Tibet Neel has surely imprinted on all her readers’ minds.

It is around 5 a.m. on a chilly summer day up in the mountains. I am standing on a deserted road, a trifle disappointed by the ‘unTibetness’ of the place I have just arrived at. Then, day breaks and life spills on to the streets. Suddenly, the air is moist with memories of Tibet; and loss and Lhasa become real everywhere in Dharmasala.

A township of 18,000, Dharmasala is located in India’s northern Himalayan state of Himachal Pradesh. The name translates as ‘place of dharma’, a refuge of sorts. Hindsight reveals the aptness of the nomenclature. For it is to Dharmasala that the Tibetans fled following the Chinese invasion in 1949. Currently, it is the seat of the Tibetan government-in-exile and home to ever-growing numbers of Tibetan refugees including their spiritual and temporal leader, His Holiness the XIV Dalai Lama.

The mountain township itself consists of two separate parts. I make my way from the bustling

markets of the lower township crowded with locals towards MacLeod Ganj where the Dalai Lama and most Tibetans live. This is to become my journey of both hope and despair.

MacLeod Ganj requires settling in; its reputation as a hippie centre precedes it. Visitors often end up making comparisons with Kathmandu rather than Lhasa, Tibet’s capital. Tourists, locals and young Tibetans throng its two arterial roads congested with cafés and souvenir shops. This feels like any other popular Indian tourist destination in the mountains, I tell myself.

In MacLeod Ganj, I play tourist myself and step into a handicrafts store to buy a *chupa*, the traditional Tibetan dress. All is going well until a label on the hand-stitched aquamarine garment breaks the illusion. ‘Made by Tibetan Refugees in India’, it reads. I look away for a moment focussing instead on the busy road outside. A lone Tibetan monk in ochre and maroon robes is walking past. I notice little more than his pace. Amid the noise and haste of MacLeod Ganj, it is unswervingly steady. My eyes fix on his dusty but sturdy boots. A snow-draped mountain path from somewhere in Tibet flashes inside my brain.

The monk and the moment, both pass soon. The signs of regular life return. I watch young Tibetan boys in bandanas and baggy trousers being, well, young. Elsewhere a cherubic Tibetan baby tests the patience of a new mother. This semblance of normalcy, I realise, symbolises both the beauty and tragedy of the Tibetan situation in Dharmasala and other settlements dotted across the country. You can be forgiven

for forgetting that these people are in fact refugees, so vibrantly alive is their way of life. The title of the Dalai Lama's autobiography - 'Freedom in Exile' - comes to my mind. It is difficult to better this phrase when one is looking for an expression to sum up what Tibetan refugees enjoy in Dharmasala and other parts of the world where they have sought asylum.

Numerous monasteries dot the mountainscape around Dharmasala and serve as reminders of the scholastic Tibet of yore. Tibetan music, dance and opera are alive and thriving. Language and religion are safe. I observe schools, hospitals of Tibetan medicine and the parliament complex. There are no real reminders here of the pressing conflicts in contemporary Tibet: the massive influx of Chinese civilians into Tibet, systematic destruction of Tibetan culture and environment, militarisation of the plateau, the Lhasa-Qinghai railway project and more. To me, life in exile appeared free and sometimes even complacent. I could not have been further away from the truth. The words of a young Tibetan human rights activist brings home the truth. Not everyone can participate actively in the independence movement, he says. Ordinary Tibetans with everyday lives are making a contribution by simply living their culture, one that is fast disappearing in the occupied homeland. This insight comes five weeks into my arrival on July 6th, an all-important date in the Tibetan calendar, the birthday of the Dalai Lama.

While July 6th in Dharmasala is as festive as it can get, the day also serves as a cruel reminder of Chinese politics. Most of Dharmasala's Tibetan community, except the Dalai Lama himself who generally prefers to stay indoors, converge at the main temple. Old and young,

ministers and hawkers, all assemble under the Tibetan flag. Around me are hundreds of young Tibetans many of who have traded their favourite baggy trousers for the *chupa*. I realise that they may never see their homeland. It is a disturbing thought. The remoteness of a final, positive political solution is suddenly very real to me.

The harsh realities of the Tibetan issue are hard to hide any longer either under the garb of the festivities of the unfolding day or the normalcy of days past. That it is the last day of my stay here makes it worse. I am left with the stark images I notice amidst the gaiety of the day; they replace every impression of normalcy I had internalised. Until this moment, Dharmasala was synonymous with the warmth of the Dalai Lama's clasp and the colour of Tibetan tea (that of faded roses). That song of innocence is lost forever. The ominous picture I am left with is that of a dragon in the land of snow.

I take the 6 p.m. bus out of Dharmasala on July 6, 2002. I have not yet had an opportunity to re-visit. Nevertheless, a homeless people from this beautiful town chase my thoughts often. Both of us have long dreamt of standing free in the long shadows of the Potala.

Ms. Anupama Sekhar
II M.A. International Studies

In the summer of 2002, I had the unique opportunity to experience Tibetan life first hand through the Gurukula scholarship of SPIC MACAY and the Foundation for Universal Responsibility of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. That June-July, I spent five weeks in Dharmasala, Himachal Pradesh, the mountain township that many Tibetans now call home. I returned with precious lessons about life in exile. My teachers: Tibetans of every hue, from passionate student activists to the Dalai Lama.

Enchanting Wyanad

THE EXCURSION OF THE STUDENTS OF III B.Sc. MATHEMATICS (EVENING COLLEGE)

"How about Ooty?"

"The same old place??"

"Well . . . then Kodai?"

"Oh no! Not again!"

"Hey . . . what about this place, Wyanad?"

That's how it all began. The travel agent was contacted, the train tickets and hotel rooms were booked and all of us geared up for an adventurous trip ahead.

The day of our departure arrived and with a lot of excitement and expectation, we boarded the Mangalore Mail at 8 p.m on August 31st 2005. Ms. Uma and Ms. Teresa, our enthusiastic faculty members accompanied us on the trip.

We reached Calicut the next morning, had a quick breakfast and took the bus to Wyanad. Braving numerous hairpin bends [and the unavoidable nausea], we enjoyed the panoramic view and the pollution-free air. On reaching the hotel, we had a quick shower, a sumptuous lunch and left for the Soochipara Waterfalls.

Armed with small packets of salt to keep off the leeches, we began our journey down the steep path towards the waterfalls. And lo, it was a sight to behold indeed! The crystal clear water with milk-white foam splashing against the rocks refreshed all of us. After a wonderful

evening, we returned to our hotel for a delicious dinner and well deserved sleep.

The next morning, we boarded the bus to Edakkal Caves that date back to the BC period. The caves were formed during an earthquake due to which a boulder rolled down and came to rest atop two large rocks. The caves were the abode of the early tribal chiefs and had several inscriptions. With the NCC girls

leading the way, around 24 of us climbed the giant hill which is 6,000 feet high. After a lot of huffing and puffing, we reached the hilltop and stood a while in silence, astounded by the spectacular view. We then descended [read rolled down!] the hill, unmindful of

the numerous scratches on our legs and cramps developing in our muscles.

After lunch, we went to Muthunga Sanctuary for a safari and got to see herds of elephants, deer, wild boar and peacocks.

We had a campfire that night at the hotel. The dancing and singing went on till midnight when we finally decided to call it a day and give our tired bodies some rest. The next day, with heavy hearts, we vacated the hotel and reached Pookot Lake. After a round of boating, we shopped for souvenirs and left for Calicut.



On Top of the World

Having come to Calicut, we did not want to miss seeing the Calicut beach.

We spent a little time on the beach taking photographs and having fun chasing the waves, after which we left for the railway station.

We boarded the train at 5.00 p.m., unable to believe that our trip had ended so fast . . . that we were going back to the routine of "C.A." tests and "third components"! But once we got back to Chennai, we looked forward to returning to the fun-filled atmosphere at Stella Maris which we had actually missed during our stay at Wyanad.

*Ms. Aishwarya R.
III B.Sc. Math [Even.]*

The Little Things

I just got a message on my cell phone! It's these little things that make college life so endearing.

But I'm not very good at deciphering SMS lingo. So let's break it down bit by bit.

'late bed (a)wakenings'

The combination of 'late' and 'wake' in the same phrase makes me think this is some kind of funeral service. Maybe it's an allusion to the death-like zombie state that we find ourselves in at 8.10 a.m. in the morning, when we stumble into the college campus, looking like an extra from "Buffy the Vampire Slayer".

'slight breakfast'

I'm going to make things easier for myself, and just ignore that 's' in the beginning. So, a light breakfast. Or make that no breakfast. Who feels hungry at 7.15 in the morning? Try to have a decent meal at that hour, and you wind up dry-heaving all the way to college. Hunger pangs strike exactly at 9.30 of course, in the middle of second hour MC class with a lecturer extremely unsympathetic to the idea of your making a short trip to the chaat counter.

'bus stand figures'

I honestly can't figure this one out. Does this refer to checking out the, er, figures at the bus stand? Let's just move along . . .

'foot board travels'

I must say, this sounds almost as appealing as "Club Mahindra Travels". It could be the new adventure sport. "Foot Board Travels! Experience adrenaline-pumping heart-stopping goosebump-inducing near-death encounters EVERY DAY in your choice of MTC bus! Sturdy footwear, a vice-like grip and life insurance required."

'mobiles in silent mode'

Finally, something I can relate to.

'late night chats'

Never a good thing where I'm concerned. If I'm calling someone up at two in the morning, it's because I've woken up in a cold sweat suddenly remembering that nasty 3rd comp assignment due in 6 hours, but not remembering what the assignment actually is.

'some misunderstand'

Well, what do you think happens when I wake up the smartest kid in class at two in the morning?

'struggle 4 marks'

Let's not think about it.

'prestige in arrears'

Prestige? Okay. Whatever keeps your chin up, mate.

'mass bunk'

I don't think God would appreciate bunking Mass.

'friday movies'

In the Rs.10 seats of course! The closer you are to King Kong, the better view you get of his nostrils.

'enjoying group arguments'

Ah yes. A day doesn't go by when we History students don't get into a friendly debate over the merits of western imperialist autocracy versus the rights of the post-structuralist colonial suffragette movements.

'freshers day and farewell with tears . . . COLLEGE life is nothing but HEAVEN.-)'

I'm not going to argue with that! Might as well make the best of it.

*Madhuri Shekhar
III BA History*

Unpredictability of Life

A dark highway along the coast,
Distant rumblings of thunder and
Streaks of lightning flash across the sky.
A man and woman on a single bike,
Satisfied and happy were these two-
For in love they were.
But life, with its strange and unexpected twists
Was about to change in an instant.
The stillness of the night is broken,
By the screeching tires and crashing metal.
The drunken driver speeds past without looking
back.
The injured man on the road
gropes in the dark for his wife;
Drops of rain begin to fall and
The man with tears streaming down his face
Curses his fate, for it was-
Two, and not one life
he had lost in one moment of drunken frenzy

Faith

Tears flowing from the eyes,
Indicating the sorrows harboured within the
heart.
Wrinkled creases surrounding the eyes,
Indicating the heaviness felt in the heart.
Tears and worry can wreck the soul,
Preventing us from joy and happiness.
Blame it on fate; blame it on destiny,
Yet today's results are the answers to
yesterday's actions.
Sensibility to identify the mistakes,
And courage to put them right-
Is all within us.
But the most important thing required is faith.
Yes, faith that all wrong deeds and actions can
be solved.

All About A Blade of Grass

A glistening drop of dew catches the sunlight
And shimmers with a motley of varied colours.
A dewdrop on a blade of grass that is often
taken for granted.
Grasses everywhere;
Grasses in the trimmed landscapes,
Grasses as the food crops we consume,
To the tallest grass Bamboo, consumed by the
Panda,
And the grasses in the verdant sceneries of
the world.
A blade of grass in the vibrant hue of green-
Green symbolising fertility; the grass
exemplifying Nature at her very best.
So beautifully created by God.
Grasses or trees, herbs or shrubs,
Man has destroyed flora the world over.
Every time we tread upon a patch of grass
Let us for a moment pause to reflect,
And work towards conserving Nature.

Ms. Sharanya K.C.

III B.Sc. Plant Biology and Plant Biotechnology

Ms. Sharanya K.C. has a passion for reading fiction and non-fiction, dancing and writing poems and short stories. Her current short-term goal is to acquire a Masters degree in Microbiology, the intricacies of which have always fascinated her. Her long-term aim is to become a research scientist in her field of choice.

Ode to Bhaji?

(With due apologies to Keats)

Thou still unused bottle of masala
thou product of Everest and grinding.
Sylvan spice who can't thus flavour
a delicious dish sweetly like thyme
what machinations haunt thy grains
of cleaning or packaging or of both
in kitchens or in pantries of hotels?
What veggies and gravies are these? What juicy
broth?
What mad boiling? What bubbles escape?
What spoons and pans? What wild stirring?

Used masalas are spicy, but those unused
Are spicier; therefore ye daft chef, spoon me
Not to the sweet dish but more endearingly
Pour me into the succulent bhaji of
table no. 10.
Fair youth beneath the hat thou can't not
know
Thy trade, without masala this bhaji be bare
Bold learner never can't thou forget.

Ah! happy, happy bhaji that cannot shed
Your oil nor ever bid the fat adieu,
And happy eater unwearied
Forever asking for more
More oily bhaji! more oily, oily bhaji!
For it is warm and still to be enjoyed
With mild panting and burning tongue

All passionate exhalations far below
That leaves him relieved and wind free
Leaving watery eyes and a parching tongue.

Who are these coming to the buffet?
To what lain table O mysterious steward
Lead'st thou that cow rolling in the entrance
With all her printed silks with diamonds drest?
What little granary or sea shore
Or mountains of terraced crop
Has her bulk emptied this pious morn?
And little restaurant thy stores for evermore
Will empty be and not a soul to feed
Thou will be desolate

Oh sada dosa! fair nan! with bhaji
Of moustached men and maidens overfed,
With bay leaf branches and trodden veggies
Thou silent form do'st tease us out of hunger
As doth eternity. Hot bhaji
When spicy food shall our intestines waste
Thou shalt remain in midst of other food
A friend to man to whom thou say'st,
Bhaji is good, ze good is bhaji, that is all
Ye know in hotels, and all ye need to know.

*Ms. Saraswati Datar
III B.A. English*

*Ms. Saraswati Datar enjoys dancing and listening
to music. She hopes to pursue a career in Mass
Communication.*

I hold up a shard of glass to the sun
And you squint, stumble and fall
Grope your way through faith
As the reflected light passes
through you; You bend back like a stricken
lion.

The shaft of light strikes you
And you, light up electrified.
The insides are burnt and
the flames leap up, consuming you.

Intention was but to reflect
- the truth; towards me.
Not to burn you.

*Ms. Manu George
II M.A. English*

I scribble
As I wait.
Wait for insipid coffee coloured inspiration
- to turn around.
- to become
Rainbow hued.
Hues, Tinges, Tinctures

*Ms. Manu George
II M.A. English*

*Ms. Manu George is interested in reading and
creative writing. She loves travelling and embroidery.*

Fate

Oh! the fate of life, so much more to chaff;
transit to world above,
that none on earth would love.
Who created thee? God or Man? or
your self began where man before thou dwelt?
What part of creation thou art
yet to see
till sin begot was.

He for You, or Ye for Him
that ye a blemish be

I know that sin, gave thee the win
Pray thee, thou save, no men to thy grave.
What joy ye behold, when men thee hold,
Yet . . . I

I know you make the turn,
that me to heaven you do concern
no age, no creed you would see, and be as
such till eternity flee.

*Ms. Anita Samuel A.
II B.A. Sociology*

*Ms. Anita Samuel is interested in reading novels.
She plays the guitar and loves singing. She also
works with the mentally challenged and the deaf
and blind, and looks forward to a career in Speech
Therapy.*

நலம் தரும் நாட்டுப்புறப் பழமொழிகள்

(டாக்டர் விஜயலட்சுமி இராமசாமி எம்.எ., எம்.எட்.பி.எச்.டி)

நாட்டுப்புற மக்களின் நூட்பமான அறிவின் வெளிப்பாடே பழமொழியாகும். ஒரு செய்தியின் அழுத்தத்திற்கும், ஆழத்திற்கும் நாட்டுப்புற மக்களிடம் உருவாக்கம் பெற்றன. மக்கள் தாங்கள் செய்யும் தொழிலைச் சார்ந்து, இருக்கின்ற சமுதாயத்தைச் சார்ந்து, சிந்தனைத்திறனோடு பல பழமொழிகளை உருவாக்கினர். சொல்ல வேண்டியதை, சுருக்கமாகவும், கருத்துடனும் வெளிப்படுத்தினர். மக்கள், தங்களுக்கு ஏற்பட்ட அனுபவங்கள் போல பிறருக்கும் ஏற்படும் பொழுது, முன் அனுபவம் பெற்றவர், தங்கள் அனுபவத்தைச் சுருக்கமாகவும், சந்தமுடனும், எதுகை மோனையோடு ஒரீரு வரிகளில் பழமொழிகளாகக் கூறிவந்தனர்.

இவர்கள் கூறிய பழமொழிகள், வாழ்க்கையின் இனைந்துத்துறைகளுக்கும் பொருந்தும் தன்மைகளைக் கொண்டிருந்தன. பழமொழிகள் நாட்டுப்புறமக்களின், அனுபவங்களின் அணிவகுப்பாகும். நாட்டுப்புற மக்களின் வாழ்க்கை முறைகளைத் தெரிந்து கொள்வதற்குப் பழமொழிகள் பெரிதும் துணைபுரிவதாக அமைந்துள்ளன. 'வாழ்வை ஊன்றிக்கவனித்து உனர்ந்த உண்மைகளின் துணுக்குகளே பழமொழிகள்' என்கிறது ஆக்ஸ்போர்டு ஆங்கிலப்பழமொழிகளின் அகராதி.

‘நூண்மையும் சுருக்கமும் ஒளியுடமையும்

எண்மையும் என்று இவை விளங்கித் தோன்றிக்

குறித்த பொருளை முடித்தற்கு வருஉம்

ஏது நூதலிய முதுமொழி என்ப’

என்று தொல்காப்பியம் கூறுகின்றது.

தமிழில் பழமொழி, பழஞ்சொல், முதுமொழி, முதுசொல், வசனம் என்றெல்லாம் இது சொல்லப்பட்டு வருகின்றது. பழமொழிகள், விடுகதைகள் ஆகியவை எப்பொழுது தொற்றம் பெற்றன என்பதை வரையறுத்துச் சொல்ல முடியாது. மனிதன் என்று தோன்றினானோ அன்றே பழமொழிகளும், விடுகதைகளும் தோன்றியிருக்க வேண்டும் என்பார். பழமொழிகள் வாய்மொழியாகவே கூறப்பட்டு வந்தவை. வாழ்வில் முழுமையாக, இரண்டறக் கலந்த பட்டறிவில் பட்டுத் தேர்ந்த, செறிவான மனங்களின், தெளிவான வெளிப்பாடே பழமொழிகளாகும் என்பார். இவற்றைப் படைத்தோர் பெயர் அறியப்பட முடியாதவை. பழமொழிகள் ஏட்டுக் கல்வியில் விளைந்தவை அல்ல. அவை வாழ்வியலை நேராகவே கற்ற, எண்ணற்ற உள்ளங்களில் இயல்பாய் தோன்றி, நிலைத்த அறிவின் கருவூலமாகத் திகழ்பவை.

இப்படி, உளவியல் பாங்கோடு, இயல்பான அனுபவங்களை உள்ளடக்கி, வெளிப்படுத்திய நாட்டுப்புற மக்கள் நமக்கு வழங்கிய பழமொழிகளில், நோயின்றி வாழ என்னென்ன பழமொழிகளைக் கூறி வந்தார்கள்; நோய் வராமல் தடுக்க, என்னென்ன

உணவுப்பொருள்களை உண்ண வேண்டும் என்பதை, அறிவியல் நோக்கோடு எப்படித் தெரிந்து கொண்டிருந்தனர்; ஊட்டச் சத்து மிகுந்த உணவுகளின் பயன்களைப் பழமொழிகள் மூலம் எப்படி உணர்த்தினர் என்பவை பற்றிய சிந்தனை இன்று நமக்குப் பெரும் பயனைத் தருகின்றன. இந்த வகையிலே, நாட்டுப்புறமக்கள், மருத்துவத்தன்மையோடும் அறிவியல் பாங்கோடும் கூறி வந்த, நலம் தரும் நாட்டுப்புறப் பழமொழிகள் ஏராளமாக இருந்த போதும், சில பழமொழிகளையாவது தெரிந்து கொள்வது அவசியமாகும்.

சோற்றுநீர்:

‘ஆற்று நீர் வாதம் போக்கும்
அருவி நீர் பித்தம் போக்கும்
சோற்று நீர் இரண்டும் போக்கும்’
என்பது பழமொழி

இப்பழமொழி என்ன மருத்துவக் கருத்தை நமக்குச் சொல்கின்றது என்றால், ஆற்றுநீருக்கும், அருவி நீருக்கும் உள்ள மருத்துவத்தன்மையை, பழைய சோற்று நீரில் நாம் பெறமுடியும், என்பதைச் சொல்கிறது. இயற்கையாக பொருள்களும், மூலிகைச் சத்துக்களும் நிறைந்து காணப்படும்.

தாமிரபரணி, காவிரி, கங்கை, வைகை போன்ற ஆறுகளில் நீராடினால் மனிதனுக்கு வரக்கூடிய சில வகையான நோய்கள் தீரும் என்பது நம்பிக்கை. இதுமட்டுமல்லாது, சமய நம்பிக்கையாகவும் இருந்து, சிறந்த மருத்துவப் பயனும் அதனால் விளைகின்றது என்பது, பழமொழிகள் மூலம் தெளிவாகின்றது.

நரம்புக் கோளாறுகள், வாத நோய்கள், தோல்தொடர்பான நோய்கள் போன்றவை வராமல் தடுக்கும் தன்மையும், வந்த நோயைத் தீர்க்கும் தன்மையும் ஆற்று நீருக்கு உண்டு. எனவே ஆற்று நீரில் குளிப்பது நன்மை தரும் என்று மக்கள் நம்பினர். மேலும், அது நோய் தீர்க்கும் என்றும், அது தூய்மையுடையது என்றும் நம்பினர். ஆற்று நீரில் குளிப்பது அன்றாட வாழ்க்கையில் ஒரு செயலாகவே நடந்து வந்தது. அந்தக் காலத்தில் ஆற்றுக்குப் பக்கத்தில் இருப்போர், நாள்தோறும் ஆற்றுக்குச் சென்று, துணி துவைத்து, பின் குளித்து வருவதை ஒரு பழக்கமாகவே கொண்டிருந்தனர். ஆறு தொலைவில் இருந்தால், அவ்வப் பொழுது ஆற்றுக்குச் சென்று குளித்து வருவதை, ஒரு சடங்காகவே கொண்டிருந்தனர்.

உடம்பில் பித்தம் அதிகமாக இருந்தால், அது தொடர்பாக, மூளை நோய்கள் வரும். நோயாளி நினைவு இழப்பார். இந்தச் சமயத்தில், அவர் பித்தம் தொடர்பாக வரும் நோய்களைப் போக்க, அருவி நீரில் குளிப்பார். இன்றும் மக்கள் குற்றாலம், பாபநாசம் போன்ற அருவிகளில் குளிப்பதை நாம் பார்த்திருக்கிறோம். பித்துப் பிடித்தவர்கள் கூட அருவிகளுக்குச் சென்று, அங்கேயே தங்கி, ஒரு நாளைக்கு நாற்கைந்து முறை குளித்து, பித்தத்தைப் போக்கித் தெளிவாக்கிக் கொண்டதையும் நாம் கேள்விப் பட்டிருக்கிறோம்.

நரம்பு வலிவிண்மையால் வரக்கூடிய வாதத்தையும், பித்த நோயையும் தீர்க்கக் கூடிய சக்தி, பழைய சோற்று நீருக்கு உண்டு என்பர் நாட்டுப்புறமக்கள்.

சோற்றுநீர் என்பது, முதல்நாள் சமைத்த சோற்றில், இரவு நேரத்தில் நீரை ஊற்றி வைத்து, அடுத்த நாள் காலையில் அந்தச் சொற்றை நீக்கிவிட்டு, நீரை மட்டும் குடிப்பது. அக்கால மக்கள் மண் பானையில் சோறு சமைப்பர். அந்தப் பானையிலேயே, மீதமுள்ள சோற்றில் நீரை ஊற்றி, வைப்பர். அந்த நீரில் வாதத்தையும், பித்தத்தையும் நீக்கக்கூடிய சக்தி உள்ளது என்பதை அறிந்து. அந்தச் சோற்று நீரையே காலை நேர உணவுப் பொருளாகவும் சாப்பிட்டு வந்தனர். இன்றும் பலர் இவ்வணவை உண்டு வருகின்றனர். கோடை காலத்தில் உடம்பிற்கு மிக மிக நல்லது என்றெண்ணி, நலம் பயக்கும் உணவாக உண்டு வந்து மட்டுமல்லாமல், வாதமும் பித்தமும் வராமல் தடுக்கும் மாமருந்தாகவும், சோற்று நீரைப் பயன்படுத்தி வந்தனர் நாட்டுப் புறமக்கள்.

ஆற்றுநீருக்கும், அருவி நீருக்கும் நகரத்தில் உள்ள மக்கள் எங்குபோவது. ஆறு ஓடும் இடத்திற்கும் சென்று குளிப்பது என்பது இயலாத ஒன்று. ஆனால் இவர்களுக்கு, வீட்டிலிருந்தபடியே, கிடைக்கக்கூடிய நீர் இருக்கிறது. இதுதான் சோற்றுநீர். இதை எல்லோரும் தயார் செய்து கொள்ளலாம். இந்தச் சோற்று நீரை, நாள் தோறும் பருகி வந்தால் வாதமும், பித்தமும் நீங்கும் என்பதை இப்பழமொழி நன்கு உணர்த்துகிறது.

கொள்ளு, எள்ளு,

கொழுத்தவனுக்குக் கொள்ளு

எளச்சவனுக்கு எள்ளு

என்பது பழமொழி. கொழுத்து இருப்பவர்கள், கொள்ளைச் சாப்பிட்டு வந்தால், கொழுப்புக் குறைந்து, மெலிவாக ஆவார்கள். இளைத்து, ஒல்லியாக இருப்பவர்கள், எள்ளு சாப்பிட்டு வந்தால், குண்டாக ஆவார்கள் என்பது இதன் பொருள். கொள்ளுக்கும், எள்ளுக்கும் இருக்கக்கூடிய மருத்துவத்தன்மையை நன்கு அறிந்தே இப்பழமொழியை கூறி வந்தனர்.

நகர்ப் புறத்தில் இருப்பவர்களுக்குக் கொள்ளு என்றாலே என்ன என்பது தெரியாது. நவதானியங்களில் ஒன்று என்பது மட்டும் தெரியும். மேலும், கொள்ளைச் சாப்பிடுவதா? குதிரை தானே கொள்ளு சாப்பிடும் என்றும் கூறுவார்கள். அப்படியே எடுத்துக் கொண்டாலும், கொள்ளு சாப்பிடக் கூடிய குதிரை எப்படி, ஒல்லியாக இருக்கிறது; எவ்வளவு வலிமையுடையதாக இருக்கிறது. எவ்வளவு வேகமாக ஓடுகிறது என்பதையும் நாம் எண்ணிப்பார்க்க வேண்டும். எது எப்படி இருந்தாலும், கொள்ளுக்குக் கொழுப்பை நீக்கக் கூடிய சக்தியும், வலிமையைக் கொடுக்கக் கூடிய சக்தியும் உண்டு என்பதை இப்பழமொழியால் அறிகிறோம் என்பதை உணரலாம்.

இதுபோல், எள்ளிலிருந்து எடுக்கப்படுவது நல்லெண்ணெய். நல்லெண்ணெய் உடல் வலிமைக்கு மிக மிக நல்லது. எனவே எள்ளைச் சாப்பாட்டில் சேர்த்துக் கொண்டால், மெலிவாக இருக்கும் உடல், பருத்து வலிமையாக இருக்கும் என்பதை இப்பழமொழி உணர்த்துகி

றது என்பதை நாம் உணரமுடிகிறது. இப்படி, கொள்ளுக்கும், எள்ளுக்கும் இருகக் கூடிய மருத்துவத்தன்மையை அறிந்து இப்பழமொழியைக் கூறியுள்ளனர் நாட்டுப்புறமக்கள்.

இஞ்சி

இஞ்சி சுரசம் சளி போக்கும

என்பது பழமொழி. இஞ்சி சாப்பிட்டால் சளி முறிந்து விடும் என்பது இப்பழமொழியின் பொருள். சளிப்பிடித்தது என்றால் இஞ்சிக் கஷாயம் வைத்துக் கொடுப்பர். இஞ்சி வரண்டால் சுக்கலலவா, சுக்கையும், மிளகையும் பொடியாக்கி, தண்ணீரில் போட்டுக் கொதிக்க வைத்துப் பயன்படுத்தி வருகிறோம். சுக்குக் காப்பியையும் நகரத்தில் இன்று பெரும்பான்மையோர் பருகி வருவதைப் பார்க்கிறோம்.

நெய், மோர், நீர்

நெய் உருக்கி உண்

மோர் பெருக்கி உண்

நீர் சுருக்கி உண்'

என்பது பழமொழி. சாப்பிடும் பொழுது, நெய்யை, மோரை நீரை எப்படிப் பயன்படுத்த வேண்டும் என்பதை இப்பழமொழி கூறுகிறது.

நாம் சாப்பாடு சாப்பிடும் பொழுது, நெய்யை உருக்கித் தான் பருப்பிலோ, சாம்பா ரிலோ போட்டுச் சாப்பிட வேண்டும். இதே போல் மோரைப் பயன்படுத்தும் பொழுது, மோரில் நீரை அதிகமாகக் கலந்து நீர் மோராகக் கலந்து பின் சாப்பிட வேண்டும். அடுத்து, சாப்பிடும் பொழுது, நீரைக் குறைவாகக் குடிக்க வேண்டும். சாப்பிட்டு முடித்தபின், எவ்வளவு தண்ணீர் வேண்டுமானாலும் குடிக்கலாம்.

சாதாரணமாக, குழந்தைகளுக்குச் சாப்பாடு ஊட்டும்பொழுது, நிறைய நெய் சேர்த்துக் கொள்வோம். உணவில், நெய்யைக் கொடுக்கும் பொழுது, நெய்யை உருக்குப் பின் பயன்படுத்த வேண்டும். நெய் ஆறிய பின், கெட்டியாக இருக்கும். கெட்டியாக இருக்கும்பொழுது, நெய்யைப் பயன்படுத்தினால், குழந்தைகளுக்குச் செரிமானம் ஆகாது, குடலைச் சுற்றிக் கொள்ளும், என்ற மருத்துவத் தன்மையை அறிந்தே, இப்பழமொழியைக் கூறிவந்தனர்.

இதுபோல், மோரைப் பயன்படுத்தும் பொழுது, தயிரைக் கடைந்து, அத்துடன் நீரை அதிகமாகக் கலந்து, நீர்மோராக்கிப் பின் பயன்படுத்த வேண்டும். மோரைக் கெட்டியாகக் குடித்தால் அது மந்தம் கொடுக்கும். மந்தகுணத்தைக் கொடுக்காமல் இருப்பதற்காகத் தான் நீரைக் கலந்து கொடுக்க வேண்டும் என்பர். இதை ஒட்டித் தான் இன்றும் கோடை காலத்தில் நீர் மோர் வழங்குவர். நீர் மோர் தாகம் தீர்க்கும். உடம்பிற்கும் நலம் பயக்கும்.

அடுத்து, உணவு உண்ணும் பொழுது, இடையில் நீர் அருந்தக் கூடாது. நீர் அருந்தினால், உணவு உண்பது குறைந்து விடும். தேவையான அளவு சாப்பிட முடியாது. எனவே தான் உணவு உண்ணும் பொழுது நீரைக் குறைவாகப் பருக வேண்டும் என்று அறிவியல்

தன்மையோடு கூறி வந்தனர். இப்படி, நெய்யை உருக்க வேண்டும், மோரைப் பெருக்க வேண்டும், நீரைப் பெருக்க வேண்டும் என்று எதுகை மோனையோடு, மனதில் தங்கும் அளவில் மருத்துவ அறிவியலோடு, நல்ல கருத்துகளை நாட்டுப்புற மக்கள் நமக்குச் சொல்லியுள்ளனர். மேலும்,

'முடக்குத் தீர்ப்பான் முடக்கத்தான்'
 'இரும்பைச் சேர்க்க முருங்கை தின்பாய்'
 'மாதுளை தூதுளை வளர்ந்த வீட்டில்
 வயிற்றிலே நெஞ்சிலே களங்கம் இல்லை'
 'பத்து மிளகிருந்தால்
 பகைவர் வீட்டுலும் உண்ணலாம்'

என்பன போன்ற இன்னும் பல பழமொழிகள் நமக்கு நல்ல பல கருத்துக்களை மருத்துவத் தன்மையுடன் எடுத்துச் சொல்லியுள்ளன. புதுமைகள் பல வந்தபோதும், பழமை பழமை தான் என்பதை எடுத்துச் சொல்லுவது நம் நாட்டுப்புறப் பழமொழிகள் தான்.

டாக்டர், பேராசிரியர். விஜயலட்சுமி இராமசாமி

தமிழ்த்துறை, ஸ்டெல்லா மாரிஸ் கல்லூரி. இவர் நாட்டுப்புறப் பாடலில், ஆய்வு செய்தவர். தொலைக்காட்சி, வானொலியில் பல நிகழ்ச்சிகளில் பங்கு பெற்றவர். பட்டிமன்றம், கருத்தரங்குகளில் பேசுபவர். சிங்கப்பூர், மலேசியா, மொரீசியஸ், வாஷிங்டன் போன்ற பல நாடுகளில் நடந்த தமிழ்க்கருத்தரங்குகளிலும் கலந்து கொண்டு, கட்டுரை வாசித்தவர். "கோவை மாவட்ட நாட்டுப்புறப் பாடல்கள்", 'நாட்டுப்புற இயல்', நாட்டுப்புறக்கலை (கதை இசைப் பொழிவு) என்ற நூல்களை எழுதியுள்ளவர்.

பாரதி மன்றமும் தமிழ்த்துறையும் இணைந்து நடத்திய பொங்கல் விழா பற்றிய அறிக்கை

“நன்றியின் பெருநாள்
தமிழர்தம் திருநாள்“ என உலகம்

போற்றும் நன்னாளாம் பொங்கல் திருநாள் ஜனவரி திங்கள் 13ஆம் தேதி ஸ்டெல்லா மாரிஸ் கல்லூரி திறந்த வெளி அரங்கத்தில் நடைபெற்றது. மாணவியரை மகிழ்வித்த மங்கள ஒலியும், பொங்கல் பானையும், கரும்பும் குத்துவிளக்கும் மலரும் மஞ்சளும் வண்ண கோலமும் ஸ்டெல்லா மாரிஸ் கல்லூரிக்குள் ஒரு கிராமத்தையே கொண்டு வந்த உணர்வைத் தந்தது. பாரதி மன்ற மாணவியர் தலைவர் செல்வி மரிய ரோஸ்லின் வரவேற்புரை வழங்க இனிப்பின் விழா இனிமையாக துவங்கியது.

கல்லூரி முதல்வர் அருட்சகோதரி அன்னம்மா பிலிப் அவர்கள் தலைமை ஏற்க சிறப்பு விருந்தினராக முருகப்பா கல்வி நிறுவனங்களின் தலைவரும் கம்பன் கவிதை களில் அறிவுச் சீலராக விளங்கும் 'கம்பன் அடிசூடி' பழபழனியப்பன் அவர்கள் வந்திருந்து விழாவிற்கு பெருமை சேர்த்தார். தமிழ்த்துறைத்தலைவர் பேராசிரியர் முனைவர் உலகநாயகி பழனி அவர்கள் சிறப்பு விருந்தினரை அறிமுகம் செய்ததைத் தொடர்ந்து திருவாளர் பழ. பழனியப்பன் அவர்கள் சிறப்புரை ஆற்றினர்.

முழு மன ஒப்புதலோடு பெற்றோருக்கு நாம் செய்யும் நன்றியே கல்வியின் உண்மையான பயன் என்பதை வலியுறுத்திய சிறப்பு விருந்தினரின் உரை மாணவியரின் மனதைக் கவர்ந்தது. பாரதி மன்றத்தின் பொருளாளர் செல்வி சித்ரா அவர்களின் கவிதைப் பொங்கலோடு கல்லூரியின் 3500 மாணவியருக்கும் போத்தீஸ் நிறுவனம் வழங்கிய இனிப்பு பொங்கல் விழாவிற்கு இன்கவைத் தந்தது. மாணவியரின் கலை நிகழ்ச்சிகளைத் தொடர்ந்து தமிழ்த்துறை பேராசிரியர் விஜயலட்சுமி ராமசாமி அவர்களின் நன்றியுரையோடு பொங்கல் விழா இனிதே நிறைவேறியது. பாரதி மன்ற அறிவுறுத்துனர் பேராசிரியர் திருமதி ஸ்டெல்லா ஸ்டானி அவர்களின் தலைமையில் பாரதி மன்ற செயலர் செல்வி ஜெனிபர் அடங்கிய பொங்கல் விழாக்குழு விழாவிற்கு செம்மை சேர்த்தது.

அன்புடன்
பாரதி மன்ற மாணவியர் தலைவர்
மரிய ரோஸ்லின்

நேயர் விருப்பம்

அரிது அரிது மானிடராய்ப் பிரந்தல் அரிது'
ஒளவையின் மொழி
அரிதாம் மானிடப்பிறவியில்
அரிதாகியது 'மனிதநேயம்'!
வெல்லும் சொல்
கொல்லும் சொல்லானது!
உதவும் கரங்கள்
உதைக்குக் கரங்களாகின!
புன்சிரிப்பான உதட்டில்
புன்சிரிப்பு உதயமானது!
கனிவான பார்வை
கடுமையாக மாறியது!
உள்ளமும் உதடும் வேறாகி
உலகமே இருளாகியது!
ஆனால்
உதிக்கும் சூரியன் மாறவில்லை
கவினுறத் தோன்றும்
கார்மேகமும் தவறவில்லை!
மலரும் மலர்களும்
மலர மறக்கவில்லை!
இயற்கை உயற்கையாக இருக்க
மனித மனம்
செயற்கையாக இருப்பதன்
காரணம் என்ன?
மாற்றங்கள்
மானிடத்திந் தேவை!
மனித நேயம்
மாறாமல் இருப்பதே
மானிடத்தின் மகத்துவம்!

'வைரவிழா' காணும்
ஸ்டெல்லா மாரிஸ் கல்லூரி
வையகத்தில்
மனித நேய மலர்கள் மலர
வாழ்த்துகிறது!
இதுவே
இன்றைய நேயரின் விருப்பம்!

முனைவர் ஆலிஸ் ஜோசப்
தமிழ்த்துறை
ஸ்டெல்லா மாரிஸ் கல்லூரி

முனைவர் ஆலிஸ் ஜோசப் அவர்கள் ஸ்டெல்லா மாரிஸ் கல்லூரியில்
ஆண்டுகளாக தமிழ்த்துறைப் பேராசிரியராகப் பணியாற்றி வருபவர். 'இயேசுவின் விழிப்பு
ணர்வில் பெண்மை' எனும் தலைப்பில் முனைவர் பட்டம் பெற்றவர்.

நினைவுகள்! மனித ஏக்கங்களின் சரணாலயம்

சீருடை விடுத்து புத்தக சுமைகுறைத்து
பயம் கலந்த தயக்கத்துடன் கல்லூரிக்குள் நுழைத்த
அந்த முதல் நாள் !!!...

மறப்பது சாத்தியமோ?
வசந்தம் நிறைந்த கனவு மாளிகையின்
ஒவ்வொரு தூணும் தேவதையாய் மாறி
கைவிரித்து வரவேற்பதைப் போன்று
கடந்தகால நினைவுகளையும்
நிகழ்கால அனுபவங்களையும் தாங்கி நின்ற
உயர்ந்த மரங்கள்!!
மனதின் அறுதல் பெருமூச்சுக்கு வழிவிட்டது
இந்த இடைப்பட்ட காலத்தில்தான்
என்னில் எத்தனை மாற்றங்கள்! எத்தனை முன்னேற்றங்கள்!
அந்தப் பள்ளிப் பருவ பச்சிளம் மாணவியை உள்ளூரத் தேடுகிறேன்
கிடைத்துவிடக்கூடாதே என்ற எண்ணத்தில்
நேற்றுதான் நுழைந்தார்போல் இருக்கிறது
மூன்று ஆண்டுகள் மூன்று நிமிடங்களாய் பறந்து விட்டன.
இந்தப் புதையல் கூடாரத்தில்
முடிந்தவரை சேகரித்து திரும்புகிறேன்
ஆழ்மன கண்ணீருடன்
இந்தப் பொற்குவியலுக்குள் எனக்குக் கிடைத்த மணிமகுடம்
என் நட்பு.....
தாயின் அரவணைப்பை
தந்தையின் கண்டிப்பை
சகோதரியின் பாசத்தை
உறவினரின் ஊக்கத்தை ஒருசேர
தோழி என்ற ரூபத்தில் எனக்களித்த
இறைவனைத் தேடுகிறேன்...
நன்றி என்ற மூன்றெழுத்தோடு என்னையும் சேர்த்து காணிக்கையாக்க.

குழந்தை கையில் களிமண்? அல்ல
பொற்கொல்லன் கையில் ஆபரணம் ஆம்
என் ஆசிரியர்களுக்கு நானும் அப்படியே
நான் செய்த பிழைகளுக்கு என் அன்னையைக்
காட்டிலும் பொறுமையைக் காட்டிய இவர்களுக்கு

என்ன கைமாறு செய்வது?
 இவர்கள் உருவாக்குவது மாணவியரை அல்ல
 வருங்கால சமுதாயத்தை
 உணர்ந்தே வெளியேறுகிறேன்
 வெற்றி மங்கையாய் திரும்புவேன் என்ற நம்பிக்கையில்
 அனுபவங்கள் ஆயிரம்
 மாற்றங்கள் பல
 தடுமாற்றங்கள் சில
 இந்தக் கல்லூரி என்ற பூலோக சொர்க்கத்தில்
 நான் கழித்த ஒவ்வொரு நாளுமே ஓர் வரலாறாயிற்றே?
 அந்த மூன்றாண்டு கால அனுபவத்தை எழுத
 இந்த முப்பது வரி கவிதைப் போதுமா?
 என் வருங்காலத்தையே கவிதையாக்குகிறேன்
 இந்த சொர்க்க பூமியின் கதையை சொல்ல
 இருப்பினும்
 என் இதயத்தின் இதயம் கலங்குகிறது.
 எதையோ இழப்பதை நினைத்து
 அதற்கும் ஆறுதல் சொல்கிறேன்
 நினைவுகள் என்னும் மைஊற்றிய
 எழுதுகோல் கொண்டு....

மரிய ரோஸ்லின்
 மூன்றாம் ஆண்டு - இயற்பியல் பிரிவு

ஸ்டெல்லா மாரிஸ் கல்லூரியின் தமிழ் வளர்க்கும் பணியைச் செய்துவரும் பாரதி மன்றத்தில் கடந்த ஆண்டு மாணவியர் தலைவியாய் செயலாற்றியதைக் குறித்து பெருமகிழ்ச்சி அடைகிறேன். தமிழும் தமிழ் கதை கவிதை கட்டுரைத் துறைகளிலும் ஈடுபாடு கொண்டவள். தமிழ்ப் பாடல்கள் பாடுவதில் ஆர்வம் கொண்டவள்.

தொலைவில் அருகில்

பண்டைக் காலந்தொட்டே தொலைவில் உள்ளோருக்கு செய்தி பகிர்வது நம் வழக்கத்தில் இருந்து வந்தது. இதற்கு பலவித முறைகள் கையாளப்பட்டன. புராணங்களிலும் இதிகாசங்களிலும் பறவைகள் மூலமாக தூது அனுப்புவது இயல்பாகவே கருதப்பட்டு வந்தது. காளிதாஸர் மேகத்தை தூதாக அனுப்பினார். மன்னர்களும் பிற நாட்டரசர்களுக்கு தூது அனுப்புவது உலக வரலாற்றில் ஒரு சிறப்பம்சமாக திகழ்ந்தது. தவிர நம் தமிழ்நாட்டில் ஒளவையாரின் தூது ஒரு மாபெரும் போரையே தவிர்த்து என்பதை அனைவரும் அறிவர். இவ்வாறாக தொலைவில் இருக்கிறது என்ற காரணத்திற்காக ஒரு செயலையோ, விளக்கத்தையோ பகிர்ந்து கொள்வதை நாம் தவிர்த்ததாக சரித்திரமே இல்லை.

இன்றைய தொழில்நூட்ப வளர்ச்சியில் பல்வேறு விதமாக நம் எண்ணங்களையும், உலக நிகழ்வுகளையும் எடுத்துரைக்க, புவியின் எந்த எல்லையில் இருந்தாலும் அவர்களுடன் தொடர்பு கொள்ள முடிகிறது. முக்கியமாக கல்வித்துறையிலும், ஊடகங்களிலும் இணை தளம் போன்ற தொழில்நூட்பங்கள் இன்றியமையாத விதத்தில் செயல்படுகிறது. இவற்றின் மூலமாக மிகக் குறுகிய நேரத்தில் செய்திகளை பறிமாறிக் கொள்வது எளிதாகி விட்டது. எந்த இடத்திலும், எந்நேரத்திலும், எக்காலத்திற்கும் இணைதளங்களில் ஈடு இணையற்ற விஷயங்களை அறிந்து கொள்வது எளிது.

இன்று மிகவும் அத்தியாவசியமாக விளங்கும் இணைதளத்தின் மூலம் கல்வி பயில்விப்பது பெருகி வருகிறது. உள்நாட்டிலும், வெளிநாட்டிலும் உள்ள பல பல்கலைக்கழகங்கள் தங்கள் கல்விச்சேவையை இணையதளம் மூலம் செலுத்தி பல்லாயிரம் மக்களுக்கு அறிவு வளர்ச்சியை அளித்து வருகின்றன.

நம் சென்னை மாநகரத்தில் தமிழ்நாடு வர்ட்சுவல் யுனிவர்ஸிடி (Tamilnadu Virtual University) என்று அழைக்கப்படும் பல்கலைக் கழகம் இணைதளம் மூலம் பல கல்விநிகழ்வுகளை நடத்தி வருகிறது. பல துறைகளில் கல்வி பயிலவு நடைபெற்றாலும், கணினி துறையிலும் மற்ற கணினி சம்மந்தப்பட்ட அறிவியல் துறைகளிலும் கல்வி பயில்வு சிறப்பாக நடைபெறுகிறது.

இம்முறையின் சிறப்பம்சம் என்னவென்றால் வீட்டிலிருந்தபடியே கணினி மூலம் கல்வி பயிலலாம். எந்த ஊரிலும், எந்நாட்டிலும் இவற்றைப் பெற்று பயனடையலாம் இணைதளம் இணைப்பு இருந்தால் மட்டும் போதும். எளிதாகவும், குறைந்த செலவிலும் நம் வசிக்கேற்ப கல்வி அறிவு பெற்று விடலாம். குறிப்பாக கல்லூரி, பல்கலைக்கழகங்களின் அருகில் வீடு அமையாவிடில் இவ்வகையான கல்வி ஒரு வரப்பிரசாதம் எனக் கருதலாம்.

இன்று பல கிராமங்களில் இணை தள வளாகங்கள் பெறுகி வருகின்றன. விவசாயிகளுக்கு சாதகமாக இணைதள இணைப்பு பொருத்தப்பட்டு இருக்கின்றன. இவற்றில் மாணவ

மாணவிகளும் மற்றும் இக்கல்வி முறையில் ஈடுபட்டுள்ளோரும் பெரிதும் பயனடைய வாய்ப்புகள் அதிகரித்திருக்கின்றன.

இணைதளக் கல்வி முறை அமையும் விதம்

ஒரு துறையில் வழங்கப்படும் பாடதிட்டங்கள் அனைத்து இணைதளக் கல்வி மாணாக்களுக்கு இணைதளம் மூலமாகவே Computer Disk (CD) என்று அழைக்கப்படும் கணினி தட்டுக்கள் மூலமாக முன்னதாகவே அனுப்பப்படும். ஒவ்வொரு வாரத்திலும் ஒரு சில நாட்கள் அவற்றில் ஒரு சில மணிநேரங்கள் மாண மாணவி பாடநேரங்களாக ஒதுக்கப்பட்டு விடும். இவை தொடர்பான அறிவிப்பும் முன்னதாகவே அவர்களுக்கு தெரிவிக்கப்படும். இப்படங்களை பயில்விக்கும் ஆசிரியர், தமது வகுப்புகளை திட்டமிட்டு அவற்றை பயில்வதற்கான நேரத்தில், இணைதளத்தில் இக்கல்விக்கான வலைதளத்தில் மாணவர்களைத் தொடர்பு கொள்வார். கணினி வழியாக தம் உறையை எழுத்து வடிவில் அளிப்பார். மாணவர்களும் தம் சந்தேகங்களை உடனுக்குடனே எழுத்து மூலமாக ஆசிரியரிடம் கேட்டு தெரிந்து கொண்டு பயனடைவர்.

மேலும் ஆசிரியர், ஒவ்வொரு வகுப்பின் முடிவிலும், மாணவர்களுக்கு பயிற்சி மற்றும் சில அன்றைய வகுப்பைச் சார்ந்த வேலைகளை அளிப்பார். அவற்றை அனுப்புவதற்கான கடைசி நாள் / தேதி / நேரத்தையும் தெரிவித்து விடுவார். அவற்றைப் பெற்ற பின் Online Correction என்று கூறப்படும், கணினி - இணைதளத் திருத்தல் வகையில் திருத்தி, திருத்தங்களை மேற்கோள் காட்டி அனுப்பி விடுவார். அவற்றில் தாம் கூற நினைத்த குறிப்புகளையும் எழுதி விடுவார்.

இப்பாடங்களுக்கான தேர்வுகளும் கணினி மூலமாகவே இணைதள இணைப்போடு நடைபெறும். சரியான நேரத்தில் வளைதளத்தில் தொடர்பு கொண்டு கேள்வித் தாளைப் பெற்று குறிப்பிட்ட நேரத்திற்குள் விடைகளை அளித்து விட வேண்டும். கேள்விகள் நேர் திசையில் அல்லாது சற்றே திரித்து கேட்கப்படும். ஒரு சில பல்கலைக் கழகங்கள் வலைப் புகைப்படக் கருவியின் எதிரில் அமர்ந்துதான் தேர்வுகளைச் சந்திக்க வேண்டும் என்று வரையறுத்து விடுகிறது. இதனால் வேறொருவரின் உதவிக் கொண்டோ நம் பாடப்புத்தகங்களிலிருந்தோ விடையத் தேடியோ அளித்து விட முடியாது.

இவ்வாறாக, இணைதளக் கல்வி முறை மிகச் சிறப்பாகவும், வசதியாகவும், குறைந்த செலவிலும் நடைமுறைப் படுத்தப்பட்டு வருகிறது.

இக்கல்வி முறைக்கு சான்றாக, இன்று பெங்களூரில், திருமதி. லலிதா வெங்கடேசன் என்பவர் இணைதளம் மூலம் அளித்து வரும் கணக்கு பாடங்களைக் குறிப்பிடலாம். இவர் புதுடெல்லியின் மேலிநிலைப் பள்ளி ஒன்றிலிருந்து துணை முதல்வராக ஓய்வு பெற்றவர். சுமார் 30 ஆண்டுகளுக்கு அப்பள்ளியில் கணக்கு மற்றும் ஆங்கில ஆசிரியராக பணிபுரிந்தவர்.

சென்ற ஜனவரியில் அமெரிக்க ஜனாதிபதி அமெரிக்க குழந்தைகளின் கணக்கு பாடங்களிலும், அவர்களின் திறமைகளிலும் உள்ள குறைபாட்டைச் சுட்டிக் காட்டினார். இதனை அறிந்த திரு. கணேஷ் என்பவர் ட்யூடர் விஸ்டா (Tutor Vista) என்று புதிய கம்பெனி துவங்கினார். இந்திய அசிரியர்களிடம் இப்பாடங்களில் உள்ள திறமையை பறை சாற்றும் வகையில் இணைதளத்தின் அமெரிக்க மற்றும் பிரிட்டனில் உள்ள மாணவர்களுக்கு பயிற்சியளிக்க தன் கம்பெனி மூலம் ஏற்பாடு செய்தார். இதனால் அம்மாணவர்கள் பல்வேறு விதமாக பயன் பெறுவதோடு, திருமதி. லலிதா வெங்கடேசன் போன்றோரின் ஊதிய உயர்வும் பண்மடங்கு வளர்ந்துள்ளது என்பது குறிப்பிடத்தக்கது.

ஆதாரம் இந்தியா டுடே, ஜூலை 31, 2006

கல்வியைத் தவிர இணைதளத்தின் மூலம் பல பணிகளைச் செய்து பணம் சம்பாதிப்பதும் வழக்கத்திற்கு வந்து விட்டன. On line editing என்று அழைக்கப்படும் இணைதள நேரடி பதிப்பாசிரியப் பணியையும் மேற்கொள்வது நடைமுறைப்பட்டு வருகிறது. இப்பணியை முதலில் ஒரு தொழில் ஆணையத்தில் குறிப்பாக புத்தக மற்றும் பத்திரிகை பிரசுரிக்கும் இடத்தில் சிறிது காலம் உழைத்தபின், அவர்களது நம்பிக்கையைப் பெற்ற பின் இவ்வேலையை இணையதளத்தின் மூலம் செயல்படுத்தலாம். கணினியிலேயே திருத்தங்களை பதிவு செய்வது எளிதாகையால் வீட்டில் இருந்தபடியே இப்பணியை மேற்கொள்ளலாம். இப்பணியை ஏற்பதால் நம் அறிவும் வளர்ந்து விரிவடையும் வாய்ப்புகள் அதிகமாகும்.

இதைப்போன்றே மற்றொரு பணி பெரிதும் பரவி வருகிறது. வெளிநாட்டவர் மற்றும் உள்நாட்டவர், எழுதிய நாவல்களை படித்து அதன் சுருக்கத்தையும், அவற்றின் கதைக் குறிப்புகளையும் அளிப்பதாகும். இவையனைத்தும் இணைதளத்தின் மூலமே செயல்படுத்தப்படும்.

தவிர, வினாவிடை Quiz என்று சொல்லப்படும் வகையில் சில கட்டுரைகளுக்கு வினாக்களை உருவாக்கி அனுப்புவதும் பெரிதும் பரவி வருகிறது.

வெளிநாட்டவர்கள், குறிப்பாக அமெரிக்க மாணாக்கர்களின் கட்டுரைகள் மற்றும் தேர்வில் விடைகளைத் திருத்தி அவற்றிற்கு மதிப்பளித்து (Grade) வருவது இணைய தளத்தின் மூலம் சாத்தியமே.

இவையனைத்திற்கும் ஆங்கில அறிவின் அவசியம் இன்றியமையாததாக திகழ்கிறது. தவிர மேகமாக படிக்கும் திறனும், கணினியில் அதிவேகமாக தட்டெழுத்து பொறிக்கவும் (Type Writing), கணினியை உபயோகப்படுத்தும் ஆற்றலையும் நிச்சயமாக பெற்றிருக்க வேண்டும்.

கணினியின் முன்னால் பலமணி நேரம் அமர்வதால் கண்கள் பழுதடைந்து விடும் எந்பதை மனதில் கொள்ள வேண்டும். கணினி ஒளியை எதிர்க்கும் கண்ணாடிகளை (anti reflection glasses) அணிவதால் கண்களில் ஏற்படும் தளர்ச்சியை கணிசமாக குறைக்கலாம். ஒரே இடத்தில் அமர்ந்து வேலை செய்வதாலும் உடல் உபாதைகளுக்கு உள்ளாவோம் என்பதையும் மனதில் கொள்ள வேண்டும். அதற்கேற்ப உடற்பயிற்சி மேற்கொள்வது அவசியம்.

எனவே, இணைதளத்தின் மூலம் பலவித நன்மைகள் உண்டு என்பதனை அறிந்து...

இதற்கேற்ப நம் கல்வி முறையையும், ஆற்றலையும் வகுத்து அறிவை வளர்த்துக் கொண்டால், நாமும் நம் நாடும் கணிசமான முன்னேற்றம் அடையலாம்

हीरक जयंती

आया हीरक पल
चटकी रसभीनी कलियाँ
उतरी हीरक किरणों-सी पटियाँ
ज्ञान रस कलश छलकाती

लघुकथा

क्यों नहीं सोचते ?

भारत की जनसंख्या विश्व में द्वितीय है लेकिन भ्रूण हत्या में भारत प्रथम है। आज कल पति-पत्नी शादी के चार-पाँच वर्ष बाद ही बच्चे चाहते हैं। वह शादी के बाद अपने आप में जीना चाहते हैं और पैसे कमाकर घर बनाने के बाद ही वह बच्चे के बारे में सोचते हैं। अगर शादी के पहले वर्ष में ही पत्नी गर्भवती हो जाए तो बच्चे को जन्म देने की बजाए उसे मारना चाहती है। भ्रूण हत्या करवाना चाहती है। इस तरह का काम क्या ठीक है ? बिल्कुल नहीं। ऐसा क्यों होना चाहिए? क्या वे लोग यह नहीं सोचते कि कितने लोग बच्चों के सुख को तरसते हैं? बच्चे भगवान का रूप होते हैं।

पर यह इस किस्से का एक पहलू है। जब बलात्कार की शिकार कोई महिला गर्भवती हो जाए तो भ्रूण हत्या ठीक है। यह इसलिए क्योंकि वह गर्भवती अपनी इच्छा के विरुद्ध हुई है। ऐसे अवसर में भ्रूण हत्या करना गलती नहीं कहलाई जाएगी। अगर ऐसे बच्चे का जन्म होने दिया तो वह माँ उसे ठीक से पाने की इच्छा शायद नहीं रखे, और बच्चे को उसके पिता का नाम प्राप्त न होने पर लोग उसे नाजायज़ करार दें। ऐसे जीवन से मृत्यु उत्तम है।

कुकु, 04/EC/18

आदमी

काट कर जंगल,

चमन की बात करता है आदमी !

फाड़ कर चादर

वसन की बात करता है आदमी !

चिलचिलाती धूप है,

छाया नहीं दिखती कहीं !

तप रहा है सूरज,

पवन की बात करता आदमी !!

बादलों की प्यास को,

कैसे बुझाओगे कहो !

फट रही धरती,

गगन की बात करता आदमी !!

दोस्ती कर ली अँधेरे से,
बहुत कुछ सोच कर !
बुझा कर दीपक,
हवन की बात करता आदमी !!

दोस्ती को न समझा है,
किसी ने आज तक,
गाड़ कर मुर्दे,
कफन की बात करता आदमी !!

मनीषा, 06/HS/33

झरोखे से

झरोखे से.... मैं देखती हूँ दुनिया,
आपके लिए ये हो सकती है,
विशाल शाखाएँ प्यारे से नजारे को छुपाती
या घर जो ईंटों से बने हो
था पत्तों का हिलना या झोकें का एहसास
या हो सकती है एक दीवार।।

मुझे क्या नहीं दिखाता....
राजा, रानी सैनिक और महलों का आंगन,
यहाँ तक कि महान आत्माओं का समर्पण
पर्वतों को अम्बर को छूते देखा,
नदियों को प्यासे सावन से मिलते देखा।
एक तरफ हरियाली को खिल खिलाते देखा।
और तो और रेगिस्तान को तड़पते देखा।।

देखते ही देखते मुझे मिला ये आसमान....
एक आशा की किरण के साथ,
अपने स्वतंत्रता का थामे हाथ।
भूल गयी सारी दिवारों को....
अरे हाँ, दिवारों को....

जिसमें बंदिशें थी,
उसमें मैं पंछी की तरह उड़ूँ।

और बतलादूँ समय जो मुझ पर मेहरबान हैं
वह कर रहा हैं इंतजार मेरा पर क्यों ?
उसी झरोके से....फिर देखा तो
दिखायी दी दुनिया जो कर रही थी
मेरा इंतजार मेरा इंतजार..... । ।

हर्षा ओस्तवाल एम., 06/CM/660

आतंकवाद

आतंकवादी कौन होता है? उसका बहुत सरल उत्तर है कि आतंकवादी वो होते हैं जो आतंक फैलाते हैं और मासूमों की जान लेते हैं। किसलिए ? केवल अपनी माँगे पूरी करने के लिए हम आतंकवादी को बुरा ज़रूर कहते परन्तु हम यह भूल जाते कि हर पहलू की कुछ अच्छाइयाँ होती हैं और कुछ बुराइयाँ। आतंकवादी सिर्फ समाज के कारण ही आतंक फैलाने पर मजबूर हो जाता है। कहीं न कहीं हम इसके लिए ज़िम्मेदार हैं।

कश्मीर का एक उदाहरण ले लीजिए। जब भी भारत-पाकिस्तान के बीच तनाव हो जाया करता तब कश्मीर बीच में फँसता। वहाँ सैनिकों के बीच लड़ाई हुई और घायल हुए कश्मीर के मासूम लोग। किसी के माता पिता भगवान को प्यारे हुए तो किसी के भाई बहन के लिए कौन ज़िम्मेदार है ? हम समाज के लोग। शुरू से ही भारत के लोगों के हृदय में पाकिस्तान के प्रति और पाकिस्तान में भारत के प्रति काफी वैमनस्य है, क्यों ? यदि आतंकवादी ने जान ली है तो हमने भी उसके परिवार के किसी सदस्य को मारा है। हमारे अन्दर भी एक आतंकवादी छुपा है।

मैं यह नहीं कह रही हूँ कि आतंकवादी अच्छा होता है। वो भी अपना 'हक' पाने के लिए मासूम लोगों और बच्चों की जान लेता है। अभी हाल ही में श्रीनगर जाने वाली बस में दो नए शादी शुदा लड़का और लड़की जा रहे थे। आतंकवादियों ने उनकी बस में बम रख दिया। आज वह दोनों अपनी ज़िन्दगी और मौत के बीच में झूल रहे हैं।

हमें यह चाहिए के हम आतंकवादियों से सुलाह कर लें और भारत तथा पाकिस्तान के बीच की दूरियों को मिटा दें। क्या पता कि आतंकवादी हमले में आप भी शिकार हो जाए। तो हाथ बढ़ाओ मेरे वतन के साथियों और मिला दो दोनों देशों को। आतंकवादी को फिर निर्मल बना दो और अपनी ज़िन्दगी आतंकवाद से मुक्त कर दो।

आयुशा आरिफ, 06/EC/53

पल भर की ज़िन्दगी

पल भर की है ज़िन्दगी
ज़रा हमें भी जीने दो
लड़की हूँ तो क्या
स्वच्छंद जीने का अधिकार दो।
इतनी पाबंदियाँ क्यों
जीवन के रंगों में रंगने दो
कुछ करने से पूर्व टोकते हो
स्वच्छंद जीने का अधिकार दो।
क्या हसीन है नजारा
परिवर्तन है कितना सारा
लेने दो हमें जीवन का मज़ा
स्वच्छंद जीने का अधिकार दो,
हम भी सपने देखते हैं
बड़े हो या छोटे
वे सब हमारे अपने हैं
लड़की कहकर क्यों ठुकराते हो,
स्वच्छंद जीने का अधिकार दो।
हमें भी लड़कों सी आज़ादी दो
हम पर विश्वास करना सीखो
फिर हमारा करिश्मा देखो।

प्रीति थॉमस,

मानवता ही धर्म है

कोटि-कोटि हैं मानव जाति के हम
इक्कीसवीं सदी में बढ़ा रहे हैं कदम,
जानते हैं धर्म और मानवता का सही अर्थ,
जानकर भी करते हैं अनर्थ,
धर्म राम और रहीम से नहीं बनता,
बनाता है इसे सिर्फ मानवता,
उद्देश्य हमारा है मोक्ष पाना,
वो है सभी प्राणियों से हाथ मिलाना।

कहते हैं वेद, ग्रंथ और पुराण,
समान हैं सभी जीवों के प्राण,
सीखना है इन्हें सम्मान देना,
और मानवता की राह में चलना।
धर्म और मानवता चलते हैं साथ-साथ
होते हैं ये सिर्फ मानव के मन की बात
श्वेत हो हमारे हृदय का रंग,
तो पतित न होगा अगर हीन भी भुजंग
अंत में है यही आशा,
कि हो एक ही धर्म, एक ईश्वर की भाषा,
पहुँचे हम इष्ट के निकट,
मानवता को करके प्रकट

अनामिका, 04/SC/51

इंटरनेट का माऊस ?

सोफे पर पसरा वैभव फुर्ती से उठा और जैकेट पहनने लगा. कक्ष में कंप्यूटर के सामने बैठा संस्कार कनखियों से देख रहा था. कंप्यूटर छोड़ वह वैभव के सामने आ खड़ा हुआ.

‘आप कहीं जा रहे हैं ?’

‘हाँ, क्यों...? कोई काम है...?’ जैकेट के बटन बन्द करते हुए वैभव ने कहा.

‘भइया, मेरे मन में एक सवाल उठता रहता है. मैं आपसे पूछना चाहता हूँ, यदि आपके पास समय हो तो....?’

‘हाँ, हाँ, छोटे.....तेरे हर सवाल का जवाब देने के लिए मेरे पास समय ही समय है.....’ वैभव ने बाल सँवारते हुए उत्तर दिया.

‘सवाल यह है कि जब नई तकनीक से सारी दुनियाँ मुट्टी में आ गई है, सारी व्यवस्था एलपीजी हो गई है तो ऐसी स्थिति में मानव-जीवन कैसा होना चाहिए ?’

अपने अनुज संस्कार का प्रश्न सुन वैभव के हाथ रुके उसने दर्पण से ही अनुज संस्कार की ओर देखा.

उसे लगा यह अनुज संस्कार नहीं अपितु संस्कार का दूरदर्शी ज्ञान बोल रहा है. अपने छोटे भाई को कंधे से पकड़कर वैभव ने कहा—

‘मेरे प्रिय अनुज ! यह सत्य है कि मैं आयु में तुमसे बड़ा हूँ किन्तु तीन कारणों से मैं तुम्हें ही अपना ज्येष्ठ मानता हूँ पहला तुम धैर्यपूर्वक मेरी बात सुनते हो, तुम्हारे में धैर्य है. दूसरा बड़ी श्रद्धा-प्रेम से मेरा ही नहीं सबका काम करते हो, तुममें श्रद्धा-भाव कमाल का है और तीसरा जीवन दर्शन का अच्छा ज्ञान रखते हो. इतना कह वैभव संस्कार को स्नेहमयी दृष्टि से देखते हुए मुस्कराने लगा. एकाएक उसे ख्याल आया कि प्रश्न में कुछ एलपीजी शब्द भी था. अरे हाँ, यह एलपीजी क्या है?’

‘एलपीजी.....एल लिबरलाइजेशन यानी उदारीकरण, पी-प्राइवेटाइजेशन यानी निजीकरण और जी-ग्लोबलाइजेशन यानी भूमंडलीकरण या वैश्वीकरण. हँसते हुए संस्कार ने बताया.

‘वाह ! मान गए तुम्हारा ज्ञान.’

‘यह तो आपका प्यार और बड़प्पन है भइया, भला बड़े भाई के ज्ञान के सामने छोटा भाई ज्ञानी हो सकता है ?’ इतना कह संस्कार हँसने लगा. वैभव भी ठूठा कर हँस पड़ा.

‘तुम देख ही रहे हो मेरे हाथ में सारा दिन सेल होता है और तुम्हारे हाथ कंप्यूटर का माऊस.

पहले युवकों के हाथ धनुष-बाण होते थे जिससे वह लक्ष्य-वेध करना अपना लक्ष्य मानते थे. मेरे हाथ में सेल है और अपना मनोरंजन मेरा लक्ष्य है.’

‘भइया, लक्ष्य-वेध तो मानव-जीवन का मुख्य कार्य है’.

‘यह क्या कह रहे हो तुम ? तुम्हारी परिभाषा ने तो मुझे महान व्यक्ति बना दिया.’

‘लक्ष्य-वेध अवश्य ही मानव को महान बनाता है, मानव को सफलता के शिखर पर ला खड़ा करता है. आज स्पर्धा एवं तकनीकी युग में इसका महत्त्व कई गुना ज्यादा बढ़ गया है.’ माँ का स्वर सुन दोनों चौंक उठे.’

‘माँ, आप यहाँ....?’ वैभव ने पूछा.

‘हाँ, सेल चार्ज के लिए रखने आई हूँ. तुम दोनों की बातें सुनकर मन प्रसन्न हो गया है. आज जीवन-निर्माण के साधन भिन्न हैं किन्तु साध्य एक ही हैं. आज धनुष-बाण के लक्ष्य-वेध होना चाहिए. जीवन का लक्ष्य निश्चित कर उस ओर क्रियाशील हो जाएं तो लक्ष्य की प्राप्ति हो जाती है’. माँ ने हँसते हुए समझाया.

माँ गुणवती सेल चार्जर पर रख चली गई थीं. दोनों भाई फिर से बातों में लग गए. वैभव और संस्कार सगे भाई थे. वैभव बड़ा था और संस्कार चार साल छोटा. दोनों शहर के जाने-माने उद्योगपति रत्नसिंह के साहबजादे राजकुमारों से कम न थे. उन दोनों की परवरिश नैतिकता के वातावरण में हुई. उन दोनों में सद्गुणों की कमी न थी. न्यायी भी दोनों ऐसे कि दूध का दूध और पानी का पानी करनेवाले. न्याय करते समय किसी में भेदभाव न करते. वे स्वयं खूब मन लगाकर पढ़ते थे. अपने जरूरतमंद मित्रों की मदद करते थे अपने मधुर व्यवहार के चलते दोनों अतीव लोकप्रिय थे.

रत्नसिंह अपने दोनों पुत्ररत्नों को बेहद प्यार करते थे. वे चाहते थे कि दोनों अपने सुयोग्य संस्कारों से श्रेष्ठ जीवन का निर्माण करें. उन्होंने अपने आदर्शमय जीवन के साथ घर और बाहर बड़ा सुन्दर वातावरण बना रखा था. वैभव और संस्कार का जीवन इसी नैतिकता में पल्लवित हो रहा था.

यौवन की देहरी पर पाँव रखते-रखते साइबर युग का बोलबाला छा गया. ई-मेल, इन्टरनेट तथा सेल का प्रचलन बढ़ने लगा. देखते-देखते दोनों के व्यवहार-आचरण में कुछ अन्तर आने लगा. वैभव की शिक्षा पूर्ण होने वाली थी कुछ माह उपरान्त वह उद्योगपति के उद्योग का एक खंड संभालने वाला था. इस दृष्टि से पाँच-छह चतुर सहपाठी वैभव से सम्पर्क

बढ़ाने लगे और उसे भोग के मार्ग पर आगे बढ़ाने की चेष्टा करने लगे. उसमें उनका स्वार्थ था. वे सोचते थे कि दो माह उपरान्त शिक्षा समाप्त हो जाएगी किन्तु नौकरी कहाँ मिलेगी इसलिए यदि वैभव का पूरा विश्वास जीत लेंगे तो उन्हें पद-प्रतिष्ठा मिल जाएगी. भोला-भाला वैभव इन सबसे अनभिज्ञ अपने ही ख्यालों में डूबा रहता. मित्र जो भी कहते करता. एक तो वह लोकनीति में निपुण न था, दूसरा यौवन का मस्ती भरा समय था. सहपाठियों की भोग-प्रधान बातें—डिस्को जाना, रेस्तरां में खाना, पंचसितारा होटल में होनेवाले कार्यक्रमों में जाना अच्छा लगने लगा. धन की कोई कमी न थी. घंटों इंटरनेट पर किसी न किसी से बातें करता रहता. कितनी आश्चर्यजनक बात थी उन दोनों के हाथ धनुष-बाण नहीं, इंटरनेट का मॉउस था किन्तु एक का मॉउस यानी चूहा गणपति का वाहन बन उसे सम्पूर्ण विश्व का भ्रमण करवाता हुए सिद्धियाँ दे रहा था. दूसरे के हाथ का मॉउस यानी चूहा उसे चैट रिलेशन में भटकाता हुआ आम चूहे की भाँति जगह-जगह कुतरता हुआ भटका रहा था. उद्देश्यहीन जीवन की ओर ले जा रहा था.

संस्कार संस्कारों से परिपूर्ण माऊस के सहारे ज्ञानवर्द्धन करने लगा. पिता की आकांक्षानुरूप विशेष रूप से फैलने लगा. किशोरावस्था में ही उसकी दृष्टि स्पष्ट, वाणी मधुर और आचरण विशुद्ध था. यह इसलिए क्योंकि उसने अपने जीवन का लक्ष्य सुनिश्चित कर लिया था. वह स्वस्थ-स्वाधीन-सुन्दर तथा नई तकनीकी विशेषज्ञ बनकर भारत में बहुराष्ट्रीय यानी मल्टी नेशनल कंपनियों की सुचारू संरचना करना चाहता था. अपने लक्ष्य के अनुरूप उसने अपनी संयमित तथा संतुलित गतिशीलता भी बना ली थी. इसके बावजूद भी दोनों भाईयों में अपार स्नेह था. वैभव की आत्मीयता भले उतनी गहरी न थी. किन्तु संस्कार का प्रेम अभिन्न रूप से अपने बड़े भाई के प्रति था. वह अपने बड़े भाई के साथ समय-समय पर कई विषयों पर चर्चा भी करता.

‘मैं झील किनारे सैर करने जा रहा हूँ, यदि तू भी चलना चाहे तो चल.’ वैभव ने कहा.

‘चलो.....’ कहता हुआ संस्कार वैभव के साथ हो लिया. आज दोनों भाई शहर की झील के किनारे भ्रमण पर निकले. झील के किनारे हरी-भरी घास पर बैठे. झील के हीरक जल कणों तथा लता गुल्मों को निहारते हुए बातों में डूब गए. साथ-ही-साथ बसन्त ऋतु की मनमोहक सुनहरी धूप का आनन्द लेने लगे. झील की नील जलराशि को स्पर्श करती शीतल मन्द सुगन्ध वायु दोनों के मन-मस्तिष्क में पुलक भर रही थी. चारों ओर बिछी गुलाब की क्यारियों में लगे गुलाब आँखों को मोहित कर रहे थे. आसपास लगे सुन्दर सघन वृक्ष उन पर चढ़ी लदी हरी-भरी लवंग लताएँ जिन पर सैकड़ों की तादाद में लाल-पीले-सफेद और बैंगनी फूल लगे थे. दर्शकों पर संमोहन चला रही थीं. झील की अगाध जलराशि पर पड़ती सूर्य की

कोमल किरणें इस प्रकार झिलमिला रही थीं मानो प्रकृति के नीले आँचल पर सुनहरी धागों का जाल बुना हो. प्रकृति के मनमोहक रूप को निहारते दोनों बातचीत में डूबे थे. संस्कार ने उचित अनुकूल अवसर पाकर जीवन-निर्माण की चर्चा छोड़ दी. जिससे गुमराह होते बड़े भाई की आँखें खुलें. वैभव ने छोटा कंकड़ उठाकर सामने लगे फूल पर निशाना साधा. कंकड़ ठीक निशाने पर लगा. संस्कार प्रसन्न हो उठा.

‘भइया ! आपकी विशेषता यह है कि आपका निशाना सदा अचूक होता है. आप अपने जीवन का श्रेष्ठ लक्ष्य निर्धारित कर उस दिशा में अचूक निशाना क्यों नहीं लगाते ? यह अन्दरूनी लक्ष्य-वेध आपको पिताजी की भाँति योग्य उद्योगपति बना देगा.’

‘तुमने ठीक कहा. अब समय आ गया है कि मैं अपने जीवन का श्रेष्ठ लक्ष्य संधान करूँ. और अपना जीवन स्वस्थ-स्वाधीन-सुन्दर तथा नवीनतम तकनीक से युक्त करूँ तभी हम मल्टीनेशनल कंपनियाँ खोलकर अच्छे उद्योगपति बन सकते हैं. यह अत्यन्त महत्वपूर्ण बात है कि ऐसा जीवन का लक्ष्य जिसमें हम पूरे विश्व को नौकरियाँ दें. अपने भारत की बेरोजगारी खत्म कर दें.’

‘वाह, यह लक्ष्य मेरा होना चाहिए’.

दोनों का शरीर अज्ञात प्रसन्नता से पुलकित हो उठा. मानो अपने देश की बेरोजगारी की समस्या का समूल अन्त कर दिया हो और चारों ओर स्वर्गीय परिवेश छा गया हो. शीतल मन्द समीर उनके प्रसन्न हृदयों को छू प्रसन्न होने लगी. थोड़ी देर दोनों आने-जानेवालों को देखते रहे फिर स्वर को गंभीर बनाते हुए संस्कार ने कहा—

‘यह लक्ष्य-वेध तो बाद की बात है भइया, पहले सुन्दरता कहाँ मिलती है, सुन्दरता तो अंतिम उपलब्धि होती है. सबसे पहले हमें स्वस्थ होना पड़ता है.’

‘मैं स्वस्थ हूँ’. वैभव ने हरी घास पर पसरते हुए कहा.

‘भइया, “स्वस्थ” का बाहरी अर्थ शरीर की निरोगता ही समझा जाता है. लेकिन इसका अन्दरूनी अर्थ अत्यन्त गूढ़ है. स्वस्थ शब्द में ‘स्व’ का अर्थ है स्वयं यानी अपनी आत्मा और उसमें स्थित हो जाना स्वस्थ कहलाता है.’

‘छोटे....तू बड़ी-बड़ी बातें करने लग गया है, पहले यह बता ‘स्व’ में स्थित कैसे होते हैं?’

‘भइया, ‘स्व’ में स्थित तभी हो सकते हैं जब ‘पर’ से विमुख हो जाएँ. आत्मा ‘स्व’ है और सम्पूर्ण विश्व ‘पर’. ‘पर’ से मोह हटा लें तभी ‘स्व’ में स्थित हो सकते हैं. यही समता है. ममत्व हटकर स्व-पर का भेद समाप्त हो जाए और संसार के समस्त प्राणी आत्मवत् बन

जाए. ऐसी स्वस्थ आत्मा ही स्वाधीन बन सकती है—अपने ही अधीन बाहर के सुखों के अधीन नहीं. बाहरी इच्छाओं से आकर्षित होकर इन्द्रियाँ और मन आत्मा को अपने काबू में न कर सकें, बल्कि आत्मा उन्हें अपने नियंत्रण में रखकर संयमित बना ले. यदि ऐसी नियंत्रण शक्ति मिल जाती है तो आत्मस्वरूप सुन्दर बन जाता है. ऐसी सुन्दरता हमारे जीवन का लक्ष्य बनना चाहिए..’

वैभव एकटक संस्कार को निहारता रहा. मन्द-मन्द बह रहे शीतल सुगंधित पवन वेग को जैसे अपने रोम-रोम में पूरी तरह भरते हुए कहा—‘तुम तो महाज्ञानी हो गए हो. अभी तो जवानी में कदम रखा ही है और तुम आत्मा की सुन्दरता की बातें करते हो. जहाँ लोग नवीनतम जीवन शैली ढूँढते फिर रहे हैं.’

‘संस्कार ने बड़े भाई के भावों को भाँपते हुए अपने ढंग से कहा—भइया, मैं यह थोड़े ही कह रहा हूँ कि यौवन का आनन्द न उठाएँ या शरीर की सुन्दरता को न भोगें. आपने अभी-अभी यौवन में प्रवेश किया है. ऐसा न हो कि यौवन के मद में अंधे हों हम भोगों के पीछे पागलों की भाँति भागने लगे जैसे अब भाग रहे हैं और लक्ष्य से भटक जाएं. फिर हाथ में पकड़ा माऊस रूपी धनुष-बाण लक्ष्य-वेध न कर सकेगा.’

घास पर बैठे वैभव का माथा ठनका. वह हँसता हुआ उठ कर खड़ा हो गया. चेहरे का रंग उड़ा-उड़ा-सा लगने लगा. ‘अनुज संस्कार’ तुम बिलकुल अपने नाम के अनुकूल हो. मुझे तो ऐसा लगता है कि संस्कार मानव रूप धर धरती पर उतर आया हो. मैं न तो तुम्हारे जैसा सोच सकता हूँ और न ही सोचता हूँ. बाहरी सौंदर्य दिखते ही मेरा धनुष-बाण यानी हाथ में पकड़ा सेल चुप्पी नहीं साध सकता. यौवन का उन्माद मुझे आ घेरता है.’

‘बड़े भइया का वाक्य सुनते ही संस्कार चौंक कर उठ खड़ा हुआ. यह जानने के लिए कि भइया से क्या गलती हो गई है. थोड़ी ही देर में उसे समझ आ गया कि अनर्थ हो ही गया है. झील के किनारे थोड़ी दूर पर पाँच-छह अत्याधुनिक किशोरियाँ चहल-कदमी कर रही थीं. उसी समय भैया का सेल बजा और भइया हँस-हँसकर मीठी-मीठी बातें करने लगे.

लक्ष्यवेध की क्रिया-प्रतिक्रियाओं का अनूठा क्रम चल पड़ा. भीतरी लक्ष्य-वेध की चर्चा करनेवाला संस्कार बड़े भइया को ऐसा देखने लगा मानो कोई अजूबा हो. वैभव बाहरी लक्ष्य-वेध कर रहा था जिसके कारण संस्कार ने चर्चा चलाई थी. वैभव विचारों की परिपक्वता से कोसों दूर तो नहीं किन्तु समीप भी न था, क्योंकि उसके सहपाठी उसे भरमाते रहते थे. संस्कार वैभव के निकट जाकर बोला—यह लक्ष्य तुम्हारा नहीं है. वैभव सेल पर मीठी चुहल में व्यस्त था. संस्कार ने भाई को पुनः कहा किन्तु वैभव मुँह फेरकर आगे चला गया. संस्कार ने बुरा न माना. बड़ा भाई कभी मुँह फेर भी ले तो परवाह नहीं, छोटा अपनी जान भी अर्पित

करने के लिए तैयार है. फोन पर बातें समाप्त कर वैभव ने संस्कार को वहीं बैठने को कहा और स्वयं लड़कियों के बीच घिर कर मस्ती करने लगा. पास में खड़ा एक ग्यारह-बारह साल का लड़का उनकी ओर हसरत भरी निगाहों से देख रहा था. इतने में उसके पिता आइसक्रीम लिये वहाँ पहुँचे और एक धौल जमाते हुए अपने पुत्र से बोले — शिव, क्या देख रहा है ?

पिता का स्वर सुन लड़का घबरा गया. पिता ने कहा— ऐसा तुझे नहीं बनना है. ये लड़के या तो आवारा होते हैं या गरीब....वह अमीरजादियों को फंसा कर शादी करना चाहते हैं.

‘क्यों पापा ?’

पिता ने पुत्र की ओर देखा...क्योंकि अमीर बन सकें. वैभव के कानों में मानो गर्मागर्म उबलता हुआ सीसा किसी ने डाल दिया हो. वह तिलमिला उठा.

‘पर, पापा दोस्त भी तो हो सकते हैं.’

‘अमीर लड़कों के पास इस तरह समय बर्बाद करने के लिए समय नहीं होता क्योंकि उनका अपना व्यापार संभालना होता है.’

परली तरफ बैठा संस्कार भी सुन रहा था. वह खून का घूँट पी गया. निम्न मध्यवर्गीय उनकी ओर उँगली उठाएँ आज तक लोगों ने पलकें बिछाई थीं. वैभव को ऐसा झटका लगा कि वह वहाँ और न बैठ सका. सबसे विदा ले उठ बैठा. संस्कार कार की ओर बढ़ता जा रहा था. उसकी आँखों में ही नहीं दिल भी रो रहा था. वैभव लम्बे-लम्बे डग भरता संस्कार के पास पहुँच गया. संस्कार ने अश्रुपूरित आँखों से बड़े भाई की ओर देखा वैभव की आँखों में पश्चाताप झलक रहा था. संस्कार खड़ा हो गया. दोनों एक पल निहारते रहे फिर एक-दूसरे के गले लग गए. संध्याकालीन सूर्यास्त होते गगन की रक्ताभ किरणें भीतरी भावों से चमकते हुए उन दोनों के अश्रु बाह्य आकर्षणों के चलते आई मलिनता को धोने के लगे और किरणें चेहरों को और प्रदीप्त करने लगीं मानो आंतरिक लक्ष्य-बेध एकाएक सार्थक हो गया हो।

—डॉ. मधु धवन



Un dessert français pour vous régaler : des îles flottantes

Ingrédients :

- 5 œufs
- ½ litre de lait
- 100 g de sucre
- 1 citron
- 1 pincée de sel
- 1 cuillère à café de farine de blé

Recette :

- 1 – Faire bouillir le lait avec la pincée de sel et le zeste de citron (peau du citron coupée en petits bouts)
- 2 – Séparer les jaunes et les blancs d'œufs.
- 3 – Dans un récipient mélanger le sucre, les œufs et la farine.
- 4 – Ajouter le lait bouillant.
- 5 – Mettre dans une casserole et faire chauffer à feu doux ; ne pas cesser de remuer.

Enlever du feu dès que la préparation commence à bouillir : c'est de la crème anglaise.
- 6 – Verser la crème dans un plat.
- 7 – Monter les blancs en neige (avec une batteur ou une fourchette).
- 8 – Sur une casserole d'eau bouillante déposer les blancs par petites portions deux minutes environ puis les déposer sur la crème.
- 9 – Mettre au frais au moins pendant une heure avant de servir.

Suggestion du chef : Faire du caramel (avec du sucre et de l'eau) et le verser sur les îles flottantes !

Bon Appétit !

Française, venant de Toulon dans le sud de la France (en Provence, sur la côte d'Azur entre Marseille et Nice), j'aime beaucoup Dieu, passer du temps avec mes amis et ma famille, chanter, créer, danser, nager, marcher en montagne, faire du ski et découvrir de nouvelles choses ... me voilà donc en Inde! Pour moi, l'Inde c'est un arc-en-ciel de couleurs et de saveurs, et chaque fois un 'warm' accueil à la hauteur de la température de Chennai!

*Ms. Violaine Huysmans
Visiting Faculty, Department of French*

Poème

Au tout début Il le clamA
Mon trésor je te le livre sans ramdaM
Ose le chercher jusqu'au fond de ton egO
Unis et use pour lui tes forces comme un foU
Rien alors ne saurait te manquer
Violaine HUYSMANS, french lecturer

Etoile de la mer

Voguons au vent des mers
Au gré des vagues
Marie, là-haut comme une étoile
Marie, là-haut veille sur nous
Etoile du ciel lumière sans voile
Etoile du ciel, brille pour nous

Un Voyage

Je m'appelle Natacha Martin, je suis en deuxième années de licence en économie ici même à Stella Maris, vous m'avez sûrement rencontrée : oui... je suis la fille qui a toujours cet air perdu, qui parle avec un accent bizarre. Cet accent que je porte eh bien il est français ! Je suis née en France, et toute ma vie je n'ai parlé que français et je n'ai vécu qu'à Vernouillet, une petite ville dans la région Centre. J'ai donc surpris beaucoup de gens en décidant de venir poursuivre mes études supérieures en Inde après mon bac : tous d'abord mes professeurs qui croyaient que j'avais des problèmes familiaux, mes amis qui pensaient que j'avais raté mon intégration sociale, et pour finir toutes les nouvelles personnes que j'ai rencontrées en Inde et qui pensaient que j'étais tous simplement 'crazy'. En fait ce sont de raisons toutes simples qui m'ont emmenée ici ; je voulais tous d'abord connaître le pays dont mes parents sont originaires et que je connaissait si peu, ensuite je voulais perfectionner mon anglais qui était si mauvais et vivre une expérience humaine inoubliable!

Je pense que cette décision je ne l'ai pas prise au hasard. C'est en fait l'époque dans laquelle j'ai la chance de vivre et qui permet une telle mobilité qui m'a aidé à prendre une telle décision ...en effet je représente presque la mondialisation à moi toute seule ! Oubliez la mondialisation économique, je parle d'une mondialisation de normes et de valeurs...et plus particulièrement d'acculturation mondiale...l'acculturation c'est tout cet ensemble de phénomènes qui résulte d'un contact continu et direct entre des groupes d'individus de cultures différentes et qui entraîne des modifications dans les modèles culturels initiaux de l'un ou des deux groupes, et cette acculturation est en moi depuis ma naissance.

En effet depuis ma toute tendre enfance j'ai grandi en regardant des films indiens, en mangeant du curry indien...ensuite ici je continue toujours d'écouter de la variété française, je regarde mes films français préférés et je mange toujours mes fromages . J'ai cette impression depuis mon arrivée en Inde d'appartenir à la France, et à l'Inde et plus globalement au monde. Tout m'appartient, la tour Eiffel m'appartient, le Taj Mahal m'appartient, je soutiens l'équipe de France de football et je supporte aussi l'équipe indienne de cricket (même si je l'avoue je ne comprends pas grand-chose à ce jeu). Je suis fière de ces deux mondes, je me sens et française et indienne et c'est ce qui m'a emmené ici !

Cependant les débuts étaient difficiles, mon anglais n'était pas parfait et mon tamoul encore moins, les méthodes bureaucratiques m'exaspéraient, je ne comprenais pas vraiment le règlement intérieur du Stella Maris, j'étais en fait complètement perdue !

Même si j'ai constaté une certaine tendance mondiale à aller vers un modèle unique (des pratiques alimentaires, culturelles et vestimentaires similaires) amplifié par la diffusion de masse avec Internet, la télévision et les medias... chacun des pays a gardé son essence. L'Inde c'est un voyage de tous les sens pleins de couleurs, de bruits, et de mythes, et la France c'est un pays où il fait bon vivre et où la qualité de vie y est au maximum.

C'est donc cette expérience indienne que je suis en train de vivre, qui m'enrichit tous les jours. Elle m'apprend le respect de la différence surtout beaucoup de chose sur moi même.

*Ms. Natacha Martin
I B.A. Economics*

STELLA MARIS COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS), CHENNAI - 600 086

LIST OF OVERALL PERCENTAGE OF PASSES

April - 2006

CLASS	APPREARED	PASSED	% OF PASS
B.A. History	45	42	93.33
Sociology	47	37	76.59
Economics	63	49	77.78
Fine Arts	39	37	94.87
English	49	38	77.55
B.Com. Section - A	70	62	88.57
Section - B	158	146	92.41
B.Sc. Mathematics			
Section - A	62	47	75.81
Section - B	58	50	86.21
Physics	54	52	96.30
Chemistry	46	46	100.00
Plant Biology & Plant Biotechnology	42	42	100.00
Zoology	43	41	95.35
B.C.A.	76	71	93.42
M.A. International Studies	18	18	100.00
Economics	14	10	71.42
Fine Arts	11	11	100.00
English	29	27	93.10
M.S.W. Social Work	31	31	100.00
M.Com.	22	22	100.00
M.Sc. Mathematics	30	25	83.33
Information Technology	23	23	100.00
Bioinformatics	18	18	100.00
Chemistry	20	20	100.00

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