



# XAVIER BOARD NEWSLETTER

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## *President's Message*

*As we celebrate the Golden Jubilee of India's independence, we recall the value of freedom; for which so many worked and suffered selflessly. Our university students are today in need of a different freedom - freedom from pressures by peers towards smoking, alcohol and drugs, all so injurious to one's health. Also freedom from the continuous onslaught of the electronic media pushing the young ones towards permissiveness and even pornography. We search for a freedom that will respect the rights of students to develop a sound sense of values towards self, family, environment and society.*

*As we start this new academic year, let us resolve to give serious attention to value education, allotting it fairly prime time in the syllabus and involving staff and students. The need is urgent and Xavier Board is more than keen to assist you in this endeavour. We hope that the Christian Colleges continue in the preparation towards the new millennium, centering in the coming months on the person of Jesus Christ, through variety of activities for both staff and students.*

**Dr. A F A MASCARENHAS**

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## WHAT DO CHRISTIAN COLLEGES / SCHOOLS EXIST FOR?

*Sr. Ezechiel CMC, Secretary, Xavier Board*

The topic assigned to me is "What do Christian Colleges / Schools exist for?," in other words, the identity and mission of Christian colleges / schools. To answer this question we shall draw inspiration from eminent scholars who have dealt with this very same issue.

According to Hesburgh, a great Catholic university must be a community of scholars, young and old, teaching and learning together, and together committed to the service of mankind in our times. It might be hoped that in a university, worthy of the name, the young learn from the old and vice versa, that the faculty grows wiser as it confronts the questioning, idealism, and generosity of each new generation of students, and that the students draw wisdom and perspective from their elders in the academic community. Any university should be a place where all the relevant questions are asked and where answers are elaborated in an atmosphere of freedom and responsible inquiry, where the young learn the great power of ideas and ideals, where the values of justice and charity, truth and beauty, are both taught and exemplified by the faculty, and where both faculty and students together are seized by a deep compassion for the anguishes of mankind in our day and committed to offer a helping hand, wherever possible, in every aspect of man's material, intellectual, and cultural development knowledge and faith.

Speaking of a great Catholic/Christian University Cardinal Newman says that there must be universality of knowledge within the university. Catholic means universal and the university, as Catholic, must be universal in a double sense : first, it must emphasize that centrality of philosophy, and especially, theology among its intellectual concerns, not just as window dressing, not just to fill a large gap in the total fabric of knowledge as represented in most modern university curricula. Rather theology

in the Catholic university must be engaged on the highest level of intellectual inquiry so that it may be in living dialogue with all the other disciplines in the university. Both physiology and theology are concerned with the ultimate questions, both bear uniquely on the nature and destiny of man, and all human intellectual questions, if pursued far enough, reveal their philosophical and theological dimension of meaning and relevance.

Without a deep concern for philosophy and theology, there is always the danger that the intellectual and moral aspects of all human knowledge become detached and separate. Technique can become central, rather than the human person, for whom technique is presumably a service. Social scientists can close their eyes to human values; physical scientists can be unconcerned with the use of the power they create. Stating all of this is not to say that all other knowledges in the Catholic <sup>university</sup> insularity are ruled by a philosophical or theological imperialism. Each discipline has its own autonomy of method and its proper field of knowledge. The presence of philosophy and theology simply completes the total field of inquiry, raises additional and ultimate questions, moves every scholar to look beyond his immediate field of vision to the total landscape of God and man and the universe. One might turn the word of Shaw around and say that no university is truly a university unless it is catholic, or universal, in this sense.

H. Carrier says the greatest periods in the history of universities have always been those in which communities of scholars and students have been able to meet emerging cultures. This lead to the integration of learning and new cultural instincts. A university which is intellectually receptive to the human riches so often found in new cultures, can widen man's comprehension of himself and of his times: for the valid insights of new cultures are a deepening of human wisdom.

Raimund Lulsrorff says that culture and Christian heritage must mutually pervade and enrich each other. They are capable of this, since they differ like soul and body, but for that very reason are ordered



to each other. Thus on the one hand, Gospel and culture differ in their essence and objective. But on the other hand, at least according to the platonic notion of the world, in the end they serve the same end, that of using created means and images to refer to the divine original. For its part culture provides the Gospel with patterns, form and style of expression, in which it can take shape.

Though independent of cultures, the Gospel and evangelisation are not necessarily incompatible with them, rather they are capable of permeating them all without becoming subject to anyone of them. Christianity does not need to find a way around culture: it has to illuminate it, not eliminate it. The Christian heritage becomes richer in forms which finally bring to expression the goodness, truth and beauty which culminate in God.

Thus we can say, the central role of Christian education is to integrate faith and reason, religion and culture.

My analysis will consist of five parts of which the first will be examination of the mission of Christian education, the second, the manner in which we carry it out, and the image we project on others, the third, the specific contributions we make in the area of education, the fourth, some of the areas of our weaknesses and finally a few questions for reflection.

Coming to the first part, I shall draw my material from a study organised by the International Federation of Catholic Universities over a decade ago and carried out by Dr. Jose Murickan S.J. and published in 1981 as a book entitled the **Catholic Colleges in India**. In the section on the mission of catholic colleges and how far they are understood by the staff and students of the colleges the following responses were received.

a) Witnessing to Christ through the inculcation of Christian values (b) total development of the personality stressing character formation (c) providing quality education with emphasis on intellectual development and critical thinking (d) developing social concern and offering preferential service to the weaker sections.

1. **Witnessing to Christ means :** To make the students good Christians and good persons / the perfect development of man in the light of eternal value / to inculcate Christian values / spiritual formation to spread the "good news" of Christ / make the students aware of Christian ideals in behaviour and practice / develop integrity, honesty, truthfulness, purity, adherence to duty, charity, brotherhood / Christian formation of children / to make the Christian ideal felt.
2. **Intellectual development :** Training of young men of quality to be the leaders in all walks of life / generation of love of learning and habits of critical thought.
3. **Personality development :** Formation in self discipline / create leaders with a spirit of justice, service and concern for their fellowship / formation of dedicated, competent and industrious persons / strength of character and moral values / produce socially responsible persons / mould them to be good citizens / prepare them for life / form women who will be good mothers / development of women raise liberated women with a system of values based on Christian principles.
4. **Service :** A spirit of service towards God and country / participating in the healing ministry to be an instrument of service / uplift of the weaker sections and underprivileged to form well integrated men and women for the service of the country / impart a sense of social concern.

The manner in which the Christian colleges fulfil this mission and make unique contributions to the field of Higher Education are brought out by Dr. Mannath S.D.B. Among the strengths of a typical college in India one can mention :

- a) Greater commitment to the student, to society, to the task on hand by both management and teachers.
- b) Greater integrity : In financial matters, evaluation, admission procedures. It is well-known, for instance, how fair the admission policies at



Christian medical colleges are, compared to the "sale" of medical seats in some private colleges.

- c) Better facilities : Well-maintained classrooms, better libraries, adequate equipments (often including a state-of-the-art computer section).
- d) Neater surroundings : This means very much in a country notorious for its dirt and disorder, which are not wanting, by any means, in colleges and universities, too.
- e) A truly pluri-religious atmosphere, where each student's religious tradition is respected.
- f) Better "discipline" (a hard-to-define term) which means, to say the least, the absence of rowdysm and the possibility of doing work.
- g) Provision for extra-curricular activities, such as music, drama, social service, gymnastics, sports, etc.
- h) Availability of counselling.
- i) Greater opportunities for religious guidance and religious services for the Christian students.
- j) Latest, but not the least, the trust the average person (whether Christian or a member of another religion) has in "religious" persons, such as priests, pastors, sisters, brothers, including the feeling, "My son/daughter is in good hands," or "they will not cheat me". Ask any member of the clergy or religious orders; they will tell you this is true.
- k) Financial aid arranged for poorer students, often from church sources.
- l) Excellent staff improvement programmes and student programmes.

The lists of courses and seminars organised by Xavier Board, AIACHE, Ecumenical Christian Centre, and other such organisations are ample proof of the constant concern Christian Higher Education

has for making its own unique contribution to the integral formation of youth. However we have also certain areas of weaknesses which we should beware of :

- a) Urban bias : Most institutions are in the cities. The rural poor, in this regard too, is a marginalized group.
  - b) Excellence, but at what cost? Should we admit brighter students (and get better results) or give preference to poorer students and to first generation learners? Isn't the second a more "Christian" option?
  - c) Lack of involvement in the neighbourhood : Students can live for years on a well-known college campus, and be unaware of, and unaffected by, the lives of the ordinary people in the area.
  - d) Lack of political education : A critical analysis of our society and a training for political responsibility and leadership. Too often, we have stressed individual success and a private (intimistic) spirituality based on devotional performances and neglected the social responsibility of an educated person.
  - e) Wrong priorities : India's greatest educational need is more widespread and better organized primary education. Higher education, because of its greater influence and knowledge, has received a disproportionate amount of the funds and facilities, compared to primary education.
- This comment refers to the general Indian situation, but it applies with greater validity to Christian institutions too.
- f) The reluctance to use (or loan) the college's facilities of the benefit of the neighbourhood, e.g., evening classes for poorer children.
  - g) The danger of forming conformists rather than people who will challenge and transform the system.



h) Lack of vision : Do we want to preserve and perpetuate the status quo, change it marginally, or transform it radically? What role is the college called to play in this?

These strengths and weaknesses of Christian education as practised in India raise certain important issues of dichotomies and antinomies for our consideration :

We insist on the pursuit of excellence; on the other hand we are also concerned about giving preferential treatment for the weaker sections in our admissions and appointment. In combining these two ideals we run the risk of lowering the quality and standard of education we offer. How do we compromise these two?

We maintain a high standard of order and cleanliness on our campuses. If we open our campuses to the neighbourhood community according to our ideals, we run the risk of lowering the order and cleanliness of the campus. How do we compromise on this?

Through our insistence on discipline we form a generation of conformists; on the other hand, they should stimulate in the students a spirit of questioning and critical analysis of the status quo. This is bound to rock the boat and create ripples of unrest. How do we handle such situations?

As regard the priorities we have to primary education and higher education we seem to be biased towards the latter, whereas the urgent need of the country seems to be the former; with such large illiteracy prevailing in our country, our resources should have been allocated on a priority basis to this area. Whereas we are catering more to the development of Higher Education., How do we justify this?

Since Christian educators today have taken clear options towards these issues, there is great hope for a better future in our college campuses.

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## EVANGELISATION - COLLEGES MUST COME FORWARD

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*Abraham Arakal -  
Retired Principal, Alappuzha - 688 012*

Though according to tradition the Indian Christianity is as old as Christianity itself, today the Christians in India number less than three percent of the population. Even this attainment is the result of European Missionary activities which flourished under the Portuguese and the British.

The east-west meet, which the palm fringed shores of Calicut witnessed exactly five Centuries back, was the opening up of a new era in the history of mankind. For the Church, it was a golden opportunity for the blending of the vibrant Christianity of the west with the Christian tradition of the mysterious east, but somehow the honeymoon did not last. What should have been the harmonious integration of two Christian traditions turned out to be not more than a boisterous coming together. And, there was a major break in just over a hundred years. What was missed was an opportunity for the involvement of the local Christianity in the Christianisation process of India. There is no point in blaming one side or the other for what transpired for the simple reason that it would not be fair to judge the events and mental attitudes of a bygone era by present day standards. Suffice it would be to say that what was missed was a grand opportunity in Evangelisation.

This thought should give a sense of urgency and added impetus to the church as a whole, as it stands on the threshold of the third Millennium and responds to the call of the Holy Father for Evangelisation. The Church should devise effective means of communication with the people and lay stress on the human resources at its command in the implementation of the evangelisation programmes. With that a rich harvest is still possible.

But gone are the days of mass conversions or even conversions of small groups. With a resurgent Hinduism taking a totally hostile stand at the hustings, the church has to adjust itself to the new



ground realities. Even the government rules are becoming more stringent, these have to be taken into account in drawing up programmes and modalities of operations. At the same time the spectrum of evangelisation has to remain unabridged. Only there can be variations in the ratio of emphasis of different aspects. With the post Vatican II dictums the opportunities have actually increased. The approach is that of spreading the word of the Lord and carrying the message to all. It is a call for transformation of the personal lives of each and every one. The message and the values it proclaims should permeate the individual and mass consciousness of this vast sub continent.

It is here that the Catholic Colleges and those associated with them have an important role to play. Ever since the Christian institutions sprang up all over India as vanguards in the field of education, the Christians have been able to exert a decisive influence on the intelligentsia of the country. During the early years of Independence almost every body who counted in the national and state set up had a Christian educational background. Most of the teachers who guided these institutions were exemplary men who influenced the formation and thanking of their students. Through them it has been possible to modulate the decision making process at the national level on Christian wavelengths.

Of late there has been a diminution of this role. It is partly due to the proliferation of educational institutions of other denominations and partly due to the new thinking of the Christians themselves. They feel that Christians have contributed sufficiently in the field of education and should now turn to other areas of service. The governmental interference in the day to day running of the institutions is on the rise. This also has contributed to the development of the aforementioned attitude. Formerly the Catholic institutions were marked out by their unique quality. With the politicisations of the campuses affecting both the students and teachers, at least in some areas Christian institution look hardly any different from their counterparts under government.

In the present day situation for effective

evangelisation the church will have to recapture its old role in the educational field. Though the charged socio-political scenario and the technological revolution will necessitate many adjustments, it should be possible for the Church to achieve this. Such are the resources at her command, both human and material. Enlisting the co-operation of the staff and insisting on a training oriented towards evangelisation. The colleges and schools could become true Christian communities spreading the word of the Lord. The approach will be more subtle than direct; all persuasion indirect, through shining personal example.

For this, bodies like Xavier Board should be given a greater role and say as co-ordinating agencies in spiritual training and value education.

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## TEACHERS AS COMMUNICATORS

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*Dr. Elaine Ann Charles, Principal -  
Xavier Institute of Education, Mumbai*

It is an undeniable fact that teachers have multiple roles to perform but perhaps that of communicators is the key role of them all. For communication is the very soul of teaching.

The dictionary meaning reveals that a communicator is one who transmits or imparts knowledge, information, instructions, either through speech or writing'. A communicator is also defined as one 'who has a close, personal and sympathetic relationship' - obviously with those he or she communicates with. Teaching involves precisely this and hence, it is evident that teachers are essentially and primarily communicators and that communication is the essence of teaching.

Communication may be oral or written. Effective oral communication necessitates certain verbal skills, like the skill of communicating information, directions and instructions with clarity and preciseness, - in grammatically correct language, with suitable diction and pronunciation and in a reasonably loud tone of voice. Gestures add meaning to what we say and eye contact ensures that our



communication necessitates the ability to express oneself in clear, concise, properly structured and grammatically correct language.

Teachers have been traditionally looked upon as communicators of knowledge and information and none can deny that this is one of the main aspects of teaching. But even in this connection, it is a sad reality that many teachers restrict their teaching, primarily to communicating the knowledge and information contained in the students' text-books, often with little or no explanation or supplementary information and without any effort to get students to think and reason out for themselves. Often communication is limited to copious notes, dictated by the teachers.

But a teacher's role can never stop at the mere communication of knowledge, for teaching goes far beyond this. It involves also the communication of skills, attitudes, values recognition and praise.

Teachers are communicators of skills, especially in the junior classes when the basic skills, of reading and writing are imparted and inculcated. Children at this stage being particularly imitative, readily copy the teacher's diction, pronunciation, accent and writing style. Hence, teachers serve as role models for their students and communicate to them, norms and patterns for imitation. In later years, several other skills are also subtly communicated by teachers to their students.

Teachers are also communicators of attitudes - attitudes to people, to circumstances, to work, to education and to life itself. Unless we teachers ourselves have a healthy, cheerful and optimistic attitude towards life and people, we cannot inculcate similar attitudes in our students. A teacher who is pessimistic, disgruntled, unhappy with life and who views life with dark glasses - not with rose-tinged binoculars, communicates similar negative attitudes to his or her students. On the other hand, teachers who are optimistic and happy and who love people and enjoy life, communicate positive, healthy attitudes, to their students.

We also tend to communicate our attitude of disapproval and dissatisfaction with our students, through devices like comparisons and criticism. A grave mistake teachers make, often unconsciously, is that of comparing one sibling with another, especially a younger sibling with an older brother or sister. This is particularly common, when the older sibling happened to be more talented, more intelligent and more studious. Such comparisons communicate feelings of inferiority, worthlessness and low self-esteem in the person being compared and often result in an unconscious dislike of the sibling they are compared with, the latter being looked upon as arrival or opponent.

Teachers can also communicate a positive or negative attitude towards a subject, by their own attitude to it. Teachers who have a deep love of the subject communicate the same love to their student, by their enthusiasm, the pains they take to prepare their lessons and the additional information they provide, making their classes a joyous and enriching experience for the children. In fact it is not uncommon to find people nostalgically recall a teacher who cultivated in them a deep interest in mathematics or a fascination for science, by their own attitude towards the subject and their deep love of it.

Teachers above all are communicators of values - values of honesty, integrity, a sense of responsibility, of kindness, caring and concern. Children being with their teachers for the greater part of each day and during the most impressionable years of their lives - are easily influenced by them and readily imbibe values and ideals which they communicate. But these values are best communicated by example, rather than by precept. As Mahatma Gandhi remarked, "I have found that children imbibe more from the teachers' own lives, than they do from the books that they read to them, or the lectures they deliver to them with their lips". Hence teachers are communicators of values, by the example of their own lives and the values they live by.



Finally, teachers are communicators of recognition and praise, so essential in the process of Education. Unfortunately, praise and recognition are usually reserved only for achievement, whereas they are most necessary for effort. If only, those children who show effort receive recognition and praise, the number of those who achieve results will be really increased. Teachers have the power to motivate and to build a child's self-esteem, by communicating recognition and praise.

In conclusion then it can be said that teachers are primarily communicators - communicators of knowledge, skills, attitudes, values and of recognition and praise. Let it not be forgotten, that a good communicator is also a good listener and that listening is a requisite of effective communication. One needs to listen with attention, without interruptions and encouraging communication through non-verbal signals, like a nod of the head, an encouraging smile or a gentle clasp of hand. Remember it is better to build children, than to repair people and good communication is the pathway to achieving this.

### "HAPPY TEACHERS DAY"

#### A LETTER FROM SECRETARY

Dear Friends,

Recently I went to attend the Conference of Asian Theologians (CAT) at Seoul S. Korea. One day I went along with the participants to see a Korean Folk Village We noticed that they had preserved the village in the original form, with the Provincial Governor's Office, Farmer's House, Sailing Ship, Farmer's Dance, Wedding Parade, Korean See-saw, Cotton Weaving, Mask Dance, Drama from Singpa, Market place, Wicker Workshop, Blacksmith Mill, Korean style restaurant, Haunted House etc. The school children from the lowest grade onwards are taken to this place to make them see the original set up of their country. It gives them an awareness of their traditional customs and life style in contrast to all the progress they have made in their modernised urban culture.

When I saw this village I was appalled by the invasion of technological civilization into the life of an Asian People which destroys the rich cultural values of their ancient heritage. It required a special effort from the part of their Government to artificially set up and maintain the model of an original village to make the children discover and experience the roots of their culture. With impact of globalisation, this process seems to overtake practically every country in the world.

This year our country is celebrating the Golden Jubilee of her Independence from foreign political domination. On this occasion we would do well to reflect whether we too are going in the same direction as other modernised societies like S. Korea. While we glory in having achieved self determination, are we not being subjugated to a new slavery of globalised consumerism which devalues and even destroys the rich heritage of our ancient culture? The ignorance and even the aversion which a large section of our college youth shows towards Indian cultural forms like Indian music, Indian dance, Indian art etc. and their preference for western music, and western dance clearly demonstrate how fast they have been overtaken by the overwhelming impact of a western cultural system which holds in disdain indigenous cultural values.

If our colleges do not make a conscious effort to stem this tide, all the external celebrations which they may organise will be of little value. We would be genuinely honouring our country if our Jubilee celebrations help our youth to appreciate more and more positively the rich heritage of our culture.

Our culture in spite of all its inherent injustices, has been steeped in faith. Every phase of human history held the hope of a better tomorrow and the faith that hope shall never be turned to despair. This hope is vital. Our forefathers have been strong in this faith and have bequeathed the same vision to us through their heroic lives and indefatigable sacrifices. Their trust and hope, their faith and confidence mean very much to us. They guarantee that we are not only the inheritors of selfishness and its oppressive weight but that we are also sons and daughters of hope - a hope that forebears freedom. We can never



dream of a new world order of freedom and justice if we have not the faith that are the creators of our world and history.

Pope John Paul II said in his departure speech at Krakow Airport, Poland, that fidelity to roots does not mean a mechanical copying of the patterns of the past. It means, above all, being able to create an organic synthesis of perennial values, confirmed so often in history. The challenge of today's world, is an integration of faith and culture as well as gospel and life.

With warm regards

**Sr. Ezechiel CMC**  
Secretary

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### A PARADIGM SHIFT FOR A NEW WORLD COMMUNITY

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*Archbishop Angelo Fernandes,  
Archbishop Emeritus of Delhi*

The starting point is the recognition that we find ourselves in a multifaceted global crisis that touches every aspect of our lives, our health and livelihood, the quality of our environment and our social relationships, our economy, technology, our politics - our very survival on this planet.

The nations of the world have stockpiled more than 50,000 nuclear warheads, enough to destroy the entire world several times over and the arms race continues at undiminished speed. While worldwide military spending is more than one billion dollars a day, more than 15 million people die of starvation annually - 32 every minute, most of them children! Developing countries spend more than 3 times as much on armaments as on health care. Thirtyfive percent of humanity lacks safe drinking water, while nearly half of its scientists and engineers are engaged in the technology of making weapons. Economists are obsessed with building economies based on unlimited growth, while our finite resources are rapidly dwindling; industrial corporations dump toxic wastes somewhere else, rather than neutralizing them, without caring that in an ecosystem there is

no "somewhere else". Modern medicine often endangers our health, and, the Defence Department itself has become a threat to our national security.

Our politicians no longer know where to turn to minimize the damage. They argue about priorities and about the relative merits of short-term technological and economic "fixes" without realizing that the major problems of our time are simply different facets of a single crisis. They are systematic problems, which means that they are closely interconnected and interdependent. They cannot be understood through the fragmented approaches pursued by our academic disciplines and government agencies. Rather than solving any of our difficulties, such approaches merely shift them around in the complex web of social and ecological relations. A resolution can be found only if the structure of the web itself is changed, and this will involve profound transformations of our social and political institutions, values and ideas.

The first step in overcoming the crisis is to recognize a new "paradigm" - a new vision of reality.

The present world view consists of a number of ideas and values, among them the belief in the universe as a mechanical system, composed of elementary material, building blocks, the view of the human body as a machine, the view of life in society as a competitive struggle for existence, the belief in unlimited material progress to be achieved through economic and technological growth and the belief that a society in which the female is everywhere subsumed under the male, is one that follows a basic law of nature. During recent decades all of these assumptions have been found severely limited and in need of radical revision.

Long-term visions for the future are founded on four basic principles : ecology, social responsibility, grassroots democracy and nonviolence. Non-violence is the essential ingredient in an ecological society. Gandhi said "there is no want to peace; peace is the way".

"We no longer have a choice between violence and non-violence. The choice is either non-violence or non-existence." (Martin L. King)



Included in the analysis of our inter-related crises, the "spiritual decay" and "spiritual impoverishment" of our industrial societies call for the inclusion of "spiritual subjects" in the education of our children.

These are two modes of existence; having (acquiring, controlling and being (experiencing, sharing).

It is an economic necessity of humankind to shift from the former to the latter orientation.

The Club of Rome is calling for wisdom. At the Copenhagen Social Summit in March 1995, thanks to the multireligious lobby, it became clear that without spiritual renewal, the reversal of present unhealthy trends will not take place.

Have the Christian Universities of the world the responsibility to create public opinion and conscience raising on this crucial matter?

There is need for a dialogue between "Rights" and "Dharma" between Rights and Duties; between rational Man and Man-in-relationship; between the myth of transforming the world and the myth of maintaining the world and harmonising with it - a process of mutual learning and mutual enrichment.

Human rights in their present form do not represent a universal symbol which is sufficiently strong to create understanding and agreement among all peoples. But no more does "dharma". If we must have a declaration, then this should be a Declaration of Universal Rights and Duties, covering the whole reality.

To redress the balance, perhaps it is pertinent to shift the emphasis from rights to duty and service, and ask ourselves the question: Will it make for a greater sense of responsibility and duty towards the weak and vulnerable, especially of the least

developed countries? Emphasising human dignity and responsibility may yield better results in our campaigns for the observance of human rights. The value and dignity of every child, made for immortality and evoking reverence and care at the hands of others, is because of his/her intrinsic and intimate link with the Divine. Making human dignity and responsibility the fundamental points of reference for the onslaught on world poverty may yield better results in the struggle to secure the "human rights" of the deprived and the elimination of destitution.

There is enough in the world for the needs of all, but not enough for the greed of any. All concerned people have to keep lobbying for the "responsibility" and the political will - to be forthcoming for delivering the goods. This is a mighty challenge, but an essential ingredient of the task of peace-making. It necessitates a change from the present mechanistic mind-set, governing the conduct of human affairs to a more holistically human world view that would seek to rally all the forces available towards making life more human for as many as possible across the globe and beyond all frontiers and barriers. The human, God-given dignity of each and every man, woman and child must be made the basis for Gandhiji's revolution of non-violence and truth, a collective blaze of love for building a human society based on freedom, solidarity, justice and inter-dependence in our Only One Earth.

This calls for a shift of emphasis from an individualistic spirituality to a more collective or communitarian one for addressing the "collective wrongdoing of our day".

In prayer this can be achieved; some would say in contemplative prayer alone. We consciously ask the Lord to take over and to allow us to be led by the Spirit and to receive from Him the "power" and will to do.



## **THE COLLEGE MISSION TO ITS OWN STUDENTS**

Today's Catholic College in India is called to be:

Champion of the disadvantaged  
Challenger to the gifted  
Stimulator of the integral and harmonious  
development of the person of each student  
Upholder of sound Indian traditions  
Updated and Foreseeing

### ***Champion of the disadvantaged***

The special care and compassion shown by Jesus to the poor, the suffering, and the publicans of His time should be reflected in a Catholic College by the special love and care shown to the disadvantaged. It may be material poverty, physical illness, or spiritual decay. Overall, the College should extend its healing hand in the name of Jesus, with preferential treatment of one kind or another. It may be difficult at times to solve problems of this kind, but where love is genuine, a partial solution and even an infructuous attempt can give relishing solace.

### ***Challenger to be gifted***

To those gifted with health, wealth, or talent of any kind the College should be a constant but friendly challenger. The challenge should be double: to develop the talent to the highest degree of excellence, and to share it with others directly or indirectly.

Every talent is a gift from God, and God's gifts are not only not to be wasted, but to be protected and wisely developed. Students in particular, specially those gifted with high intelligence, artistic bent, ability in games or sports, etc. should be stirred to rise ever higher with determination and calm, never satisfied with mediocrity.

But this is not enough. The gifted should be urged to share generously with others, and help the poor, the suffering, the intellectually backward students. They should be effectively challenged visibly to care for others, knowing that man is greatest, when like Jesus, he sacrifices himself for others.

### ***Stimulator of the integral and harmonious development of the person of each student.***

This is perhaps the most important aspect of the mission of a Catholic College vis-a-vis its students. Jesus inspired the growth of persons; let a Catholic College, then, be primarily concerned with the personal growth of every student.

Now the growth of any person, any more than the growth of any thing alive cannot be made to order; and so, the student's actual growth will take place more or less by itself through the interaction of the various forces playing upon him. But the College can stimulate this growth by providing suitable stimulants.

Care should be taken that the growth should not be one-sided but all round and harmonious, that is, physical, intellectual, emotional, etc., because only with this integral development can the person reach *physical and psychological maturity*. But there is more than that. A Catholic College should be especially concerned with the growth in personal responsibility leading to *moral maturity*, which is tantamount to character. And as this can only grow through freedom and guidance in an atmosphere of joy and love, it is up to the College to provide them. Here more than ever the interaction of persons with each student is of the highest importance, for ultimately only a person can make another. Hence, the high priority, expected of a Catholic College, to this aspect of the education of the student.

What I have said so far applies to all students, irrespective of creed. There is, however, in a Catholic College a group of students, namely, those professing the Christian faith, demanding a special attention from the College. Here, too, the College's role is to stimulate that faith to grow and flourish into the full-fledged maturity of a Christian personality. No development of a Christian can be integral without development of his Christian mind and heart. Theology above the level of the school Catechism but relevant and adapted to the student mind, well planned and conducted liturgical celebrations, personal and guided prayerful reading of the Word of God, and not the least, the shining example of



the stirring Christian lives of teachers and companions, these and any other help that may be found desirable should find pride of place in the life of a Catholic College. Nothing whatever should be left undone to cooperate with the hidden activity of the Holy Spirit to stimulate Christian students to flower as staunch Christians into the ranks of the laity, the clergy and the religious. A mind well equipped with sound and personal convictions on the Christian faith, a heart thrilled with enthusiasm for Jesus and His Church and open with His love to the poor and needy, and a strong will capable of hard and firm decisions to the point of sacrifice could be the most precious heritage that a Christian student could receive from God through the quiet but powerful stimulation of his Catholic College.

#### *Upholder of sound Indian traditions*

A Catholic College in India cannot possibly forget the country's cultural roots, for no Catholic institution should appear foreign in any part of the world whatever. Moreover, various aspects of the Guru-Sishya relationship, so typical of Indian tradition, could form the basis, if adjusted to modern times and situations, of educationally very sound and religiously inspiring relationships between some teachers or counsellors and their students in our Catholic Colleges in India.

#### *Updated and Foreseeing*

The Catholic College's traditional quest for excellence kept it in the past generally up-to-date. Today, living in a world of change more rapid than ever, a special effort should be made not to become out-dated. But even this is not enough. We must be able to foresee tomorrow's world, which shall be upon us before we realize it, and for which we should prepare today's students already now. Carrying the mission of Jesus Christ, a Catholic College should be always relevant, so that just as Jesus must reign in all places and cultures, so must He reign in every age and time.

## **NEWS FROM THE XAVIER BOARD SECRETARIAT**

The next Triennial Conference of Catholic University Colleges in India, organized by the Xavier Board, will be held at CHENNAI (Madras) from 21 to 24 May, 1998. The theme of the Triennial Conference is "Preparing the Catholic University College to face the challenges of the Third Millennium": The deliberations will include keynote addresses, symposia, workshops, etc. The subjects aim towards the integral formation of the college student and the college teacher. As a preparation for this Triennial meeting, we request Catholic Colleges to begin to study and deliberate on the theme in each college or in groups of colleges in an area.

The International Ecumenical Forum of the Association of Christian Colleges and Universities has included the Xavier Board as a full member of the forum. The Second International Ecumenical Assembly is scheduled to be held at Chicago, USA, from 10 to 13 September 1998, with the theme "Jubilee 2000 - Global challenges and opportunities of Christian Higher Education".

The Xavier Board, together with the National Campus Ministry, is organizing a three day program for student representatives from all Catholic Colleges in India, from 5 to 7 September 1997, at Chennai (Madras). Under the guidance of leaders of the Church, the National Campus Ministry aims to train student leaders who would then arrange campus programs giving an opportunity to experience Christ and to witness to their faith.

Catholic Colleges that wish to seek financial assistance from the Xavier Board for programs of faith formation, are requested to write urgently to the secretariat, giving relevant details of the proposed program, the proposed budget and the amount of assistance sought from Xavier Board.

