

# Echoes of the Heart

# 75 years of Grace & Growth

Platinum Jubilee



**SACRED HEART COLLEGE**  
(AUTONOMOUS)  
TIRUPATTUR





**ECHOES OF THE HEART**

**SEVENTY-FIVE YEARS  
OF GRACE AND GROWTH**



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## SEVENTY-FIVE YEARS OF GRACE AND GROWTH

A Platinum Jubilee Commemorative Volume



**Sacred Heart College (Autonomous)**

Tirupattur, Tirupattur District – 635 601

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**Echoes of the Heart: Seventy-Five Years of Grace and Growth**  
A Platinum Jubilee Commemorative Volume

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## FOREWORD

Education animated by love and service, becomes a force that transforms both individuals and society. *Sacred Heart College (Autonomous), Tirupattur*, embodies this truth in every phase of its distinguished 75 years. The college was established in 1951 by the visionary guidance of the Salesians of Don Bosco. As a minority institution, the college emerged as a beacon of hope in a largely rural and economically backward region, offering the gift of education to those who needed it most.

*Echoes of the Heart: Seventy-Five Years of Grace and Growth* stands as a living chronicle of this noble mission, one that has harmoniously united learning with compassion, knowledge with character, and scholarship with service. The volume reflects not only the historical milestones of the institution but also its unwavering commitment to the moral and social advancement of humanity, particularly the poor and the marginalized.

From its inception, the college has been deeply rooted in the preventive system of Don Bosco guided by the principles of reason, religion, and loving-kindness. By this philosophy, the classroom has become a community, the teacher a mentor, and education a means of human liberation. Throughout its seven and a half decades of service, the college has steadfastly upheld this vision, offering access to quality education for first-generation learners, rural youth, and students from socially and economically disadvantaged backgrounds.

The enduring greatness of the institution lies not merely in its academic achievements and infrastructural growth, but in its compassionate outreach to the less privileged. In its journey, the institution has consistently extended its resources beyond the campus gates through literacy programmes, rural development projects, and social work initiatives.



This Platinum Jubilee celebration is a moment not only of remembrance but also of reaffirmation. It invites reflection on the institution's journey from a modest beginning to its present stature as a leading centre of higher education in Tamil Nadu. It calls us to recognize that the strength of Sacred Heart College does not rest solely in its academic distinction, but in its steadfast commitment to forming individuals who are both intellectually competent and morally conscious—women and men capable of transforming society through compassion and integrity.

This commemorative book, *Echoes of the Heart: Seventy-Five Years of Grace and Growth*, is a tribute to all who have contributed to this extraordinary journey of the college. May this volume serve as both a record and a reminder: a record of 75 years of dedication to humanity and a reminder that education, when grounded in compassion, becomes a lifelong service to the poor and society at large. As the college moves forward into the future, may it continue to be an instrument of faith, knowledge, and transformation—ever **'Ready for every good work'**.

**J. Jeyaranjan**  
Executive Vice Chairman  
State Planning Commission,  
Tamil Nadu.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

*“Great things are not done by impulse,  
but by a series of small things brought together.”*

– Vincent Van Gogh



‘**Echoes of the Heart: Seventy-Five Years of Grace and Growth**’ is more than a book – it is a living record of our journey, our struggles, and our triumphs across seven and a half decades. It gives me immense pride to acknowledge with gratitude all those whose support has made this commemorative work possible.

*“Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labour in vain”*

- (Psalm 127:1)

With this profound truth in my heart, I first and foremost raise my gratitude to the **Sacred Heart of Jesus** and to our **Blessed Mother Mary**, whose unfailing love, guidance, and protection have been the cornerstone of this journey.

I express my gratitude to my fellow author, **Rev. Fr. K. J. Louis, SDB**, whose eloquent and evocative language has given the book its true soul. His style has not only captured the essence of the college’s journey but also instilled in the work a spirit of strength and inspiration that resonates on every page of the book.

I remain deeply grateful to retired professor, **Dr. S. Veeraraghavan**, Department of Physics, who as an author has added immense value to this commemorative work. With his rich experience and long association with the college, he has infused the narrative with warmth, depth, and a sense of nostalgia that connects the present with the past.

I also wish to make a special mention of **Maria Micheal Nithyn A**, Department of History, whose dedication and meticulous research have been vital in shaping this commemorative volume.

I extend my heartfelt thanks to our beloved **Rev. Dr. Praveen Peter, SDB**, Rector and Secretary of the College, Council and the Fathers of the Sacred Heart Community for the constant support



and encouragement in bringing out this book. My special thanks to **Rev. Fr. Michael Viyakulam, SDB**, for his assistance, and to **Rev. Dr. D. Shanmugam, SDB**, Director of Don Bosco Centre, for providing documents that enriched this work. I am also grateful to retired professor **Mr. G. Chandrasekaran** for sharing his valuable experiences and cherished memories of the college.

I further wish to thank the IQAC Office, the Alumni Association, the College Library, the Physical Director, and the Department of Physical Education for their support in providing substantial sources for the book.

In a special way, I thank the Office Superintendent, Administrative office staff and other Non-teaching staff for their timely assistance in furnishing essential records, photographs, and documents, which has been crucial in completing this work with accuracy and depth. I sincerely thank **Bro. Arunraj**, Manager of SIGA Press, and his team for the beautiful design and neat printing.

Thus, *Echoes of the Heart: Seventy-Five Years of Grace and Growth* stands today as a fitting tribute that encapsulates seventy-five years of our college's grace and growth in this Platinum Jubilee year. Once again, I extend my heartfelt thanks to all who have contributed to this remarkable achievement.

**May this book breathe the spirit of our glorious past and kindle a flame of inspiration in the hearts of generations yet unborn.**

**Rev. Dr. D. Maria Antony Raj, SDB**  
Principal,  
Sacred Heart College (Autonomous),  
Tirupattur.



## *Dedication*

To the generations of  
young men and women  
who have walked through  
the portals of  
**Sacred Heart College,**  
and to those yet to come.

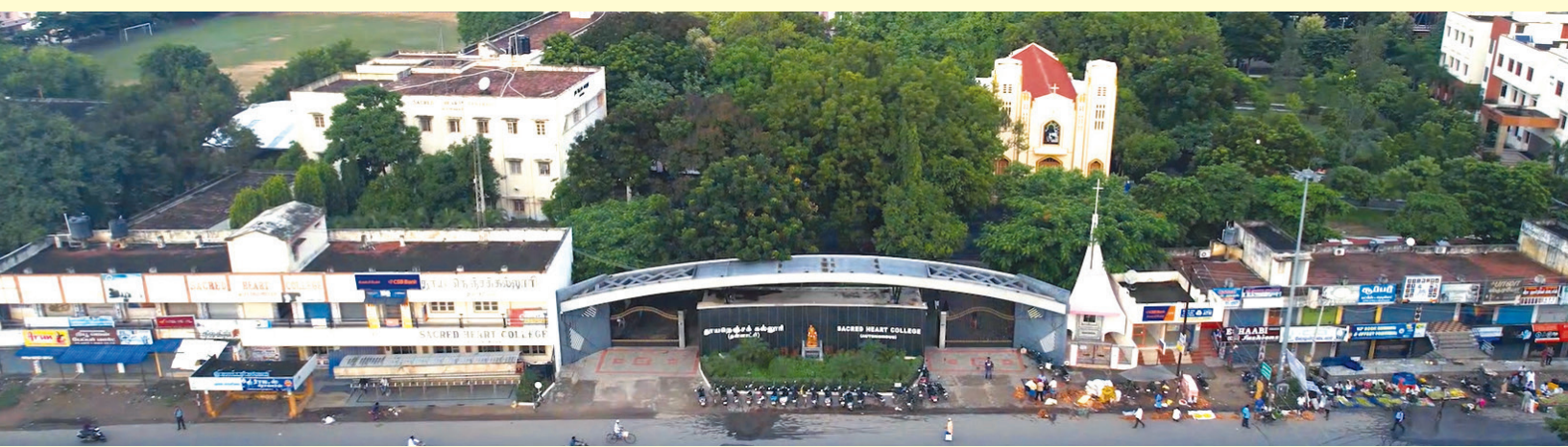
May their time here  
inspire them to shine as  
beacons of light  
to serve with compassion,  
and to remain always  
**ready for every good work,**  
wherever life may lead them.



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# Echoes of the Heart

## SEVENTY-FIVE YEARS OF GRACE AND GROWTH

*Great institutions—like cities and cathedrals—are not built in a day. They are the work of generations. Sacred Heart College, Tirupattur, is no exception. Founded seventy-five years ago, it has grown with quiet strength and enduring grace—like a tree deeply rooted in faith and nourished by commitment. Its walls—some timeworn yet dignified, others fresh and vibrant—stand as silent witnesses to decades of transformation. Within its lecture halls and corridors echo the voices of countless young men and women whose dreams and aspirations have shaped the very soul of the institution. Across its green campus, ancient trees and young saplings alike rise as symbols of continuity and renewal—mirroring the journey of the college and its students. Sacred Heart is not merely an academic institution—it is a living story of vision, growth, and legacy.*

### Memories that Mould Us, Milestones that Move Us

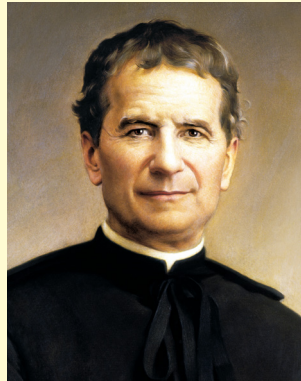
Seventy-five years ago, in the little town of Tirupattur, a dream was born—a dream stirred by the daring vision of Fr. Josè Luis Carreño and shaped by the gentle genius of Don Bosco’s educational system. The dream was christened **Sacred Heart College**. It emerged not merely as a place of instruction, but as a living mission—a sacred ground where knowledge would meet compassion, and learning would embrace service.

What began with just 80 students has blossomed into a vibrant academic community of 5,000—shaped by the enduring values of faith, integrity, and social responsibility. Through the ebb and flow of decades, Sacred Heart has remained steadfast in its call: to form not only minds illumined by knowledge, but hearts awakened to truth, justice, and love.

As we mark this Platinum Jubilee, we pay homage to all who have walked on these hallowed premises—

the visionaries, the mentors, the teachers, and the taught. The platinum milestone is more than a celebration of years; it is a renewed dedication to the mission entrusted to us—a future radiant with promise and a glow with the fire of the heart. It is a celebration of lives touched, dreams kindled, and a mission steadfastly lived.

Since its inception, SHC has remained unwavering in its mission to offer an education that harmoniously blends academic excellence and community engagement. Inspired by the educational philosophy of Don Bosco—grounded in *Reason, Religion, and Loving Kindness*—the college has become a transformative force, nurturing young minds into compassionate leaders and responsible citizens.



Over the decades, SHC has played a pivotal role in shaping students with values of discipline, leadership, and social responsibility, preparing them not only for personal success but for meaningful contribution to society. The holistic approach of the college integrates intellectual growth with moral integrity and vocational preparedness, staying true to Don Bosco’s ideal of forming **“good humans and honest citizens.”**

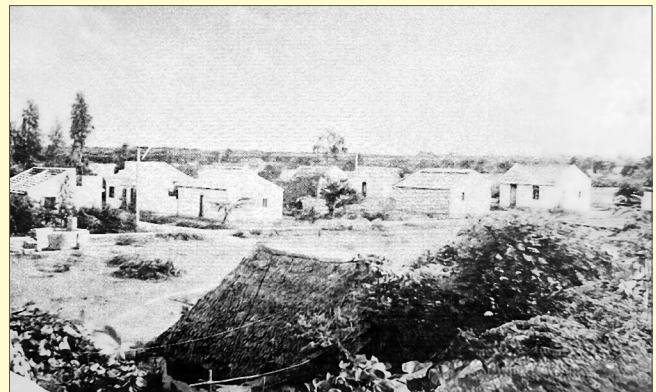
As it completes 75 years of sterling service, SHC stands tall as a citadel of learning in southern India. Anchored in the core values of integrity, inclusiveness, and compassionate leadership, the college has continuously adapted to the needs of an evolving world while staying true to its founding mission: to accompany the young on their journey towards truth, justice, and wholeness.

This Platinum Jubilee is both a celebration of a storied past and a call to renewed purpose—honouring the legacy, celebrating the journey, and looking ahead to a future marked by continued impact, innovation, and service to humanity.

## The Story of Tirupattur

The town of Tirupattur carries deep historical and cultural roots, its name believed to have originated from a “federation of ten communities.” Tradition holds that this region once stretched from Adhiyur in the south to Kodyoor in the north, and ten shrines located within this expanse are thought to have inspired its name.

Over centuries, Tirupattur was ruled by various dynasties and known by names like *Bramapuram*, *Thiruvanapuram*, and *Tiruperur*. During the 14th-century Vijayanagara reign, it came to be known as **Tirupattur**—a name that has endured. Nestled between the Javadhu and Yelagiri Hills, the region is home to the Malayali tribal communities, who continue their agrarian traditions and preserve a rich cultural heritage.



An old photograph of Annandapatti - Tirupattur

Renowned as the “Sandalwood City,” Tirupattur plays a key role in the sandalwood trade and hosts Asia’s largest sandalwood godown. Its economic importance is matched by its cultural and historical

legacy—from Chola-era ruins to a recently discovered Buddha sculpture, hinting at a once-thriving Buddhist presence.

Tirupattur also figured in the Mysore campaigns of Hyder Ali and Tipu Sultan, serving as a strategic point en route to Madras. Despite military incursions, the valley remained largely unscathed, preserving its tranquil charm.

Administratively, Tirupattur was originally part of North Arcot District established in 1908 with Chittoor (now in Andhra) as the district capital; the headquarters was shifted to Vellore in 1911. The region underwent several reconfigurations until 2019, when Tirupattur was carved out as an independent district—marking a new phase in its governance and development.

Once a modest hamlet, Tirupattur has evolved into a growing urban hub. Modern villas now rise alongside colonial-era mansions, reflecting a blend of tradition and transformation. Its location—midway between Chennai and Bengaluru—gives it strategic significance.

Connectivity has been vital to this growth. Jolarpet Railway Station, established in the 1860s and located 8 km away, links Tirupattur with major cities like Trivandrum, Bengaluru, and Mumbai, reinforcing its role as a regional commercial nexus.

A symbolic marker of this evolution is the road from Jolarpet to the heart of the town, passing by Sacred Heart College, which vividly showcases the region's journey towards modernization. SHC has been instrumental in shaping Tirupattur's educational, social, and economic landscape since the early 1950s. As a beacon of learning and progress, the college remains central to the town's journey toward a dynamic future.

## From Turin to Tirupattur: A Salesian Saga

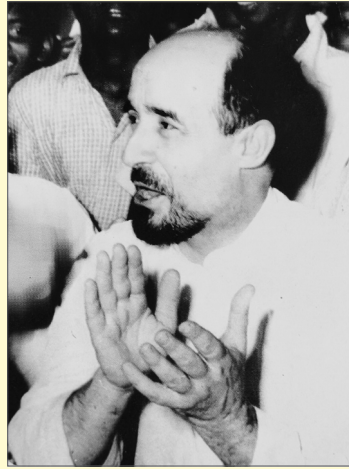
The first group of Salesian missionaries from Turin, Italy, arrived in India in January **1906** under the visionary leadership of Fr. George Tomatis SDB. They began their pioneering educational mission in Thanjavur, Tamil Nadu, establishing an elementary school and a technical training centre—marking the beginning of a movement dedicated to education and social transformation.

From their initial foundation in Tamil Nadu, the Salesians expanded across the country, responding with compassion and strategic foresight to the needs of marginalized communities. Their commitment to holistic development is reflected in the establishment of institutions in both urban and rural regions. As of January 2025, the Salesians are present in **all the 28 states of India** and four of the eight Union Territories—namely, the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Chandigarh, Delhi, and Puducherry—continuing their mission of youth empowerment and inclusive education across India. Their commitment to inclusivity is reflected in the establishment of institutions across diverse regions—demonstrating both adaptability and a deep sense of mission.

It was in this spirit of mission and service that the Salesians arrived in **Tirupattur in 1931**, bringing with them Don Bosco's vision of nurturing the young through reason, religion, and loving-kindness. True to their charism, the Salesians approached education not as a mere academic pursuit, but as a transformative response to the socio-economic challenges of the time. Their focus extended beyond the classroom—towards empowering marginalized communities and fostering long-term social change.

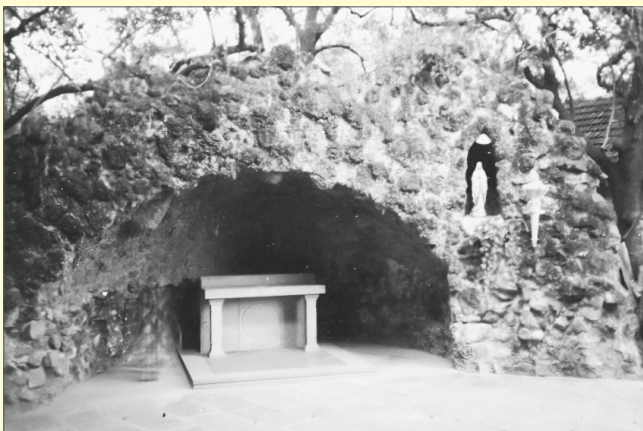
However, before launching their ambitious socio-cultural and educational initiatives, they recognized the urgent need for well-formed Salesians—men of

courage, compassion, and conviction, ready to dedicate their lives to Don Bosco’s mission. Thus, in **1933**, under the leadership of **Fr. Josè Luis Carreño, SDB**, a remarkable Salesian from the Basque region of Spain, they established a Novitiate in Tirupattur.



Fr. Josè Carreño

Fr. Carreño, known for his **golden heart** and **brilliant mind**, laid the foundations for what would become a nursery of Salesian personnel in India. The first batch of novices in Tirupattur comprised ten young men—six from Europe and four from India—symbolizing the international spirit and inclusive ethos of the Salesian congregation. This initial ‘formation house’ marked the beginning of an enduring legacy, preparing generations of Salesians who would go on to educate, uplift, and transform communities across the country.



Marian Grotto - Cradle of Salesians in India

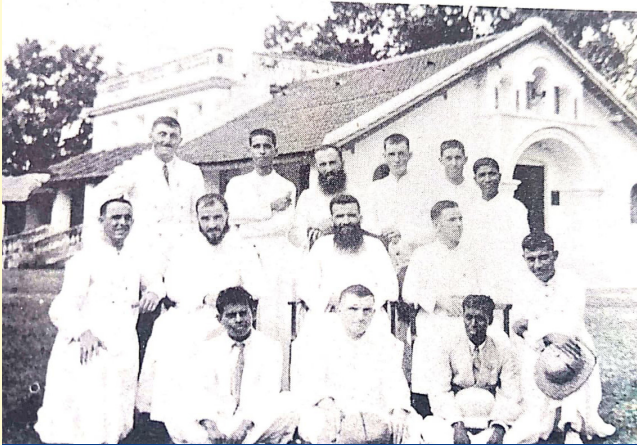
Over the years, the novitiate at Tirupattur became a vibrant centre of Salesian formation and missionary zeal, earning it the reputation of

being the “**Cradle of the Salesians in India.**” As more young men from both India and abroad were drawn to the Salesian way of life, the community expanded, and the need to widen their educational outreach became clear. The vision was no longer limited to forming future Salesians—it was about reaching the rural poor, educating the underprivileged, and empowering youth through holistic development.

### A Vision Born of Compassion: The Pre-History of SHC

The origins of Sacred Heart College can be traced back to 1931, when **Rt. Rev. Dr. Eugene Mederlet SDB**, Archbishop of Madras, acquired a site in Tirupattur, on the outskirts of the town. Though the acquisition reflected strategic foresight, immediate development did not follow. The turning point came in 1933 with the arrival of **Fr. Josè Carreño**, the dynamic Salesian missionary deeply committed to uplifting the rural youth of Tirupattur and its surrounding areas.

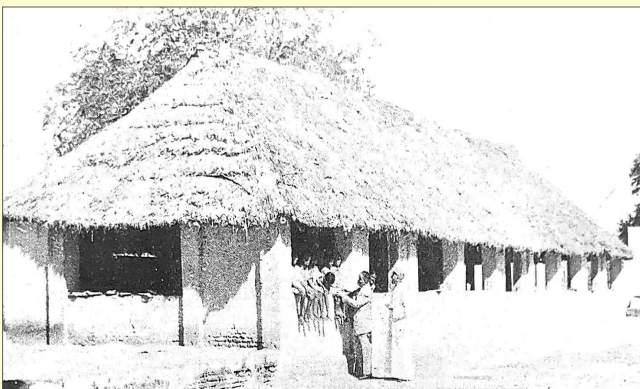
During his many visits to the villages around Tirupattur in the 1930s, Fr. Carreño was confronted by two deeply troubling realities: an unusually high number of orphans and alarmingly low levels of literacy. On inquiry, he discovered that the widespread presence of orphans was largely due to the frequent and tragic accidents in the **Kolar Gold Fields**, where many men from these villages had migrated in search of work. Historical records indicate that in the final 55 years alone of British rule, **3398 workers** lost their lives in mining-related accidents in KGF—leaving behind grieving families and countless children without parental care. The educational landscape of the villages was equally bleak. In the then **Madras Presidency**, the literacy rate stood at a mere **9.5% in 1931**, rising only slightly to **12.1% by 1941**. With no access to formal schooling, most



Pioneer Batch of Novices

children were engaged in cattle herding or menial agricultural labour, their potential unrealized and their futures uncertain.

Moved by the gravity of these challenges, **Fr. Carreño responded with both compassion and bold initiatives.** He envisioned a space that would provide both care and opportunity—a place where orphans and disadvantaged children could find shelter, receive an education, and be guided towards a dignified life. That vision took shape on **August 15, 1941**, with the establishment of the **Sacred Heart Orphanage and School** (Tamil Medium), complete with a small **technical training centre.** It was later renamed **Dominic Savio Orphanage and School.** Today it is a thriving Higher Secondary School.



Dominic Savio Orphanage - 1941

From the beginning, the institution embraced the Salesian philosophy of **holistic education**—nurturing the mind, heart, and spirit. It focused on basic literacy, vocational training, and character formation, quickly emerging as a beacon of hope for hundreds of rural children who had been excluded from the formal education system. As demand grew and community support strengthened, the institution expanded—both in vision and infrastructure. In **1946, Sacred Heart Matriculation School** was launched chiefly for the benefit of the “aspirants” to Salesian life, but other local students were also admitted. In 1968, the school was relocated to a larger campus just a kilometre away and was renamed **Don Bosco Matriculation School,** continuing Fr. Carreño’s legacy of transformative education.

But the dream didn’t stop there. Recognizing the pressing **need for higher education**—especially for first-generation learners from rural and economically challenged backgrounds —Fr. Carreño and his fellow Salesians envisioned a new kind of institution: one that would offer university-level education while continuing to serve the cause of social upliftment.

That vision culminated in the founding of **Sacred Heart College** in **1951**, under the University of Madras. From its modest beginnings, the college would soon emerge as **a flagship institution** of the Salesians in India, not only transforming the lives of its students but also serving as **a catalyst** for the socio-economic and cultural development of the entire region. What began as a small seed of compassion has grown into **a thriving centre of learning, leadership, and service**—true to the Salesian ideal of forming “good humans and honest citizens.”

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## The Chapel The Beating Heart of the Campus

The Second World War cast a long shadow over India. Soon after Italy declared war on Great Britain, acting on orders from the British Government, Italian and German nationals in India—including missionaries—were arrested and confined to internment camps in locations like Dehradun (Uttarkhand), Deoli (Rajasthan), Deolali (Maharashtra) and Ahmadnagar (Maharashtra) till the end of the war. For the young Salesian mission in Tirupattur, this was a heavy blow, as several pioneers were suddenly taken away. Yet, in the midst of this wartime uncertainty, faith did not falter.

With quiet courage, Fr. Carreno, along with the small number of Salesians who were left behind, dared to dream of something enduring and hope-giving: a house of God for the people. In 1941, the foundation stone of the Church of the Sacred Heart was laid. Brick by brick, through sacrifice and trust in Divine Providence, the building rose. By July 1943, a beautiful church stood complete—a lasting testimony that even in times of trial, faith builds, love endures, and hope finds a home.

More than a structure, it became the spiritual heart of the campus, where generations of students, staff, and Salesians have gathered in prayer, silence, and celebration. Designed by Rev. Fr. Peter Maggioni, SDB, with Gothic and Romanesque features, the chapel embodies the spirit of Don Bosco—faith woven into daily life. Within its walls, the young and old, the learned and simple, bow their heads seeking strength, guidance, and peace.

On entering this sacred space, one's eyes are immediately drawn to its majestic centrepiece: a 24x12 feet painting of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the work of Augustine, a gifted local artist. Christ stands upon the earth, against a background of clouds, his compassionate gaze extending not only to those on the campus but to the entire region.

Over the decades, the chapel has served many roles—first as a seminary chapel, later as a parish church, and today as the College Church. In 1957, Fr. Di Fiore added the elegant false ceiling and the teakwood dado panelling of the walls and pillars. The pews, massive and enduring, embody the timeless spirit of the church—both beautiful and prayerful. For the college community, it is far more than a landmark: it is a sanctuary of peace and hope. Every prayer whispered here has shaped hearts and inspired lives of service.



Truly, this Chapel of the Sacred Heart is the beating heart of the campus. Standing in the middle of many academic structures, it proclaims a profound truth: that reason and faith, knowledge and spirituality, are like two wings lifting the human spirit towards the contemplation of truth and the fuller meaning of life.

## **Sacred Heart Statue The Iconic Landmark**

At the very entrance of the College rises, in majestic grace, the life-size statue of the Sacred Heart of Jesus—arms outstretched, as though to embrace every person who steps into the hallowed campus. Sculpted in Italy from pure white Carrara\* marble and erected by Rev. Fr. Di Fiore, this iconic monument has become a symbol of faith and identity for the institution.

The statue rests on an elegant pedestal of polished black granite, bearing the timeless invitation of Christ, “Come to me, all of you” (Mt 11:28). Originally inscribed in Latin—*Venite ad Me Omnes*—the words were later rendered in Tamil, “எல்லோரும் என்னிடம் வாருங்கள்”, allowing the message to speak directly to the hearts of the local people.

More than stone and marble, this monument stands as a silent herald at the gate, proclaiming to everyone who enters that the spirit of the College is rooted in Christ’s compassion and welcome.



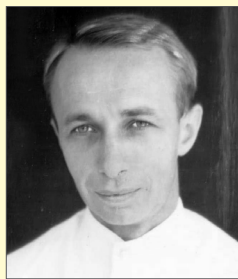
*\*Carrara marble is often referred to as Italy’s ‘white gold’. Michelangelo’s masterpieces like the Pietà in the Vatican and the statue of David in Florence are of this material. The Marble Arch in London and the Leaning Tower of Pisa too are made of white Carrara marble.*

## From Dream to Reality: The Birth of the College

The vision to establish **Sacred Heart College** began to take concrete shape in 1950, when Fr. Carreño and his team meticulously prepared a proposal for a new college in Tirupattur. The plan was submitted to the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Madras through **Archbishop Rt. Rev. Fr. Louis Mathias** of Madras on 22 July 1950. Following this, a **seven-member University Commission** conducted an official inspection of the proposed college site on 15<sup>th</sup> March 1951.

On Friday **27 April 1951**, the Registrar of the University, Mr. Ravi Varma, sent the formal affiliation letter to the Provincial. The letter stated: *“Resolved that provisional affiliation for a period of two years be granted to the Sacred Heart College in the Intermediate Course...”*

Fr. John Med SDB was appointed the first Rector, Correspondent, and Principal of Sacred Heart College, with Fr. Hubert D’Rosario SDB serving as the Vice-Principal. On Monday, **25 June 1951**,



Fr. John Med SDB

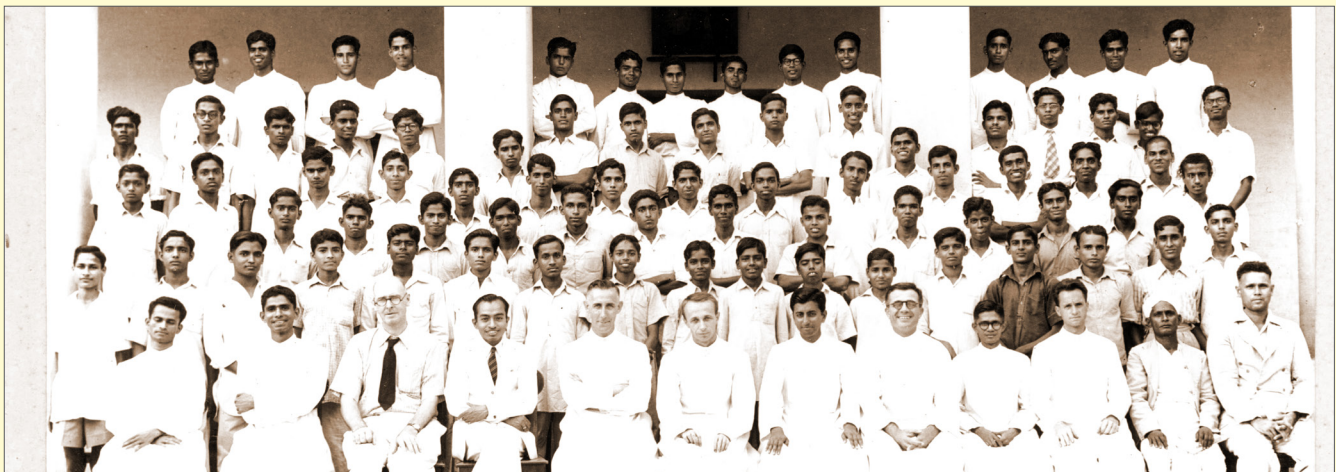
the college opened its doors with 80 students enrolled in the two-year Intermediate Course—40 in the humanities stream and 40 in the science stream.



Mechanical Engineering Workshop

This modest yet momentous beginning laid the foundation for what would become a distinguished centre of higher learning in the region.

True to the Salesian spirit of practical education, the founders included **Mechanical Engineering** among the subjects offered—aiming to make the curriculum skill-based and employment-oriented. However, due to challenges in recruiting qualified faculty and the high cost of the necessary equipment and machinery, the course was discontinued after two years. In its place, Chemistry was introduced, strengthening the academic offerings and ensuring continuity in the sciences.



Fr John Med with the first batch of Intermediate Students

## The First Principal

### A Gentle Architect of Beginnings

The tenure of **Fr. John Med SDB**, Sacred Heart’s first principal, was brief but profoundly impactful. A man of slender frame and steely mind, Fr. Med hailed from Czechoslovakia, and brought with him a quiet strength and affable spirit. He believed deeply in the power of community, and from the outset, worked to cultivate a warm, family-like atmosphere on the campus. His vision was especially meaningful for the young students—many of them first-generation learners from nearby villages—who found in the college not just a place of education, but a home where they could grow socially, emotionally, and intellectually.

Fr. Med’s hallmark approach—summed up in his “friendly-carefree-cheerful” philosophy—came to



Drama enacted by students of cultural academy

define the ethos of Sacred Heart College. The early years were not without their trials; the institution began in a rural landscape, constrained by limited resources and modest infrastructure. Yet, under Fr. Med’s nurturing leadership, SHC laid down its foundational values—openness, service, and joy—that would shape its legacy for generations to come.

The launching of the Science and Cultural Academies in 1951 served as a vital complement to formal

education at SHC. The **Science Academy** inspired students to go beyond the prescribed curriculum, nurturing a genuine curiosity for scientific inquiry. It provided a dynamic platform for them to develop critical thinking, analytical reasoning, and problem-solving skills, while encouraging them to apply scientific concepts to real-world challenges.

Meanwhile, the **Cultural Academy** played a pivotal role in preserving and promoting the region’s rich heritage of values, customs, and traditions. Through vibrant festivals, artistic performances, and cultural events, it fostered creativity and self-expression while building a spirit of unity and appreciation for diversity. Together, these academies enriched the academic experience and helped shape well-rounded, culturally rooted, and intellectually curious individuals.

It should be noted that from the very beginning, the institution has been a beacon of **inclusion**—committed to bridging social inequalities and uplifting the under-represented, especially the rural poor, Dalits, and tribal communities. With unwavering dedication, it has championed the cause of dignity, justice, and equality for all, staying true to its founding mission of education as a means of social transformation.

### From Intermediate to Pre-University

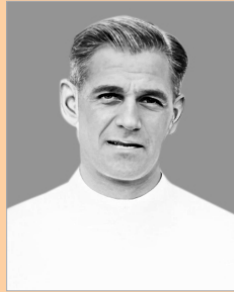
When Sacred Heart College started in 1951, students began their college life with the nationally prescribed **two-year Intermediate Course**, after which they would have to do a two-year course leading to Bachelor’s degree. In **1956**, however, the Intermediate Course, existing from the 1920s, was abolished and the **one-year Pre-University Course (PUC)** introduced, which would be followed by a **3-year degree course**.

## Fr. Murphy: Educator Extraordinary

Born on 4 April 1920 in Newcastle, England, Fr. Joseph Murphy arrived in India in 1938 as a young Salesian of just eighteen. Over the next decade, he immersed himself in formation and study—completing his Salesian training at Tirupattur under the mentorship of Fr. Carreño, and earning a Bachelor's degree in Economics and a Master's in English Literature from Bombay University.

In 1953, he joined Sacred Heart College as Vice-Principal and, the following year, was appointed Principal. During his transformative nine-year tenure, he laid the firm foundations of the fledgling institution and introduced practices and traditions that continue to shape life on the campus to this day. Guided by the founding vision, his mission was clear: to uplift the economically, educationally, and socially backward region through the power of higher education.

Most of the students he welcomed were first-generation learners, navigating the unfamiliar terrain of English-medium education. Sensitive to their struggles, with patience and care, Fr. Murphy adapted his own speech



to suit them. Students were astonished—and delighted—when he addressed them by name, even when their names were long and tongue-twisting. His attention to detail and his heartfelt presence created deep bonds with both students and staff.

Fr. Murphy believed that true character was forged not only within the walls of the classroom but also on the open expanse of the playground. Cricket was his passion, not merely as a game but as a way to be with his boys, to form, to inspire. On the afternoon of 14 November 1971, after taking six wickets in an intramural match, he collapsed on the college grounds—struck by a massive heart attack. He died as he had lived: doing what he loved, in the place he cherished most, surrounded by the students for whom he had given his all.

Like Don Bosco, he was a teacher with a father's heart and a father with a teacher's mind and method. His spirit continues to animate Sacred Heart College—not in photographs or memorials alone, but in the countless lives he touched, inspired, and shaped.

### Visionary Era of Foundation and Growth (1954-1967)

The years 1954 to 1967 marked a transformative chapter in the story of Sacred Heart College—a time of inspired leadership, academic milestones, and unwavering commitment to first-generation learners.

At the heart of this progress was **Fr. Joseph Murphy SDB**, a British-born Salesian missionary and scholar in Economics and English Literature from the University of Mumbai. Appointed in 1954 as the college's **first full-time Principal**, and later as Rector, Fr. Murphy brought with him a rare blend of academic acumen, administrative clarity, and pastoral sensitivity.

With a deep sensitivity to the struggles of first-generation learners, he adapted curricula and teaching

strategies to make education more accessible and transformative. His leadership—alongside the enduring presence of Fr. John Med SDB—resulted in a **major institutional milestone**: the granting of **permanent affiliation** and the approval of degree courses in 1954, establishing Sacred Heart College as a first-grade institution and setting the stage for future expansion and excellence. This bold step elevated the institution to the status of a **first-grade college**, anchoring it firmly in the educational landscape of South India.

With a curriculum tailored to the needs of students from rural and underserved communities, this era set the tone for Sacred Heart's lasting legacy: academic excellence with a heart for social transformation.

## From Vision to Vibrancy in a Rural Setting

In its formative years, Sacred Heart College faced the daunting task of establishing itself in a largely rural landscape. Yet even in its infancy, the institution—under the farsighted leadership of **Fr. Murphy**—responded with resolve and vision to the growing demand for quality higher education.



Social Service League in Action

A pivotal moment came in 1956, with the introduction of Economics as a degree course, diversifying the college’s academic offerings and drawing a wider student body. That same year, the launch of the **Pre-University Course (PUC)** provided a crucial bridge for students transitioning to higher education, significantly boosting enrolment. By 1959, the college community had grown to over 220 students—a remarkable achievement for a rural institution at the time.

This rapid growth presented new challenges. The increasing number of students began to stretch the close-knit staff-student rapport, a hallmark of Don Bosco’s educational philosophy. To preserve this spirit of connectedness, Fr. Murphy initiated the construction of **recreational facilities** and introduced games like basketball, badminton, carrom, chess, and tennikoit, alongside new volleyball courts. These simple but strategic steps helped cultivate community and camaraderie on campus.

Academic and service-based associations flourished during this period. Between 1955 and 1956, the **College Union**, **Social Service League**, and **Camera Club** were launched, fostering student leadership and civic engagement. Reflecting the college motto—*Ready for Every Good Work*—the **National Cadet Corps (NCC)** was introduced in 1960, promoting discipline, leadership, and patriotism.

Subject-specific academic forums like the **Tamil Association** (1956), **Mathematics Association** (1957), and **History and Economics Association** (1957) were also established. These platforms not only enriched academic life but anchored the college in its mission of *service-learning*, applying theoretical knowledge in a practical setting. Initiatives like the **Social Service League** and the **Medicine Squad** played a pivotal role in uplifting the surrounding villages—offering food, clothing, medical assistance, and above all **hope**.

Beyond academics and service, the arts were embraced as essential to student development. In 1957, a **dedicated auditorium** was inaugurated, becoming a vibrant venue for music, drama, and cultural expressions. This space, later renamed **Carreño Hall** in 1983, gave students a stage to nurture creativity and confidence. In these foundational years, Sacred Heart College was more than an academic institution—it was a beacon of



Carreño Hall

hope, growth, and transformation in the lives of rural youth, sowing seeds of change that would bear fruit for generations.

## Fr. Murphy's Enduring Legacy (1957–1962; 1967–1971)

As Sacred Heart College entered a new phase of growth, it became clear that the rising number of students—many from distant rural communities—required expanded residential facilities. Responding to this need, the college constructed the **Rinaldi Hostel**, a transformative initiative that opened



Thiru K. Kamaraj arriving at SHC to inaugurate Rinaldi Hostel

doors to students who might otherwise have been denied the chance for higher education. Officially inaugurated in 1957 by the then Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, **Thiru K. Kamaraj**, the hostel stood as a beacon of the college's commitment to accessibility and inclusion.

Academic expansion paralleled infrastructural growth. The construction of the **Chemistry Wing** enabled the launch of B.Sc. Chemistry as a major course, further diversifying the college's academic offerings. In 1961, the **Mathematics Association** merged with the Chemistry Association to form the **Science Association**, fostering interdisciplinary collaboration and student engagement in scientific learning.

At the heart of this transformative period was **Fr. Joseph Murphy**, whose approach to leadership was as personal as it was visionary. He made it his mission to learn the names of his students, engage with them individually, and nurture a sense of community and belonging. His passion for sports reflected his belief in holistic education; he would often be seen playing alongside students, breaking formal barriers and building genuine relationships.

Fr. Murphy's tenure marked a significant turning point in the life of the college. He was instrumental in steering the institution toward a **mission of social justice and inclusive education**. Recognizing that talent and potential were not confined to the privileged, the college under his leadership actively recruited students from marginalized and economically disadvantaged backgrounds. With generous financial support and a welcoming ethos, SHC became a sanctuary for those seeking not just education, but dignity, opportunity, and transformation.

Such commitments came at a financial cost, but the college never wavered. Its strength lay in its conviction that **education must serve the many, not the few**. In doing so, Sacred Heart College not only provided academic training but also nurtured agents of social change.

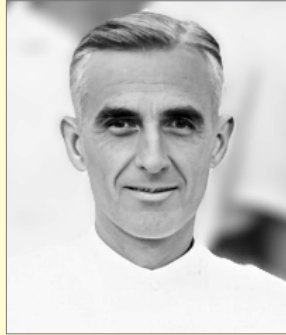
In 1962, the college bid a tearful farewell to Fr. Murphy as he was called to another important mission. His departure was deeply felt—but so was the enduring impact of his leadership. Like a devoted guardian, he had taken a fledgling institution into his care, guided it with patience and passion, and left it stronger, more inclusive, and more alive than ever.

Fr. Murphy's legacy lives on—in the hearts of students, in the classrooms he helped shape, and in the soul of Sacred Heart College itself.

## Nation-Building and Lifelong Bonds (1962–1967)



Fr. Vladimir Ondrasek



Fr. James McGuire

Following the fruitful tenure of Fr. Murphy, the stewardship of **Fr. Vladimir Ondrasek SDB** (1962–1964) and **Fr. James McGuire SDB** (1964–1967) carried forward Sacred Heart College’s unwavering commitment to growth, education, and community service.

A landmark initiative during this period was the founding of the **Planning Forum** in 1963, established with the goal of spreading awareness about India’s **Five-Year Plans** and national development objectives. Through **study sessions, public meetings, seminars, film screenings, educational tours, and community discussions**, the forum became a vibrant hub for engaging students and the broader public in the nation-building process.

The forum extended its reach beyond campus walls, partnering with the **Social Service League** to champion **children’s literacy campaigns, sports events**, and hands-on **community development projects**. Its most impactful contributions included road construction, the building of homes, and improving the living conditions of people—tangible expressions of Sacred Heart’s deep-rooted mission to uplift society through action.



Social Service League and Planning Forum volunteers in flood relief

Student participation in these efforts was wide and enthusiastic, transforming the forum into a crucible for **civic engagement, social awareness, and leadership formation**. It instilled in students a lasting sense of responsibility and purpose—hallmarks of Don Bosco’s educational vision.

Another significant milestone came in 1963 with the founding of the **Old Boys Association**. More than just a network, it became a living testament to the enduring bond between alumni and their alma mater. This association—a **bridge of friendship**—ensured that the values learned at Sacred Heart continued to inspire lives long after graduation, creating a legacy of lifelong connection and shared purpose.

### NCC Cadets – A Tragic Accident

On the morning of 31 December 1966, following the annual **NCC training camp at Hosur**, fifty cadets from our college boarded a Mysore State Transport bus bound for Bangalore, intending to take a train to Tirupattur. Tragedy struck near the village of Santhapura when the driver lost control of the vehicle and crashed into a banyan tree. The

horrific accident claimed two lives and left forty injured, fourteen of them critically.

**M. Viswanathan** (1st Year Mathematics) died at the scene. **V. Anandapathmanaban**, also of 1st Year Mathematics, succumbed to his injuries the following morning at the hospital. With the help of the local villagers, the injured were pulled from the mangled wreckage. In an inspiring display of compassion, passing motorists stopped to help and transport the wounded to Victoria Hospital in Bangalore. News of the accident reached Tirupattur around mid-day. Vice-Principal Fr. Abraham Panampara, Administrator Fr. Thomas Mylador, and Dr. Swaminathan—a dear friend of the



The mangled bus after the tragic accident

college— immediately set out for Bangalore by road. Early reports mistakenly indicated that nine cadets had perished. By the time the Fathers arrived at the hospital, some of the less seriously injured cadets had already been discharged and were on their way back to Tirupattur.

Meanwhile, Principal **Fr. McGuire** was attending a Principals' meeting at Madras Christian College in Tambaram. A telegram, dispatched at 1 p.m.,

reached him only at 5:30 p.m. It read: "NCC CADETS SERIOUS ACCIDENT; A FEW KILLED; BETTER RETURN." The message gave no indication of where the accident had occurred or the condition of the injured.

Fr. McGuire immediately rushed to Chennai Central, boarded the next available train to Jolarpet, and arrived in Tirupattur at 2 a.m. The college and hostels were closed for the Christmas vacation. Upon reaching the Salesian House, he found that two classrooms and the infirmary had been converted into a makeshift field hospital. There, young Salesian Brothers—classmates of the injured cadets—were quietly and devotedly tending to their friends.



Fr. McGuire with the NCC cadets—photo taken shortly before the tragic accident

On the morning of 1 January 1967, Fr. McGuire and Rector Fr. Murphy travelled to Bangalore, where they joined Fr. Abraham Panampara, Captain Alphonse, Lt. Y. Gnanaprakasam, and several parents of the injured cadets. At the mortuary, they offered prayers before the mortal remains of Anandapathmanaban, which were then taken to his hometown of Harur for the final rites (At that time, there were no Salesian institutions in Bangalore).

Among the injured were two first-year Chemistry students—Jacob and Chandrasekaran—whose conditions were reported to be critical. By God's

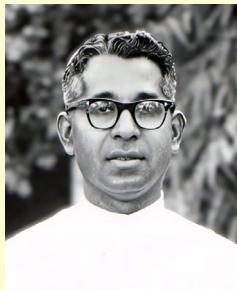
grace, both recovered. Chandrasekaran would go on to serve the college with distinction as a Professor of Chemistry and Controller of Examinations.

At the condolence meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> January to honour the memory of the deceased cadets, Fr. McGuire—widely regarded by students as a strict and stoic figure—broke down mid-speech, overwhelmed by grief. That deeply human moment remains indelibly etched in our memories.

All the injured eventually recovered, though several required prolonged treatment at Madras General Hospital and CMC Vellore.

## Fr Abraham Panampara Architect of Inclusive Growth (1967–1973)

The tenure of **Rev. Dr. Abraham Panampara SDB**, the first Indian principal of Sacred Heart College, marked a period of dynamic academic, infrastructural, and cultural development. With a visionary approach, he led the college through a transformative era that laid the groundwork for the institution's continued growth. In **1968**, the college introduced **B.Sc. Physics**, expanding the academic offerings and responding to the growing demand for science education. That same year, the **Pre-University Course (PUC)** got diversified to include Science, Economics, and Commerce, resulting in a surge in enrolment, the student strength reaching 455. This strategic expansion paved the way for the later introduction of the **B.Com. degree**, fulfilling the increasing interest in commerce education.



Fr. Abraham Panampara



Sacred Heart College clinches the very first  
Murphy Memorial Trophy

Infrastructure development was a hallmark of Fr. Panampara's leadership. In 1968, the **library block** was constructed with generous support from the University Grants Commission (UGC), providing students with enhanced learning resources and an academic hub.

Co-curricular and extracurricular activities also flourished during this time. The Science Association, founded in 1968, promoted vibrant student engagement across Physics, Chemistry, and Mathematics. The **Social Service League** expanded its outreach, initiating **literacy programmes, free tuition for underprivileged children**, and even taking on community development projects like the construction of a **bridge over the Kallar stream** in 1971—a remarkable feat of student-led service.

That same year, Sacred Heart College mourned the sudden passing of **Fr. Murphy**, who collapsed while playing the game he loved—**cricket**. In his honour, the **Murphy Memorial Tournament was established**. Held annually to this day, it stands as a tribute to his enduring legacy and deep passion for sports, fostering the same spirit of camaraderie and excellence among students that he once embodied.



Cultural and artistic pursuits reached new heights. The **Fine Arts Club** became a cradle for talent in **music, drama, and dance**. The **Catholic Students' Union** and **AICUF** were especially active, participating in national-level camps and seminars while establishing youth centres in over sixteen villages, bringing education and awareness to rural communities.

In the early 1970s, the college continued to grow intellectually and creatively. The **English and Commerce Associations** were launched, and the Tamil cultural programme **Muthamizh Vizha** gained prominence. Another distinctive initiative was the creation of the **Philatelic Club** in 1972 by **Fr. P. A. Thomas**, which fostered a love for stamp collection among students. More than a hobby, the club served as a creative blend of **history, culture, and education**.

To support students from diverse backgrounds, **scholarships and financial aid programmes** were introduced, reflecting Fr. Panampara's commitment to inclusive and holistic education. His tenure remains a testament to progressive leadership rooted in academic excellence, social outreach, and the overall development of students.

## Building Minds and Communities (1973–1977)



Fr. P.P. George

In 1973, **Rev. Dr. George Palackappillil SDB** (P. P. George) assumed the role of Principal of Sacred Heart College, ushering in a period marked by innovation in education, social outreach, and cultural engagement.

A pivotal initiative during this time was the establishment of the **Literary Club** in 1974 (later renamed the **Don Bosco Centre**) under the guidance of **Fr. P. M. Thomas**. Functioning as an extension arm of the college, the club forged a strong network of **doctors, lawyers, educators, and civic-minded citizens**, all united in their commitment to the educational upliftment of underprivileged children. It became a vital platform for **non-formal and continuing education**, offering access to Indian and international literature and empowering those unable to pursue university education through regular channels.



Fr. P.M. Thomas

In **January 1974**, the college launched the **College-School Complex**, in collaboration with the **Mathematics Teachers Association and the Literary Club**. This initiative extended the college's academic resources to local schools and the broader Tirupattur community. Initially comprising 18 high schools, the programme successfully **trained 150 high school teachers in modern mathematics and English**, enhancing teaching standards across the region. To encourage student involvement in social outreach, the Literary Club also introduced a **scholarship for exemplary "good neighbourliness,"** awarded to a student who demonstrated exceptional community spirit.

## From a Circle of Minds to a Sanctuary of Service The Journey of the Literary Club to the DB Centre

### The Literary Club: Where Reflection Became Service

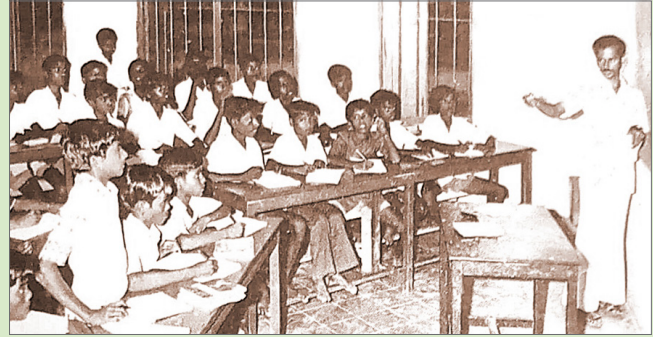
The Literary Club comprised teachers, doctors, lawyers, and business leaders who met to discuss ideas and enrich one another. Yet Fr. Thomas envisioned something deeper. For him, the Club was not merely an intellectual forum but a space where thought would lead to empathy and empathy to meaningful action. His philosophy of sharing the time, talent and resources became the soul of the Club.

What began as thoughtful conversation soon transformed into compassionate outreach. Members visited neighbouring villages, tutored underprivileged children, supported struggling families, and engaged in small yet significant acts of service. Over the years, the Literary Club increasingly reflected the spirit of its founder—a humble and steadfast commitment to uplifting lives.

### The Birth of the DB Centre: A Vision Expanded

By 1991, after decades of teaching, Fr. Thomas retired from formal academics. But retirement marked a new beginning for him. He envisioned a larger, unified platform where his educational and social initiatives could flourish. From this vision emerged the Don Bosco Centre for Education, Research and Training—the DB Centre.

The transition from Literary Club to DB Centre was natural and seamless. The compassion, commitment, and community engagement that defined the Club now found a structured home. Under this banner, Fr. Thomas consolidated various activities: study



centres, school dropout prevention programmes, youth coaching classes, women empowerment initiatives, and village outreach.

### A Sanctuary for Children and a Light for the Poor

The DB Centre soon became a haven for children and youth. Morning and evening study centres welcomed hundreds of students, many of them first-generation learners. Aspirants preparing for ESLC, MBBS, and engineering examinations found in Fr. Thomas not only a mentor but a fatherly guide.

What set the DB Centre apart was its spirit. Fr. Thomas lived among the children—studying with them, sharing meals, praying together, and even mending their torn clothes. He gave them dignity, confidence, and hope.

Pioneering initiatives such as the School Dropout Prevention Programme, Mobile Computer Education, village libraries, and the *Manitha Neya Maiyam* extended learning and compassion deep into rural communities.

### A Legacy Carved in Service: The Present Work of DB Centre

Today, the DB Centre continues to uphold the life and legacy of Fr. P. M. Thomas with quiet dedication and unwavering commitment. Though the founder is no longer physically present, his spirit lives on in every programme that uplifts



children, empowers women, or restores dignity to struggling families.

The Department of Extension Education and Services (DEEDS) of Sacred Heart College plays a pivotal role in fostering inclusive growth and social transformation through its sustained community engagement activities. The department reaches thousands of beneficiaries every year by integrating education, skill development, counselling, and outreach services, with a strong focus on marginalized and vulnerable communities.

Skill development remains a key thrust area of DEEDS. During the recent period, over 200 women and youth benefitted from vocational training programmes such as Aari embroidery and tailoring, enabling them to acquire income-generating skills. In collaboration with government initiatives like the Deendayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana, 420 rural youth were trained in technical trades such as Construction Electrician and Fitter, of whom 376 secured placements in industries, significantly improving their economic prospects.

DEEDS has also made a lasting impact on family and social well-being through its Family Counselling Centre. Since 2014, more than 14,000 individuals have benefitted from counselling services, with nearly 2,850 cases registered, addressing marital conflicts, psychological stress, substance abuse, and rehabilitation needs. On

an annual basis, the centre supports around 179 families, promoting healthier relationships and emotional stability.



Educational support initiatives form another strong pillar of DEEDS activities. Ten Evening Study Centres currently support 262 school-going children, contributing to improved academic performance and reduced dropout rates. Scholarships worth over ₹99 lakh have been distributed to more than 1,400 orphan, semi-orphan, ultra-poor, and physically challenged students, ensuring continued access to education. Early childhood care services through crèche centres have benefitted over 800 children since 2014.



Through targeted interventions for the Gypsy community, DEEDS has disbursed loans exceeding ₹41 lakh to 75 beneficiaries, along with educational scholarships. Large-scale outreach initiatives like the “Lab to Land” programme have actively involved nearly 14,000 students and close to 300 staff members. Collectively, these initiatives reflect DEEDS’ strong commitment to social responsibility, community empowerment, and institutional outreach.

In 1975, the college further deepened its community engagement by introducing the **National Service Scheme (NSS)**, rooted in the motto: “**Education through Service.**” The NSS aimed to develop students’ character and civic responsibility by involving them in voluntary service and nation-building activities. Within just three months, a **100-member NSS unit** was actively engaging with marginalized communities, fostering a culture of empathy, awareness, and national integration.

That same year witnessed the launch of the **Cine Forum**, recognizing the importance of nurturing artistic expression alongside academic and athletic excellence. The forum quickly gained cultural significance, attracting distinguished guests such as **Padma Shri Kamal Haasan**



and **Director K. Balachander**, and offering students a space to explore cinema as a medium of thought and creativity.

These years under Fr. P. P. George’s leadership marked a blending of academic excellence with social consciousness and cultural awakening, strengthening Sacred Heart College’s commitment to holistic education and community transformation.

## A Silver Jubilee of Growth and Transformation (1976)

The year 1976 marked a historic milestone for Sacred Heart College as it celebrated its **Silver Jubilee**, commemorating 25 years of dedicated service to education and community development. The occasion was celebrated with grandeur and vision, symbolizing both reflection and renewal.

To mark the Jubilee, two major infrastructure projects were launched: The **Silver Jubilee Building** and the **Indoor Stadium** (later named **Kamarajar Arangam**). These developments reflected both **horizontal expansion**—increasing the campus’s capacity with new academic and administrative spaces—and **vertical growth**—enhancing the college’s facilities to meet the rising standards of higher education and student development.

The Silver Jubilee Building became a central hub for academic activities, housing classrooms, staff rooms, and administrative offices, while the Indoor Stadium addressed the growing need for advanced sports infrastructure.

During this decade, Sacred Heart College earned widespread recognition for its **Pre-University Course (PUC)**, which attracted a large number of students, especially from **rural backgrounds**. The PUC programme formed the **backbone** of the college’s academic strength and reputation. In 1977, the final batch of PUC students saw impressive outcomes—**over 100 out of 250 Science stream students** secured admissions on merit to prestigious engineering and medical colleges, which were very few in numbers at that time.

However, the introduction of the 10+2 school system in 1977 led to the **discontinuation of**

the PUC programme, presenting the college with a sudden challenge: the loss of approximately 500 seats. Rising to the occasion with strategic foresight, the college expanded and strengthened its **undergraduate science programmes**, particularly in **Mathematics, Chemistry, and Physics**. These departments became key platforms for students aspiring to pursue **professional studies in medicine and engineering** after completing their B.Sc., with many graduates continuing their education at premier institutions like MIT Chennai.



The Silver Jubilee year not only celebrated past achievements but also set the stage for the **next phase of academic innovation and infrastructural growth**, affirming SHC's enduring commitment to holistic and future-ready education.



## Laying the Groundwork for Academic Excellence (1977–1983)

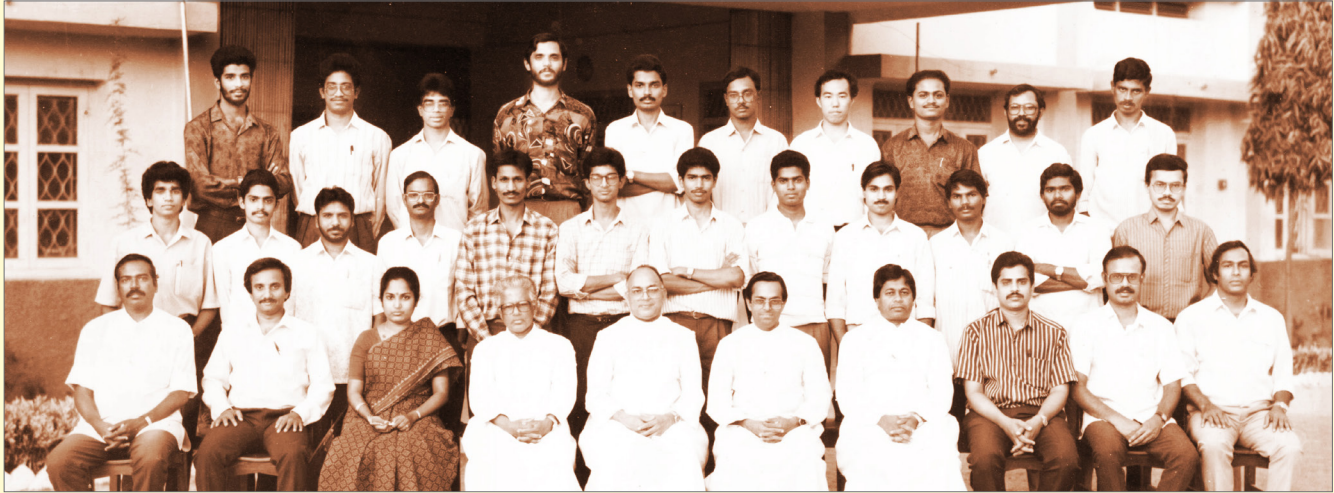
**Fr. Abraham Panampara** returned as Principal in 1977, he renewed his mission to transform Sacred Heart College into a centre of academic and social distinction. His leadership during this period was marked by steady progress in infrastructure, academic programmes, and community outreach.

**Modernization of classrooms** was a key focus, with improved seating, lighting, and ventilation aimed at creating a more conducive learning environment. Simultaneously, the **college's intellectual and cultural life flourished**. The **Tamil and English Associations** organized vibrant debates, oratorical contests, and quiz competitions, while the **Fine Arts Club** championed music, drama, and public speaking. The AICUF (All India Catholic University Federation) remained active, hosting leadership camps, rural development projects, and film screenings that featured renowned filmmakers and actors.



To accommodate the growing number of outstation students, the **Murphy Hostel** was constructed in 1979, further strengthening the college's residential capacity.

That same year marked a **major academic milestone**: the establishment of the **Postgraduate Department of Social Work**, with a specialization in **Community Development**. Spearheaded by **Fr. Joe Arimpoor**, the department became a pioneering hub for social impact. Projects such as the **Student**



**Service Centre, Tirupattur Rural Project, and Child Labourers Welfare Project** made significant contributions to both student formation and local community welfare.



The **Tirupattur Rural Project** reached **20 villages** within the Panchayat Union, implementing a **six-point development programme** focused on formal and non-formal education, leadership training, health and hygiene, and economic upliftment. These initiatives fostered **self-reliance and sustainable development** in the region, reinforcing the college's commitment to community engagement.

In **1980**, the college expanded further with the creation of the **Postgraduate Department of Mathematics**, deepening its academic offerings and setting the stage for future autonomy.

This period laid the **foundation for the college's vertical growth**—expanding postgraduate education, deepening community ties, and strengthening institutional infrastructure. By the end of **1983**, Sacred Heart College had emerged as **one of Tamil Nadu's premier institutions**, thanks to the vision and tireless work of Fr. Panampara, whose leadership remains a cornerstone of the college's legacy.

### **Bridging Tradition and Innovation (1983–1994)**

The growth trajectory of Sacred Heart College accelerated with the return of **Fr. P. P. George** as Principal in 1983. His leadership ushered in a dynamic phase of academic expansion and social outreach.

A major academic milestone was achieved in 1986 with the introduction of the **M.A. Economics programme**, broadening the college's postgraduate offerings. Recognizing the aspirations of **working students**, the college launched its first-ever **B.Com. (Evening) course**—an inclusive initiative aimed at those supporting their families while pursuing higher education.

In **1987**, the newly built **Don Bosco Extension Education Centre**, an expansion of the earlier



Literary Club, became a hub for community-based learning. It housed key programmes such as the **School Dropout Prevention Programme** — a project lauded by the State Government—as well as continuing education courses, reaffirming the institution’s commitment to **lifelong and inclusive education**.



Rev. Fr. Thaddeus

The following year, in **1988**, the launch of the **B.Sc. Computer Science** programme marked the college’s bold step into the world of **technology and innovation**, aligning its curriculum with the demands of a rapidly changing job market, under the leadership

of Fr. Gregory Thaddeus



A moment of profound significance occurred in November 1988, when Very Rev. **Fr. Egidio Viganò, SDB, the Rector Major of the Salesians**, visited Sacred Heart College. His visit—during the centenary year of Don Bosco’s death—was a spiritual and motivational landmark, strengthening the Salesian identity and inspiring both faculty and students in their mission of education and service.

## Embracing Autonomy: A Bold Step Forward (1987–1989)

The UGC started granting autonomous status to a small group of high-performing colleges in India from 1978 on a pilot basis. Their numbers increased gradually. Autonomy gives colleges a good deal of independence in their academic and administrative operations, allowing them to tailor their curriculum, teaching methods, examinations systems, evaluation procedures, etc.

The attainment of autonomy marked a transformative chapter in the history of Sacred Heart College. It was not a sudden change but the result of careful preparation and collective vision. Through seminars, consultations, and internal discussions, the faculty, students, and administrators were sensitized and equipped for this significant transition.

**Fr. P. P. George** played a pivotal role in leading the autonomy movement. His deep engagement with academic bodies and educational authorities helped present a compelling case to the **University of Madras**, which led to a phased grant of autonomy—first to the **postgraduate departments of Mathematics and Social Work in 1987–88**, and then to the entire **aided UG and PG programmes in 1989**.

Autonomy brought with it not only prestige but also **greater academic freedom**. The college could now frame its own curriculum, design evaluation systems, and implement innovative pedagogical practices. Under Fr. P.P. George’s visionary leadership, **academic bodies and committees** were established to guide curriculum design, examination reforms, and the smooth functioning of the autonomous framework. This new phase enabled a more **flexible, dynamic, and student-centred educational model**.

## Curriculum Renewal for Contemporary Relevance

With autonomy came the **responsibility—and opportunity—to transform the curriculum** in alignment with emerging global trends and local realities. A major revision of syllabi across departments was undertaken, ensuring relevance to both the academic world and the **rural socio-economic context** of the student population.

Special efforts were made to design **interdisciplinary and skill-oriented courses**, enabling students to gain practical knowledge applicable in real-world settings. Departments of **Economics, Commerce, and Social Work** pioneered innovative academic models, incorporating **case studies, fieldwork, and research-based learning**, thereby enriching the educational experience.

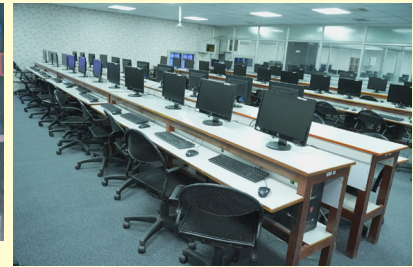
Faculty members were encouraged to adopt modern teaching tools, integrating technology-enhanced learning methods such as **audio-visual aids and computer-assisted instruction**. A milestone in this direction was the establishment of the **Guezou Centre for Computer Science in 1989**, which offered students access to **state-of-the-art computing facilities** and marked a significant leap in the college's digital infrastructure.



Rev. Fr. Guezou inaugurating the Guezou Hostel



Fr. Guezou  
inaugurating the  
Library in 1993



Guezou Centre for  
Computer Sciences

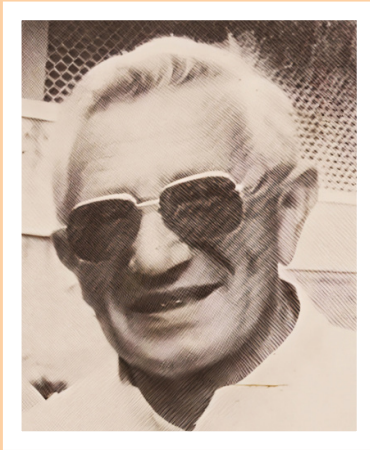


Fr. Guezou at the Sports Day celebrations

## Advancing Knowledge Through Autonomy

With the advent of autonomy, **research emerged as a central pillar** of Sacred Heart College's academic mission. The new academic freedom allowed departments to design **research-oriented curricula**, fostering a culture of inquiry and innovation among both faculty and students.

The **Department of Economics** began conducting focused **studies on regional economic development**, addressing the socio-economic challenges specific to the area. Simultaneously, the **Department of Social Work** strengthened its **partnerships with governmental and non-governmental organizations**, leading to impactful **community development projects** rooted in academic rigor and social engagement.



### Fr. Guezou

#### Missionary Who Dreamt with the Poor

Fr. Francis Guezou SDB was born in Brittany, France, on 7 April 1924. In 1937, his life took a defining turn when he met Archbishop Louis Mathias SDB, then Archbishop of Madras, who had come to his school in France to invite young volunteers for the Indian mission. That meeting ignited in young Guezou a lifelong passion for India—particularly for Yelagiri Hills and Tirupattur—where he would go on to leave a transformative legacy.

A tireless missionary and visionary educator, Fr. Guezou played a pivotal role in the growth of Sacred Heart College. He was instrumental in establishing key infrastructures, the Guezou Centre for Computer Science, the Department of Social Work building, and the modern college library that continues to benefit thousands of students. In 1987, he also built the Don Bosco Centre for Education within the college campus.

Fr. Guezou's vision of "education as liberation" was further realised through the introduction of the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) Centre, making higher education accessible to learners across the North Arcot District. His life and mission remain a testament to the power of compassion, vision, and tireless dedication to the poorest and most neglected.

Faculty members were encouraged and supported to **publish scholarly papers**, participate in **national and international conferences**, and apply for **research grants**. These initiatives not only enriched faculty development but also enhanced the academic standing of the college.

To further bolster research, the college **library was significantly upgraded**, incorporating an expanded collection of reference materials, academic journals, and digital resources. A noteworthy addition was the **introduction of a structured course in research methodology**, equipping students with the critical tools and techniques essential for both academic and field research.

This dynamic shift signalled Sacred Heart College's transition from a teaching-focused institution to one increasingly invested in **knowledge creation, social relevance, and academic excellence**.

### Examination Reforms and Student Evaluation

One of the most transformative outcomes of Sacred Heart College's autonomy was the comprehensive **reform of its examination and evaluation system**. The traditional model gave way to a more student-centred and continuous approach to learning and assessment. A **dynamic evaluation structure**



was introduced, allocating **25% weightage to Continuous Internal Assessment (CIA)** and **75% to end-of-semester examinations**. This balanced system fostered deeper academic engagement and accountability throughout the semester.

The CIA component revolutionized evaluation process by incorporating **problem-solving sessions, seminar presentations, assignments, and project work**. It ensured that evaluation was not merely an end-of-term event but **a continuous academic journey**, promoting critical thinking and application-based learning. To maintain academic rigour, the college adopted a **dual evaluation model**, involving both internal and external examiners. In parallel, question paper formats were restructured to assess **conceptual clarity and practical application**, thereby encouraging higher-order thinking skills among students.

To maintain high academic standards, SHC conducts regular **Academic Audits** facilitated by external experts from relevant fields. These comprehensive reviews evaluate teaching practices, assessment methods, and adherence to academic benchmarks, offering constructive feedback that drives continuous improvement and innovation. Conducted annually, the audits support the ongoing evolution of academic programmes and teaching methodologies. This commitment to quality assurance and adaptability has reinforced Sacred Heart College's reputation as an institution dedicated to holistic development and excellence in education.

### Academic and Social Impact: Strengthening Community Engagement

The impact of autonomy was not confined to campus boundaries. In 1988, the college expanded its social outreach through the establishment of the Bosco Institute of Social Work (BISW). This initiative extended services to over 50 villages in the

Tirupattur and Jolarpet Panchayat Unions, including the Jawadhu Hills and Dharmapuri. BISW launched diverse and impactful programmes:

- **A Family Counselling Centre (FCC)** supporting 110 families;



- **TRYWA** (Training Rural Young Women for Awareness), empowering 3,772 women through financial aid and self-help groups;
- **CLAP** (Child Labourers Apprenticeship Programme), offering vocational training to 100 former child labourers;
- **A Nutrition Centre**, in collaboration with the International Labour Organisation (ILO), aiding 100 children;
- **A state-level study** on NGOs and child labour;
- **A research report** evaluating the impact of Catholic schools.

Additionally, BISW's **Computer Centre** trained Social Work students in **SPSS** (Statistical Package

for the Social Sciences), enhancing their research capabilities and professional competencies.

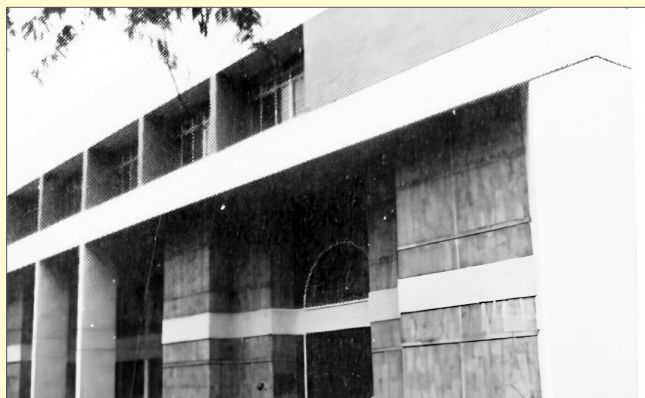
### Opening Doors: Research and Access

In 1992, the college deepened its academic influence by launching an **IGNOU Study Centre** on campus. This partnership with the **Indira Gandhi National Open University** expanded access to higher education for underprivileged rural youth in the North Arcot district. For many, it offered a long-awaited opportunity to pursue formal education.

That same year, the **Department of Economics** introduced **M.Phil. and Ph.D. programmes**, marking a turning point in the college's research profile. This milestone catalysed research growth across other departments as well, positioning SHC as a centre for advanced academic inquiry.

The introduction of **B.Sc. Mathematics (1991)** and **B.Sc. Physics (1993)** in the Evening College further reflected the institution's commitment to **inclusive education**, enabling working students to pursue academic advancement. Another major step forward was the **admission of women into postgraduate programmes**, a progressive move that promoted gender equity and higher learning.

In 1993, a long-cherished dream was realized with the laying of the foundation stone for a **dedicated**



The Library

**library building** by **Fr. Guezou**. This magnificent structure became a **symbol of intellectual growth and academic aspiration**, permanently enriching the college's infrastructure.

### A Transformative Era of Leadership

The years from 1967 to 1993 were marked by **immense transformation and strategic evolution**. As the Indian educational landscape underwent major reforms, Sacred Heart College responded with visionary leadership. **Fr. Abraham Panampara** and **Fr. P. P. George** stood at the helm, navigating challenges with foresight and purpose. Their combined leadership laid the groundwork for both vertical academic advancement and horizontal community outreach, shaping the institution into a model of excellence in holistic education.

### Raising the Bar

#### The NAAC Evaluation (1994–1999)

In 1994, **Rev. Dr. P. Soundararaju SDB** (later appointed Bishop of Vellore), assumed leadership as Principal of Sacred Heart College, ushering in a new phase of academic development. Under his stewardship, the college achieved **12B status**, a significant milestone that enhanced its eligibility for government funding and academic grants.



During this period, the institution also responded to the growing demand for technology-driven education by introducing **MCA and B.Sc. Computer Science programmes** in the Evening College (1998–1999). These additions marked a strategic expansion of the college's curriculum into emerging fields of study. A landmark moment came in **1999**, when



the college underwent its **first assessment by the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC)**. This comprehensive evaluation not only provided national recognition but also catalyzed a wave of introspection and improvement. The process of preparing the **Self-Study Report** offered valuable insights, helping the institution identify both strengths and areas needing growth. The result was a **Four-Star accreditation**, an affirmation of the college’s academic quality and institutional integrity.

Following the NAAC visit, the college identified two critical needs: **systematic documentation** and an **institutional website**. Both were established promptly, enhancing transparency, communication, and accessibility. These initiatives laid the foundation for future accreditations and digital transformation.

Throughout this phase, Sacred Heart College remained committed to its **core mission**: nurturing

students—many from rural and economically challenged backgrounds—into intellectually competent, ethically grounded, and socially responsible individuals. The NAAC process raised the bar, setting a benchmark for sustained academic excellence and institutional accountability.

## A Season of Expansion: Building Beyond Boundaries

When **Rev. Dr. Stanislaus Swaminathan SDB** took the helm of Sacred Heart College in the year 2000, he brought with him not just academic vision, but a deep resolve to broaden the horizons of higher education. His tenure marked a season of blossoming—where new dreams took root and long-held aspirations began to flourish.



With the winds of NAAC accreditation at the college’s back, doctoral programmes in Mathematics and Social Work were introduced, heralding a new chapter in the college’s research journey. The following year saw a cascade of academic offerings—M.Sc. in Chemistry and Physics, M.Phil. in Mathematics, and M.Com—all launched under the self-financed stream. Each new course was like a new branch added to a growing tree, extending the reach of knowledge



and opportunity. But vision needs space to grow. To celebrate 50 golden years and prepare for the future, the foundation of the **Golden Jubilee Building** was laid in 2002. Rising brick by brick, it stood as both a tribute to the past and a promise for the future—a place where thousands more would gather, learn, and launch their journeys. Under Fr. Stanislaus’s leadership, Sacred Heart College expanded not only in infrastructure, but in spirit, becoming a richer, deeper, and more vibrant sanctuary of learning.

### Years of Vision and Vital Growth

In 2003, **Rev. Dr. C. M. Varghese SDB** assumed the mantle of leadership as Principal of Sacred Heart College, ushering in a period marked by thoughtful expansion and student-focused development. That same year witnessed the establishment of the **Amalagam Women’s**



**Hostel**, a milestone in the college’s commitment to empowering female students through enhanced residential facilities.

The years 2004 and 2005 brought a fresh wave of academic enrichment with the introduction of **M. A. Tamil** and **BBA**, broadening the scope of both the humanities and management streams. In tune with the changing demands of the professional

world, the college launched several **UGC-aided certificate courses** and self-financed programmes under the ‘*Vazhikaati*’ initiative (2005–2006), aimed at equipping students with industry-relevant skills and career-oriented training.

This era also saw a strengthened focus on science and technology education. Programmes such as **M.Sc. & M.Phil. Computer Science**, and **B.Sc. Biochemistry** were introduced, enriching the academic landscape and reinforcing the college’s



commitment to innovation and research. In 2006, infrastructure development continued with the construction of the **Guezou Hostel**, a tribute to the beloved missionary Fr. Guezou, a great benefactor of the college. This new facility further enhanced student accommodation, ensuring a holistic and nurturing environment for learners from diverse backgrounds.

### A Time of Accreditation and Academic Expansion

In 2006, **Rev. Dr. C. Antonyraj SDB** assumed office as the Principal of Sacred Heart College. One of his foremost priorities was to secure institutional accreditation, a goal he pursued with clarity and conviction. Under his





leadership, the college successfully underwent the **NAAC peer team visit** in 2006–2007, earning an **‘A’ grade**—a distinction that significantly elevated the institution’s academic standing and credibility.

Committed to fostering employability-oriented education, Fr. Antonyraj spearheaded several academic and structural reforms. During his tenure, **autonomy was extended to all self-financed courses**, enabling greater curricular innovation. New academic programmes—including **M.Phil. in Social Work, Chemistry, Physics, and Commerce**—were introduced, strengthening the college’s postgraduate and research offerings.

A landmark step in this period was the introduction of **co-education at the undergraduate level**, marking a progressive and inclusive shift in the college’s admission policy.

In 2009, the College witnessed one of the most memorable moments in its history when it played host to **Fr. Pascual Chávez Villanueva**, the ninth Rector Major of the Salesians. He had come to India



to join the Platinum Jubilee celebrations of the Salesian Province of Chennai. His arrival at the college campus was not just a ceremonial visit but a profound affirmation of the institution’s role as the cradle of Salesian higher

education in South India.

The academic portfolio was further enriched in 2010 with the launch of **B.A. English and M. Phil. Tamil** in the self-financed stream, reflecting the institution’s continued dedication to diverse and dynamic learning.

## A Legacy of Growth and Academic Excellence

In 2010, **Rev. Dr. Maria Soosai SDB** assumed the role of Principal, ushering in a period of notable academic expansion and institutional progress. Under his leadership, new programmes such as **BCA** and **MBA** were launched in the self-financed stream, widening opportunities for students in the fields of computer applications and business administration. Recognising the transportation challenges faced by many rural students, a **college bus service** was introduced, greatly improving accessibility for those commuting from remote areas.





A defining moment of his tenure was the **Diamond Jubilee celebration** in 2011, marking 60 years of Sacred Heart College’s commitment to education and social transformation. To commemorate the milestone, the **John Med Block** (Diamond Jubilee Building) was constructed in accordance with AICTE norms, symbolising both heritage and forward-looking vision.

In 2013, the college underwent its **third cycle of NAAC accreditation** and was once again awarded



an ‘A’ grade with an impressive CGPA of 3.43, reaffirming its stature as a premier institution of higher learning.

Later that year, **Rev. Dr. C. M. Varghese SDB** returned as Principal. Under his renewed leadership, the college continued to thrive—enhancing academic programmes, upgrading infrastructure, and fostering a culture of innovation and excellence. His tenure reaffirmed Sacred Heart’s enduring mission: to offer transformative education rooted in quality, research, and holistic student development.

## Digital Horizons and Global Synergies

### A New Era of Leadership (2015–the Present)



With the appointment of **Rev. Dr. D. Maria Antony Raj SDB** as Principal in 2015, Sacred Heart College entered a transformative era characterized by digitalization, sustainability, research innovation, and a

deepened commitment to student welfare. Under his visionary leadership, the college evolved into a technologically enabled, globally connected, and environmentally conscious institution, setting new benchmarks in academic excellence and institutional relevance.

From the outset, the college prioritized digital transformation, streamlining both academic and administrative processes to provide a seamless, modern educational experience. This shift not only enhanced operational efficiency but also redefined academic administration, enabling data-driven decisions and dynamic learning environments.



## Institutional Growth and Collaborations

During this period, the college experienced significant vertical and horizontal expansion, aligning infrastructure and curriculum with emerging educational demands. Strategic emphasis was placed on national and international collaborations, resulting in Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with reputed institutions in Japan, Ghana, France, and Spain, as well as numerous research centres and corporate organizations across India. In the academic year 2023–2024 alone, nearly 20 MoUs were signed, reinforcing Sacred Heart’s commitment to global engagement and knowledge sharing. Departments were actively encouraged to build such partnerships, facilitating faculty exchanges, student mobility programmes, and collaborative research.



A notable innovation during this time was the launch of “**Sharing Day**,” an initiative that empowered students to raise funds to support the underprivileged in Tirupattur. Rooted in **service learning and character formation**, this annual event quickly became a cherished expression of the college’s Salesian values in action.



## A Bicentenary to Remember

The Bicentenary of Don Bosco (1815–2015), marking the **200th birth anniversary** of the beloved founder of the Salesians, was commemorated with reverence and festivity. To honour this historic milestone, a **new academic building** was constructed, and the **main gate and compound wall** were renovated, giving the campus its present distinguished appearance. These additions symbolized both the legacy of Don Bosco and the college’s forward-looking spirit.



Through these multi-dimensional advancements, **Rev. Dr. D. Maria Antony Raj** not only guided Sacred Heart College into the digital age but also **strengthened its global reputation**, making it a beacon of holistic education, innovation, and inclusive growth.

## Digital Advancements and Enhanced Safety

In 2015, shortly after assuming office, **Rev. Dr. D. Maria Antony Raj SDB** launched a series of transformative **digital initiatives**, marking a significant leap in the modernization of campus operations. One of his earliest and most impactful efforts was the implementation of a fully **digital admissions process**, which greatly streamlined enrolment procedures and enhanced transparency.



To further support digital integration, a **dedicated data centre** was established, enabling the efficient management of student attendance, staff databases, and the timely uploading of **Continuous Internal Assessment (CIA)** marks by faculty. These advancements laid the groundwork for a more organized and data-driven academic environment.

In addition, a **customized college App** was introduced to assist with **attendance tracking, certificate generation, and academic monitoring**, significantly reducing administrative workload while



improving accessibility and efficiency for students and staff alike.

To foster **better communication and engagement** among all stakeholders, the college incorporated **online transactions** and organized an **annual parents' meet**, strengthening the bridge between students, faculty, administration, and families.

Recognizing the importance of student well-being, the same year also saw the installation of a **comprehensive CCTV surveillance system** across the campus, bolstering security and ensuring a **safe and supportive learning environment**.



## Curriculum Innovation and Industry-Ready Programmes

In 2017, Sacred Heart College undertook a major curriculum revision, strategically realigning academic offerings to focus more deeply on job-oriented education, certified programmes, and research-driven postgraduate learning. This shift marked a decisive move toward enhancing student employability and addressing emerging industry needs.

To foster a disciplined academic culture, library usage was integrated into the evaluation system through a biometric attendance system, encouraging regular scholarly engagement and making reading hours a recognized component of student performance.

That same year, several new academic programmes were introduced:

- B.Sc. Microbiology
- M.Phil. in Biochemistry
- Ph.D. programmes in Management and Biochemistry

To complement these, the college launched specialized diploma courses aimed at equipping students with hands-on, industry-relevant skills:

- Diploma in Medical Laboratory Technology
- Diploma in Human Resource Management
- Diploma in Import and Export Management
- Diploma in Logistics Management

These initiatives bridged the gap between theoretical learning and real-world application, opening up direct pathways to employment in high-demand sectors.



Students were also encouraged to enrol in national online learning platforms such as SWAYAM, NPTEL, and IGNOU, further enriching their academic portfolios and enhancing lifelong learning.

To support career development, programmes like “My Quest; My Career” were organized in collaboration with Quest Alliance and Don Bosco Vazhikatti, offering students structured guidance, industry insights, and mentorship for professional growth.

## Digital Leap in Learning: Introduction of LMS and Campus Connectivity (2017–2019)

In 2017, Sacred Heart College made a decisive leap into the future of education by adopting the **Learning Management System (LMS) MOODLE**, marking a pivotal moment in the institution’s digital transformation. This platform revolutionized the teaching-learning process by offering a **structured, interactive, and accessible digital environment** for course content, assessments, and faculty-student engagement.



The transition from traditional pedagogical methods to a **blended learning model** offered students greater **flexibility, self-paced study, and anytime access** to academic resources, aligning the institution with global trends in higher education.

### To complement this advancement:

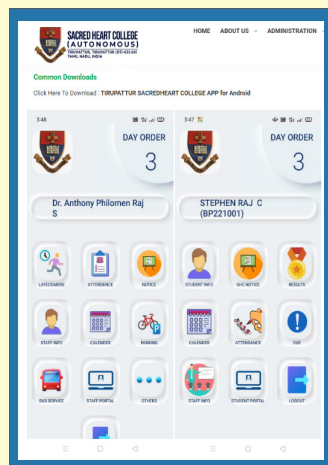
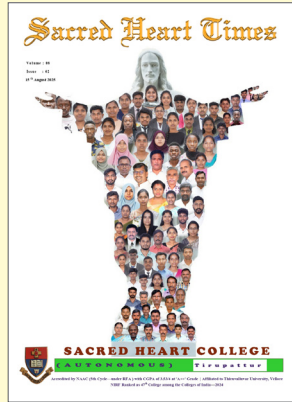
- An **online fee payment system** was introduced, eliminating the need for long queues and manual transactions.
- The **college website** was revamped to provide updated content and improved user navigation.
- **High-speed campus Wi-Fi**, enabled by the **Data Centre**, ensured smooth digital operations.

- In **2019**, the college further strengthened digital access by installing **Wi-Fi hotspots across the campus**, ensuring that students could **seamlessly connect to MOODLE and other academic resources** from any location within the college grounds.

These digital infrastructure upgrades laid a strong foundation for an **innovative, student-centric learning ecosystem**, reinforcing Sacred Heart College's commitment to academic excellence in the digital age.

### Towards a Paperless Campus and Modernized Infrastructure

In **2018**, Sacred Heart College advanced its mission of modernization and sustainability by embracing digital transformation and upgrading campus infrastructure. A major leap toward becoming a **paperless campus** was taken with the digitization of the college newsletter, *Sacred Heart Times*, enhancing accessibility and reducing environmental impact.



To further streamline communication and student engagement, the college launched the **SHCTPT mobile application**, giving students real-time access to academic schedules, updates, and essential resources—all from the convenience of their smartphones.

Infrastructure developments in the same year brought a new vibrancy to campus life:

- The Don Bosco **Indoor Stadium** was founded, marking a milestone in promoting sports and wellness.
- The **Savio Sports Hostel** and new guest rooms were constructed to support student-athletes and accommodate visitors.



- The **canteen** was expanded with a new outlet and a larger common dining area, enhancing student' experience.



- Key facilities, including the **Chemistry labs, DMT Hall, Presentation Hall, and the walking lane**, underwent significant renovations, modernizing the academic and recreational environment.





The college was also honoured to welcome **Fr. Ángel Fernández Artimè**, the 10th Successor of Don Bosco and Rector Major of the Salesians, along with **Fr. Maria Arockiam Kanaga SDB**, the Regional Superior. Their visit was a moment of inspiration and reaffirmation of the Salesian spirit and educational mission.



## Embracing Digital Education and Expanding Academic Horizons

The groundwork laid in the years preceding the COVID-19 pandemic enabled Sacred Heart College to swiftly and effectively transition to

**online learning.** In 2020, the procurement of a **high-performance Dell PowerEdge R740** server significantly enhanced the performance of the MOODLE Learning Management System, ensuring uninterrupted online education and effective student engagement.

In 2021, campus operations were further streamlined with the introduction of a **Vehicle Registration and Parking Mobile App**, reflecting the institution's continued embrace of digital convenience. The same year, the college expanded its academic offerings with the launch of **B.Sc. Psychology** and **M.Sc. Applied Microbiology**.

### The momentum continued:

- In 2022, the **Master of Social Work (MSW) – Human Resource Management** programme was introduced.
- In 2023, the undergraduate portfolio was further diversified with the addition of **B.Sc. Data Science** and **B.Sc. Zoology**.
- Recognizing the pace of technological innovation, 2024 saw the launch of **B.Sc. Artificial Intelligence** and **Machine Learning** and **B.Com. Banking and Finance**, aligning with evolving industry demands and preparing students for future careers.
- The college took another leap in digital transformation: **LED TVs** were installed across the campus to disseminate news and academic information in real time.
- In 2025, The **Smart Classroom Project** equipped **67 classrooms with smart boards**, creating a dynamic, interactive learning environment.
- Also, a 12ft x 8 ft LED panel was installed to disseminate information.



These developments positioned Sacred Heart College as a **technology-forward institution**. With a strong **Information and Communication Technology (ICT) infrastructure**, the college has not only enhanced digital learning and administrative efficiency but has also set a **benchmark for innovation**—especially significant given its **semi-urban setting**. This sustained commitment to modernization has ensured that both faculty and students remain future-ready in an increasingly digitalized global landscape.

### Sacred Heart Hosts South Asian Youth Fest (SYM Fest)



Adding a new dimension to its vibrant academic and cultural environment, Sacred Heart College, Tirupattur, proudly hosted the South Asia level **Salesian Youth Movement (SYM) Fest** from **December 29, 2024, to January 1, 2025**.

The event was jointly organized by Don Bosco Youth

Animation South Asia and the Salesian Province of Chennai, marking a momentous occasion in the college's history.



The **Salesian Youth Movement (SYM)** is a dynamic network of young people inspired by the teachings of Don Bosco. Rooted in the values of faith, friendship, and service, SYM promotes holistic youth development through spiritual formation, leadership training, community involvement, and joyful celebration. It embodies Don Bosco's vision of forming "good humans and honest citizens," encouraging youth to be agents of positive change in society.

The South Asian-level SYM Fest at SHC brought together over **1,800 young participants** from Salesian institutions across **India, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Pakistan, and Bangladesh**. The four-day festival was a celebration of **youthfulness, diversity, and unity**, offering a vibrant blend of spiritual reflection, cultural exchange, skill-building workshops, sports, and social outreach initiatives.

Themed around "**Faith in Action, Youth on Mission**," the fest featured:

- Eucharistic celebrations and moments of prayer to deepen spiritual roots;
- Cultural performances showcasing the rich traditions of South Asia;
- Workshops and leadership sessions on youth engagement, digital citizenship, and social justice;

- Service projects focused on environmental awareness and community development; Interactive sports and games, fostering teamwork and camaraderie.



NAAC Peer Team visit, 2019

impressive **CGPA of 3.53/4**, placing it among the top accredited institutions in the country.

The campus of Sacred Heart College came alive with colour, music, and youthful energy, making the SYM Fest not only a **celebration of Don Bosco's educational spirit**, but also a powerful platform for **intercultural dialogue and youth empowerment**.

By hosting the SYM Fest, **SHC reaffirmed its commitment** to Don Bosco's mission and its role as a **centre for youth development and leadership formation in the region**. The event left a lasting impression on participants, enriching their sense of identity, solidarity, and purpose.

### National Recognition and Academic Excellence

Sacred Heart College's unwavering commitment to quality education and holistic development has earned it national recognition. In **2019**, during the 4th cycle of NAAC accreditation, the college was awarded an **A+ grade with a CGPA of 3.31/4**—a significant milestone reflecting sustained academic growth, institutional integrity, and dynamic leadership. Building on this momentum, **2024 marked a landmark year** for the institution. In the 5th cycle of NAAC accreditation, Sacred Heart College achieved the prestigious **A++ grade** with an



Adding to this achievement, the college earned a place in the **National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF)**, securing the **47<sup>th</sup> position among more than 50,000 colleges across India**.



This national recognition reaffirmed Sacred Heart College’s status as a beacon of academic excellence, innovation, and inclusive education in the higher education landscape.

| NIRF Ranking from 2020 - 2025 |                      |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|
| Year                          | Rank                 |
| 2020                          | Band between 151-200 |
| 2022                          | 82                   |
| 2023                          | 42                   |
| 2024                          | 47                   |
| 2025                          | 80                   |

*The College has consistently remained within the top 100 ranking band over the past five years*

### Fostering a Vibrant Research Ecosystem

Sacred Heart College has steadily cultivated a dynamic research culture through visionary academic initiatives, strategic collaborations, and robust infrastructural support. The institution’s commitment to research excellence has not only enhanced academic output but also nurtured innovation and entrepreneurship across disciplines.

A major milestone was reached in 2016 with the launch of a series of academic journals bearing **ISBN numbers**, providing a credible and accessible platform for faculty and scholars to publish their work. These journals include:



- *Journal of Computing and Intelligent Systems (JCIS)*
- *Journal of Computational Mathematics*
- *Journal of Functional Materials and Biomolecules*
- *Puthiya Avaiyam (Tamil)*
- *The Journal of Management and Social Science Research*

In recognition of the college’s growing research reputation, students have earned prestigious Summer **Research Fellowships** from leading national institutions such as the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) Bangalore, Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA), New Delhi, Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Chennai, and the Ramanujan Institute of Advanced Study in Mathematics (RIASM), Chennai. These opportunities have strengthened research exposure and expanded the academic horizons of Sacred Heart scholars, reinforcing the college’s status as a hub for inquiry, discovery, and academic leadership.

## Strengthening Research & Innovation: Recognition and Awards



In **2018**, Sacred Heart College instituted **Research Day**, a landmark initiative to recognize and reward outstanding research contributions by students and faculty. To encourage scholarly output, **cash awards** were introduced for articles published in reputed journals, fuelling motivation and academic excellence.

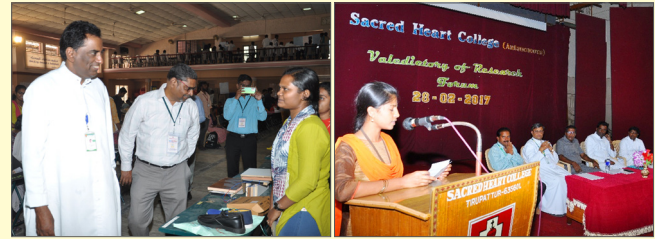
By **2020**, the scope of Research Day assessments expanded to include diverse parameters such as **result analysis, student and peer feedback, library usage hours, and remedial classes**. The **Academic Performance Indicator (API)** system was refined to effectively evaluate faculty contributions to research and scholarship. In parallel, the Institution's Innovation Council (IIC) was established to create a conducive environment for accelerating innovation,



Centre for Innovation and  
Business Incubation

Fr. Rector inaugurates  
the CIBI Office

advancing Research and Development (R&D), facilitating business incubation, promoting start-ups as entrepreneurial endeavours, and providing



comprehensive support services for their sustained growth. The **Centre for Innovation and Business Incubation (CIBI)** emerged as a catalyst for entrepreneurial development. CIBI organized various capacity-building programmes, including **SHYIA (Sacred Heart Young Innovators Award)** and **SHBIA (Sacred Heart Budding Innovators Award)**, targeting both college and school students.



These platforms promoted creativity, critical thinking, and practical problem-solving skills. CIBI's efforts gained momentum by **2023**, securing external funding to establish **state-of-the-art research and incubation facilities** for product development. The **SHYIA** competition spurred the **filing of patents**, discovery of **potential start-ups**, and registration of **MSME companies**, including the acquisition of **UDYAM-TN certificates**. Collaborations with premier institutions such as the **Indian Institute of Food Technology** further enriched the innovation ecosystem. In **2024**, a **new innovation centre** was inaugurated, providing dedicated space and support for product creation and incubation activities. CIBI, functioning as a **nodal agency for the**

**Entrepreneurship Development and Innovation Institute – Tamil Nadu (EDII-TN)**, conducted multiple entrepreneurship training programmes and mentored student entrepreneurs toward successful start-up launches.

Culminating in national recognition, Sacred Heart College secured **first place at the South Regional Level** and **second place at the National Level in the Science and Technology Category** of the **Best Entrepreneurship Award Competition**, affirming its growing stature as a hub for innovation, research, and entrepreneurship.

### Lab-to-Land Outreach Programme Bridging Knowledge and Community Impact

Sacred Heart College champions community engagement through its **Lab-to-Land Outreach Programme**, an initiative designed to translate academic learning into tangible social impact. Targeting **second-year undergraduate students**

across all departments, the programme integrates **extension activities** as a vital component of holistic education. Prior to fieldwork, students participate in **social analysis input sessions**, equipping them with the awareness and sensitivity needed for meaningful engagement. They then embark on **two-day outreach missions in 27 villages**, where they apply their **discipline-specific knowledge** to benefit local communities—ranging from awareness campaigns and educational support to practical demonstrations and capacity-building activities. This initiative not only enhances **experiential learning** but also deepens students’ understanding of **social responsibility**, fostering a lifelong commitment to **inclusive development** and **community transformation**. The Lab-to-Land programme stands as a testament to Sacred Heart College’s mission to integrate academic excellence with civic consciousness.

### Green Initiatives: Championing Sustainability



With a clear vision for environmental stewardship, **Fr. Maria Antony Raj** spearheaded a series of eco-friendly initiatives that transformed Sacred Heart College into a model of sustainable education.

Recognizing the urgency of ecological responsibility, he introduced impactful measures to reduce the institution’s carbon footprint and promote a culture of environmental awareness.

Among the most notable efforts were large-scale tree plantation drives in collaboration with the Tamil Nadu Forest Department, significantly increasing the green cover on campus. Rainwater harvesting systems were implemented to promote water

conservation and reduce reliance on external sources. The college also made a bold leap toward renewable energy by installing solar panels, which substantially reduced electricity consumption.

A comprehensive waste management system was introduced, focusing on segregation, recycling, and composting, thereby fostering responsible disposal practices among students and staff. These initiatives were not only infrastructural upgrades but also educational tools that instilled a deeper sense of eco-consciousness on the campus.



In recognition of these efforts, Sacred Heart College received the **Green Champion Award** from the Tirupattur District Collectorate in 2022. Continuing its commitment in 2024, the college constructed an artificial bund near the BISS Block to serve as a water reservoir for rainwater harvesting. A Herbal Garden was also established near the Salesian House, cultivating Indian medicinal plants and educating students about the value of traditional remedies and biodiversity.

Under the dynamic leadership of Fr. D. Maria Antony Raj SDB, the college witnessed remarkable vertical and horizontal growth. Academic and infrastructural advancements were thoughtfully planned and executed, aligning with the evolving needs of modern education. His visionary leadership fostered a robust research ecosystem and integrated cutting-edge technology into learning, positioning

Sacred Heart College as a forward-thinking, environmentally responsible institution.

By bridging tradition with innovation, and sustainability with academic excellence, Fr. Maria Antony Raj has ensured an enduring legacy—one that continues to inspire future generations of Heartians to lead with conscience and care for creation.

## Sports at Sacred Heart College A Legacy of Excellence

Sports has been an integral part of the college since its inception. Recognizing the importance of structured athletic development, the college invested in infrastructure and coaching, laying the foundation for a vibrant sports culture. From the beginning of the college, Don Bosco's education system became the core of the college ethos, which laid emphasis on education, culture and sports. More than a physical exercise, it was a foundational element that underscored the holistic approach to education at the college.

Sports have a profound impact on both the physical and mental well-being of individuals, extending far beyond mere physical exercise. They contribute to the development of character, teach valuable skills, and foster a sense of purpose and connection. Sports build character, teach strategic thinking, develop leadership skill and goal-setting capacity.

Sports participation can improve mental health by promoting the release of endorphins, reducing stress, and fostering a sense of accomplishment. Sports provide opportunities to learn valuable life skills like teamwork, sportsmanship, fair play, and resilience. Team sports, in particular, foster social connections and a sense of community. Engaging in sports can provide a sense of purpose and meaning in life, as individuals strive for goals and overcome challenges.



### Major Alphonse: Mentor, Coach, Legend

The driving force behind Sacred Heart's long-standing excellence in sports was none other than Major Alphonse, the legendary Physical Director (1957-1990) who served the institution with unwavering dedication for 33 years. A true mentor and motivator, Major Alphonse possessed a rare talent for identifying athletic potential in students and transforming it into championship performance. His keen eye for talent, combined with disciplined training, relentless coaching, and a steady stream of encouragement, brought out the very best in his players—both on and off the field.

More than a coach, Major Alphonse was a mentor and guardian to his athletes. He made it a point to ensure that students who excelled in sports but struggled academically received extra classes and support, thus nurturing not just winners in games, but well-rounded individuals. He also made sure that they were placed in central and state government jobs. His passion for sports was infectious, and his ability to inspire his boys to rise above limitations became the stuff of legend. Through his years of service, he built a sporting legacy that continues to inspire Sacred Heart College—proving that with the right mentor, discipline and heart, greatness is not just possible, but inevitable.

### Rise of the 'Volleyball College'

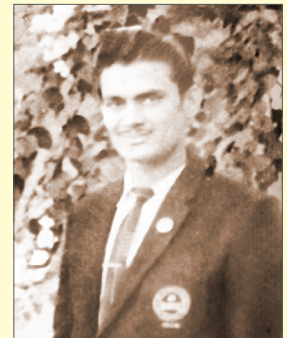
The 1960s marked a turning point for SHC in competitive sports, particularly in volleyball. In 1967, SHC's volleyball team clinched both the **University Championship** and the prestigious Santhanam Cup at the state-level Dawn-to-Dusk tournament.

From that point, SHC consistently dominated the volleyball scene, earning the proud title of "*The Volleyball College*" by the early 1970s. Its string of achievements included:

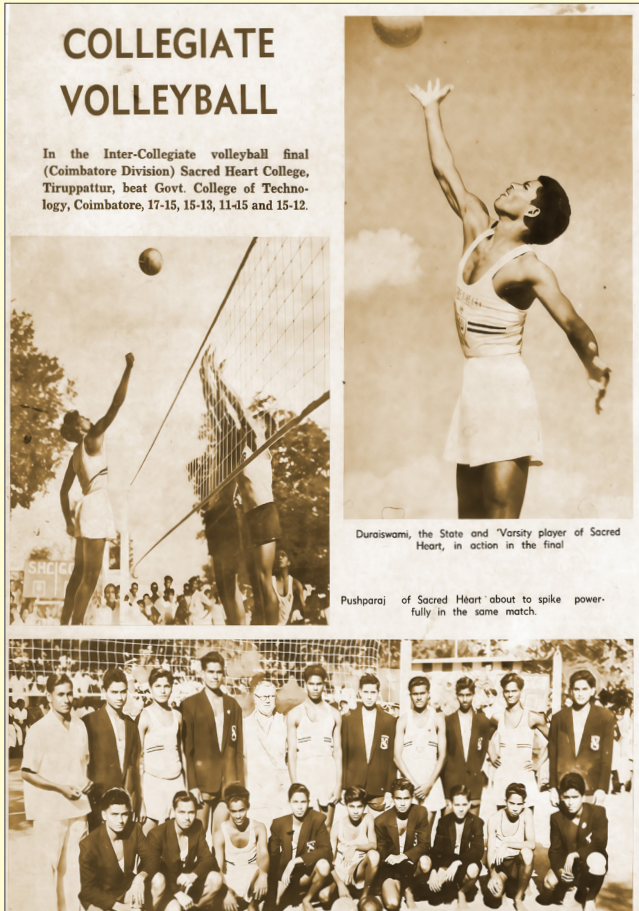
- Bertram Memorial Volleyball Trophy (Winner for 13 Consecutive years)
- Thevara Cup,
- Irinjalakuda Trophy
- Santhanam Trophy (State Level)

The college also contributed numerous players to the University and State volleyball teams, affirming its leadership in the sport.

**Mr. T. M. Nawabjan** added fame to the college by representing the state of Tamil Nadu in Volleyball. In 1971, five out of six players who represented the Madras University team were from Sacred Heart College.



In 1972, the All-India Inter-University Volleyball Tournament was won by the University of Madras. Five of the players in the Madras University team were from Sacred Heart and went on to participate in the World University Competition. Years later, in 1996, six more Heartians repeated this remarkable feat, underscoring that SHC was not just producing players—it was shaping champions.



## COLLEGIATE VOLLEYBALL

In the Inter-Collegiate volleyball final (Coimbatore Division) Sacred Heart College, Tiruppattur, beat Govt. College of Technology, Coimbatore, 17-15, 15-13, 11-15 and 15-12.

Duraiswami, the State and 'Varsity player of Sacred Heart, in action in the final

Pushparaj of Sacred Heart about to spike powerfully in the same match.

## Recognition and the Sports Hostel



The Government of Tamil Nadu, recognizing SHC's leadership in volleyball, selected the college under a special scheme in 2004 to establish a dedicated Sports Hostel for Volleyball. Through this government scheme, both the State and the College management came together to provide free boarding, education, and complete fee waivers for volleyball players,

ensuring that financial barriers did not hinder talent. The hostel was more than accommodation—it was a nursery of excellence, where discipline met passion, and ambition was nurtured into achievement.

## Achievements in Other Sports

While volleyball remained SHC's flagship sport, the college steadily expanded into other disciplines:

- **Hockey:** Won the divisional championship consecutively for 20 years; produced players who represented university and state.
- **Basketball:** Popular among hostel students, encouraged by faculty involvement, including Principal Fr. Abraham Panampara.
- **Football:** Gained momentum through hostel enthusiasm and participation in local tournaments.
- **Cricket:** The college competed regularly, including in the Murphy Memorial Cricket Tournament.
- **Table Tennis:** In the early 1970s, SHC captured the Madras University Championship.
- **Kabaddi and Handball:** Later decades saw notable debuts and steady growth in intercollegiate competitions.

A proud milestone came in 1976, when **Mr. Roger Magee**, an SHC alumnus, **captained the Indian University Hockey team** on a foreign tour—bringing national prestige to the college for the first time.



During the 1990s and early 2000s, SHC maintained its standing as a powerhouse in university-level sports. The college saw continued success in volleyball, basketball, and hockey, while also nurturing individual athletes who went on to

represent the institution at the state and national levels. The administration remained committed to sports development, integrating advanced training methods and providing scholarships for outstanding athletes. Sacred Heart College was one among the few colleges from which outstanding sportspersons were selected by the government for special training. The selected players were given accommodation in government sports hostel.

And then came the individual torch bearers, whose stories still echo through our corridors. G. Stanley Vincent of BBA, eyes burning with determination, donned Tamil Nadu's colours in volley ball and returned with a glittering gold medal from the 10<sup>th</sup> All India Youth National Volleyball Championship at Burdwan in 2008. Not long after, P. Praveen of B. Com grabbed another gold for Tamil Nadu in the Sub-Junior Nationals in Kerala in 2011, and S. Vinitha of B.A. Economics carved her own path with a bronze in athletics at the Junior State Athletic Meet in Coimbatore in 2012. Each of them carried the flame higher, reminding generations that Sacred Heart is not just a college—it is a force where talent turns into triumph. In recent years, SHC has extended its excellence beyond intercollegiate competitions to national-level representation. In 2016, R. Balaji and R. Ajith from the Department of Economics represented Tamil Nadu in hockey tournament held in Jhansi. SHC athletes have also made their mark in

body physique competitions at the All India Inter-University meet. The performance of the college in intercollegiate activities has significantly grown, with students participating in multiple events each academic year across a wide range of sports and extracurricular activities. In 2018, the Savio Sports Hostel and Don Bosco indoor stadium were built; they are a lasting testament of the college's commitment towards the development of sports.

### The Role of Sports in SHC's Educational Framework

Sports at SHC go beyond competition and are an essential part of student development. The college views athletic participation as a means of instilling values such as teamwork, perseverance, and leadership. With dedicated coaching, modern sports facilities, and active encouragement from faculty members, SHC ensures that students not only excel in academics but also in sports, leading to well-rounded personal and professional growth. Sacred Heart College's commitment to sports is deeply ingrained in its institutional philosophy. By fostering a competitive yet inclusive sports culture, the college continues to shape future leaders who embody discipline, resilience, and a spirit of excellence. As SHC moves forward, its legacy in sports remains a source of pride and a testament to its holistic approach to education.



## Alumni Association

The Alumni Association of Sacred Heart College traces its origins to **1963**, when it was informally launched as the **Old Boys Association**—a heartfelt initiative by former students to stay connected with their alma mater. Over the years, this gathering of goodwill and nostalgia matured into a formally structured body and was officially established in **1980** as a registered society under the Indian Societies Registration Act. Today, it functions under the guidance of an **11-member executive committee**, comprising committed office bearers who ensure that the Association’s mission aligns with the vision of the institution. It is also affiliated with the Don Bosco Past Pupils Federation, a globally recognized alumni network of Don Bosco institutions.

A highlight of the Association’s calendar is the **Annual Alumni Meet**, traditionally held on the **last Sunday of January every year**. This event brings together hundreds of former students in a celebration of shared legacy, lifelong friendships, and renewed commitment to the institution’s growth. In addition to the central meet, various departments host **Alumni Chapters**, offering focused interactions that strengthen ties between past and present students.



Alumni Chapter

Sacred Heart College alumni form a vital pillar of the institution’s legacy and development. Spanning a wide range of professions—including Vice Chancellors, civil servants, lawyers, entrepreneurs, professors, and educators—they embody the values instilled during their time at the college. Their continued association with the college significantly enhances its academic, infrastructural, and social landscape. Alumni actively contribute to the academic life of the college. Many serve on key statutory bodies such as the **Board of Studies** and **Academic Council**, helping shape curriculum with industry-relevant insights. Others return as **resource persons** for seminars, workshops, and conferences, enriching academic discourse for both faculty and students. They play a key role in **career guidance**, facilitate **internships and field visits**,



The first gathering of the Old Boys Association

*Contd. on page 58*

## STORIES THAT SHAPED US, MEMORIES THAT BIND US

### Voice of an Alumnus

உணர்ந்ததை உரைக்கிறேன், உள்ளத்தை திறக்கிறேன். நலம் விரும்பிகளின் திசை நோக்கி, எழுத்து கோலால் பயணிக்கிறேன்

நான் N.S. லூர்துராஜ் பேசுகிறேன் ஏ. ஆர். ரஹ்மான், தான் படித்த பள்ளிக்கூடத்தில், தனக்கு நேர்ந்த அவமானத்தை பற்றி சொன்னதை படிக்க நேர்ந்தபோது, என்னையுமறியாமல் கலங்கியதோடு மட்டுமல்லாமல், இனம்புரியாத பயம் தொற்றிக்கொண்டது.

ஒரு நூலிழையில் நான் தப்பியிருக்கிறேன் என்று புரிந்தது. ஒருவேளை அப்படியொரு சம்பவம் என் வாழ்வில் நடந்திருந்தால், ஏ. ஆர். ரஹ்மான் போல போராடி வென்றிருக்க முடியும் என்ற நம்பிக்கையில்லை. மாறாக, இந்த உலகத்தின் எங்கோ ஒரு மூலையில், அன்றாட சோற்றுக்கும், துணிக்கும் அல்லாடும் கோடானு கோடி மக்களில் நானும் ஒருவனாய் கரைந்து போயிருப்பேன். இந்த சூழ்நிலையில்தான், நான் படித்த, திருப்பத்தூர் தூய நெஞ்ச கல்லூரியை நெஞ்சார நன்றியோடு நினைத்து பார்க்கிறேன் .

அந்த கல்லூரியின் வாசலில் நிற்கும் காவலரை கூட அதிகாரம் செய்யும் அளவிலான உத்தியோகத்தில் என் அப்பா இல்லை. அந்த வளாகத்திற்குள் காலடி எடுத்து வைக்கும் அளவிற்கு என் மதிப்பெண்கள் இல்லை. அந்த பேராசிரியர்கள் பேசுவதை புரிந்து கொள்ளும் அளவிற்கான, ஆங்கில ஞானம் இல்லை அந்த வகுப்புகளுக்கு போட்டு கொண்டு போகும் அளவிற்கு நல்ல சட்டைகள் இல்லை. அங்கு வந்து சேர்ந்த சொற்ப மேட்டுக்குடி மக்களோடு, போட்டி போடும் நிறமில்லை அந்த விடுதியில் தங்கி, உண்டு உறங்குவதற்கு கொடுக்குமளவிற்கு என்னிடத்தில் பணமும் இல்லை.

இப்படி எதுவுமே இல்லாத நான்தான், இளங்கலை படிப்பையும், முதுகலை படிப்பையும் முடித்துவிட்டு வெளியே வந்தேன் என்றால், இதை படிப்போரை வியக்க வைக்கும். ஆச்சரியத்தில் புருவம் உயரும். கொஞ்சம் வளர்ந்து, ஒரு உத்தியோகத்தில் அமர்ந்து, ஆளான பின்பு, என்னோடு பயின்று. உலகமெங்கும் விரவி கிடக்கின்ற, என் நண்பர்களோடு, என் 'இல்லை' தத்துவத்தை பகிர்ந்து கொண்டபோதுதான் தெரிந்தது, அவர்கள் எல்லோருக்குமே இந்த தகுதிதான் இருந்தது என்று.

ஆக மொத்தத்தில், எங்களிடத்தில் 'இல்லை' என்று இருந்ததுதான், எங்களின் தகுதியாக கருதப்பட்டு, தூய நெஞ்ச கல்லூரிக்குள் செல்ல வழிவகுத்தது. தொடக்க காலத்தில், விடுமுறை முடிந்து கல்லூரிக்கு திரும்பும்போது விழுப்புரத்திலிருந்து விடியற்காலை மூன்று மணிக்கு ஒரு பேருந்தில் புறப்பட்டு, திருவண்ணாமலை போக வேண்டும். அங்கிருந்து ஒரு மணி நேரம் கழித்து, திருப்பத்தூருக்கு பேருந்து பிடித்து, காலை எட்டு மணிவாக்கில் போய் சேர்ந்து. அவசர அவசரமாக புறப்பட்டு, கல்லூரிக்கு போகவேண்டும். சிறிது காலம் கழித்து, விழுப்புரத்திலிருந்து நேரடியாக பேருந்து, அதே விடியற்காலை மூன்று மணிக்கு விடப்பட்டது. பேருந்து கட்டணம் பத்து ரூபாய் ஐம்பது காசுகள். எங்கள் வீட்டிற்கும் பேருந்து நிலையத்திற்கும் ஏறக்குறைய மூன்று கிலோமீட்டர் தூரம் இருக்கும்.

அப்பா என்னை இரண்டு மணிக்கெல்லாம் எழுப்பி சைக்கிளில் அழைத்து கொண்டு வருவார். எனக்கு வறுமையில் வளர்ந்த உடல் வாகு என்பதனால், அப்பாவுக்கு சைக்கிள் மிதிப்பதில் சிரமம் இருக்காது. வழியில் 'இரக்கம்' என்று விழுப்புரம் மக்களால் அழைக்கப்பட்ட மேம்பாலம் வரும், அங்கு அப்பாவால் சைக்கிள் மிதிக்க முடியாததனால், இரண்டு பேரும் அதன் மேற்புறம் வரை சைக்கிளை தள்ளிக்கொண்டு நடந்து போவோம், மேற்புறத்தை அடைந்தவுடன், அடுத்து

வருவது சரிவு என்பதனால், மறுபடியும் சைக்கிள் பயணத்தை தொடர்வோம். அப்பா என்னை காலை இரண்டரை மணிக்கெல்லாம், சைக்கிளில் பேருந்து நிலையத்துக்கு அழைத்து கொண்டு வந்து விடுவார்.

கையில் பத்து ரூபாய் ஐம்பது காசுகளை கொடுத்து, நான் டிக்கெட் வாங்கும் வரை பார்த்து கொண்டிருந்து விட்டு, டிக்கெட்டை பத்திரமாய் மடித்து, சட்டைப்பையில் வைத்து கொள்ள சொல்லி எச்சரிக்கை செய்துவிட்டு, பேருந்து புறப்பட்டவுடன், அந்த இருட்டில், வந்த வழியே வீடு நோக்கி சைக்கிளில் புறப்பட்டு செல்வார் ஒரு டிக்கெட் வாங்குவதற்கு ஏன் அத்தனை சிரத்தை எடுத்தார்? என்றால், ஒரு வேளை அந்த பணத்தில் கொஞ்சம் தொலைந்து, குறைந்து விட்டால், டிக்கெட் வாங்க வேறு காசு இல்லை என்பது தான்.

எப்போதுமே பேருந்து கிளம்பும் வரை நின்று செல்லும் அப்பா, ஒரு நாள் என்னை பேருந்து நிலையத்தில் இறக்கி விட்டு, «இங்கேயே நில, உடனே வருகிறேன்» என்று சொல்லிவிட்டு காசு கூட கொடுக்காமல், சைக்கிளை தள்ளிக்கொண்டு திரும்ப சென்றார். நேரம் செல்ல செல்ல, பேருந்து புறப்பட்டு விடுமோ என்ற பயம் வந்தது. நான் தோளில் மாட்டிய பையோடு, அப்பா சென்ற திசையையும், பஸ் நிற்கும் இடத்தையும் மாறி மாறி பார்த்துக்கொண்டிருந்தேன் என் படபடப்பு அதிகமாகி கொண்டே இருந்தது.

பேருந்து புறப்பட ஐந்து நிமிடம் இருந்தபோது, அந்த இரவில் வியர்த்து விறுவிறுக்க, என் அப்பா வந்து, கையில் காசை திணித்து, "போய் டிக்கெட் எடுத்து கொண்டு, பஸ்ஸில் உட்கார்" என்று அவசரப்படுத்தினார். எதுவும் புரியாமல், நான் உள்ளே போய், டிக்கெட் வாங்கி கொண்டு ஜன்னலோர இருக்கையில் அமர்ந்தேன். சைக்கிளை தள்ளிக்கொண்டு, ஜன்னலருகே வந்த அப்பா "அது ஒண்ணுமில்லைப்பா, கால் சட்டை பையில் வைத்திருந்த பத்து ரூபாய் எங்கோயே

விழுந்துடிச்சி, டிக்கெட் எடுக்க காசில்லை, அதான் திரும்பி, சைக்கிளை மிதிக்காம, தள்ளிகிட்டே போய், தேடிப்பார்த்தேன். இரக்கம் ஏறுகிற வழியில் கிடந்துச்சு. எடுத்துட்டு வந்தேன்" என்று சிரிப்போடு சொன்னார்.

அவர் 'இரக்கம்' ஏறுகிற வழி என்று சொன்னது, நாங்கள் கடந்து வந்த பாதையில் பாதி தொலைவு அவர் சொன்ன நேரம், அதிகாலை மூன்று மணி. இப்படிப்பட்ட பின்புலத்திலிருந்த என்னை யாரும், பிச்சை எடுக்க சொல்லவில்லை, மாறாக, என் இல்லாமையை கணக்கில் கொள்ளாமல் அரவணைத்து, கற்றுக்கொடுத்தார்கள். எப்படி கல்வி கட்டணத்தை கட்டினோம், விடுதியின் கட்டணத்தை கட்டினோம் என்ற விவரமெல்லாம் எங்களுக்கு ஞாபகம் இல்லை. ஆனால், அடிக்கடி சில சம்பவங்கள் நடக்கும். அதில் ஒன்று, திடீரென்று, கல்லூரி உதவியாளர், அலுவலக எழுத்தர் கூப்பிடுவதாக சொல்லி வகுப்பிலிருந்து அழைத்து போவார், அங்கு ஆரோக்கியசாமி என்பவர், தம் அலுவல்கள் மத்தியில், ஒரு காகிதத்தை நீட்டி, «இதில ஒரு கையெழுத்து போடுப்பா» என்பார். கையெழுத்து போட்டவுடன், "சரி நீ கிளாசுக்கு போ. லோன் ஸ்கலர்ஷிப் வரும், வாங்கி காலேஜ் பீஸ் கட்டிக்கிறோம்» என்பார் அன்று அவர் செய்த மனித நேய செயல்களை இன்றுவரை கூட மறக்க இயலவில்லை. அடுத்த கூத்து, விடுதியில் நடுக்கும் குற்றவாளிகளை அடையாளம் காண நடக்கும் அணிவகுப்பு போல, வருடத்திற்கு, இரண்டு அல்லது மூன்று முறை, விடுதிக்கு பணம் கட்டாதவர்களின் அணிவகுப்பு நடக்கும் வந்த பணத்தை, சொந்த செலவிற்கு பயன்படுத்தி விட்டு, விடுதிக்கு பணம் கட்டாதவர்கள் மத்தியில், என்னைப்போன்ற, பணத்தின் வாசனையையே அறியாது நிற்போம். வசவு எல்லோருக்கும் பொதுவாகவே இருக்கும். வலிக்காதது போலவே நிற்க வேண்டும். வலிப்பதை காட்டினாலும், வீறாப்பை காட்ட பணமில்லை.

அணிவகுப்பு முடிந்து, வசவுகளை சுமந்து கொண்டு, விதிக்கப்பட்ட கடைசி நாட்களை காதில் வாங்கி கொண்டு, அவரவர் அறைக்கு வந்து, சுருண்டு தூங்கி போவோம். அடுத்து வருவதுதான், ஒரு உச்சகட்ட திருப்பம். அடுத்த நாள் காலை, வழக்கம் போலவே, குளித்து முடித்து விட்டு, காலை திருப்பலி முடிந்து ஆலயம் விட்டு வெளியேறும்போது, யாரவது ஒருவர் வந்து, «உன்னை ரெக்டர் கூப்பிடுகிறார்» என்று சொல்வார்கள். ரெக்டர் என்று சொல்லப்படுகின்ற இல்ல தந்தையை, அவர் அறையில் போய் பார்க்கும்போது «வாங்க தம்பி, இந்த வருஷம் உங்களுக்கு, ரெக்டர் ஸ்காலர்ஷிப் தர்றோம், வாங்கி ஹாஸ்டெல் பீஸ் கட்டிட்டு, நல்லா படிங்க» என்பார். இப்போதும் கூட இதை எழுதும்போது கண்ணில் வழியும் நீர்த்திவலைகள், காகிதத்தை மறைக்கிறது, எழுத்துக்களை நனைக்கிறது.

எத்தனையோ நாள், தேநீர் கடையில் பேராசிரியர்களை சந்திக்க நேர்ந்தபோதெல்லாம், அவர்கள் எங்கள் தேநீருக்கு பணம் கொடுத்த சுக அனுபவங்களும், நாங்களே அவர்களை கொடுக்க சொல்லி வற்புறுத்திய, ஆரோக்கியமான உறவுமுறைகளும் இருந்தது என்பது இன்றுவரை மறக்க இயலாது. எங்கள் கணித துறையை சேர்ந்த, பேராசிரியர் திரு ரெனி சகாயராஜ் அவர்கள் இப்படி ஒரு தர்ம சங்கடத்தில் சிக்கியபோது, அவர் கையில் பணமில்லாததானல், தன்னுடைய அடையாள அட்டையை, தேநீர் கடைக்காரரிடம் அடகு வைக்க முற்பட்டதும், அதை அவன் வாங்க மறுத்தபோது, நாங்கள் வெடித்து சிரித்ததும், மனுசுக்குள் மத்தாப்பாய் எப்போதும் ஒளிர்கிறது. கற்றலும், கற்பித்தலும் எப்போதும் பேதம் பார்க்காது, குரோதம் கொள்ளாது, அதிகாரம் செய்யாது.

அது ஒரு கண்டிப்பு கலந்த தோழமை ஒரு நாள் என் பெண் குழந்தை «அப்பா, நீ படித்த கல்லூரிக்கு என்னை கூட்டிப்போயேன்» என்றாள் "நிச்சயம், உன்னையும், தம்பியையும் கூட்டி கொண்டு போகிறேன்" என்றேன்

"அதே கல்லூரியில் நானும் படிக்க முடியுமா?"

"இல்லை தாயீ, உனக்கு அங்கு இடம் கிடைக்காது, அதற்கான தகுதி உனக்கு கிடையாது"

"ஓ மை காட், அப்படி என்னப்பா உனக்கு இருந்த தகுதி எனக்கு இல்லை?"

"உன் அப்பா, வறுமையில் பிறந்தவன், அரசு பள்ளியில் படித்தவன், காசு இல்லாதவன், ஆங்கிலம் அறியாதவன், ஏழை அப்பனுக்கு மகன், காலில் செருப்பு போடுவது கூட ஆடம்பர செலவு என்று சொல்லி வளர்க்கப்பட்டவன், ஆனால் நீ, பணக்கார அப்பனுக்கு மகள், நுனி நாக்கில் ஆங்கிலம் பேசுபவள், விதம் விதமாய் உடுத்துவதற்கும், உடைக்கு ஏற்ப மாற்ற செருப்பும் வைத்திருப்பவள்" அந்த கல்லூரி, உன் அப்பாவை போன்றே ஒருவனுக்காகத்தான் காத்திருக்கிறதே ஒழிய, உன்னைபோன்றவளுக்கு இல்லை" என்றேன்.

'எழுத்தறிவித்தவன் இறைவன் என்பது உண்மை, ஆனால் தூய நெஞ்சு கல்லூரியில் இறைவனே இறங்கி வந்து எழுத்தறிவிக்கிறான்'.

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(Translation)

**Voice of an Alumnus**

I am N. S. Lourduraj. When I read A. R. Rahman's account of the humiliation he endured at his School, I was shaken to the core. It was not a fleeting sadness—it carried with it a nameless fear, as though the wounds were mine.

In that moment, I realized how narrowly I had escaped. If such a humiliation had befallen me, I know I could never have risen above it as Rahman did. I would not have fought back, nor triumphed. More likely, I would have been lost forever—one

among the faceless millions of India who struggle each day for food, clothing, survival.

It is with that awareness that I now look back—grateful beyond words—at the institution that cradled me, raised me, and shaped me: **Sacred Heart College, Tirupattur.**

My father was not a man of power—not even that of the watchman at the college gate. My marks were not high enough for admission. My English was too poor to follow lectures. I had no proper shirts to wear to class, no money for food or hostel fees. By every measure, I had nothing.

And yet—with all these “nothings”—I completed both undergraduate and postgraduate studies. That very fact still raises eyebrows. Only later, when life matured me and I reconnected with classmates now spread across the world, did I realize: many of us had shared the same strange ‘qualification’. We were admitted, not despite our nothingness, but because of it. At Sacred Heart, our “nothing” was counted as our merit.

I recall those early days vividly. Returning from vacation, I would leave Villupuram at 3 a.m., catch a bus to Tiruvannamalai, then another to Tirupattur, reaching by 8 a.m. and rushing into class. Later, a direct bus was introduced, still at 3 a.m., bus fare: Rs. 10 and 50 paise. My house was 3 km from the bus stand.

My father would wake me at 2 a.m., seat me on his bicycle, and pedal me through the darkness. On the way was the flyover the townspeople called *Irakkam*. Since he could not pedal uphill, we would both dismount and push the bicycle until we reached the top. From there, the slope carried us forward again. By 2:30 a.m., he would leave me at the bus stand, watch until I bought my ticket, remind me to keep

it safe in my shirt pocket, and then pedal back into the darkness.

Why such care over a ticket? Because if that ten-rupee note somehow got lost, there would be no second chance—no more money to buy another ticket.

I remember one day vividly. He left me at the bus stand without handing me the fare. “Wait here, I’ll be back soon,” he said, and disappeared. Minutes ticked by. My fear rose. The bus was about to leave. With my bag on my shoulder, I stood staring in the direction he had gone and, every now and then, glancing at the bus—heart pounding—out of fear that it may start without me.

Just in time, he returned—drenched in sweat, breathless, and clutching a 10 rupee note. Pressing it into my hand, he urged, “Quick, buy the ticket!” Only after I was seated by the window did he explain, smiling through exhaustion: “The money had slipped out of my pocket, on the way. I ran back to search and found it lying on the slope of *Irakkam*.”

That was my background. And yet, in college, no one treated me as lesser; no one asked me to beg. No one despised my poverty. They embraced me, taught me, carried me forward.

I do not recall how fees were arranged, but I do remember being called out of class by the clerk, Mr. Arokiasamy, who would hand me a paper and say, “Sign here.” Once signed, he would reassure me: “Go back to class now. When the loan scholarship arrives, we’ll pay your fees.” Such quiet acts of kindness remain unforgettable.

The hostel, too, had its rituals. Twice or thrice a year, those who had not paid fees were lined up like culprits in a parade. Among them, I too would stand—one who had never handled money. We stood still, pretending it did not hurt. Afterwards,

we would creep back to our rooms, thinking of the payment deadline, and fall into uneasy sleep.

But dawn always brought grace. After morning Mass, someone would whisper, “The Rector wants to see you.” Nervously, I would step into his room. With a father’s warmth, he would say, “My son, this year, you will receive the Rector’s Scholarship. Pay your hostel fees and study well.” Even now, as I write these words, tears blur the page.

There were lighter memories too. Meeting professors at tea stalls, urging them to pay for our tea. Once, Professor Reni Sagayaraj, caught without money, even tried to pawn his ID card to the tea-shop owner! When the man refused, we burst out laughing together. Such was the—professors and students bound not by authority or fear, but by friendship, correction, and humanity.

Years later, my daughter once said, “Appa, take me to your college.”

“Of course,” I said. “I’ll take you and your brother.”

“Can I study there too?”

“No, child. You won’t get a seat.”

“Why not? What qualification did you have that I don’t?”

I smiled: “Your father was born poor, studied in a government school, had no money, no English, grew up thinking shoes were a luxury. But you—you are the child of wealth, fluent in English, with shoes for every dress. That college waits for someone like me, not for someone like you.”

Yes—God is the giver of knowledge. But at Sacred Heart College, it felt as though God Himself came down to teach.

### **N. S. LOURDURAJ**

Head of Department, Mathematics,  
Indian School, Sohar, Sultanate of Oman

*Contd. from page 53*

and strengthen **placement opportunities** through their professional networks.

The Association also plays a crucial role in the **Mid-Day Meal Scheme**, ensuring that students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds receive nutritious meals at a nominal cost—upholding dignity and removing stigma. In addition, alumni contribute generously to **scholarships, financial aid, and study materials**, empowering meritorious and underprivileged students to pursue their education without barriers.

To streamline alumni engagement, the college has developed **SHC Alumni Automation**, a dedicated digital platform that maintains an updated directory of alumni from all departments and batches, enhancing communication and collaboration. Alumni have also contributed significantly to **infrastructure development**, including building projects and facility upgrades, and continue to support **institutional funds** to ensure the college’s sustainable growth.

Beyond the campus, many alumni serve in local governance through the Panchayat Raj system and similar initiatives, modelling active citizenship and social responsibility. Their engagement fosters a culture of civic awareness among students and enhances the college’s community impact. During the COVID-19 pandemic, alumni mobilized substantial relief efforts, underscoring their enduring commitment to service.

In recent years, alumni have played a central role in **entrepreneurship promotion, skill development, and institutional innovation**. The establishment of a strong **Endowment Fund** stands as a testament to their long-term vision, offering vital support for the college’s present needs and future aspirations.

## Healthy Practices at SHC: Nurturing Conscience, Character, and Community



Sacred Heart College fosters a deep sense of moral and spiritual responsibility through a range of thoughtfully integrated practices rooted in the Salesian tradition. Since 1951, the college has upheld the custom of daily “**Good Morning Talks**”—brief reflections that serve as both a moral compass and a source of personal encouragement. These talks, held during assemblies or in smaller group settings, are complemented by “Good Afternoon” and “**Good Night Talks**” in the hostels, typically offered before or after games and study hours, creating a consistent rhythm of reflection throughout the day.

These practices are not just ceremonial; they offer a meaningful space to engage with themes of personal growth, motivation, ethics, and spirituality. The talks often explore deeper philosophical ideas and social concerns—sometimes venturing into political or culturally sensitive issues—encouraging students to think critically and act responsibly.

To promote holistic well-being, the college also organizes regular **yoga sessions, morning prayer services, weekly prayer meetings, student retreats, and inter-hostel activities**, all of which nurture both body and spirit. Catholic students are invited to participate in the daily celebration of



the Holy Eucharist at 7 a.m. Spiritual retreats are conducted for Christian and non-Christian staff separately, offering spaces for inner reflection and renewal.

A distinctive hallmark of Sacred Heart College is its commitment to **Life Education**. What began as a Department of Moral Science and Ethics has evolved into the independent and dynamic Department of Life Education—a pioneering initiative of the college. While religious instruction was traditionally the responsibility of the Salesian Fathers, moral science was led by professors, creating a balanced approach to value education. The enduring impact of these classes is evident in the fond memories shared by alumni, inspiring the formal establishment of the **Department of Religion and Ethics** in 1988, and its subsequent transformation into the current **Life Education Department**.

Under the leadership of the Rector, the Department of Life Education plays a vital role in embedding human values into all undergraduate programmes. With **43 dedicated courses**, it offers a wide range of topics such as Human Rights and Social Legislation, Employability Skills, Technical Skills, Corporate Social Responsibility, and Social Work, ensuring that students graduate not only with academic credentials but with a well-formed conscience and a heart for service.



The college also houses a vibrant **Counselling Centre**, guided by the Rector, which plays an instrumental role in supporting students' emotional well-being. Beyond one-on-one sessions, the centre organizes a variety

of workshops and outreach programmes each year, aimed at equipping students with the resilience, confidence, and clarity needed to navigate life's challenges.

Sacred Heart College's commitment to **nurturing the whole person—body, mind, and spirit**—is evident in these integrated and evolving practices. Together, they form a culture of care, conscience, and community, reinforcing the college's mission to form individuals who are not only educated but deeply human.

### The Jubilee Story of Sacred Heart College

In the life of Sacred Heart College, Jubilees are far more than milestones in the march of time; they are living memories, celebrated with joy and reverence, each leaving behind a story etched in stone and



spirit. The first great celebration came with the **Silver Jubilee in 1976**. Though still young, the

college was full of promise, and the entire campus prepared itself for a momentous occasion. On the 5th and 6th of January 1977, the air was charged with festivity as the college community gathered to honour the twenty-five years of its growth. A striking new structure rose on the **grounds** — the **Silver Jubilee Memorial Monument**, a charming green building with its unique blend of Indo-Western architecture. Tall and graceful, it transformed the campus, standing as a symbol of youthful ambition. The **foundation stone**, blessed by **Archbishop D. S. Lourduwamy** (who later became a Cardinal), who had journeyed all the way from Rome, became a sacred marker of both memory and hope.

The rhythm of time carried the college to its **Golden Jubilee** in **2002**, when the college crowned itself with golden glory. The Golden Jubilee unfolded with even greater joy, a celebration of fifty years of toil and triumph. A new **Golden Jubilee Building** rose from the earth, strong and dignified. More than bricks and mortar, it stood as a crown jewel, embodying dreams realized and lasting achievements,



a testimony that Sacred Heart was no longer just a college in Tirupattur, but an institution of renown. A decade later, in 2012, the **Diamond Jubilee** was marked with equal pride and thanksgiving. On 24 February, under the blessings and jubilee message of **Rt. Rev. Dr. Soundararaju**, Bishop of Vellore and former Principal of the College, the celebrations

unfolded in memorable phases, each recalling the richness of the past. The enduring gift of this jubilee was the **Diamond Jubilee Memorial Building**, named with reverence after **Fr. John Med**, the College's first Principal and Correspondent. In honouring him, the College honoured its roots. His name, etched in stone, remains a guiding presence for generations to come.



And now, in the year **2025**, the story continues as the college steps into its **Platinum Jubilee**. Seventy-five years have passed since its humble beginnings, and Sacred Heart College now stands as a towering beacon of education, service, and transformation. The campus is alive with anticipation for, this jubilee is not merely a celebration of the past, but a promise of the future. One can almost hear the whispers of time itself — assuring that the college will live to see its **Centenary**, and beyond, carrying forward the spirit of those who built and believed.

### Traditions of Gratitude and Celebration

The traditions of the college extend beyond institutional jubilees to occasions more personal, yet no less profound. The campus often gathers to honour its Jubilarians, celebrating milestones fondly remembered as the moments when the **jubilee bells ring out** in thanksgiving. Each celebration carries with it stories of faith, fidelity and gratitude.

Foremost among these celebrations were the **jubilees of the Salesian Fathers**, who had given themselves

entirely to God and to the service of the young in Tirupattur. Their jubilees—whether of **religious life** or **priestly ordination**— were not merely personal landmarks but living testimonies of devotion and perseverance. Each one spoke of journeys marked by sacrifice and endurance: guiding students, building communities, and carrying forward the Salesian mission in Tirupattur. For the college family, such jubilees stood as a reminder that the very heartbeat of the institution flows from the dedication of the Sons of Don Bosco, who lived the gospel with quiet strength and unwavering joy.

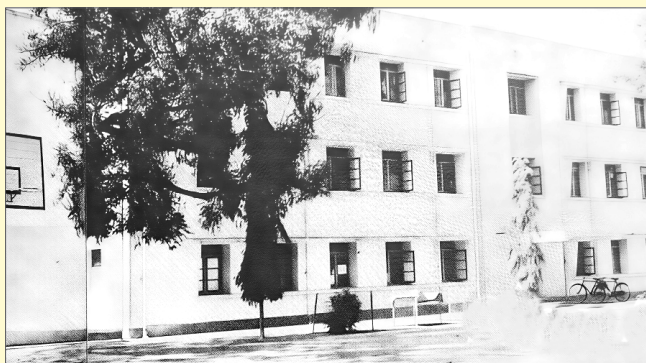
Equally cherished are the **Jubilees of the Professors, Non-teaching staff, and Domestic workers**— the often-unsung pillars who embody the college motto in classrooms, corridors, and hearts. Upon completing 25 years of service, they are honoured by the college community in a spirit of joy and reverence. These occasions become treasured opportunities for management, colleagues, and students to express heartfelt gratitude for the diligence, loyalty, and love with which they have served. Celebrated often in the presence of family, friends, and co-workers, these jubilees are transformed into moments of thanksgiving and tribute, affirming the deep bonds that unite the SHC community.

Alongside its jubilee celebrations, Sacred Heart College has nurtured another cherished tradition of gratitude — honouring its own pillars of service through **retirement functions**. These occasions, marked by reverence and warmth, celebrate not only the span of years but the depth of each one's contribution to the college and to society at large. The presence of families lends these gatherings a sense of intimacy and belonging, as the community recognizes that behind every service lies unseen sacrifice and steadfast support. This culture of esteem and gratitude, extended to every hand that helped shape the institution, has become a defining

hallmark of SHC, making it in truth a community of the heart.

Each jubilee, whether of the college or of its people, has been like a bell tolling across generations—its sound carrying echoes of past vision and vicissitudes. Together, these celebrations form not just a chronicle of Sacred Heart College, but a living tapestry of its spirit. As the **Platinum Jubilee** unfolds in 2025, the story of the institution shines brighter than ever, reminding all who enter its gates that Sacred Heart is not merely a college, but a legacy of dreams fulfilled, lives transformed, and hope renewed for the future. Every jubilee is a flame rekindled, carrying the warmth of yesterday into the promise of tomorrow.

### BEYOND WALLS AND ROOMS: The Hostel Legacy of SHC



Rinaldi Hostel

In the heart of the bustling college campus, the hostels have stood as havens of growth and belonging, shaping generations of young people. The story began in August 1956, with the **Rinaldi Hostel**—a three-storeyed rectangle of brick and mortar, named after Fr. Rinaldi, the third successor of Don Bosco. Over time, it became more than a dwelling—it stood as a stronghold of tradition and a guardian of the College’s spirit. Within its hundred-odd rooms, the new ideas of each generation met the test of lived experience, where laughter mingled with

discipline, and youthful energy was tempered by values. Within those walls, young men were quietly moulded by ideals—singleness of purpose, a spirit of cheerfulness, and loyalty to the good name of the institution. Rinaldi Hostel, home to the **degree students**, was never just a shelter of rooms and corridors; it was a hearth of friendship and discovery,



where countless lives found joy, a sense of belonging, and the awakening of purpose.

If Rinaldi was the bastion of tradition, **Jyoti Nivas** brought colour and surprise. Opened in 1971 for pre-university students, this two-storeyed quadrangular building was more picturesque than majestic. Its evergreen lawns, dotted with flowers,



became the backdrop for the laughter and songs of its young inmates. Their silvery voices and bursts of energy turned it into a jack-in-the-box of surprises. Year after year, faces came and went, leaving behind a void in the hearts of those who stayed, but also a

living memory of mirth and youthful exuberance. If sameness was the tragedy of modern life, variety was the soul of Jyoti Nivas. However, in 2012, it underwent a metamorphosis: the hostel was repurposed into a Centre for Research— the **Abraham Panampara Research Centre** (later renamed **Abdul Kalam Research Centre**). What



once echoed with the laughter of students now resonates with the hum of inquiry, reflecting the college's capacity to transform and lead with vision.

As the college grew, so too did its vision for student life. In 1979, the **Murphy Hostel** was built to accommodate the growing number of outstation



students. In 2003, the **Amalagam Women's Hostel** rose as a milestone, affirming the college's deep commitment to empowering young women with safe

and supportive residential facilities. The momentum continued in 2006 with the **Guezou Hostel**, a tribute to the much-loved missionary Fr. Guezou, whose generosity and vision had left a lasting imprint



on the institution. Each hostel added not only space, but spirit — ensuring that every student, no matter where they came from, could find a home within the walls of Sacred Heart.

From the sturdy traditions of *Rinaldi* to the cheerful variety of *Jyoti Nivas*, from the inclusivity of *Murphy* and *Amalagam* to the legacy of *Guezou*, the story of the hostels is inseparable from the story of the college itself. If the classrooms were the mind of Sacred Heart College, the hostels were undoubtedly its very soul. Within those walls, life was not just about timetables, meals, and study hours — it was about belonging.

The Fathers who served as **wardens** (now called as **directors**) of the hostels carried the role with a devotion that went far beyond duty. To them, the students were not boarders, but children entrusted to their care. They watched over them with a parent's concern, corrected them with patience, and encouraged them with the wisdom of mentors. For countless young men who had left their homes behind, the hostel truly became a '*home away from home*'.

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Working hand in hand with the directors were the assistant wardens (later called as assistant directors) — often young professors, brimming with energy, warmth, and a knack for understanding youth. They mingled easily with the students, laughing with them, guiding them and walking alongside them in their struggles and triumphs. Their presence brought a sense of closeness that blurred the lines between authority and companionship, reflecting the very soul of Don Bosco’s educational system — a system rooted not in fear or punishment, but in reason, religion and loving kindness.

Each brick, each hall, each block speaks of growth, resilience, and foresight. Today, as one looks at these living monuments, it becomes clear that the rise of these hostels is also the rise of Sacred Heart College itself — a phenomenon whose name and spirit echo across all of Tamil Nadu.

### **Role of the Rector in a Salesian Institution**

The Rector holds the highest authority within a Salesian institution, serving as both the spiritual leader and the central administrative figure. As the animating soul of the community, he is entrusted with upholding and advancing the core values, vision, and mission of the college, in the spirit of Don Bosco.

While the Rector may delegate academic and disciplinary responsibilities to the Principals, Vice Principals, and Heads of Departments, the overall governance of the institution remains under his purview. He serves as the Rector and Secretary, making him the appointing and dismissing authority and the final arbiter in all matters concerning faculty and staff, both teaching and non-teaching. All major decisions that shape the direction and functioning of the college ultimately rest with him.

As Vice Chairman of the Board of Management, the Rector plays a strategic role in policy formulation and institutional development. His leadership ensures that the college remains aligned with its founding ethos while also responding effectively to contemporary challenges.

The Department of Life Education, under the Rector’s direct supervision, is integral to nurturing both academic excellence and spiritual depth. Offering 43 interdisciplinary courses—including Human Rights, Employability Skills, Technical Training, CSR, and Social Work—it reflects the college’s commitment to forming morally grounded and socially responsible graduates.

The College Counselling Centre, also guided by the Rector, addresses the emotional and psychological well-being of students, supporting them in personal development and helping them face life’s challenges with confidence and hope.

As Secretary of the college, the Rector serves as the official liaison between the institution and the Directorate of Collegiate Education. He is the unifying force of the academic community and the spiritual mentor to faculty, staff, and students alike.

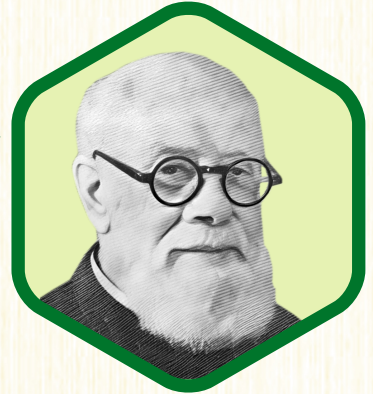
In essence, the Rector is the living embodiment of Don Bosco’s presence in the college—a father figure, a guide, and a visionary leader who inspires the community to walk the path of reason, religion, and loving-kindness. All members of the institution are encouraged to keep him informed of any issues or emergencies that affect the safety of members or the smooth running of the institution, as his leadership is crucial to the efficient and harmonious functioning of the college.

Rectors & Secretaries



**Fr. Joseph Carreño**

1933-1942



**Fr. Edward Gutierrez**

1942-1944



**Fr. Peter Melliga**

1945-1946



**Fr. John Med**

1946-1955



**Fr. Louis Di Fiore**

1955-1961



**Fr. Hugh Tuena**

1961-1966



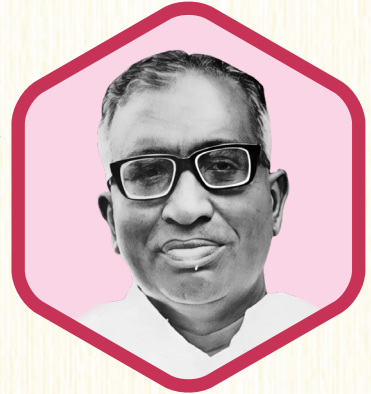


**Fr. Joseph Murphy**

1966-1971

**Fr. Maria Arul**

1972-1973



**Fr. Joseph Comandù**

1973-1976



**Fr. Abraham Panampara**

1976-1980



**Fr. Thomas Pazheparampil**

1980-1986



**Fr. Ittyachen Manjil**

1986-1988





**Fr. John Nedumpuram**

**1988-1989**



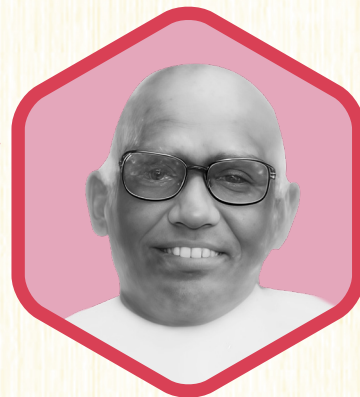
**Fr. Stephen Kuncherekatt**

**1989-1991**



**Fr. Thomas Pazheparampil**

**1991-1993**



**Fr. Joseph Puthenkalam**

**1993-1994**



**Fr. Vincent Durairaj**

**1994-2000**



**Fr. Varghese Choorackal**

**2000-2003**





**Fr. Maria Arokiam Kanaga**

**2003-2008**



**Fr. Joseph Kochamkunnel**

**2008-2014**



**Fr. Antonyraj. C**

**2014-2020**



**Fr. John Alexander**

**2020-2023**



**Fr. Praveen Peter**

**2023-**



## Thank You, Faculty and Support Staff!

As Sacred Heart College celebrates this Platinum Jubilee, it is only fitting that we pause to acknowledge the **true pillars of this institution—our beloved faculty and support staff.** From the humble beginnings to the heights we now witness, it is they who have carried the mission forward with brilliance and quiet resolve. With minds sharpened by erudition, hearts grounded in dedication, and lives modelled in integrity, they have been more than teachers; they have been **mentors, guides, and torchbearers.**

Their competence shaped our classrooms; their cooperation built our community. They were the wind beneath our wings—the force that lifted generations of students toward excellence and meaning. **To all faculty and staff, past and present, we offer our deepest gratitude.** May your lives be richly blessed, your legacy endure; may the joy of having shaped countless lives be your enduring reward.

## Conclusion

From just 80 students in 1951 to a dynamic academic community of 5,000 today, Sacred Heart College has grown not merely in numbers, but in spirit, purpose, and impact. What began as a humble initiative rooted in compassion and guided by the Salesian vision has blossomed into a transformative force—shaping minds, nurturing hearts, and building lives anchored in truth, justice, and love.

As we celebrate this **Platinum Jubilee**, we honour all who have walked these corridors—**the dreamers, the builders, the faculty, and the students.** We look back with gratitude and look ahead with hope. May this milestone be not only a commemoration of the past, but a moment of grateful remembrance and renewed resolve—a celebration not just of what has been, but of all that is yet to come.

The journey continues—**ever forward, ever faithful, ever aflame** with the fire of the Heart.

*Ad multos annos!*



## From Emblem to Inspiration The College Motto

The motto of Sacred Heart College is “*Ad omne opus bonum instructi*”—a Latin phrase taken from the Second Letter of St. Paul to Timothy (2 Tim 3:17), which translates to “**Ready for every good work.**”

Carefully chosen by the college’s founders, this motto reflects the very heart of its mission. It affirms that the true purpose of education is not merely the acquisition of knowledge, but the formation of individuals who are equipped—intellectually, morally, and spiritually—to undertake meaningful, responsible, and noble actions in the world.

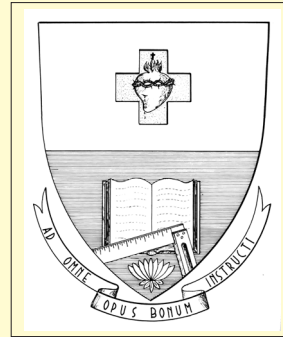
The phrase “good work” goes beyond competence; it speaks of excellence, integrity, and a commitment to the common good. It is about work that is not only well done, but that uplifts, inspires, and transforms.

Over the decades, Sacred Heart College has taken great pride in preparing young men and women to live out this ideal. Year after year, its graduates go forth into society as agents of change—distinguished not just by their skills, but by their character. For every noble task, they are found ready—just as the motto promises.

## Coat of Arms of the College

The **Coat of Arms** of Sacred Heart College serves as a powerful visual emblem, capturing the institution’s mission, values, and identity in a single, meaningful design. Drawing from the rich tradition of heraldry, the emblem is more than decorative—it tells a story.

At its core is a **shield**, shaped in the classical ‘heater’ style—a form resembling a traditional laundry iron. The shield is *parted per fess*, meaning it is divided horizontally into two equal halves. This division signifies balance and harmony, both essential elements of holistic education.



Evolution of Coat of Arms  
from 1951 to 2025

The **upper half**, rendered in *gules* (heraldic red), symbolizes *courage, zeal, and the passionate commitment required in the pursuit of truth and justice.* The **lower half**, in azure blue, represents *faith, serenity, and a spirit of trust*—foundational values in both education and spirituality.

At the centre of the upper section is the image of the **Sacred Heart**—flaming with divine love, encircled by a crown of thorns, and placed upon a golden cross. These symbols resonate deeply with Christian ideals: sacrificial love, enduring struggle, and ultimate spiritual victory.

In the **lower half**, an open book represents the *pursuit of knowledge and wisdom.* Across the pages of the open book is depicted the college motto, *ad opus bonum instructi.*

Below the book, is a **pink lotus**, sacred in Indian culture, standing for *purity, strength, and spiritual resilience.* This seamless integration of Indian symbolism with Christian iconography reflects the college’s vision of harmonizing *universal values with local cultural heritage.*

The Coat of Arms thus unites the **spiritual, intellectual, and cultural dimensions** of the College’s mission. It remains a proud and enduring

symbol—displayed on official documents and deeply cherished within the college community. It is a daily reminder of the institution’s aspiration to nurture lives of meaning, leadership, and service.

### **Vision Statement of the College**

Sacred Heart College, a Don Bosco institution of higher education, envisions becoming an acknowledged centre of learning, renowned for its dedication to student success and its transformative impact on society. Rooted in the Salesian educational ethos, we strive to empower especially the poor and rural youth through innovative teaching, excellence in research, and a commitment to holistic and inclusive development.

### **Mission Statement of the College**

At Sacred Heart College, we are dedicated to providing holistic higher education that integrates academic excellence, social commitment, and spiritual formation. Rooted in the Salesian spirit of Don Bosco and inspired by the compassionate Heart of Jesus, we commit ourselves to:

- **Academic Excellence:** Delivering quality education through rigorous teaching, relevant research, and vibrant extracurricular engagement. We offer programmes that foster employability, entrepreneurship, innovation, and a spirit of lifelong learning.
- **Social Commitment:** Empowering underprivileged and rural youth by awakening social consciousness, promoting community development, advocating for justice and equity, caring for our common home, and advancing literacy and neighbourhood transformation.
- **Spiritual Formation:** Cultivating a culture of ethical integrity, interfaith dialogue, and

reverence for life. We encourage personal and communal growth through reflective practices, value-based education, and a welcoming, family-like atmosphere.

Through these paths, Sacred Heart College strives to form compassionate, competent, and committed individuals—ready for every good work and equipped to build a just, inclusive, and humane society.



## Preventive System of Education

The seventy-five-year journey of Sacred Heart College stands as living testimony to the enduring power of **Preventive System of Don Bosco**. Founded on the principles of **reason, religion, and loving-kindness**, it was nothing less than a quiet revolution in education. Far ahead of its time, it proposed a pedagogy rooted not in fear or punishment but in trust, kindness, and personal guidance. In India, this vision took on a distinctive life of its own. Against the backdrop of rigid, exam-oriented models of learning, the Salesians introduced a method that emphasized relationships, moral formation, and holistic growth. The Preventive System was not merely a theory transplanted into Indian soil—it was reshaped, and allowed to grow in dialogue with the richness of Indian traditions.

The first Salesians in India began humbly—with orphanages, schools, and vocational training centres. Their mission was clear: to reach out to the poor and abandoned youth. The oratory became the heart of this work: a space where learning was not confined to books, but extended into music, theatre, sports, and community life. Here, discipline came not through fear or punishment, but through encouragement and personal accompaniment. In a society marked by poverty, caste divisions, and social exclusion, such a pedagogy was both radical and humane. Their response was not confrontation but transformation—offering a humanized, inclusive alternative that spoke powerfully to India's youth.

The fruits of this mission are visible in the College's legacy. Generations of Sacred Heart students and alumni have not only excelled in academics but also gone on to serve as leaders, educators, social reformers, and creative voices in society.

The discipline of encouragement, the culture of accompaniment, and the spirit of inclusivity have shaped responsible citizens who carry within them both knowledge and compassion. The Preventive System, by placing trust and kindness at the heart of education, created communities of learning that transcended divisions of caste, creed, and class. It is a reminder that education, at its best, must be rooted in love and inclusivity, while also addressing the deeper wounds of society.

Don Bosco's Preventive System stands as more than a method; it is a living legacy. Sacred Heart College embodies this legacy with pride—an institution where education is inseparable from values, where creativity walks hand in hand with responsibility, and where young people are prepared not just for careers, but for life.

## LIST OF COURSES

### SHIFT – I

| UG PROGRAMMES              | PG PROGRAMMES                |
|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| B.A. Economics             | M.A. Economics               |
| B.A. English               | M.Sc. Mathematics            |
| B.Com.                     | M.S.W.                       |
| B.B.A.                     | M.Sc. Computer Science       |
| B.Sc. Mathematics          | M.Sc. Biochemistry           |
| B.Sc. Physics              | M.Sc. Counselling Psychology |
| B.Sc. Chemistry            | M.Sc. Applied Microbiology   |
| B.Sc. Computer Science     | M.S.W (HRM)                  |
| B.Sc. Biochemistry         |                              |
| B.Sc. Microbiology         |                              |
| B.Sc. Psychology           |                              |
| B.Sc. Data Science         |                              |
| B.Com. Banking and Finance |                              |

### SHIFT – II

| UG PROGRAMMES   | PG PROGRAMMES   |
|---|-----------------|
| B.A. Tamil  | M.A. Tamil      |
| B.A. English  | M.A. English    |
| B.Com.  | M.Com           |
| B.Com. (CA)   | M.Sc. Physics   |
| B.Sc. Mathematics                                     | M.Sc. Chemistry |
| B.Sc. Physics   |                 |
| B.Sc. Chemistry                                       |                 |
| B.Sc. Computer Science                                |                 |
| B.C.A.  |                 |
| B.A History   |                 |
| B.Sc. Zoology   |                 |
| B.Sc. Artificial Intelligence and<br>Machine Learning |                 |



## AICTE PROGRAMMES

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| Master of Computer Applications (MCA) |
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| Master of Business Administration (MBA) |
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## PG Diploma Programmes

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| Diploma in Computer Software Applications (PGDCSA) |
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| Diploma in Medical Laboratory Technology (PGDMLT) |
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| Diploma in Human Resources Management (PGDHRM) |
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| Diploma in Import and Export Management (PGDIEM) |
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| Diploma in Logistics Management (PGDLM) |
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| Diploma in Cyber Security (PGDCS) |
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| Diploma in Data Science (PGDDS) |
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| Diploma in Civil Aviation Management (PGDCAM) |
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## Research Programmes – Ph.D.

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| Tamil |
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| English |
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| Economics |
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| Commerce |
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| Social Work |
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| Management (MBA) |
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| Mathematics |
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| Physics |
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| Chemistry |
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| Computer Science |
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| Biochemistry |
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| Counselling Psychology |
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| Microbiology |
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## About the Authors



**Fr. K. J. Louis SDB**, an alumnus of the college, has held several key leadership roles in various Salesian institutions. He served as the Secretary of the Salesian Provincial Conference of South Asia for nine years and as the Secretary of the Salesian Province of Chennai for seven years. A prolific writer and editor, he has contributed to numerous Salesian publications and authored *Basics of Social Communications*, a textbook on communication studies, along with publishing hundreds of articles in various journals and magazines.

**Rev. Dr. D. Maria Antony Raj SDB**, is the Principal of Sacred Heart College (Autonomous), Tirupattur, and an alumnus of the institution (1987–1990). With over 25 years of academic and administrative experience, he has served as Controller of Examinations, Vice Principal, and Director of Panampara Hostel and Jyoti Nivas Hostel. He currently serves as the South Indian Coordinator of the Xavier Board of Higher Education in India and also serves as NAAC Peer team member. Fulbright-Nehru Scholar recognized by the United States–India Educational Foundation, he earned his Doctorate from Periyar University, Salem. He has authored 9 books and published 51 research papers in reputed national and international journals. He is a member of professional bodies such as IIP, AIMA, and AAIR (USA) and serves as member on the editorial boards of seven international journals.



**Dr. S. Veeraraghavan**, is a retired Professor in the Department of Physics with 37 years of academic service at Sacred Heart College (Autonomous), Tirupattur. During his distinguished tenure, he held several key positions including Additional Vice Principal, Chief Superintendent of Examinations, Head of the Department and IQAC Coordinator. Associated with the institution for nearly four decades, he is highly regarded for his dedication to teaching, leadership, and institutional development.

**Maria Micheal Nithyn A**, is currently working as an Assistant Professor in the Department of History at Sacred Heart College (Autonomous), Tirupattur. He holds M.A. and M.Phil. degrees in History and specializes in the Economic History of India. He has published 20 research papers and is currently pursuing his Doctorate in Philosophy in the Modern History of Tamil Nadu.





## About the Book

“Echoes of the Heart: Seventy-Five Years of Grace and Growth” stands as a monumental tribute to the illustrious journey of Sacred Heart College (Autonomous), Tirupattur, as it celebrates its Platinum Jubilee. More than a chronicle of events, this commemorative volume is a living testament to seventy-five years of transformative education. Authored by Rev. Fr. K. J. Louis SDB, Rev. Dr. D. Maria Antony Raj SDB, Dr. S. Veeraraghavan, and Mr. Maria Micheal Nithyn A, the book blends institutional history with the collective memory of generations of Heartians.

This Platinum Jubilee edition captures the college’s evolution from its humble beginnings in 1951, under the vision of Fr. Josè Luis Carreño, into a premier centre of higher education. It documents the pioneering efforts of the Salesians of Don Bosco in bringing holistic education, rooted in reason, religion and loving-kindness. Each chapter weaves together the spirit of Don Bosco’s pedagogy with the institution’s milestones in academics, infrastructure, research, sports and social outreach. The narrative resonates with warmth, scholarly precision, and deep gratitude to all who shaped the college’s destiny. It reflects on the challenges overcome, the ideals upheld, and the enduring mission to form “good humans and honest citizens.” Beautifully written and richly illustrated, the volume serves not only as a historical record but also as an inspiration for future generations.

As Sacred Heart College marks seventy-five years of grace and growth, this commemorative book becomes both a mirror of the past and a lamp for the future celebrating a legacy of excellence and service to humanity.

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