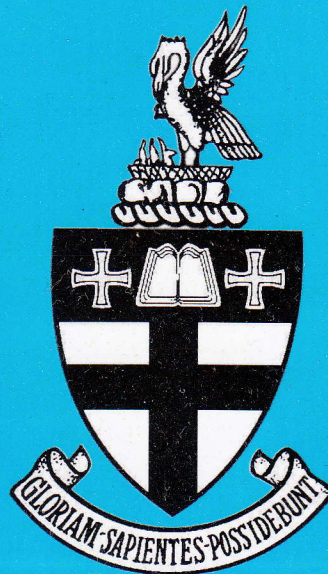


**ONE NATIONAL STRUCTURE OF
THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION IN INDIA**

**SENATE OF SERAMPORE COLLEGE
AND
BOARD OF THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION
OF
SENATE OF SERAMPORE COLLEGE**



REPORT - 2016

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THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION IN INDIA
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BOARD OF THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION
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SENATE OF SERAMPORE COLLEGE**



REPORT - 2016

FOREWORD - 2016

2016 is yet another milestone in the history of the Serampore College (University). In 1916 the BD degree was conferred on candidates for the first time who successfully completed 3 to 4 years of theological education. Thousands who have graduated and served the church and society across the globe. Serampore has faithfully served the church and society being committed to the visions of founding fathers and mothers.

The programme started on 3rd February, 2016 with Board Seminar led by Prof. Dr. Amélie Adamavi-Aho Ekué and responded by Dr. Limuel Equina and Rev. Dr. Simon Samuel. The theme of the Seminar was “*Transformative Theological Education and the Future of the Ecumenical Movement*”. This was followed by Board and Senate meetings from February 3rd afternoon to 5th evening. The Reports of the President of the Senate of Serampore College (SSC), Rt. Rev. Dr. Isaac Mar Philoxenos, the Registrar (SSC), Rev. Dr. Santanu K. Patro, the Secretary of the Board of the Senate of Serampore College (BTESSC), Rev. Dr. P. Mohan Larbeer, the Dean of Research/ South Asia Theological Research Institute (SATHRI), Rev. Dr. P. G. George and the Dean of Senate Centre for Extension and Pastoral Research (SCEPTRE), Rev. Dr. Wati Longchar are the indications of SSC’s growth and development. On the day of Convocation ev. Dr. D. S. Satyaranjan, Prof. Mammen Varkki and Rev. Dr. habil. Klaus Schäfer were conferred Doctor of Divinity (*Honoris Causa*).

The Board and Senate Meetings of the Senate of Serampore College and Convocation of the Serampore College was held at Andhra Christian Theological College, Hyderabad. I would like to highlight some of the major achievements during 2015.

1. The M.Th Curriculum revision was completed and the Senate gave its approval to implement from the Academic year 2016 - 17.
2. The Principals’ Consultation was held in 2015 to discuss various matters related to academic and ministerial aspects of the Colleges and Senate as a whole.
3. ATA-SSC joint study group met to find commonalities, and decided to work together for the service of theological education in India. It also made a joint appeal to the churches not to recognise higher theological degrees, both academic and honorary, of institutions that do not have credibility in imparting theological education nor are contributing to the ministries of the church.
4. Consultation on B.Th programme and the upgradation processes of B.Th Colleges was held in Chennai. It is decided to continue B.Th programme till such a time when the Colleges are prepared to upgrade to BD programmes. A revision of curriculum is proposed for B.Th studies.
5. India Theological Resource Book Series is initiated to write and publish theological textbooks. This year we are planning to publish 11 books and the writers are meeting in July to give final shapes to their drafts.
6. Central Evaluation System (CES) will be experimented this year in order to hasten the process of results. In future such gathering of faculty may be combined with some programmes or seminars if CES is found to be successful.

We thank all the well-wishers and partners of the Senate of Serampore College. We thank the Master of Serampore College (University), Rt. Rev. Dr. John S. Sadananda whose guidance and leadership make us to move forward in realizing our goals. We thank Rt. Rev. Dr. Isaac Mar Philoxenos for his commitment to the Senate. We thank national and international delegates of partner agencies, Churches and Institutions for their participation. My special thanks goes to all the members of the Senate, Bishops and Heads of Institutions, Principals and other representatives who actively participated and witnessed the faithfulness of God.

Serampore
March 05, 2016

Rev. Dr. Santanu K. Patro
Registrar

CONVOCATION - 2016



Serampore College (University)

Master

Rt. Rev. Dr. John S. Sadananda, M.A., B.D., Dr.Theol.

Council of Serampore College

Rt. Rev. Dr. John S. Sadananda, M.A., B.D., Dr.Theol., Master

Mrs. Hilda Peacock, M.A., B.Ed., Vice Master

Dr. Vangsanglura, B.A., B.C.S., M.A., Th.D. (U.S.A), Ph.D., Secretary

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Rev. Dr. Suppogu Joseph, B.D., M.Th., D.Th

Rev. Nirmal Kumar Sapui, B.A. (Hons.), B.D.

The Most Rev. Dr. P. P. Marandih, B.A. (Hons.), M.A., B.D.

Rev. Dr. Mar Atsongchanger, M.A., B.D., M.Th., D.Min.

Rev. Dr. Solomon Rongpi, B.Th., B.D., Th.D.

Rev. Anjan Kumar Singh, M.A., B.D., D.D.

Metropolitan H.G.Dr. Yuhanon Mar Diascoros, B.Sc., GST, B.D., M.Th., D.Th.

Rev. D. C. Haia Darnei, M.Th.

Dr. John Abraham, M.Sc., Ph.D.

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Rev. Lalramliana Pachuau, B.A., B.D., M.Th.

Mrs. Ella Sonawane, B.A.(Hons.), B.Ed., PGD, BCS, Dip. in Management

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Bishop (Dr.) Philip Masih, Ph.D.

Rev. Dr. S. Robertson, M.A., D.Th.

Officers of the Senate

President

Rt. Rev. Dr. Isaac Mar Philoxenos, B.A., B.D., M.A., Th.M., Ph.D.

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Treasurer

Rev. Dr. Ivy Singh, M.Th., D.Th.

Registrar

Rev. Dr. Santanu Kumar Patro, B.A., B.D., M.A., M.Th., D.Th.

Department of Research/SATHRI

Dean, Research & SATHRI

Rev. Dr. P. G. George, M.Sc., M.Div., Th.M., Th.D.

SCEPTRE

Dean for Extension & D.Min Programme

Position Vacant

Associate Dean & Administrative Assistant

Dr. M. T. Cherian, M.Th., D.Th.

Associate Professor

Officers of the BTESSC

Chairperson

Rt. Rev. Dr. Isaac Mar Philoxenos, B.A., B.D., M.A., Th.M., Ph.D.

Secretary of the Board

Rev. Dr. P. Mohan Larbeer, M.Th., Ph.D.

Treasurer

Rev. Dr. Ivy Singh, B.Sc., M.Th., D.Th.

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ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

Rt. Rev. Dr. Isaac Mar Philoxenos President, Senate of Serampore College

Respected Master of Serampore College, Rt.Rev.Dr.John S. Sadananda, Members of the Council, Members of the Senate and Members of the Board of Theological Education, Graduates, Distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am very pleased to extend a hearty welcome to all of you to the 88th Convocation of Serampore College, hosted by Andhra Christian Theological College, Hyderabad. We are grateful to the principal, staff and students for their dedicated service during these days and the warmth of hospitality extended to us. Special welcome to Rev. Dr habil. Klaus Schäfer, Rev. Dr. D. S. Satyaranjan, Prof. Mammen Varkki V., whose contribution we acknowledge and confer them the *Honoris causa*, the Doctor of Divinity.

We are happy to welcome all the Principals, Registrars of affiliated colleges and Federated Faculties and Heads of Institutions accredited to the Board and all special guests and friends attending this Convocation.

A. New Principals/Vice-Principals/Registrars of Colleges/Seminaries/Federated Faculties:

- i. Dr. Vansanglura, Principal, Serampore College in place of Prof.(Dr.) Lalaluangliana Khiangte.
- ii. Rev. Dr. Prakash K. George, Principal, Mar Thoma Theological Seminary, Kottayam in place of Very Rev. Dr. K.G. Pothan.
- iii. Rev. Dr. Naveen Rao, Principal, Leonard Theological College, Jabalpur in place of Rev. Richard E. A. Rodgers.
- iv. Rev. Dr. David Rajendran, Principal, TTS, Madurai in place of Rev. Dr. M. Gnanavaram.
- v. Fr. Dr. O. Thomas, Principal, Orthodox Theological Seminary, Kottayam in place of Fr. Dr. Jacob Kurian.
- vi. Rev. Dr. Jayasiri T. Peiris, Principal, Theological College of Lanka, Sri Lanka in place of Rev. Dr. Jerome Sahabandhu.
- vii. Rev. Dr. P. P. Thomas, Registrar, NJPGRC, New Delhi in place of Rev. Dr. Koshy P. Varughese.
- viii. Rt. Rev. Silvans S. Christian, Acting Principal, Gujarat United School of Theology, Ahmedabad in place of Rev. Jayant Noel.
- ix. Rev. Dr. Easow Mathew, Principal, Mar Thoma Episcopal Jubilee Institute of Evangelism, Tiruvalla in place of Rev. Dr. C.P. Mathews.
- x. Rev. Sonal Christian, Principal, United Theological Seminary of Maharashtra, Pune in place of Rev. Satyasheela Pandhare.
- xi. Rev. Mathew P. Course Co-ordinator of The Mar Thoma Hospital Guidance and Counselling Centre, Thiruvananthapuram in place of Rev. Abraham Scaria.
- xii. Rev. Arpan V. Christian, Principal, Methodist Bible Seminary, Vasad in place of Rev. Kirit D. Parmar.
- xiii. Rev. Dr. V. S. Varughese, Registrar, FFRRRC, in place of Fr. Dr. Reji Mathew.
- xiv. Rev. Paul Augustine, Acting Principal, MCT, Vishakhapatnam in place of Dr. George Samuel.
- xv. Rev. Dr. Aji George, Acting Principal, MSOTS, Ernakulam in place of Rev. Dr. Adai Jacob.

B. Affiliation Cases:

1. **New Affiliation for BD programme:**
India Bible College & Seminary, Kozhimala, Tiruvalla - B.D
2. **New Affiliation for M.Th. programme:**
 - i. Academy of Integrated Christian Studies, Aizawl - M.Th in New Testament and History of Christianity or Religions from the academic year 2016 - 17.

- ii. Advanced Institute for Research on Religion and Culture, Hyderabad - M.Th in Religion and Old Testament

3. External Programmes offered by the affiliated Colleges:

1. Harding Theological College, Tura - BCS
2. Aizawl Theological College, Aizawl - DCPC
3. Tamilnadu Theological Seminary, Madurai - MCS
4. Dharma Jyothi Vidya Peeth, Faridabad - BCS & DCPC

4. New Centres other than affiliated colleges for External studies:

The Lamb's Institute of Field Evangelism, Madurai.

C. Obituary:

1. Rev. Dr. (habil) James Massey - March 02, 2015
2. Prof. Dr. Ninan Koshy - March 04, 2015
3. Rev. Dr. Sampath Kumar - March 09, 2015
4. Rev. Dr. Somen Das - May 05, 2015
5. Bishop Dr. Taranath S. Sagar, Resident & Presiding Bishop of South Indian Regional Conference & Madras Regional Conference, Methodist Church in India - October 19, 2015.
6. Rev. Dr. Bastian Wielenga, December 23, 2015
7. Bishop Dr. Zacharias Mar Theophilus Suffragan Metropolitan, Mar Thoma Syrian Church, December 27, 2015.

Graduation:

The following graduates will receive their degrees/diplomas in 2016

D.Th	24
D.Min	13
M.Th	133
M.C.S	02
B.D	969
B.C.S	96
B.Th	90
B.Miss	14
Dip.C.P.C	13
Dip.C.S	85
Dip.B.T.	08
DWM	14

Total ... 1461

New Registration:

New Registration to the various programmes in 2015 is given below:

D.Th	34
D.Min	29
M.Th	168
B.D	1153
B.Th	73
B.C.S	302
M.C.S	24
M.C.P	15
B.Miss	15
Dip.C.P.C	33
Dip.C.S	294

Dip.B.T
D.W.M

63
50

Total ...2253

Department of Research - SATHRI

The Department of Research/SATHRI of the Senate of Serampore College functions at Serampore, giving opportunity for academic interaction and enabling mutual learning for research scholars, under the guidance of the Committee for Research of the Senate of Serampore College (University). The Committee of Research receives progress report of students enrolled through Doctoral centres and SATHRI, scrutinize them and ensure that the research programme continues without compromising its reputed standard.

The Department of Research/SATHRI initiated the following programmes:

- a) The D.Th Methodology Seminar was conducted at the United Theological College, from May 18 to 29, 2015, where 34 research scholars attended. Thesis Proposal formation, Doctoral level Theological Research in Indian/Asian context, Current trends in Theological Research and Methodological Interactions, were the main components of the seminar.
- b) National Colloquium was held at Union Biblical Seminary, Pune, from August 11 to 13, 2015, based on the theme "*Re-reading M. M. Thomas in the light of Indian Christian Theology*". 31 doctoral research scholars of second and third year participate. It provided an opportunity for students to have a critical appraisal of the writings of Dr. M. M. Thomas in the present context of theological trend in India.

Academic Programme:

The students were admitted for Doctoral programme through the Common Entrance Test conducted by the Senate of Serampore College and attended the D.Th Research Methodology Seminar and Orientation Course organized by the Department of Research/SATHRI.

This year 32 new students were admitted for research out of which 11 are direct SATHRI students and the rest are through Senate affiliated Doctoral Centres. At Present the total number of doctoral students enrolled under the Senate is 186 out of which 35 are women research scholars.

This year twenty four doctoral students have been recommended to the Senate for the award of degree of Doctor of Theology. Department of Research/SATHRI continues to publish 'SATHRI JOURNAL' and published the National Colloquium papers as book titled "*Reclaiming Manyness: Re-reading M. M. Thomas in the light of Indian Christian Theologies*".

The revised D.Th. regulations are made available to all Doctoral Centres. Scholarships were given to 53 students in the form of full scholarships or as one time grant/bursary. The Department of Research/SATHRI building is in the process of completion. The Research/SATHRI building will serve as Research Centre of the University with all facilities for the research scholars both national and international. Along with the Jubilee programme, the SATHRI Alumni Fellowship was officially launched. Hope this will help in mutual fellowship and learning, as well as to foster collaborative initiatives in theological research and resource sharing.

Rev. Dr. P. G. George serves as the Dean of the Department of Research/SATHRI. I appreciate his earnest efforts in organizing various programmes under the Department of Research.

Senate Centre for Extension and Pastoral Theological Research:

The SCEPTRE continues to engage in equipping and empowering the lay people for formation and transformation of the whole community towards building a just and inclusive community through the extension programmes. SCEPTRE involve in organizing,

- BCS contact seminars
- D.Min Seminar and Colloquim
- Non-formal ecumenical theological initiatives and
- Coordinating SCEPTRE Programme Centre for various Senate and Church-related programmes

Diploma in Christian Studies (DCS) is open for all. 56 students have been registered this year. Bachelor of Christian studies (BCS) focus on equipping Christians who are in different forms of ministry and leaders in various secular vocations. Four BCS contact seminars were conducted for the benefit of BCS Students at four regions. Faculty members from different colleges and seminaries facilitated the seminars.

Master of Christian Studies (MCS) program primarily meant for laity and Christian ministers who wish to continue theological education provides an opportunity for learning for spiritual and vocational growth. This year 10 students enrolled for this program.

Doctor of Ministry (D.Min), helps those who are in full-time ministry, to develop their skills and provide tools to analyze contemporary socio-political, religio-cultural contexts of the society and interpret their missiological implications for Christian faith. D.Min Colloquium on issues in Ministry; Orientation Seminar and Research Methodology Seminar, Specialization Colloquium and Foundational Colloquium were organized at SCEPTRE, at Orthodox Theological Seminary, Kottayam and at Eastern Theological College, Jorhat.

SCEPTRE facility is used by the churches and church based Non Governmental Organizations. SCEPTRE also took initiative in publishing two text books and reprinted six books as study materials for theological students.

Dr. Wati Longchar serves as the dean of Extension and D.Min studies and Dr. M. T. Cherian as Associate Dean and Administrative Assistant.

Board of Theological Education of the Senate of Serampore College:

The Board of Theological Education of the Senate of Serampore College has completed 41 years in its role as an advisory body to the Senate in ecumenical theological education and ministerial formation. The role of the Board within the 'One National Structure of Theological Education in India' had well defined and we find its results.

It fulfills its responsibility through:

- Reflection and pioneering on new methods and styles in theological education in the context and considering the need of faith communities in the country.
- Promotion of theological literature, particularly in regional languages through the Board of Theological Text book programme of South Asia (BTTBPSA).
- Promotion of the welfare of theological teachers and students, development of ecumenical co-operation among theological institutions and their libraries.
- Promotion of relationship between churches, theological institutions and study centres.

BTESSC in collaboration with other ecumenical bodies organized various programmes that helped to build relationship with churches, ecumenical organizations/institutions and to strengthen theological education. These consultations, seminars and conferences on relevant theological issues often stimulate theological thinking in the member institutions. The consultation on 'Contours of Tribal Theology' held at Synod Conference centre of Mizoram Presbyterian church, 'Theological consultation on Human Sexuality', 'National Consultation on Christian Social Ethics', and International conference on 'Revisiting Reformation: Explorations on Religion-State Relations Then and Now', at UTC, Bangalore, the Consultation on 'Christian - Muslim Conversation on Secularism and Democracy' at HMI, Hyderabad, the seminar on 'Re-locating Mission and Ecumenism in the context of Margins: An Adivasi Perspective' at Gossner Theological College, Ranchi, were joint initiatives of BTESSC and the Institutions for enabling the Indian Christian theological

communities to broaden their perspectives on these issues. The writers Workshop, 'The Writing on the Wall' was organized by BTTBPSA in collaboration with NCCI and Union Biblical Seminary at UBS Pune. Most of the presentations in the Seminars or Consultations are published in book form for the benefit of wider community. The committee on Ecumenical Relations and Church Ministry functions as the executive committee of BTESSC.

Rev. Dr. Mohan Larbeer serves as the secretary of BTESSC and functions through the office at Bangalore.

Vision and Beyond...

As the Senate, our responsibility is to rekindle the true theological vision in the Asian context and to sustain our students and faculty as a dynamic truth- searching community for the services of the church and the world. For this we need to discern the signs of our times, to have the wisdom to understand where God is present and what God expects from us in these times and to engage meaningfully in God's mission of transforming this world as God's world. This calls for Transformative Theological education that brings total change in attitude, function and appearance of community life.

The task of the theological education is to enable persons in their vocational discernment and to facilitate them in equipping themselves to be God's partners in God's ministry. In every age theological education has to have renewed vision, mission, and imagination on how we can together be faithful to the call of the gospel for an alternative world which upholds the vision of the kingdom of God.

We have already started preparations for the Bi-centenary of the Serampore College and the Centenary of Senate of Serampore College in 2018. Celebrations are for enlarging our visions and horizons and to rededicate ourselves for the larger causes of the kingdom of God, which was pioneered by the great visionaries.

In our theological studies the challenges that we are facing today is no longer the lack of avenues for theological education, but it is to do with developing a model of theological education that is relevant to the Asian people. This year we could start the revision of the M. Th curriculum and other degree programmes. One of the key objectives was to transform our theological education into a liberating and creative one, while being sensitive to the gap between the academic, spiritual and the practical. It also aims at equipping the candidates to be good theological facilitators. Curriculum revision should not only make academic sense but it should go beyond theological colleges' campus enabling the candidates to address the issues of the times, analyzing them and providing mature perspectives to handle them. One of the purposes of theological training is to enable the students to learn the posture of engaging deeply with God and fully with the world.

Theological education is a part of the life and mission of churches in their particular situations. It derives from God's creative and redemptive works revealed in human history and seeks to understand the significance of the gospel in today's world. It aims to equip people, men and women, to participate in the church's mission of witness and service to people in the different contexts of the world. Closer relationship between theological institutions and churches is essential and greater involvement of the churches in the management of colleges is needed to achieve the expected results. Churches and theological institutions could challenge and empower each other with new thinking and actions in theological education and ministry. If theological education systems are neglected or not given their due prominence in church leadership, it could in near future affect the theological competence of church leadership, holistic nature of the churches mission, capacities for ecumenical and interfaith dialogue and the dialogue between churches and society. Theology and theological education are always inspired by an ecumenical vision of God. Theological education should, therefore, constantly seek to respond to the most pressing needs in its social setting, and always attempt to be more involved with the problems of human survival and the integration of creation, both locally and globally. In order to perform this prime task of defending life, theological education needs to be contextual, open, willing to engage in dialogue, amenable to change, interdisciplinary and intercultural. This year we were able to hold discussions with other institutions and accrediting agencies and thus developing the scope of a wider ecumenical participation.

We need to meaningfully combine learning and life, knowledge and commitment, academic learning and appropriate life styles so that the people who are equipped may experience coherence and consistency between what is taught and what is experienced. Many of the colleges in the Northern part of India need to improve their general standards. Faculty development, improvement in facilities for students and development of good libraries should become the utmost priority of many of the colleges as they plan development programmes. The Principals' Conference held in Chennai could discuss many of these issues and challenges. However the management and churches should act with commitment.

We are called to foster a Christian ministry that enhances relationships. A ministry that builds a community that works for the establishment of God's reign in this world, upholding the values of the kingdom and the vision of an oikoumene in which all have place, value and dignity. As we journey forward, May God, guide us to empower the community of God's people to communicate the liberating Gospel of Christ.

Thanks

Rt. Rev. Dr. John S. Sadananda the Master of Serampore College is guiding us with his timely involvement and advice. As a theologian and as a leader of the church we value very much his contribution to theological education in India.

We record our thanks to the Registrar of the Senate Rev. Dr. Santanu K. Patro, who is working hard to keep the Senate system perfect.

Thanks to the Treasurer Rev Dr. Ivy Singh, Secretary of BTESSC, Rev. Dr. Mohan Larbeer, Dean of the Department of Research/SATHRI, Rev. Dr. P. G. George, Dean of Extension and D.Min, Rev. Dr. Wati Longchar, and Administrative Assistant and Associate Dean of SCEPTRE, Dr. M T. Cherian for their valuable service and commitment.

I also record our thanks to the members and chairpersons to the various committees for their active participation in the affairs of the Senate and the Board. The Question Paper setters and examiners also deserve our appreciation and thanks. We also record our thanks to the office staff in the Senate office at Serampore, BTESSC/ SATHRI offices and SCEPTRE in Kolkata who have discharged their duties faithfully.

We appreciate the generous cooperation of the churches, Institutions and our ecumenical partners for their support and participation in our journey forward. We express a special word of thanks and appreciation to the EMW Hamburg for their commitment in strengthening and developing the partnership relationships. We record our thanks to the Global ministries division of UCC, ICCO - Kerkinactie Netherlands, Methodist Church in Britain, Christian Education Fund Kassel and all other partners who have supported us in our activities and we look forward their continued partnership.

The Principal of ACTC Rev. Dr. T. M. Emmanuel, the faculty and students of ACTC deserves special appreciation for the hospitality and excellent arrangements for the Senate meetings and Convocation. We congratulate all those who received their degrees. May God continue to strengthen you to be faithful to your calling and hear the master's voice," Well done, good and trustworthy servant; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things, enter into the joy of your master".

REPORT OF THE REGISTRAR: SENATE OF SERAMPORE COLLEGE (SSC)

Rev. Dr. Santanu Kumar Patro
Registrar, Senate of Serampore College

I. Welcome and Introduction:

I thank God the Almighty for enabling us to come to yet another year of Board and Senate meetings and the Convocation. We thank for God's faithfulness and continued presence in the past year. I thank the Master of Serampore College Rt. Rev. Dr John S. Sadananda, for his gracious presence, continued support and timely advice. I thank the President of the Senate of Serampore College, Rt. Rev. Dr Isaac Mar Philoxenos, for his leadership. I thank the Principal, the Secretary of the Serampore Council. I thank the Senators, the Principals of the affiliated Colleges, Acting Principals and representatives of colleges in place of Principals, heads of Institutions, Bishops, Executive Secretaries and heads of churches, guests from India and abroad, overseas partners, representatives and invitees, recipients of Doctor of Divinity (Honoris Causa), and teachers' and students' representatives. Your presence, participation, commitment, support and prayers enable the Senate of Serampore College to move forward year after year. It is indeed my joy and privilege to welcome each of you to the Senate Meeting and the Convocation.

My colleagues, Rev. Dr. Mohan Larbeer, Secretary of the Board of Theological Education, Rev. Dr. P. G. George, Dean of Research/ SATHRI, Rev. Dr. Wati Longchar, Dean of Extension/ SCEPTRE, Rev. Dr. M. T. Cherian, Associate Dean of Extension/ SCEPTRE for their collegiality and willingness to work as a team. I thank the staff of the Senate and Board without whom it may not be possible for us to run the Senate's programmes.

2016 is an important milestone in the life of the Serampore College. Exactly 100 years ago the first batch of BD graduates received their degrees in Serampore College. Hundred years later, things have changed much faster than what one had anticipated. Today we are training thousands of students and more than one thousand students are graduating every year.

Between Kottayam 2015 and Hyderabad 2016 many things have happened and more is expected from the Senate. The churches in India have great expectations from theological administrators and educators. Theological education has to become more engaging, moving beyond the rhetorics. Theology needs to appropriate itself in order to be relevant. The context demands that we remain alert to the sufferings of the people. The Dalits, Adivasi, Tribals and women of our countries cry for liberation, justice, dignity and equality. We cannot send candidates of ministry year after year, yet we do not challenge them to transform the church and society and bring liberation to the masses. Today's theological students are the leaders of tomorrow's church. We have a responsibility to train students for the church and society and enabling them to empower the marginalised and discriminated.

Five hundred of Protestant Reformation, nearly two hundred years of Serampore Mission in India have brought immense transformation to the society. There are still areas where Christian church and Indian society need another reformation, if not revolution. Have we lost the spirit of reformation and only practice mob activism which ends up in becoming more violent and achieves nothing? The suffering masses are crying out and they are met with resistance and violence. What then is our role and call as leaders?

II. Challenges and Concerns

A. Situating Theological Education in Context:

India as a democracy is still evolving herself, and as a Republic, she needs to mature. If we limit democracy to body-politics, then this country will remain divided in the name of caste and religion. If the concept of Republic remains limited to fine prints of the Constitution, the vision of India realising her full

potential as 'Sovereign, Socialist, Democratic and Secular' Republic remains a mirage. There is nothing wrong in the fundamentals of Indian Democracy but the foundations of Republic need to be strengthened by guaranteeing every citizen freedom, equality, dignity and justice irrespective of caste, creed and race. Tolerance is not a discourse to be debated in the public spheres, rather a matter of belief in the Indian socio-cultural and religious heritage. Is India becoming intolerant to diversities and plurality? The Nation State is marred by terrorism and communalism. Terrorism and Communalism are two sides of the same coin. Both have nothing to do with the religions or a belief system; rather it is the politicisation of religion to go into crusades and capture power. True religion does not promote terrorism, and violence has no place in any religion. A terror attack is an affront to religious pluralism. All forms of terrorism both within the country and outside should be condemned in no uncertain terms. In the same manner, communalism has no place in a civilised society.

Atrocities on Minorities, Dalits, Tribal, Adivasi and women are on the rise. Dadri killing, Dalit student's suicide in the campus of Hyderabad University, abuse of women and women not being allowed in worship places, racist attacks on North East Tribals in Delhi and other cities and continued displacement of Adivasis and bonded labour of Adivasi and Dalits masses in unorganised sectors and ecological degradation are the issues that call us to doing theology in the context.

Doing theology is praxiological. Doing Theology just does not happen in the classroom alone nor writing an excellent answer on the day of examination. Students are called to carry the conviction and commit themselves to the cause of the Gospel. The radicalisation of the Gospel is not a predicament of theological call, rather precondition to be Christian ministers in India. Theological Academia is also not free from prejudices. The predilection of caste and predisposition of women as inferior have not only undermined theological commitment but also raised our sincerity in delivering justice to the weak and marginalised. This house represents the best of the Christian Church and together we train more than a thousand candidates to the ministries of the church in India. When will the Dalits, Adivasi and Tribals witness the ushering of justice and dignity as enshrined in the scriptures? When will our women step into the pulpit and bring the word to the people. If our generation does not witness freedom, equality, justice and dignity of all, irrespective of caste, creed and gender in religious spheres in our churches, the history will hold us accountable and put aspersion on our sincerity and commitment to the cause of liberation as an agenda to provide dignity, equality and justice to the Dalits, Adivasis, Tribals and women.

B. Falling Number of BD students in Colleges

Has the insensitivity of theological institution prevent many to choose Christian ministry as a vocation? This is only a pointer to ponder. In last few years, many of our institutions are not getting enough BD students. The applications for BD studies have drastically fallen. There was a time when we had so many candidates and there were fewer seats. It is an irony that more and more institutions are applying for affiliation and at the same time some of our premium institutions, particularly the uniting church seminaries are not getting enough application for BD studies. Are our churches no longer willing to sponsor students for theological education due to cost that involves in training? Are our young people no longer interested in theological education and ministries? Or does a university degree as a prerequisite little too much to wait for young people to choose theological studies as vocation? Are we offering avenues and scholarship for the Dalit, Adivasi and women students to come for theological education? Have the churches stopped sponsoring candidates and handpick graduates after their study, ignoring the potential ministerial candidates who could not make it to the Colleges. Most of such candidates belong to the deprived communities. Where are the woman students in theological institutions? Or Colleges are marred by internal problems where students are dissuaded to come for theological education?

Senate needs to introspect and move forward. There is no easy solution and there are no issues that may be fixed overnight. We need to respond to the needs of our church and society. There is a need for dialogue between churches and theological institutions. Why our children are losing interest in doing theological education? Why are women not coming forward to do theological education? Why are the churches not

giving right placement to women ministers? Has the institution of the church and theological college failed to motivate the younger generation to choose Christian vocation?

III. Registration, Examination and Results:

As a normal practice, we inform the house the registration, examination and results. Though the numbers look staggering, in real terms we only produce a fraction of Christian ministers in India. While ecumenical and orthodox churches train most of their candidates in Serampore affiliated College, there are thousands who are trained in non-Serampore affiliated seminaries. Following the statistical list of candidates graduating this year and new students who have registered in the current year.

A. Graduation:

The following graduates will receive their degrees/diplomas in 2016

D.Th	24
D.Min	13
M.Th	133
M.C.S	02
B.D	969
B.C.S	96
B.Th	90
B.Miss	14
Dip.C.P.C	13
Dip.C.S	85
Dip.B.T.	08
DWM	14

Total... 1461

B. New Registration:

New Registration to the various programmes in 2015 is given below:

D.Th	34
D.Min	29
M.Th	168
B.D	1153
B.Th	73
B.C.S	302
M.C.S	24
MCP	15
B.Miss	15
Dip.C.P.C	33
Dip.C.S	294
Dip.B.T	63
D.W.M	50

Total... 2253

IV. Consultations and Programmes:

The Senate hosted the annual coordination meeting of the Asian Forum for Theological Education at SCEPTRE, Kolkata on 24th and 25th February 2015 which was attended by the representatives of WCC, FTE, ATESEA, ATA and SSC. There were around 15 participants from Asian countries, including a representative from WCC. Rev. Dr H. S. Wilson, the Executive Secretary of the Foundation for Theological Education was instrumental in bringing all the associations together. The Master of the Serampore College and President of the Senate of Serampore College joined the conclave. The President and Executive Secretary of ATA, India were also invited to the programme.

B. B.Th Principal and Heads of Management Consultation

The Senate had a very successful Consultation with the Principals and Heads of the Churches of the B.Th Colleges on 8th September in Chennai. The Consultation was proposed to review the preparedness of the B.Th Colleges themselves to upgrade to BD programme by the academic year 2017. The discussion during the Consultation helped in exploring the possibilities of working together for phasing out B.Th. The Principals and heads of churches outlined their vision and plan of action for upgrading their respective institution to BD level. After listening to all the Principals and heads of the churches, it is felt that the Colleges need more time. Few Colleges pleaded that B.Th may be continued for few more years. However, the Colleges are asked to submit concrete proposal and a schedule as to when each of the College may be able to upgrade.

Few important points that need to be remembered. The B. Th Colleges affiliated to the Senate of Serampore College belong to the United and uniting ecumenical churches, located particularly in North India. All Colleges are vernacular language institutions. It may be important that Gossner Theological College and Santal Theological College in Jharkhand, and Gujrat United Theological Seminary and Methodist Bible Seminary in Gujrat may merge together to offer theological education in Hindi and Gujarati respectively. Orissa Christian Theological College and United Theological Seminary of Maharashtra may have to strengthen their faculty, library and infrastructure to upgrade their institutions.

C. Principals' Consultation

On 9th and 10th September the Principals of the affiliated college met for an open house discussion on various matters related to academic life, such as Senate and College relationship, church and theological institution, spirituality in the campuses. The Master and President who were present led from the front. It was a meaningful gathering. Many of the issues that are not discussed in other forums are brought out. The highlights of the programme are that the Principals reiterated that there is a need for addressing the issues of spirituality on the campuses of theological colleges. It was also a time of fellowship. It is suggested that the Principals' Consultation may be held every three years for better coordination and understanding between the Colleges, and the Senate.

D. Bicentenary Celebration

Serampore College is completing 200 years of its existence in 2018. It is not only a time of thanks giving but also mapping our progress and outlining our vision for the future. The Serampore College (Arts, Science & Commerce (ASC) and Theology) and the Senate of Serampore College are jointly planning to celebrate this big event with many activities and projects. The time has come to think big and plan big if we are to make an impact and saturate with our academic scholarship in the secular academia in India. Let us create a structure at par with other Universities in terms of infrastructure, programmes and academic research, and collaborate with other national and international universities. Theological education has so far been more understood as the witness of the church and Christian community than impacting the academia with its hermeneutical alternatives and thinking.

Senate and Serampore College together have planned few programmes and we also want the affiliated Colleges to be part of the celebration by initiating programmes and celebrations. It is important immediately after the 500 years of Protestant Reformation, we are going to celebrate 200 years of Theological Education in India.

E. ATA - BTESSC Joint Study Committee

In Chennai, on 11th and 12th September 2015, the President of the Senate of Serampore College led a delegation and had a consultation with the delegation of ATA, India. We had an open discussion on many matters, particularly on academic matters, areas of cooperation and exchanging views. Each of the body was briefed about accreditation and affiliation system as well as theological positions. This was constructive, positive and forward moving. The biggest challenge which is yet to be resolved is to recognise ATA's degrees as ATA has already recognised the Senate's degrees. At the moment, the Senate has recognised

the B.Th and M.Div degrees and allows ATA candidates to do B.D and M.Th degrees respectively with some qualifying papers. The joint study group also decided to exchange teachers between Colleges, attend each other's programmes and examination and evaluation, accreditation and affiliation processes. SSC and ATA felt that they must continue the engagement to advance theological education in India.

As a follow up the four members consisting of the Registrar, Secretary of the Board, Chairperson of Academic Council and Dr Vanlalhlani were appointed to be part of the Study Committee to meet and strengthen relationship and exchange views. The ATA and SSC together brought a joint statement denouncing offering theological degrees without any credentials by many of the Christian organisations, especially the higher degrees, and urged the church leaders and lay leaders not to accept such degrees nor recognise such degrees. The ATA and SSC do not recognise degrees offered by different bodies in India for they do not have any credentials. The Study Committee also decided that the accrediting Colleges of ATA and affiliated Colleges of the SSC refrain from accepting such degrees.

F. Congress of Asian Theologians (CATS)

This year the Senate of Serampore College is organising Congress of Asian Theologians. Rev. Dr P. G. George is coordinating the entire programme. The Congress will be held from April 18 to 21, 2016 in Kochi, Kerala. There will be about 120 theologians from Asia including 20 Indian theologians.

V. Programme Initiatives:

A. M.Th Curriculum Revision

Immediately after the review of the BD Curriculum Revision that completed in 2014, M.Th Curriculum Revision began earnestly and it took two years starting with visiting of all M.Th Colleges in 2014 and having a consultation with the Deans and Principals of PG and Doctoral Studies of all M.Th Colleges. After a thorough review of the existing programmes - regulations, required qualifications, objectives, curriculum and syllabi - the Regulations and Structures of M.Th Curriculum were finalised. This process was followed by writing syllabi for each of the branches. It took almost nine months to complete the writing of syllabi. The Syllabi for all the branches are completed except religions which are expected to be completed by January 31st, 2016. A new branch is introduced in the area of Christian Ministry. From this year Worship, Liturgy and Music will be offered as an M.Th Branch Specialization.

Students of M.Th will now do 50 credit hours of course work and thesis instead of 40 credit hours. The reason for increase in credit hours is to allow students to have more grounding in methods and methodology as well as a full four credit course is introduced as Teaching Pedagogy (Methods of Teaching). This course is devised in such a way that M.Th candidates will be equipped in teaching by learning practice teaching, preparing lessons/ teaching plan, syllabus writing, setting question papers, evaluating answer papers, assignments, thesis, projects, use of different medium of teachings. The course is designed to be more practical and will be done in the fourth semester.

B. India Theological Resource Book Series (ITRB Series)

India Theological Resource Book Series project is actively working on publishing books by August 2016. Around 55 teachers are currently involved in writing 11 Titles. Each resource book will be written by five professors and one of them will serve as the editor. The table of content and titles are based on BD Courses. The writers have been working since October, 2015 and are going to meet in Chennai from 8th to 11th March 2016 to finalise the drafts. It is encouraging to see many of the teachers have already completed their first draft. We propose to publish 25 books by 2019. If we succeed in implementing this project, we may be able to meet the long felt needs of students and other readers. The textbooks will emphasise Indian contextual reading. The goal is to help students develop reading books, enable students to get the books at an affordable price and bring Indian perspectives in theological education. We plan to bring more publications, the writings of our teachers including D.Th theses in the future.

It is important that we produce more books, but at the same time, all our publications should have to be of International standard in its quality, content and academic scholarship. Editing of English language is

essential. In future vernacular colleges and Board of Theological Textbook Programme of South Asia (BTTBPISA) may publish by translating the resource books. All these need human and financial resources. While we have human resources in our country and within the Senate's theological community, we need financial resources.

C. Libraries of Theological Colleges

More and more Colleges spend less and less budget for the Library. The time will come when the hardcopies will no longer be found in our libraries. It is true that we are in the virtual world, and the whole library is on our finger tips. At the same time, there is value in hardcopies, and our students have not matured to use the online library. Online libraries are also not financially viable. Free resources are selective, subjective and often does not serve the academic purpose. The time has come that Senate has to supervise the library development of each College. There are Colleges where the library has no or very little budget. Often Libraries are packed with spiritual books mostly having extreme theological positions and they are not useful. I appeal that Senate be informed every year the new titles that Colleges receive during the current academic year. This is not to check the Colleges library, rather help develop library through supervision.

To start with all BD Colleges must buy at least five titles every year which they consider most important from each course's syllabus. Often students complain that the books are not available in the libraries for the courses. There are more than 60 courses and optional papers with extensive bibliography. If we implement this in five years we will see our Colleges have all the major titles.

D. B.Th & B. Miss Curriculum Revision

B.Th and B. Miss are the two undergraduate programmes currently offered as residential programmes. While B.Th is proposed to be phased out, there is a demand for offering B. Miss programme by few colleges. It appears that colleges want to replace B. Th with B. Miss. If Senate's objective is to make BD the basic programme, the purpose is defeated when B. Miss is replaced as a substitute. Probably we still need to evaluate the relevance and effectiveness of B.Th programme especially in the light of more and more students choosing their vocation by the time they are in high schools.

Though the objective of curriculum revision is not entirely on the backdrop of the above issues that I have highlighted. The Senate proposes to have a curriculum revision of B. Th and B. Miss together in order to design distinctly each of the programmes and at the same time find continuity when they register for BD programme. The Curriculum revision of B.Th and B. Miss are not going to be exhaustive; rather it would approach the entire B.Th and B.Miss Syllabi as the foundations of theological education. Curriculum Revision for B.Th and B. Miss are proposed to be completed within one year and be implemented by 2017 academic year.

VI. Policy Initiatives:

A. Salary, Promotion, Service Rule & Teaching Load

This is a longstanding felt need and in my last report, I had pointed very clearly that we need a policy as a University and it should be uniform, non-discriminatory and implementable across the board. We belong to different church traditions and represent very distinct forms of management. It is not easy. But these proposals are doable if we are committed to implement. The Committee has gone through carefully before it was discussed in the Executive Committee of the Senate of Serampore College. The Executive Committee felt that these are important documents and the documents must be circulated in advance so that Principals may come with their responses and suggestions.

a. Salary Structure:

The Senate prescribes only the minimum and Colleges may choose to give more than the prescribed limit. I am sure that many Colleges are offering better packages than what the Senate has prescribed. The salary structure is prepared taking into consideration few College's scale of pay. The Committee has moderated keeping in mind the inflation. For the region of North East, the salary proposed is very low due to high cost of living. The

Colleges of the region may have to consider substantially higher. We appeal Colleges not to give lower than the prescribed scale of pay. The minimum take home salary for a fresh M.Th teacher is Rs.18500/- and for D.Th teacher is Rs.22000/-per month.

b. Service Rule:

Many of the Colleges have Service Rule, and few College do not have a well-laid structure. Service Rule is prepared as a model document. The Service Rule has all important features that are needed for a College. Colleges are required to modify suitably the Service Rule or implement in full the proposed Service Rule. I appeal the management of the Colleges to include all the features. Unless we implement a Service Rule, we may compromise in imparting quality education. I would like to see that this is implemented for the benefit of the teachers.

c. Promotion:

It is very important that as a University we have uniformity in the promotion. This is something all the Colleges have to come to a common agreement. In any University, Promotion policies are meticulously prepared and objectively implemented purely on academic considerations. For us ministerial concerns are also included in evaluating a candidate for promotion. It is important that we take time to go through the draft proposal and make a final decision so that we will implement uniformly in all Colleges.

d. Teaching Load:

Teaching loads and administrative responsibilities are equally important in any academic institutions. Even we must have teachers in all clusters and/ or branches.

Human resource is more important than any other resources to manage an academic institution. This is one aspect that we need to take seriously. The leadership of the church rests with theological institutions, the way the institutions train. Therefore, teachers should be recognised for their contributions and commitment to the cause of teaching. What is proposed is not impossible, but we need greater will power to implement.

B. Central Evaluation System (CES) for all Senate Papers

Time has come as an academic university to have an evaluation of examination system which is full proof, time saving, cost effective and monitoring quality control. Many a time we have discussed how to streamline our examination system to avoid cumbersome procedure. It is also not possible to implement as we are divided far and wide geographically which means any central evaluation is going to be financially not viable with the examination fee currently collected from students. Having fully aware of the cost factor, the Senate is planning to experiment by implementing Central Evaluation System. CES will be experimented this year both for March/ April and October/ November examinations and if found successful we may continue in the forthcoming years.

Under the CES system four examination evaluation centres are shortlisted, namely Jorhat, Hyderabad, Kottayam and Serampore. The Colleges of the region will send a minimum of five teachers and each centre will have 50 to 60 examiners. Each centre will evaluate nearly 12000 papers in a span of five days and each teacher will evaluate not more than 50 answer scripts per day. The Senate will pay 3AC return train travel or equivalent for any mode of transport. The vernacular language papers shall be evaluated in the region where enough same vernacular teachers are available. The draft proposal outlines in some details as to how we plan to approach Central Evaluation System. I hope you would appreciate the initiative considering the geographical divisions and limitations in terms of resources.

I would appeal to all the Principals to encourage teachers to give a minimum of five days for evaluation. I also request one the Colleges in the region to host and provide free accommodation to reduce the cost. The Senate will bear the food and travel bills. The Principal of host College will act as Centre Superintendent and

shall be assisted by at least two Senate staff. The October/ November evaluation may be conducted in one centre due to limited number of examinations. This year we propose to have in Serampore and it will be rotated every year in different centres. However, the CET examinations for D.Th and D.Min and all these will be evaluated as per the existing system.

We propose to announce the result by June 15 every year. I seek the cooperation of all the Colleges to help us not only in sending the College marks by May 20 or before but also depute a minimum of five members from among the members of the faculty to help in the evaluation. It will also be a time for the teachers to know each other and have fellowship.

C. Prospectus

Senate receives hundreds of letters enquiring about various theological education that we offer in affiliated Colleges as well as through extension. Often, Churches, universities and academia are not aware of our programmes and courses that we offer. The Embassies and foreign universities want information in details in order to assess our programmes. Though we want to publish on the Senate website and make it more interactive; we need to give full information to all external students and others to know our programmes and courses that we offer. It is in the interest of theological education in India and for greater publicity in an age of information, we need to document all affiliated colleges, their courses, contact details, and information about admissions, fee structure, duration of each course, residential and non-residential, application date for those who want to know more. More precisely for all our external students, there will be information for them to know each of the programmes that we offer so that they may choose for themselves the courses of their choice.

We propose to bring a prospectus which shall include all the above matters, and give history of Serampore College, description about the Senate of Serampore College, applications for all external courses, qualifying papers and CETs conducted by the Senate, programmes offered by the affiliated Colleges. Students at the time of applying for external courses shall be given prospectus which will contain all application documents, required prerequisites as well as information about various programmes. The same shall also be published on the website. In no way this is a substitute, rather an additional information for many students who do not know about theological education and affiliated Colleges' programmes and courses they offer.

D. Appointment of Evaluation Commission to Study SATHRI, SCEPTRE & BTESSC

The Senate has made a decision to appoint a high-level commission consisting of Rev. Dr H. S. Wilson, Rev. Dr. Vanlalauva, Rev. Cherian Thomas and the Registrar as Member Secretary to evaluate the programme and administrative structures of BTESSC, SATHRI and SCEPTRE and bring its recommendations. The Colleges and Churches are requested to give their comments and suggestions in the light of the programmes conducted by above units of the Senate of Serampore College.

E. Looking to South Asia and Broader Engagements in Asia

Our theological engagement must also move to help the churches and Institution of South Asia. Bhutan National Christian Council has shown interest to start theological education programme of the Senate of Serampore. Our engagement and training candidates for students of Myanmar remains committed. We are planning to build up cooperation with the churches and theological institutions of Myanmar. Bangladesh and Sri Lanka remain our strong partners through the affiliation of two colleges and an examination centre in Bangladesh. It is our desire to explore the possibilities of building a closer relationship with the Jaffna Theological College which earlier was part of us and now closed down due to war ravage. There is an attempt to start the College again. A visit may help strengthen our relationship.

We are building a closer relationship with China Christian Council and Nanjing Theological Seminary. The young scholars' consultation of India and China is going to meet sometime this year. India and China represent two great nations and together they have a third of world's population and economy. Both have long history of Christianity, a history that is different from Europe and America's Christian history. We have a

large Christian population, though less in proportion to countries populations. As two economic power, with huge population, workforce, diverse social and religious backgrounds and two distinct forms of socialism, that we come together and build up the relationships and establish greater cooperation in advancing theological education.

F. Recognition and Equivalence

Recognition and Equivalence have been a very contentious issue. In the light of more and more teachers getting degrees from other universities both within the country and outside, it has become pertinent for us to revisit the entire system of recognition and equivalence without any biases and prejudices. Many of the affiliated Colleges employ teachers whose highest degrees are not recognised by the Senate. It will be easier for us to give our opinion when Colleges send all the details for recognition and equivalence. There are few teachers whose degrees are yet to be recognised but are already teaching. Recognition and equivalence will have to be purely on the grounds of academic credentials and no other criteria should be applied. It is important that we create an objective mechanism to evaluate each of the degrees especially the highest degree received from other universities and institutions. The Senate has taken a decision to appoint a committee to study and bring recommendations. Meanwhile affiliated colleges are requested to send the teachers' academic degrees for evaluation.

VII. Concluding Remarks:

The Senate has finally placed its priorities and agenda for the coming year. I seek your cooperation and help to implement and bring quality and commitment to theological education. Without the cooperation of the Colleges and my colleagues in the Colleges it may be difficult to implement programmes and policies. Often it is said why we need a structure as we are only training ministers for the church. We need to be far sighted. Our witnessing is not limited to Christian mission alone; we are called also to engage in our societies. We need the best Christian mind, and the theological institutions should become the nurturing ground to produce best brains and sound thinking. We need teachers who are called and committed to ministry, but also scholars and thinkers who would impact with theological scholarship and thinking.

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY: BTESSC

Rev. Dr. P. Mohan Larbeer
Secretary, BTESSC

"This implies a re-location of theological education, and an intentional attempt to do theology *from below*, reading history and interpreting the texts and contexts from the perspective of those who are pushed to the underside and their visions of a new world, the coming reign of God - of justice, dignity and life for all. The credibility of theological education, therefore, depends on its ability to enable this process - to be constantly on the move, open to change, discerning change, in order that we may not only stay relevant but also play a creative part in shaping the Church and through that the contexts in which it is placed, in ways that make sense to the lost, the least and the last."

This was the theological challenge of Dr. Deenabandhu Manchala from WCC in his paper he presented in the last year Board Seminar on the theme 'Relocating Theological Education in the Marginalised context.' With this challenge we started our activities last year. Wherever possible we reflected on this challenge in our programmes. From Relocating Theological Education we are now moving to "Transforming Theological Education." The Executive Committee of the Senate has approved the theme for this year; it is "Transformative Theological Education and the Future of Ecumenical Movement."

I had also said in my report last year that 'I am experiencing God's miracle in the life of BTESSC in the last few years. It also proves that money need not be the criteria for the growth of any organization. BTESSC has achieved a permanent place in the world ecumenical theological education map by its life and witness.' It is proved once again in our life last year. Another leap in the last year's activity is from the Ecumenical world -we were also able to move to strengthen our relationship with the Evangelical world without compromising our theological positions. BTESSC was able to achieve all these because of the leadership of our Senate fraternity. For that, I am always grateful to our Master and President.

Honorable Master, Respected President and my dear Colleagues,

Greetings to you all from the Board of Theological Education of the Senate of Serampore College in the name of our Liberator Jesus Christ.

I like to express our warm welcome to our beloved respectful Master Rt. Rev. Dr. John S. Sadananda whom I consider always as my mentor and counsellor. I still have to learn from him the skill of solving the problems with a smiling face. Thanks Master and I welcome you on behalf of myself and the officers and members of the Board. "An organization can be successful only if that enjoys freedom and BTESSC enjoys that freedom under the leadership of our Chairperson Rt. Rev. Dr. Isaac Mar Philoxenos. He is very quiet, unassuming, and very humble. A model for Christian leadership - I think each one of us should learn this from him." I cordially welcome you dear Bishop.

I am also very happy to welcome my colleagues the Registrar Rev. Dr. Santanu K. Patro, Rev. Dr. P.T. George, Dean, Research/SATHRI and Dean of SCEPTRE Dr. Wati Longchar. It is amazing to observe the smartness of Dr. Patro, how quickly he is able to learn all the rules, regulations and procedures and accommodated himself to the new context. Hats off to him.

I am fortunate to have good colleagues as full time officers Dr. P.T. George and Dr. Wati Longchar. George can win any one by his smile and he is a good Pastor. Wati my good friend's biggest strength is his scholarship. We are proud to say that we work together as a team.

I would like to recognise the presence of Dr. Amele Ekue, Programme Executive, ETE/WCC, the Board Seminar speaker, Dr. H.S. Wilson, Executive Director, FTESEA, Dr. Limuel Equina, Executive Director, ATESEA, Dr. Paul Cornelius, Regional Secretary-India of Asian Theological Association, Dr.

Dieter Mitternacht from Church of Sweden, Rev. Dr. habil Klaus Schafer from the Evangelical Luthern Church in Northern Germany and Dr. Alex Malasusa, Bishop of the Eastern and Coastal Central Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania for their greetings and for their support. We look forward to their continuous solidarity.

'To organize consultations, seminars and conferences on relevant theological issues in order to stimulate theological thinking in the member institutions,' is one of the important functions of BTESSC. The Senate concentrates more on formal theological education and BTESSC on contextual theologies. Some may think what is the use of organizing meetings, seminars, consultations? But one observes the impact of these activities will realize the need for such programmes. All the contextual theologies were born out of programmes like these. Our new courses like Dalit Theology, Tribal/Adivasi Theology, Feminist theology, Eco theology were born out of these informal programmes.

Activities of the last year:

Consultation on 'Contours of Tribal Theology':

A Consultation on 'Contours of Tribal Theology,' jointly organized by BTESSC and Mizoram Presbyterian Church was held at the Synod Conference Centre from 18th to 20th February 2015. To begin the consultation, Rev. Dr. Lalramliana Pachuau (Senior Executive Secretary, Mizoram Presbyterian Church Synod warmly welcomed all the participants, and applauded all for making an effort to participate in this timely needed seminar.

Rev. Dr. A.Wati Longchar gave the keynote address. In his keynote address, he mentioned some of the achievements of tribal theology - past and present, yet cautioned the participants from complacency. He said that people have recognized good things about tribal theology and this must continue. Although some barriers and misconceptions of Tribal theology have been broken or eradicated, there is a commonality of strength and power noticeable in tribal cultures. However, he identified the need for a transformative praxis-oriented theology and the need to sharpen tribal methodology.

During this consultation, nine papers were presented by the young and upcoming tribal theologians, and new insights and challenges were brought by them which are as follows: 1. Land is a gift from God, given to humans for survival. It plays a vital role in tribal cultural identity and spirituality. Without land there is no concept of God in tribal theology. 2. Masculinity is a social construct. It is imposed upon both men and women. This has an oppressive baggage attached to it which hinders humans from flourishing. There is a need therefore for deconstruction along with reconstruction of a liberative masculinity. 3. Denominationalism weakens unity of the Tribal church. This has become a cause of concern for tribal ecclesiology. The challenge is how to bring different denominations together and fight for a common cause. 4. The other concern is the use of indigenous element in Tribal Christian worship. 5. *Rediscovering Ancestral Testament*: There are many good elements found in tribal culture in northeast India that can be used as a Testament for theological articulation that can also act as a source for Tribal theology. The two-day consultation was truly brainstorming and enriching.

Theological Consultation on 'Human Sexuality':

The BTESSC organised a two-day Theological Consultation on "Human Sexuality" from 30th to 31st May, 2015 at the United Theological College, Bangalore for the post graduate and doctoral students. 35 students from all over India participated in this consultation. The bottom line of this consultation was to listen to friends from the Sexually Diverse Communities (SDC) to educate, enrich and enlighten the participants through their life experiences, theological reflections and questions, challenging the whole theological fraternity with the God-question.

The theological educators responded to the questions and concerns raised by the SDC academically and ministerially. This learning facilitated the students towards articulating four theological themes such as

'communities of colours,' 'radical koinonia,' 'sexuality and the image of God' and 'the spirit that unites and liberates.' They also released a statement to this effect: (**Appendix No. 1**)

"Thereby, we commit ourselves to work in making our Church and society becoming an 'inclusive Rainbow community,' by conscientising individuals and faith communities and to actively participate in the struggles of sexually diverse communities, to embrace each other and to propagate and promote dignity and justice to all. We also confess our homophobic attitude which has discriminated and marginalized sexually diverse people for centuries and will attempt for appropriate interpretations of our faith witness."

The participants sent a request to theological institutions, 'to offer/reserve residential admissions for sexually diverse communities with full scholarships.'

Thanks to Dr. P.T. George for his co-operation in organizing this programme.

National Consultation on 'Christian Social Ethics':

The BTESSC and the Department of Theology and Ethics of the United Theological College, Bangalore organized a National Consultation on Christian Social Ethics from 30th to 31st July, 2015 at the United Theological College Bangalore. Around fifty participants attended the Consultation from different parts of the country. Rt. Rev. Dr. J. S. Sadananda, the Master of the Serampore College inaugurated the Consultation. Rev. Dr. Santanu K. Patro (Registrar, Senate of Serampore College), Rev. Dr. Mohan Larbeer (Secretary, BTESSC), Rev. Dr. Sunil Caleb, Fr. Dr. Maria Arul Raja, Fr. Dr. X.D. Selvaraj, Rev. Dr. Joseph Prabhakar Dayam, Rev. Dr. Y. T. Vinayaraj, Dr. Asangla Lemtur, and others presented papers. Faculty members from different colleges along with the post-graduate and research students from UTC attended the Consultation.

This consultation introduced the new trends in Ethics and helped the teachers and other participants to revisit the whole Ethics syllabus from a new perspective. The papers presented at the Consultation will be published as a book. That will be a resource book for B.D and M.Th students for the Ethics course. I thank Dr. Allan Palanna and Dr. George Zachariah for organizing such a useful academic exercise.

I suggest that the Senate should seriously promote this kind of subject-oriented programmes to update knowledge in the recently explored development on the subjects.

International Conference on 'Revisiting Reformation: Explorations on Religion-State Relations Then and Now':

The year 2017 marks the 5th centenary (quincentenaries) of the Reformation and the worldwide Christian Communion prepare themselves to greet the occasion with a number of programmes, projects and events. In view of this historic occasion, the Department of Theology and Ethics of the United Theological College, Bangalore, and the Board of Theological Education of the Senate of Serampore College have made an attempt to revisit the Protestant Reformation, especially the social, religious and political sides of it, in and through the conference on the theme 'Revisiting Reformation: Explorations on Religion - State Relations Then and Now' from 4th to 7th August 2015 at the United Theological College, Bangalore.

Eminent scholars from across the globe, cutting across denominational and national affiliations, intensely explored, deliberated and discussed the socio-political impacts of the Reformation then, especially *the relationship between religion (spiritual realm) and the state (temporal or secular realm)* were inseparably intertwined; and the kind of impact it could make in our own context in which *religion and state are mostly separated yet closely related* as we experience in the Indian social-political domain today.

The consultation was started with the welcome by Rev. Dr. Mohan Larbeer, followed by the introduction of the theme of the conference by Rev. Dr. Mervin Shinoj Boas. Rev. Dr. R. Sahayadhas, the Coordinator of the Conference, introduced the guests and participants. Marking the inauguration of the conference, the Rev. Dr. J. R. John Samuel Raj, Principal-UTC, delivered the keynote address, highlighting

the significant contributions that Luther made in the area of scriptural interpretation, which was critical to the reform process of the Church and society then.

International scholars like Prof. Robert Kolb, Concordia Seminary, Missouri, Prof. Gudrun Löwner, United Theological College, Prof. Philip Krey, Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia, Prof. Paul Rajashekar, Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia, Prof. Mathias von Kriegstein, Prof. J. Kiran Sebastian, Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia, Prof. Fr. Leonard Fernando, Vidyajothy, Delhi, Prof. R. Sahayadhas, United Theological College, Prof. Christopher Duraisingh, Episcopal Divinity School, Cambridge, Massachusetts, Prof. Don Schweitzer, St. Andrews College, Saskatoon, Canada presented papers on different titles. They stimulated intense and sensible debates on issues pertaining to the Protestant Reformation and the contemporary situation of religion-state/ politics interface. Deep appreciation and thanks to Dr. Sahayadhas who helped us in organizing such a historical event very systematically and effectively.

Christian - Muslim Conversation on Secularism and Democracy:

A three-day Conversation was held at the Henry Martyn Institute, Hyderabad among theologians, practitioners and students of both Christian and Muslim faith from 1st to 3rd September 2015 which was jointly organized by BTESSC and HMI on the theme 'Christian Muslim conversation on Secularism and Democracy.'

The Conversation was organized in the present context where both Secularism and Democracy are in danger; and that a pattern of politics is emerging to erase the political history of India from the mind of Indians, and replace it with a religious history devised by the fundamentalists and communalists of this country. The conversation affirmed the Democracy that enables us to protest and question the State when it goes draconian against the common collective living of the people. "Jeopardizing Secularism and Democracy and replacing it with Communal history is against the fundamental principle of all religions which call for unity, relationship and living together," was the declaration of the Conversation.

Participants called upon the Christian and Islam Faiths and other Religions to have conversation among each other so that all can live in relationship with each other protecting the secular and democratic fabric of the nation. It also asked each citizen to take time to relate with one another so that the spirituality of human beings is revealed each day. The participants brought out a Declaration namely "Shi- varampally Declaration" (**Appendix No. 2**).

Dr. Packiam Samuel, Director HMI chaired the inaugural session. Rev. Dr. Mohan Larbeer, Secretary BTESSC, Rev. Dr. T Matthews Emmanuel, Principal, Andhra Christian Theological College, Rev. Dr. Ch. Vasantha Rao, Prof. Aisha Farooqui, Dr. Faheen Akthar, Rev. Dr. Praveen Perumalla, Dr. Joseph Dayam Prabhakar, Dr. Munawar Hussain, Mr. Ramesh from HMI and Rev. Nissi Ratna Prakash acted as the resource persons. Mrs. Sribala from HMI was instrumental in organizing the entire programme.

Public Lecture on Archbishop Oscar Arnulfo Romero:

The BTESSC and the Indian Social Institute, Bangalore (ISI-B) jointly organized a public lecture on "Oscar Romero-His Mission of Faith and Justice- A Contemporary Relevance," at ISI premises on September 14, 2015. About 200 participants attended the lecture from various walks of life, pastors, priests, nuns, Christian laity and also representatives from many Civil Society Organizations (CSOs). Rev. Dr. Charles Irudayam, the Executive Secretary of the Commission for Justice, Peace and Development of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India, New Delhi delivered the lecture. Dr. Mohan Larbeer welcomed the gathering. In his welcome address, he explained the importance of such lectures and the background of the idea to organize this joint program. He also asserted that the life of Oscar Romero has influenced greatly people of all denominations because of his commitment to the poor and the marginalized of his country.

Rev. Dr. Charles Irudayam, the main speaker spoke about an hour, on the various aspects of the life of Blessed Oscar Romero. He started with the influence of Blessed Oscar Romero on his life when he was a

young seminarian and how he sustained the interest in and influence upon his priestly life and ministry. He organized his speech at three levels: some sketches of the life of Blessed Romero, his public life as an auxiliary bishop and later as the Archbishop of San Salvadore and his political influence in favour of the poor plantation workers. As the archbishop moved closer and closer to the life of the people, he took a political stand against the Latin American imperialism supported and sanctified by the American interference in the life of the people of El Salvadore. His close friend and Jesuit social activist Rutilio Grante's assassination shocked his life and altered his position towards the state. He demanded that the government should take responsibility for the murder of Rutilio and apologize to the people. Thus the archbishop gradually moved away from the political and economic establishment towards the plight of the poor workers.

He made his life relevant and meaningful by being with the people, taking sides with them and dying for them. His death on March 24, 1980 shocked the world, but gave a new direction to people's struggle against economic and political fascism. Dr. Selvaraj Arulnathan SJ thanked the gathering for responding to the call.

Re-locating Mission and Ecumenism in the Context of Margins: An Adivasi Perspective:

A three-day seminar was started on 18th November 2015 with the welcome address by Rev. Dr. M. M. Ekka, Principal Gossner Theological College, Ranchi. It was followed by the inaugural address by Rev. Dr. Mohan Larbeer. His inaugural speech was an eye-opener to this seminar. This was followed by a Bible study which was led by Rev. Dr. Naveen Rao, Principal L.T.C. Jabalpur.

Bishop Rev. Dr. A. S. Hemrom presented a paper on the topic 'Mission as Social Movement: An Adivasi Theological Perspective.' The main focus of this presentation was about the missionary attitude and the social agenda of the mission which was further discussed as mission agenda for empowerment of the people and mission as a social movement for change and upward mobility. Rev. Dr. M. M. Ekka, in his paper focused on the role of the mission and missionaries for the liberation of the so-called Adivasis of this region. His emphasis was that the mission work had focused not only on the spiritual aspects but also on the holistic mission work which transformed the life and thinking of the Adivasis.

A paper on 'The Role of Adivasi Women Pastor(s) for building a Just Society,' was presented by Rev. Idan Topno, Lecturer G.T.C. Ranchi. Her main focus was to empower and enlighten the women pastors to work for the church and for the Adivasi society which is a challenging task. 'Re-visiting Luther's Theology of Mission in the Life-situation of Adivasis in Chotanagpur,' was presented by Rev. Dr. J. N. Ekka, Vice Principal N.D.T.C. Malar, Ranchi. The presenter's central focus was on Luther's Theology of the Cross. He focused, how the understanding of the Theology of the Cross helps the Adivasis of Chotanagpur who are in a marginalized situation today.

Conversation between ATA and SSC:

To strengthen the Theological Education in India, the Ecumenical Theological Education of WCC and the Foundation of Theological Education jointly facilitated a conversation between ATA and SSC at SCEPTRE, Kolkata from 24-25 February, 2015 in which representatives from these two fraternities participated. At the end of the two-day conversation they recommended, "Ten member representatives team from ATA and ten from SSC will meet for a dialogue to understand each other in detail, and bring recommendations to some of the key issues discussed especially regarding recognition of the degrees. It was decided that the Secretary of BTESSC will organize a meeting before October 2015 so that ATA and SSC get the approval of the recommendations from their Executive Committees."

In turn, this 20 member group met in CSI Synod Center, Chennai on 11-12, September 2015. In that meeting, Dr. H.S. Wilson of FTE, Dr. Gnana Patrick HOD, Dept. of Christian Studies, Madras University, Dr. Wati Longchar, Dean SCETRE, Dr. Brian Wintle, Dr. Paul Cornelius, Regional Secretary-Asia, ATA and Dr. Santanu Patro, Registrar of SSC presented papers which helped the participants to find various possibilities to work together.

It was decided that four representatives from each side would meet again at SAIACS on the 30th October 2015 to study a little more in detail the issue of equivalencies and comparability between the two systems and curricula. It was agreed that ATA and SSC upgrade the Joint Committee to a full-fledged consultative body. It was suggested,

1. To nominate 4/5 members each to meet regularly;
2. To exchange views;
3. To co-ordinate theological education in India;
4. To strengthen contextual theological curricula and theological education in India;
5. To promote ecumenical fellowship.

The team also expressed its concern on mushrooming of theological degrees offered indiscriminately and nomenclatures created without any justification as this brings down the standard of higher theological education as well as the degrees that are offered in India. Therefore, in the interest of theological education and Indian Church it was decided to issue a statement to the churches and Christian public at large (**Appendix No. 3**).

Board for Theological Text Book Programme of South Asia (BTTBPSA):

This is one of the functions of BTESSC to promote theological literature in vernacular language in different regions of the country. The Secretary of BTESSC by virtue of being so is also the Secretary of BTTBPSA. Because of many reasons, it was not effectively functioning in different regions for the last few years. But at the same time, there are a few regions effectively functioning and trying to bring out text books in their own vernacular languages. Considering the situation, the Secretary took extra effort to re-organize the regional committees and also the National committee. The National Committee which met on 7th September 2015 at the CSI Centre, Chennai reviewed the different programmes of BTTBPSA and took decisions for its effective functioning. The National Committee was re-organized and the following officers were elected for the next term (2015-2018):

1. President : Rev. Dr. T. Matthews Emmanuel
2. Secretary : Rev. Dr. P. Mohan Larbeer
3. Treasurer : Mrs. Omana Mathew

It was resolved to distribute the following grants to regional committees for the year 2015-16:

Malayalam	Rs.75,000.00
Kannada	Rs.75,000.00
Hindi	Rs.75,000.00
Tamil	Rs.75,000.00
Bengali	Rs.50,000.00
Telugu	Rs.50,000.00
Mizo	Rs.25,000.00
Ao Naga	Rs.25,000.00
Kuki	Rs.50,000.00

One of the decisions of the National Committee is to promote theological writers in different regions. On that basis, a Writers' Workshop was organized for North India at UBS, Pune and the Writers' Workshop for South India is planned for the next year.

Writers' Workshop:

A Writers' Workshop, "The Writing on the Wall," organized by Board for Theological Text Book Programme of South Asia (BTTBPSA) with the support of the Commission on Communication and Relations (COCR) of the National Council of Churches in India (NCCI), and Union Biblical Seminary (UBS), was held at UBS, Pune from November 26 - 28, 2015. The program started with words of welcome by Rev. Dr. Mohan Larbeer (Secretary, BTTBPSA). He expressed his wish for a greater impetus to the writing of

theological material in regional languages to enable the message to truly reach the grassroots in our country. Rev. Dr. T. M. Emmanuel, President, BTTBPSA led the devotion in which he spoke about the methodology, perspectives and challenges of writing. Rev. Caesar J. David, Executive Secretary, NCCI - COCR then introduced the scope and purpose of the program. Rev. Dr. Shekhar Singh, Principal, UBS delivered the keynote address.

Dr. Muthuraj Swamy, Professor of Theology and Ethics, UBS explained the theological bases for prophetic engagement and elaborated on many practical aspects of writing including the challenges for a writer, the needed knowledge and skills, motivation and perspective. Mr. Samuel Jonathan, Principal Correspondent of The Hindu, A.P. listed the various types of writing in categories of scholarly research and functional literature. He taught several skills that are essential for a writer including the inverted pyramid model (Head, Body, Tail) for reporting events, effectiveness through layouts, styles and so on.

Rev. Anil Jose, Presbyter, Church of South India highlighted the emerging facilities of technology with special reference to social media networking that is becoming the norm of functional communication in this age. Rev. Dr. Samuel Meshack, President, World Association for Christian Communication - WACC global, gave an overview of the primacy of Communication rights as they are fundamental in the pursuit of justice in all areas of life. The following points were drawn up as an outcome of the workshop:

1. Creating a group-administered "Theological Writers' Forum" for theological reflections, responses to current affairs/issues, and other functional literature for wider sharing and networking.
2. Theological Text Book writing in regional languages.
3. Adopting a Culture of Writing as individual commitment and contributing articles, features and news in newspapers and other publications in church circles as well as public domains.

Solidarity Fund:

The Solidarity Fund is able to support the needy students, and also assist a few colleges to have creative programmes.

1.	D.Th. Scholarship through SATHRI for 4 candidates	Rs.1,20,000.00
2.	M.Th. Scholarship through Senate for 5 candidates	Rs.1,50,000.00
3.	BTESSC Programmes	Rs.2,00,000.00
4.	B.D. Scholarship for 9 women candidates Rs.15,000 each	Rs.1,35,000.00
	GGM's Indian Theological Seminary, Calvin Institute of Theology, New Theological College, TTS (2), MTSC, ACTC, Serampore College (2)	
5.	Programme Grant (10 colleges & 1 institution)	Rs.4,70,000.00
	Gossner Theol College	- 50,000.00
	Mar Thoma Theol Seminary	- 50,000.00
	Master's College of Theology	- 15,000.00
	Academy of Integrated Xn St	- 40,000.00
	MSOT	- 40,000.00
	ATTI	- 50,000.00
	Serampore College	- 30,000.00
	NIPGTS	- 50,000.00
	John Roberts Theol Sem	- 45,000.00
	UTC	- 50,000.00
	Eastern Theol College	- 50,000.00

Let me take this opportunity to thank the Master, the Chairperson and all the members of the committee for helping us in effective implementation of this programme.

Books published:

1. *Introducing Communication & Media Studies to Theological Students: A Text Book* edited by John Joshva Raja & Margaret Kalaiselvi - Revised Version 2015
2. *Contours of Tribal Theology* edited by Lalramliana Pachuau, P. Mohan Larbeer & Wati Longchar
3. *Faiths Against Homophobia* edited by P. Mohan Larbeer & Christopher Rajkumar
4. *Journeys into the Deep: Hermeneutical Patterns of M.M. Thomas* edited by C.I. David Joy & P. Mohan Larbeer
5. *Spirituality: Towards a Comprehensive Perspective* edited by P. Mohan Larbeer & Santanu K. Patro
6. *Christian Theology: Indian Conversations* edited by Samuel George & P. Mohan Larbeer
7. *A Manual for Researchers & Writers* by Hunter P. Mabry - Reprint

Facilitation Circulars:

For information sharing and also for educational purpose, BTESSC distributed the following materials to all the members.

1. Dialogue Programme - Shivampally Declaration
2. PIEF Post on Israel and the Palestine issue
3. Article on GharVapasi by Dr.Simon Samuel
4. ITA Statement on Marriage and Family
5. CSAR Grant
6. Change of Principals of affiliated colleges
7. IASACT 2016 Programme Pamphlet
8. Call throughout Germany for BDS
9. Home Ministry directions regarding FCRA

Issues that need to be given importance:

- a. The seminaries need to be sensitive to the LGBT community and encourage them to do theological studies by giving preference in admission and also provide scholarship.
- b. Still many of the theological colleges have not introduced effectively the sexual harassment policy which is mandatory to the educational institutions. It is advisable to implement the BTESSC recommended policy since it includes the disabled, LGBT and HIV/AIDS affected people.
- c. BTESSC's great concern is to promote women to do theological education. Unfortunately, in the North and South India, very few women are studying theology especially at the post-graduate level. So, colleges should give importance to help women to do theological education.
- d. Women theological teachers need to be increased in all the colleges.
- e. The Senate should seriously think to change our education system to transformative system.

Finance:

As informed every year, the financial situation of BTESSC is not encouraging. Our major resource is the membership fees. But sorry to say that it is a difficult task for us to collect the membership fee from the members even though we decided in the last Board meeting that 30th August is the last day. So I request the members to send the membership fee before the end of August. We are also in a small way involved in local fund raising. Many of the programmes are partially supported by our members. But this cannot continue like this.

Transformative Theological Education and Future of Ecumenical Movement:

As I mentioned in the beginning, the Executive Committee decided to have the theme 'Transformative Theological Education and Future of Ecumenical Movement' as a theme not only for the Board Seminar and also as the theme for the year. The Committee took stock of the present scenario nationally and internationally and finally decided to have this theme for deliberations.

Traditionally, theological education has been dominated by a pseudo understanding of spiritual matters, salvation and personal sins the students we nurture inherited dogmas and sets of beliefs and traditions of the church and state. Protection of the church hierarchy and establishment dominated the spiritual formation. Even mission orientations were directed to the so-called non-believers. The tradition and teachings of the West were viewed as universal. Attention to the poor and the marginalized has been a priority of theological education only recently.

Transformative theological education involves creating awareness of the unjust system. It is directed towards helping ordinary people to fight for their own rights and to empower them. The marginalized people need awareness of their own rights because they have become a group of people without hope. 'Transform' means to undergo a complete change in character and condition. Transformative education is intended to bring about a total change in function and appearance of community life simultaneously in political, economic, cultural and social realms for change. This transformation can be achieved only when theological education is committed to serve the poor and the marginalized.

"I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may discern what is the will of God - what is good and acceptable and perfect" (Rom 12: 1-2).

The text from Paul's letter to the Romans offers a framework for transformation. Paul is emphatic in suggesting that there is a negation: "do not conform," and an affirmation: "be transformed." He also offers a methodology "by the renewal of the mind." The praxis of transformation goes far beyond reform. A reform of a structure or system does not call for a radical change. Reform retains the contours of structures: be it cultural, political or religious, but attempts to initiate minor changes. While this is valid in terms of bringing some immediate benefit to those negatively impacted by the structure, it does not enable the victim to explore liberation from the same.

Transformation on the other hand has a radical dimension. Applying botanical aspects to the functioning of the state as an example at transformation, would imply pulling the weeds out with its roots. Paul's call to discipleship is to be 'Christ like.' This calls for a radical turning around. At a recent seminar at the United Theological College (UTC), Bangalore, the speaker, Rajendara Sail, a Christian lawyer and a social activist from Chattisgarh, challenged the faculty and students to explore the contours of 'a cow-dung theology.' Raju and Sasi Sail who have lived all their lives as disciples of Jesus, engaged in peoples struggles for Justice and Peace, challenged the community at UTC to close down the seminary and spend a year in villages with the poor. What can we deduce from Raju's Cow-dung theology?

A theology that should emanate from the life experiences of women, children and men, Dalits and Adivasi, whose toil as agricultural workers and farmers feed the peoples of the world, the bread or roti of life. Toil in spite of prejudices, denials and discriminations. The ceaseless toil, against all odds, that affirms the life of millions. Cow-dung theology must be set in the frame of farmers' suicides in the country. According to the data from the National Crime Bureau, since 1991, 6 - 8 farmers in debt (Maharashtra alone), commit suicide every day. Simultaneous to the toil of the working class and peasants is the critique of an economy largely influenced by the market demands through state policies which deny the farmers their right to practice organic or natural methods of farming or / and their right to development. Hence, cow-dung versus chemical dependant fertilizer and pesticide.

A pedagogy of transformation is not motivated by pity but by justice. It is rooted in theological understanding that the work of God always brings about dynamic change. The involvement and work of God in chaos represents subversive action that is dynamic. God's work causes change. God brings down the old and builds up the new. Transformative theological education is an act of empowering the lame and opening the eyes of the blind, including through encouragement and awareness raising. Theological colleges cannot become ivory towers that isolate its students from the cries of the people demanding change in the unjust world structure. Cooperation between the Churches, Peoples Movements, NGOs, faith communities and theological education must take place so that the graduates can apply the call of faith in the midst of people's suffering.

Conclusion:

Thanks to all the Churches, Institutions and Organizations who supported us in organizing programmes and special thanks to Inter-Faith Coalition for Peace, Ethics and Theology Department of UTC, HMI, Mizoram Presbyterian Church Synod, Commission on Communication and Relations of NCCI, Union Bible Seminary, Gossner Theological College, Indian Social Institute, Bangalore. Thanks also to our Overseas Partners - Foundation for Theological Education, ETE of WCC, Interfaith Dialogue Programme of WCC, Overseas Division of the Methodist Church in UK, EMW Germany, Church of Scotland, Common Global Ministries of the United Church of Christ, Karibu Foundation - Norway for their continuous support. This year we look for new partnership with Dan Mission and Church of Sweden. I should make a special thanks to Rev. Dr. Deenabandhu Manchala, Rev. Dr. Peniel Rufus, Rev. Dr. Clare Amos, Rev. Dr. H.S. Wilson, Dr. Amele Ekue, Rev. Dr. Packiam Samuel and Rev. Dr. Lalramliana Pachuau for their personal commitment to our programmes.

My sincere thanks to our Master and to our President/Chairperson for their help and guidance. With their assured support, I was able to complete one more year. Thanks to our Registrar, Deans of SATHRI and SCEPTRE for their support. Finally, I would like to express my appreciation and thanks to my colleagues Ms. Esthaleena Margaret, and Mr. Vasanth for their tireless work especially to Leena for her commitment to her responsibilities. Her long experience and knowledge about the Senate and Board is an asset to the Senate. A word of thanks to Rev. Arun Kumar Wesley who helps us by editing all our publications.

Once again I thank you all for your active participation in this Board Meeting and look for your continuous support in the coming years. Kindly pray for us.

**Theological Consultation on "Human Sexuality"
held at United Theological College, Bangalore
From 30th to 31st May 2015**

REPORT

The Board of Theological Education of the Senate of Serampore College (BTESSC) organised a two-day Theological Consultation on "Human Sexuality" from 30th to 31st May, 2015 at United Theological College, Bangalore for the post graduate and doctoral students. There were 35 students from 20 seminaries from all over India as participants.

The bottom line of this consultation was to listen to the friends from Sexually Diverse Communities (SDC) to educate, enrich and enlighten the participants through their life experiences, theological reflections and questions challenging the whole theological fraternity with the God-question.

The theological educators, academicians, counsellors and the Church leaders present responded to the questions and concerns raised by sexually diverse communities academically and ministerially.

These learnings have facilitated the students towards articulating four theological themes such as 'communities of colours,' 'radical koinonia,' 'sexuality and the image of God' and 'the spirit that unites and liberates.'

Ms. Akkai Padmashali, Ms. Ranjitha, Mr. Manish and Ms. Jaganath Peacock from the sexually diverse communities served as the main resource people.

Rev. Dr. Dyanchand Carr, Dr. George Zachariah, Rev. Dr. Vincent Rajkumar, Ms. Edwina Pereira, Fr. Dr. Selvaraj Arulnathan, Dr. Nalini Arles, Rev. Dr. David Selvaraj, Mr. Vinod Wesley, Rev. Christopher Rajkumar and Rev. Dr. P. Mohan Larbeer served as the facilitators and enablers of this consultation. The NCCI- National Ecumenical Forum of the Gender and Sexual Diversities designed and executed the consultation.

RECOMMENDATION

We, the participants of the BTESSC Theological Consultation on *Human Sexuality* with special focus on LGBTIQ communities affirm that human sexuality and its diversities are gifts of God. Thereby, we commit ourselves to work in making our Church and society becoming an "inclusive Rainbow community," through conscientising individuals and faith communities and to actively participate in the struggles of sexually diverse communities, to embrace each other and to propagate and promote dignity and justice to all. We also confess our homophobic attitude which has discriminated and marginalized the sexually diverse people for centuries and will attempt for appropriate interpretations of our faith witness.

We invite the Churches at large, the Indian theological fraternity including the Serampore family to accompany us in this faith journey to promote the Christian gospel values of inclusion and justice "of" all and "for" all. Hence we propose the following suggestions:

1. To create a platform for articulating and developing theological and socio- scientific resources and materials for local congregations and theological institutions.
2. To organize learning events and equipping pedagogical methods through seminars, consultations, workshops and such on human sexuality where the Sexually Diverse Communities could share their experiences as facilitators, resources, and enablers.

3. To open the church gates and seminary doors for sexually diverse communities to come for counseling and fellowships.
4. To insist all the seminaries to offer a course on Human sexuality as a required course.
5. To request theological institutions to offer/reserve residential admissions for sexually diverse communities with full scholarships.
6. To encourage theological institutions, churches and other faith-related organizations to give education and employment opportunities.
7. To encourage the Field Education departments of the seminaries and the ministerial committees of the churches to send their candidates to organizations working with and among the sexually diverse communities for their internship/ministerial training.

**Shivarampally Declaration
On "Christian-Muslim Conversation on
Secularism and Democracy"**

We, both Muslim and Christian participants, mostly students, also scholars and theologians from Christian and Islamic faiths, from different parts of Indian theological circles, came together for a three-day Conversation from 1st to 3rd September 2015 at the Henry Martyn Institute in Hyderabad, titled "Christian-Muslim Dialogue on Secularism and Democracy in India." This Conversation was organized by HMI and the Board of Theological Education of the Senate of Serampore College.

The objective of this Conversation was to bring together people from Christian and Muslim faith backgrounds, especially students of theology, to discuss on contemporary conditions of communalism and other forces that disturb 'The fabric of Secular and Democracy in India.' Also the Conversation was intended to raise awareness of the problems, values, and possibilities of Interfaith Conversation of all faiths in the present situation for a renewed collective spirituality of co-living in a context where fundamentalism and communalism are thriving to rewrite the political secular history of India into a majoritarian-sectarian religious history, through appropriation of political governance.

Affirmation of Participants:

We the participants affirm that we are conscious through our faith understanding that we are all created by one God as a common humanity. We also affirm the presence of diverse faiths and collective living of human beings.

We learn that Islam and Christianity have different understandings of law and behaviour towards the State. In the understanding of Islam, only God has the sovereignty and affirms peace and justice and the co-existence of all people under His divine rule. In Christianity, we also affirm a worldly State that establishes social peace, that follows and believes in God regarding the God's absolute rule now and in the hereafter. We believe that Christians and Muslims, and all people must be accountable to God and the people at large.

We also learn that democratic and secular ideas can be found in the Holy Scriptures, and though they were not fully established in the times of their foundation, they were expanded in later traditions in both the religions.

God's secular nature and His being beyond religion shows us that He suffers with all the marginalized, is worshipped by all believers, and He (or She) wants peace and social justice for the whole common humanity.

Appeal:

We as students under the Senate of Serampore and related theological Institutes need more study facilities on the topic and issues of secularism in our education.

We call upon the people of these two faiths to have conversations between them, also between other faiths.

We call upon you to identify all communalism - within and outside our faiths - and distinguish between politics and religious issues to live in a plural secular democracy.

We call upon all faiths to promote and understand the values of a secular, religious-friendly democracy; fair share in the decision-making process of politics and public discussions, freedom of rights, religions, thoughts; safety and equality in terms of right.

We call upon all people of faith to focus on human rights and create an environment that supports diversity of faiths and thoughts according to the people, as we face unity in diversity on earth.

We negate communalism, social and religious oppression of minorities, and corrupt media. We encourage all democratic media and politicians to affirm the secular and democratic ideals and that all people must support dialogue and understanding in public and within our own communities.

We also call all people of this democratic secular country of India to study about religions, traditions, politics and history to understand the present situation so that we are independent of corrupt media and politics.

**Concern on Mushrooming of Theological Degrees
(A Joint Statement of Asia Theological Association and Senate of Serampore College)**

This is to inform the general public and in particular to the Christian communities of India that Asia Theological Association, India (ATA) and the Senate of Serampore College (SSC) are very much concerned with the rise of theological degrees offered indiscriminately and nomenclatures created without any justification. This brings down the standard of higher theological education as well as the degrees that are offered in India. Therefore, it is in the interest of theological education and the Indian Church, we issue an advisory/ statement as follows:

1. We appeal that the Christian leaders, including lay leaders to refrain from accepting such honorary degrees and even otherwise which are offered by individual institutions without any credential in imparting theological education at a higher level. While some institutions do not impart theological education, yet they offer degrees such as Ph.D, D.Th, D.Theol etc., as a reward for their ministry.
2. Academic theological degrees are not offered for merely being in the ministry. In most cases, the candidates do not meet the basic qualification requirement to receive such degrees.
3. ATA and SSC do not give permission to its accrediting and affiliating institutions any power or permission to confer any degrees particularly PhD and honorary DD degrees.
4. Churches and Christian communities are called to discern whether the person/s who has/have received awards, has/have any academic degrees or credentials prior to receiving degrees such as M.Th and PhD/D.Th/D Theol/DD, whether one has any credible academic work or any outstanding contributions to Church and society.
5. Institutions and churches should not recognise such degrees by such dubious prefixes or mentioning such academic degrees while addressing them.

Such Institutions are not recognised either by Asia Theological Association or by the Senate of Serampore College (University), the largest accrediting and affiliating bodies in India respectively of academic theological degrees. To know whether a degree is either recognised by ATA or Senate, please contact these respective bodies.

**REPORT OF THE DEAN
DEPARTMENT OF RESEARCH/SATHRI**

**Rev. Dr. P. G. George,
Dean, Research/ SATHRI**

*Hon'ble Master Bishop John S. Sadananda, Respected President of the Senate, Bishop Isaac Mar Philoxenos,
Members of the Council, the Senate and the Board, Distinguished Guests and Friends,*

I deem it a great privilege to present a brief report on the activities of the Department of Research/SATHRI for the year 2015-2016.

Introductory note

In 1989 the South Asia Theological Research Institute (SATHRI) was established in Bangalore at the United Theological College Campus. Another landmark in the history of SATHRI is its bifurcation from the Board of Theological Education of the Senate of Serampore College (BTESSC), Bangalore in 2010. Five years have also passed since the SATHRI was bifurcated and moved to Serampore to function as the Department of Research of the University. As decided by the Senate and the Council, SATHRI which was earlier the research wing of BTESSC has now become the Department of Research/SATHRI of the Senate of Serampore College functioning in the Office of Senate under the guidance of the Committee for Research of the Senate of Serampore College (University).

The Committee for Research, which is responsible for the academic administration of the Department of Research/SATHRI, met twice during the period under report on May 7 and November 3, 2015. Apart from granting admission to the candidates recommended by the Doctoral Research Centers, the Committee received progress reports of research scholars enrolled at various Doctoral centers and scrutinized their study plans as well as their thesis proposals. The Committee has also ensured that the doctoral research programme run systematically without compromising its high standard, in cooperation with the Doctoral Research Centers under the Senate of Serampore College (University). This year 11 candidates were admitted directly under SATHRI in fields that were not offered by the Doctoral Centers. This is the largest number so far.

The following are the highlights of the main activities of the Department of Research/SATHRI under the guidance of the Committee for Research for the past one year.

1. New Admissions:

The following 32 candidates who were recommended for admission into the D.Th. programme at various Doctoral Research Centers and SATHRI were granted admission beginning from June 2015.

a. UTC

1.	George Seb	Old Testament
2.	Vethakani V.	New Testament
3.	Lalramchhana	New Testament
4.	Hiapierai	Christian Theology
5.	Vikato Achumi	Christian Theology
6.	Arsenla Jamir	Christian Ethics
7.	Ajungla Jamir	Christian Ethics
8.	James Inaho Swu	Christian Ministry - Counseling
9.	Vikato Achumi	Christian Ministry - Counseling
10.	Lunkim Zangtinlen Khongsai	Missiology

b. FFRC

1.	Remesh Kumar	Old Testament
2.	Susheel C Cherian	New Testament

3.	Abin Abraham	Christian Theology
4.	Danny Chozhan	Christian Theology
5.	Blysu Varghese	History of Christianity
6.	Zohmangaih	History of Christianity
c. NIIGPTS		
1.	Lalmuanpuii Hmar	New Testament
2.	Menjiwapong	New Testament
3.	Tunchapbo	New Testament
4.	P.S. Loly	New Testament
d. TTS		
1.	Evangeline S.	Communication
e. SATHRI		
1.	Robinson Nelson Christian	Christian Ministry (Homiletics)
2.	SiehjalamDoungel	Christian Ministry (Education)
3.	BimalBarla	Religion
4.	P. SatvasheelaShankarrao	Religion
5.	K. Tokivi	Religion
6.	Babu C.	History of Christianity
7.	Rinchamlia	History of Christianity
8.	Imnabenla Jamir	Christian Ethics
9.	Y. Tonchingsangela Chang	Christian Ethics
10.	N. ViviAchumi	Christian Ministry(Education)
11.	Moalila	Christian Ministry(Education)

There were no new admissions at ATC, FTS, GLTS and UBS. The following list is according to the Branches:

1.	Old Testament	2
2.	New Testament	7
3.	Christian Theology	4
4.	Christian Ethics	4
5.	History of Christianity	4
6.	Missiology	1
7.	Religion	3
8.	Homiletics	1
9.	Christian Education	3
10.	Communication	1
11.	Christian Ministry	2
	TOTAL	32

All the above students have passed the *Common Entrance Test (CET)* conducted by the Senate of Serampore College and have attended the *D.Th Research Methodology Seminar/Orientation Course* organized by the Department of Research/SATHRI. These research scholars were given admission into the DTh programme of the Senate not only for the faculty development of theological institutions but also to provide leadership in the Church and society.

2. Doctoral Students in SATHRI and Various Doctoral Research Centers:

With the new admissions indicated above, the strength of doctoral students in SATHRI and various doctoral research centers this year is as given below:

<i>Name of the Centre</i>	<i>No. of students</i>	<i>Female students</i>	<i>No. of students under residential period</i>
UTC, Bangalore	46	10	25
FFRRC, Kottayam	61	7	17
NIIPGTS, Serampore/Kolkata	15	5	7
GLTC, Chennai	12	0	0
TTS, Madurai	6	1	2
UBS, Pune	10	2	1
ATC, Aizawl	5	0	5
SATHRI	30	10	23
Total	185	35	80

As indicated above, out of the total strength of the 185 doctoral candidates, 80 are in their residential period. This year most of the Second year D.Th candidates were declared passed in their Assessment period and admitted into D.Th candidacy. Mention should also be made that out of 185 candidates, 50 have submitted their theses, out of whom 24 students have been recommended for the award of the DTh degree in the upcoming convocation.

3. Revision of the DTh Regulations (2015)

The process of revision of the DTh Regulation started in 2013. The long process of revision included discussion and decisions in the Sub-Committee, the Research Committee and the Academic Affairs Committee and the Executive Committee. The draft revised DTh Regulations was presented in the Senate meeting in February 2015 and after detailed discussion and deliberation, it was approved with a revised fee schedule. The revised DTh Regulations was published as a book-let and made available to all Doctoral Centers.

4. Scholarship Fund and its allocation:

The scholarship funds received from both overseas partners and local partners/sources were allocated to various heads or items as given below:

Full/ Monthly Scholarship (Existing)	Rs.	7,41,000.00
Full/ Monthly Scholarship (New)	Rs.	5,59,000.00
Bursary (B1 Category ,Rs. 35,000.00)	Rs.	5,95,000.00
Bursary (B2 Category, Rs. 25,000.00)	Rs.	4,25,000.00
Viva Voce and Administrative allowances	Rs.	62,300.00

This year we have received an amount of Rs 2,103,300.00 from EMW, Germany and Rs 2,15,000.00 from Solidarity Fund and other local sources. Efforts are now being made to increase the scholarship fund by approaching some more overseas' partners and local partners as well.

It is gratifying to note that this year out of 80 candidates in their residential period who are enrolled at various Doctoral Research Centers between 2014 and 2015, fifty two students got benefited with the scholarship fund made available to us as indicated below:

Name of doctoral centre	Full/Monthly	Bursary	Total
UTC, Bangalore	4 (1 woman)	10	14
FFRRC, Kottayam	3	11	14
GLTC, Chennai	-	-	0
NIIPGTS, Kolkata/Serampore	3 (2 women)	2	5
TTS, Madurai		2	2
UBS, Pune		1	1
SATHRI	6 (1 woman)	10	16
Total	16	36	52

Whereas 16 students were given full or monthly scholarship, 36 of them were given one time grant or bursary. In allocating this scholarship fund to the students, priority has been given to the students from affiliated colleges for faculty development, women and students from socially and economically disadvantaged communities.

Special thanks are due to EMW for their continuous and consistent support of the research programme of the Department of Research for the last many years. Funds from Solidarity Fund continue to support a few scholars and request is made to enhance the amount.

5. VIVA VOCE - Candidates who are recommended for the award of the degree:

Out of 45 students who have submitted their theses 24 of them were called for viva voce. The rest of them are under different stages:

- | | | |
|------------------------------|---|----|
| 1. Under evaluation process | - | 13 |
| 2. Under revision | - | 6 |
| 3. Under Executive Committee | - | 2 |

The list of 24 candidates who have cleared the viva voce for the Degree of Doctor of Theology (DTh) is as follows:

FFRRC, KOTTAYAM

- | | | | |
|-----|----------------------------------|-------------|-------------------------|
| 1. | Mr. Tekavaba | (249/08) | Old Testament |
| 2. | Mr. Temjen Imchen | (235/07) | Old Testament |
| 3. | Fr. Jacob Mathew | (243/07) | Old Testament |
| 4. | Mr. George Philip | (AA3594) | New Testament |
| 5. | Ms. Mariyamma John | (220/05) | New Testament |
| 6. | Rev. A. J. Yesu | (238/07) | New Testament |
| 7. | Rev. Christ Sumit Abhay Kerketta | (AA1625/10) | Christian Theology |
| 8. | Bendanglemla Longkumer | (250/08) | Christian Theology |
| 9. | Rev. Gilbert Jose | (205/04) | History of Christianity |
| 10. | Rev. Abraham Mathew | (AA3601) | Christian Ministry |

UTC, BANGALORE

- | | | | |
|----|-------------------------|-----------|--------------------|
| 1. | Ms. I. Sobaba | (247/08) | Old Testament |
| 2. | Mr. T. B. Premjith | (272/09) | New Testament |
| 3. | Mr. R. Lalthanmawia | (274/09) | New Testament |
| 4. | Mr. J. Stanley Jones | (AA36007) | New Testament |
| 5. | Mr. B. Sunil Vara Kumar | (277/09) | Christian Ethics |
| 6. | Rev. A. Israel David | (AA9693) | Christian Ministry |

NIIPGTS, KOLKATA

- | | | | |
|----|-----------------------|----------|----------|
| 1. | Mr. R. D. Mawia Ralte | (AA3408) | Religion |
|----|-----------------------|----------|----------|

GLTC, CHENNAI

- | | | | |
|----|------------------|----------|----------|
| 1. | Mr. Bhanu Samuel | (271/09) | Religion |
|----|------------------|----------|----------|

UBS, PUNE

- | | | | |
|----|---------------------|----------|---------------|
| 1. | Ms. A. Abeni Patton | (261/08) | Old Testament |
|----|---------------------|----------|---------------|

TTS, MADURAI

- | | | | |
|----|------------------|----------|-----------------|
| 1. | Rev. Sethe P. A. | (271/09) | Social Analysis |
|----|------------------|----------|-----------------|

SATHRI

- | | | | |
|----|---------------------------------------|----------|-------------------------|
| 1. | Ms. Bethel Krupa | (315/06) | Christian Ministry |
| 2. | Rev. J. Gnanaseelan Jacob Sundersingh | (316/06) | History of Christianity |

3.	Ms. Ganiniliu Kamei	(266/08)	New Testament
4.	Mr. Joel Patrick	(255/08)	Communications

Having successfully defended their theses in the viva voce, all the above doctoral candidates have been recommended to the Senate for the award of the Degree of Doctor of Theology (DTH). It may be good to mention that the above twelve successful doctoral candidates belong to six doctoral research centers and SATHRI:

1.	FFRRC	-	10
2.	UTC	-	6
3.	TTS	-	1
4.	NIPGTS	-	1
5.	GLTC	-	1
6.	UBS	-	1
7.	SATHRI	-	4

The viva voce examinations this year for these 24 candidates were conducted at various doctoral centers, such as, United Theological College, Bangalore, FFRRC, Kottayam (MTTS & OTS) and the Bishop's College, Kolkata. We express our heartfelt thanks to all the Principals, Registrars and Deans of the above Colleges for their hospitality and cooperation.

6. Seminar/Colloquium:

a. D.Th Research Methodology Seminar/Orientation Course:

The D. Th. Research Methodology Seminar for the year of 2015 was held from 18 - 29 of May, 2015 at United Theological College, Bangalore. It was attended by 34 research scholars. The seminar commenced with an inaugural service at the UTC Chapel, in which the inaugural devotion was given by Dr. Pratap C. Gine. The key note address was given by Dr. K. C. Abraham, the former SATHRI Director and an eminent theologian. He challenged the world of biblical interpretation through his emphasis on grass root issues and called for developing contextual methodologies through people's experiences, thereby, doing a people's theology. Dr. P. Mohan Larbeer, Secretary of BTESSC, expressed words of felicitation.

Dr. Jerome Sylvester, a Roman Catholic scholar, took sessions from 18th to 22nd May 2015, through his vibrant teachings, he has persuaded the students to develop indigenous methodologies for Biblical academia. He introduced new research method called "Synopticon Method" which has been developed and performed as an alternative research method in biblical scholarship in his academic erudition. One very significant view about his teaching methodology was that, insisting to be determined regarding the research methods which are from the people and for the people.

1.	Methodological Issues in Religion	Dr. V.S. Varughese
2.	Methodological Issues in Old Testament	Dr. K. Jesurathnam
3.	Methodological Issues in New Testament	Dr. C. I. David Joy
4.	Methodological Issues in Theology	Dr. Joseph P. Dayam
5.	Methodological Issues in Ethics	Dr. Allan S. Palanna
6.	Methodological Issues in History of Christianity	Dr. Gladson Janthanna
7.	Methodological Issues in Christian Ministry	Dr. Nalini Arles
8.	Methodological issues in Communication	Dr. Peter Singh
9.	Methodological Issues in Mission	Dr. P. T. George

There were Methodological Interaction Sessions every evening with one of the scholars presiding over the session as facilitator. There were sessions for the development of personality and for the growth of research scholars' spiritual acumen:

1.	Time Management	Dr P. C. Gine
2.	Personality of a Researcher: Confidence and Competence	Dr. Joseph George

- | | | |
|----|--|-------------------|
| 3. | Personal Skill Development | Fr. Jerry Kurian |
| 4. | Spiritual Formation in Advance Level Academic life | Dr. Joseph George |

Every day began with Yoga/meditation walk to the local park early in the morning led by Mrs. Nissi Susan Koshy. There were morning and evening devotions led by the scholars. Certificates were distributed by Dr. Santanu K. Patro, Registrar of the Senate of Serampore College (University) at the concluding session. A special word of thanks is due to the Principal and Faculty and staff of UTC for their hospitality and support.

DTH Research Methodology Seminar 2015 created clarity of perceptive concerning different methodologies and its challenges of the present and future. More significantly, it explicitly expressed and heartened an imperative need for developing contextual methodologies for the academia of the world at large as well as for the ecclesia of India.

b. National Colloquium 2015-16: Birth Centenary of Dr. M. M. Thomas

The annual DTH National Colloquium 2015 was held at Union Biblical Seminary (UBS), Pune from 11th to 13th August 2015 based on the theme '*Re-reading M.M. Thomas in the Light of Indian Christian Theology*'. This year is celebrated as the Birth Centenary year of one of the leading Indian Christian Theologians, Dr. M. M. Thomas. Thirty one doctoral research scholars in their second and third year from seven doctoral centers and students directly under SATHRI actively participated in the colloquium. The colloquium was inaugurated by the Bishop Andrew B. Rathod (CNI, Pune). The following scholars presented papers in their wider areas of specialization:

- | | | | |
|----|-----------------------|---|---|
| 1. | Dr. Sunil M. Caleb | - | <i>M. M. Thomas' Engagements with Social Theories and Ideologies</i> |
| 2. | Dr. Y. Vinayaraj | - | <i>M. M. Thomas: Political Theology in India</i> |
| 3. | Dr. Gabriele Dietrich | - | <i>Spirituality and Politics of M. M. Thomas' Socio-Political Interventions</i> |
| 4. | Dr. V. J. John | - | <i>Biblical Hermeneutics of M. M. Thomas</i> |
| 5. | Dr. Wati Longchar | - | <i>M.M.Thomas' Contribution to Contextual Theologies in Asia</i> |
| 6. | Dr. George Zachariah | - | <i>M. M. Thomas and Eco-Justice Theologies in India</i> |
| 7. | Dr. Santanu K. Patro | - | <i>M. M. Thomas and Feminist Theology in India</i> |

Research Scholars of Doctoral Centers were assigned themes on which they have presented papers and Scholars from another Doctoral Centre responded. This exercise gave an opportunity to participants to go through the writings of M.M. Thomas, which eventually made the discussions relevant and lively:

- | | | |
|----|--|--------------------|
| 1. | Ecclesiology of M. M. Thomas | - FFRRC, Kottayam |
| 2. | Theological Method of M. M. Thomas | - UTC, Bangalore |
| 3. | Inter religious Dialogue in the theology of M. M. Thomas | - NIIPGTS, Kolkata |
| 4. | Church and State in the theology of M. M. Thomas | - UBS, Pune |
| 5. | M. M. Thomas' Theology of Mission | - GLTC, Chennai |
| 6. | Social Movements as Secular Koinonia: Theological Reflection | - TTS, Madurai |
| 7. | Gospel and Culture in the theology of M. M. Thomas | - ATC, Mizoram |

The Dean, Department of Research/SATHRI, the Registrar of the Senate of Serampore College (University) and the Dean of Extension were available to listen to the concerns and struggles regarding their doctoral studies. Thus the national colloquium provided a good platform for research scholars to share their concerns with the officers of the Senate. This interaction was very beneficial in establishing strong rapport between the participants and SATHRI administration.

The cultural night hosted by the student body of UBS was entertaining to the participants. The serene atmosphere of UBS Campus along with the warm hospitality of UBS Community kept the participants refreshed and active throughout the three days of intensive deliberations.

Special thanks to the Rev Dr. Shekhar Singh, Principal, the Faculty especially Dr. EliyaMohl, Dr. V. V Thomas and Dr. Mithra and the UBS community as whole for their courteous gestures and kind hospitality. Books and Bible Commentaries by Dr. M. M. Thomas and books on MMT were made available during the Colloquium.

7. CATS VIII - MEETING

It was decided that the VIIIth meeting of the Congress of Asian Theologians (CATS) will be hosted by the Department of Research/SATHRI of the Senate of Serampore College. Initial discussion and decision was made by the Executive Committee (EC/45/15 & EC/79/15). It was decided that the Rev. Dr. P. G. George would be in charge and serve as the coordinator.

A Preparatory Committee meeting for the VIIIth CATS meeting was held at the CCA Head Quarters, Chiag Mai, Thailand on 30th November 2015. The President Rt. Rev. Dr. Isaac Mar Philoxenos and Dean, Dr. P. G. George represented the Senate. A draft programme and speakers/resource persons were finalized. Theme of the meetings is "*Doing Asian Theologies in the context of God's Oikos.*" The date finalized for the meeting is 18th to 22nd April 2016 and the venue is Presidency Hotel and the Mar Thoma Guidance Centre in Kochi, Kerala.

We expect 120 participants including the speakers/guests/stewards from the local Theological Colleges/Seminaries. We expect a total of 100 participants from different Asian countries.

8. Publications:

Department of Research/SATHRI has published one issue of the **SATHRI JOURNAL**. The 2014 September issue was published as the SATHRI Silver Jubilee issue in 2015.

April 2015 issue is now published and the September issue focuses on Pentecostalism. From 2015 all the current DTH scholars are subscribers of SATHRI Journal by paying the Publication Fee every year till they submit their dissertation. We have to go a long way in enhancing the number of our subscribers. We hope that with the help and cooperation of the Principals and Librarians of affiliated colleges/seminaries there will be improvements in the collection of subscription fees from the institutions and the individuals.

The Papers from the annual DTH national colloquium 2015-16 held at Union Biblical Seminary, Pune was published as a book: 'Reclaiming Manyness: Re-reading M. M. Thomas in the Light of Indian Christian Theologies' edited by Dr. P. G. George and Dr. Y. T. Vinayaraj. We hope to publish the book on Methodological Issues in Theological Research, Vol. III collecting the papers from the Methodology Seminar 2014 in the coming months. Plans are underway to publish an Annotated Bibliography of all the DTH and MTH theses under the Senate of Serampore College (University). We need the cooperation of all the doctoral and MTH Centers.

9. Department of Research/ SATHRI Building:

Construction of the Department of Research/SATHRI building is the first phase of a national project that covers the entire country in order to bring a new era of creativity and renewal in theological education at doctoral level. The aim of the project is to establish infrastructure for the next generation research facilities at Serampore College, celebrating bi-centenary of the founding of College in 2018.

As per decision of the Executive Committee of the Senate, Research/SATHRI building will serve as Research Centre of the University with all the facilities for the research. Area of the Building at the plinth level is Sq ft. 33,150. Total estimate for the construction of the building is Rs 36,596,360.00.

A brief history of the project is warranted. The construction of the Department of Research/SATHRI building

began at the site allotted by the Serampore College Council in the main campus with the ground breaking ceremony on October 16, 2011. The Hi-Tech Engineers' Cooperative Society was appointed to do the construction work. The construction work got started in June, 2012. The structure of the building with the outer brick walling of the whole building with outside plastering was completed November 2013. The building was dedicated and inaugurated on 5th February 2014 during Senate/Board meetings and the Convocation after completing some urgent works including floor tiling, plumbing and electrical works, fixing of doors, making of drainage system of the ground floor only and painting of the outer wall of the building. The inside work of the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th floors were left undone.

As the construction began, it was decided to end the 'contract' with Hi-Tech Engineers Cooperation's Ltd. In consultation with experts we found out that we can finish the construction for far less money than quoted by them in the revised quotation for the 1st and 2nd floors. So, after two meetings, we have entered into a Memorandum of Understanding for a 'Full and Final Settlement' with the Hi-Tech Engineers Cooperation's Ltd and the MoU was duly signed.

1. Lift money to be deducted from the security deposit (Rs. 8,80,859.00)
2. More deduction of 3% on the entire Running Bill (Rs. 6,93,000.00)

So the payment made from Rs. 23,57,118.40 security deposit after deduction it was paid Rs. 7,83,259.00 (see RC/26/2015)

The following building works are either completed or about to complete as of date:

1. All the brick work and plastering for entire building (1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th) has been completed with some alteration in the plan.
2. Electrical wiring is at the final stage. Electrical fittings are already procured.
3. A water reservoir outside the building is constructed for water storage from the Municipal Water Connection.
4. Plumbing work is at the final stage. Five water storage tanks of 1,000 liters each are installed in the roof of the lift room and water testing is done. A water pump is installed in the premises.
5. The permission is granted from the Serampore Municipality to connect their sewage system.
6. Marble for the entire building is procured and the laying work is in the final stage.
7. Tiles-fitting work for all 34 bathrooms (1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th) are completed.
8. Installation of the PVC doors for all bathrooms is now complete.
9. Contract to install aluminum windows and room doors are given.

SUMMARY OF ACCOUNTS

Original Budget for the Project	Rs 36,596,360.00
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Settlement done with the previous contractor (Hi - Tech Engineers Co-operative Society Ltd)	Rs. 23,571,184.00
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CONSTRUCTION RE-STARTED (February 2015)

- (a) An amount of more than Rs. 62 lakhs is spent so far on the project after re-starting the construction.
- (b) Funds received in 2015.
 - i. ICCO & Kerk in Actie, the Netherlands for Solar power Rs. 8,60,824.00
 - ii. Local Donation Rs. 2,14,410.00
- (c) A loan of INR 25 lakhs was requested and INR 15 lakhs was received from the Senate to make payments to the contractors for the ongoing work.
- (d) Funds adjusted from the SATHRI General Account as and when funds are available.

Fund Request was made to all Doctoral Centers and Senate affiliated institutions and churches. So far we have received from the following:

- | | | |
|----|--------------------------------------|---------------|
| 1. | Faith Theological Seminary, Manakala | Rs. 35,000.00 |
| 2. | Harding Theological College, Tura | Rs. 25,000.00 |

Promises to be received:

- | | | |
|----|--|---------|
| 1. | Rev. H. Lianggaia, General Secretary, Baptist Church of Mizoram | 3 lakhs |
| 2. | Rev. H. Lalrinmawia/Rev. L. Pachuau, Presbyterian Synod, Mizoram | 1 lakh |

We thank EMW, Germany; Global Ministries, USA; Church of Scotland, Edinburgh and the churches/institutions in India, such as Mizoram Presbyterian Church Synod, Mar Thoma Church, CBCNEI, NIIPGTS, Andhra Christian Theological College, ISPCK, ICOSA, FFRRRC, Orthodox Theological Seminary, New Theological College, Gossner Theological College, Faith Theological Seminary, Manakala, Harding Theological College, Tura and all individuals from different parts of the country, especially from the North East. Efforts have been made to raise funds for the construction of the building. We appreciate the generous contribution of the Mizoram Presbyterian Church Synod and the LairamIsua Krista Baptist Church.

Thanks to ICCO & Kerk in Actie, the Netherlands has given funds for solar power for the new building to make the Serampore Campus a 'green Campus'. A special word of thanks is offered to the ardent support given by Ms. Corrie van der Ven.

We look forward to move into the new building early in the new financial year 2016-2017. As we have 'attempted great things for God', we are confident to complete our building project by the prayerful financial support of God's people around the world.

10. Future Plans and Concerns:

The Department of Research/SATHRI has moved to Serampore to function as the Department of Research of the University. The Department of Research/SATHRI is fulfilling a great need of the system by admitting research scholars directly in certain academic disciplines the Doctoral Centers are not able to offer. This is done without undermining the role and function of the Doctoral Centers. We hope that the new building of the Department of Research/SATHRI would help developing the programmes. There are spaces to accommodate research scholars of various disciplines and also accommodate a few National Professors. Let us make earnest efforts to institute the Chairs for National Professors and establish good library facilities to meet the requirements of doctoral level research work.

We are proposing an annual meeting of the Direct SATHRI Research scholars coinciding with the Methodology Seminar. Some of the research scholars are in placed where they do not have the luxury of a large academic community. Such a fellowship would be an occasion to present their Assessment Papers and Thesis proposals. First of such a meeting can be arranged along with the Methodology Seminar planned for 22nd May to 3rd June 2016 in UTC, Bangalore. Tentative dates are 20th to 30th May 2016.

I would like to share some of the concerns as we look ahead:

1. Alternate models or structures of theological education are rising before us and it will not be easy to withstand the pressures for long.
2. Quality is critical of long-term results. We should strive hard to excel and should not compromise on our standard.
3. We need to strengthen our Faculty position and encourage them to undertake certain research projects as part of the Post-Doctoral Research or Non-Formal Research within the system.
4. The Faculty resources and infrastructure facilities in the Doctoral Centers need to be looked at

carefully from time to time to see whether the Library and other facilities are up-to-date for the DTH research programme there.

5. How do we meet the expenses of a Doctoral Research Centre? It is not an understatement to say that we at present depended heavily on the overseas support (for scholarship fund). It is to be noted that the funds coming from overseas partners have dwindled in recent past and some of them have stopped funding us. At the same time the Government is putting restrictions on collecting foreign funds for religious programmes in India.
6. The fees that are coming to the Department of Research/SATHRI are the Research Coordination fee and the Publication Fee from all candidates who are currently in the programme till they submit their Dissertation. Also we appreciate the decision of the Senate/Executive committee to give the DTh Affiliation Fee and the Branch Fee from all Doctoral Centers to the Department of Research/SATHRI. Fees are collected from the Direct SATHRI candidates as per the new fee schedule.

Thanks:

As I conclude this report, I would like to offer special thanks to Serampore College Master, Bishop Dr. John S. Sadananda, President of the Senate Bishop Dr Isaac Mar Philoxenos, the collegiality of the Registrar Dr. Santanu K. Patro, and all fellow officers of the Senate, Dr. Mohan Larbeer, BTESSC Secretary and Dr. Wati Longchar, the Dean of Extension and for their active support and help in many ways. I am grateful to the Chairperson Rev. Dr. Sunil M. Caleb and all other members of the Committee for Research for their support and cooperation. I would like to thank all the Principals/Registrars/Deans of Doctoral Research Centers for their cooperation and support in running and coordinating our doctoral programmes. Our thanks also go to all the resource persons of the Seminars/Colloquium. We thank the guides and examiners for their help and cooperation in all the research programmes and viva voce under the Senate of Serampore College.

Our special thanks goes to our overseas partners especially **EMW, Germany, ICCO &Kerk in Actie, the Netherlands, Methodist Church in Great Britain and Global World Ministries, USA and the Church of Scotland** for their partnership with us and for their generous support for all the doctoral and research programmes/projects including the Building Project.

I would also like to thank the Research/SATHRI Office staff, Mr. Sourabh Chakraborty and also all the staff of the Senate for their valuable help and support.

My heartfelt gratitude goes to the Senate and the Council of Serampore College (University) for the opportunity to serve as the Dean. Thank you for your prayers and cooperation to make our doctoral research programme grow and flourish to serve the churches in India and South Asia with utmost relevance.

REPORT OF THE DEAN: SCEPTRE

Rev. Dr. Wati Longchar
Dean, SCEPTRE

It is a great joy that BCS degree program completes 25 years, D.Min - 20 years and MCS - 5 years. We are happy that hundreds of people have been benefitted by these programs. Affirming the objective of Christian presence in secular world, we continue to coordinate the extension program in collaboration with our churches and civil society for service, justice and love. We are happy to present a few highlights of the program this year:

New Extension Program Centres

The Senate has approved 18 colleges for offering BCS and MCS (ACTC & TTS offers both BCS and MCS) programs and 7 DCS examination centres in different regions. This year the Senate has granted permission to following institutions:

- 1) The Tamilnadu Theological Seminary, Madurai, Tamilnadu, for MCS in Tamil
- 2) Harding Theological College, Tura, Meghalaya, for BCS program in English
- 3) Bethel Bible Institute, Guntur, Andhra Pradesh, for BCS in English
- 4) Dharma Jyoti VidyaPeeth, Faridabad, Haryana
- 5) Lamb's Institute of Field Evangelism, Madurai, Tamilnadu, for DCS course in English
- 6) Saccidananda Dharmasastra Vidyapeeth, Raipur, Chattisgarh for DCS course in English

We hope that our effort to equipping and empowering the people of God, especially laity for formation and transformation of the whole community towards building a just and inclusive community, will further strengthen through them. We wish them all the success.

Extension Program Co-ordination

The Senate runs TEE programs consisting of three component elements - inter-church, inter-religious and cosmic.

The first program is:

(i) ***Diploma in Christian Studies (DCS)***

This program is open to all, i.e. to Christians as well as people of other faiths and ideologies. The program aims to: (1) provide opportunity for study of Christianity, its history, faith and practice; (2) make aware of the life, teaching and work of Jesus Christ in today's context; (3) interpret the Bible, its function, and its significance to Christian faith in Indian context; (4) provide opportunity for study of the interaction of Christianity with people of other faiths and cultures; and (5) study the interaction of Christianity with the socio-economic and political realities of South Asia/India.

The DCS is designed to provide Christian perspective on contemporary challenges in India. It is private study and admission is open to all faiths. Recognizing that DCS study will play a key role in promoting inter-faith harmony for peaceful co-existence among various religious communities in India, the Senate has approved 7 examination centres. Dr. M.T Cherian has made exploratory visit to Goa, Mumbai, Bhopal, Ahmadabad and Delhi for DCS program and concrete steps have been suggested to start extension program in those regions. Arranging contact seminar for them will strengthen the program.

The second program is:

(ii) ***Bachelor of Christian Studies (BCS)***

This program is meant for Christians who are in different forms of ministry and leaders in various secular vocations. This degree program aims to: (1) develop "Kingdom of God" values (with special reference to justice, peace and integrity of creation); (2) create critical consciousness and openness,

to analyze cultural, social, economic, political and ecclesiastical values; (3) provide tools for interpreting the Word of God in different context in society; (4) enable persons to become effective witness in the context of their varied and diversified vocations; (5) provide theological education as a transforming influence in personal, ecclesial and societal life. About 1200 students have enrolled for this program. Out of which about 350 students are registered directly with the Senate and the rest are enrolled through the affiliated colleges. This year 126 students have been registered for the course.

We have organized Contact Seminars for them in the following centres:

- May 21- 25, 2015 at Madras Theological College & Seminary, Chennai
- June 18-22, 2015 at SCEPTRE, Kolkata
- June 25-29, 2015 at Orthodox Theological Seminary, Kottayam
- August 6-10, 2015 at Allahabad Bible Seminary, Allahabad for the Hindi speaking students

The third program is:

(iii) Master of Christian Studies (MCS)

It is a post graduate program, primarily meant for laity and Christian ministers and lay leaders who wish to continue theological studies through external program. The aim of the program is to: (1) provide an opportunity for ongoing learning for spiritual (both individual and communitarian) and vocational growth of the candidate within his/her context; (2) develop necessary skills and tools to understand and interpret the socio-political, religio-cultural context of the Church and society and to identify the issues of the times; (3) equip the candidate for rendering services to the church and society through a particular ministry of his/her choice. (3) provide an opportunity to bring about an ongoing integration of theological understanding and practical ministry in varied contexts. A total of 10 students have been enrolled directly with the Senate this year and we organized Orientation Seminar for them from May 10-19, 2012 at SCEPTRE, Kolkata.

We feel that time has come for us to make a serious impact assessment of our extension programs in the church and society. From the very inception, we have been following common syllabus and closed examination system. Keeping the legacy of our long history we need to modify our system according to the change of time and context. We are now in cyber society with multiple challenges both in rural and urban context, and yet we continue to operate within traditional framework. Five days Contact Seminar, with a common syllabus and closed examination system will not make much impact in a sub-continent like India. We need to strategize new model, e.g. give more freedom to colleges for administration and development of courses, coordinate more weekend contact seminars in different places, offer more issue-oriented professional courses, adopt comprehensive assessment model, online teaching-learning method need to be considered for effective function of the external programs. A flexible curriculum responding to concrete contextual issues and a different evaluation system needs to be devised to raise the standard, promote relevancy as well as effective coordination of the extension program. The present examination oriented degree system will not be relevant for lay people who desire to equip themselves for diverse vocations. We also need to plan for Ph.D program for external candidates as many graduates wish to pursue their higher studies.

The fourth program is:

(iv) Doctor of Ministry (D.Min)

This program is meant only for those who are in full-time Christian ministry. The aims of the program is to: (1) analyze the candidate's own behavior patterns, to deepen personal formation, to engage in critical reflection, and to equip with necessary academic and professional skills needed for the ministry (2) make the candidate's own ministerial involvement and experience a basis for theological learning and reflection; (3) provide tools to analyze contemporary socio-political, religio-cultural contexts of the society and interpret their missiological implications for the Christian faith. This year 33 (out of which only one woman) students have registered for D.Min program. It is sad and matter of concern that the enrolment of women in D.Min program is reducing year by year due to less opportunity given by the churches. This year we organized seven seminar/colloquium for them as follows:

- (a) February 15-25, 2015 - Colloquium on **Issues in Ministry** at SCEPTRE, Kolkata, for the second year students.
- (b) June 1-10, 2015 - **Orientation** Seminar at SCEPTRE, Kolkata, for the new students.
- (c) June 28- July 7, 2015 - **Research Methodology** Seminar at SCEPTRE, Kolkata, for the second year students.
- (d) August 12-21, 2015- **Foundational** Colloquium at SCEPTRE, Kolkata for the first year students (Group A)
- (e) September 2-12, 2015 - **Foundational** Colloquium at OTS, Kottayam for the first year students (Group B)
- (f) September 12-21, 2015 - **Specialization** Colloquium at OTS, Kottayam for the second year students (Group A)
- (g) October 1-10, 2015 - **Specialization** Colloquium at SCEPTRE, Kolkata for the second year students (Group A)

Comparing to other external programs, D.Min program is better co-ordinated. Within 18 months students are required to attend 5 colloquium/seminars (10 days each) and work closely with the mentors. The numbers of male students are increasing and many students expressed their satisfaction. This year 13 students will be receiving their degree. We also wish to point out that we have encountered many anomalies in evaluation process. Most of the D.Min supervisors are professors in theological colleges. Many of them have not been involved in empirical research as it is not required in some disciplines. Due to this reason some supervisors are not in a position to guide and oversee the implementation of student's ministerial project. Also some of the professors expect D.Min students thesis like M.Th and D.Th without any ministerial project. Some of our examiners evaluate the dissertation project mainly from the academic point of view and some argue that it is a doctoral degree and so it must be above M.Th standard. A clear guideline is required.

The D.Min degree should be recognized as a unique professional degree, but not an academic degree for teaching. It should not be compared to M.Th or D.Th degree programs. The D.Min dissertation project is meant to enhance professional competency and contribute practical dimension to the life and ministry of the church. Therefore, (a) The design of project proposal, implementation and interpretation (b) Critical analysis of case studies and practical suggestions (c) Practical steps for the renewal of church and society must be given more importance in evaluation.

The lack of teachers in field of Christian Ministry in our colleges also indirectly affects our D.Min program. As per our present policy, the dissertation project supervisor must be a doctoral degree holder from any discipline. There is a need of re-looking the qualification of supervisor. M.Th in Christian Ministry with 5 years teaching experience in B.D colleges may be considered for supervision.

Proficiency Prizes for External Candidates:

To encourage academic excellence and promote theological studies in regional languages, the Senate decided to create endowment for prizes. The following institutions/individuals have responded positively as follows:

1. Bishop Isaac Mar Philoxenos Proficiency prize for MCS - Rs. 15,000/- Endowed by Mar Thoma Church
2. Rev. Liangkhaia Proficiency prize for BCS - Rs. 15,000/- Endowed by Prof. Laltluangliana Khiangte, Former Principal of Serampore College
3. NCCI Proficiency prize for BCS in English - Rs. 20,000/- Endowed by NCCI, Nagpur
4. Allahabad Bible College Proficiency prize for BCS in Hindi - Rs. 15,000/- Endowed by ABA, Allahabad
5. Aizwal Theological College Proficiency prize for BCS in Mizo - Rs. 15,000/- Endowed by ATC, Aizwal.

We thank them for their generous contribution. Some institutions have expressed their interest to endow proficiency prizes in Telugu, Kanada and Tamil. We heartily welcome them.

BCS/MCS (some BD) Study Materials

To aid external candidates in their studies, the production of study materials was a long felt need. We are happy that we could add two new titles during the year:

1. *Jesus Tradition in Paul and Pauline Circle* by Mr. Tunchapbo
2. *Christian Response to Multi-Faith Context* by Laji Chacko

We have reprinted the following titles:

1. *Christology* by Samuel George (3rd reprint)
2. *Pastoral Care and Counseling* compiled by Zubeno Kithan (2nd reprint)
3. *Jesus Movement in the Gospel Traditions* by Menjiwapong Jamir (2nd reprint)
4. *Jesus in the Synoptic Gospels* by Joseph Lalfakmawia (2nd reprint)
5. *Issues in Contemporary Christian Mission* compiled by K.S. Imchen (2nd reprint)
6. *Understanding Social Analysis* prepared by M.J. Thomas (2nd reprint)
7. *Discerning the Signs of Times* by Laji Chacko (2nd reprint)

The following books are in the process of updating and reprinting:

1. *Introduction to Christian Theologies in India* (2nd reprinting)
2. *Understanding Christian Faith* (updating for 2nd reprinting)
3. *Introduction to Christian Ethics* (2nd reprinting)
4. *Introduction to Christian Ministry* (2nd reprinting)
5. *Re-reading OT Text from Liberative Perspective* (2nd reprinting - enlarged version)
6. *Message of Religions* (updating for 2nd reprinting)
7. *Understanding Social Analysis* (updating for 3rd reprinting)

In spite of many deficiencies, we have published 38 study materials so far and we are in the process of publishing 9 more study materials. The books are well received and much appreciated by theological students and teachers. We thank all the teachers for their hard work. We have uploaded all our publication and theses in globethic.net for the benefit of global Christianity. As the grant from EMW and ETE-WCC comes to an end, I wish to inform you that we received a grant of Rs. 10,52,851/- from EMW in three installments and ETE-WCC granted Rs. 4,46,483/- (Total Rs. 14,99,334). I am happy to inform you that we have received a total of Rs. 29,62,567 from the sale proceed so far. I hope with the books in stock and clearance of dues by the colleges, we will be able to publish more study materials in the coming years. We thank EMW, Germany and ETE-WCC for not only journeying with us in strengthening theological education but making us strong financially for the production of the study materials. We thank teachers who have contributed for the success of this project. We appeal to all the teachers to actively participate in writing study materials. It will benefit not only Senate affiliated colleges but the whole global church.

In order to help and strengthen library, we have donated all our books to theological libraries in SA and some South East Asian countries. Permission has been granted to ATEM, NCC Bhutan for reproduction of our publication for theological students and teachers.

Joint Publication with PTCA

With the support of ETE-WCC and Karibu Foundation, the SCEPTRE continues to collaborate with PTCA for joint publication in doing theologies with Asian resources and in Asian context. The publication is further collaborated with various institutions in Asia for wider circulation and dissemination. We have published 11 Study Series so far. This year we have added 3 more titles and reprinted 1 book for the third time.

1. *Doing Theology with Indigenous Peoples Spirituality: Asian Contribution to Theology of Creation and Wider Ecumenism* eds. by Dr. SashiKichu (in-collaboration with Tribal Study Centre, ETC, Jorhat and Clerk Centre for Peace Research and Action, CTC, Mokokchung)
2. *Jesus and Wong Cilik (Jesus and Disposable People): Theology of Transformative Diakonia* by Josef Wadyatmadja (in-collaboration with Urban-Rural Mission, Indonesia)

3. *Martha & Mary: Juxtapositional Reading from the Margin's Perspective* by Kapi M. Ching (in-collaboration with Yu-shan Theological College and Seminary, Taiwan)

All the books have been uploaded to globethics.net and are well received internationally. Since we have signed MoU with globethics.net for sharing resources and SCEPTRE has been entrusted for uploading Senate publication, we request all the colleges (including SATHRI and BTESSC) to send your publications for uploading our publication for the benefit of researchers and students globally.

With our permission, the Association of Theological Education in Myanmar (ATEM) has been reprinted *Theological Education and World Christianity* by Dietrich Werner and *Returning to Mother Earth* by Wati Longchar. I am happy to inform that The Raja Ram Mohan Roy Foundation of Kolkata has ordered 606 copies of *Returning to Mother Earth: Theology, Christian Witness and Theological Education* to be supplied in different libraries in the country. The issues raised in our publication, *Deconstructing Tourism: Who Benefits? - A Theological Reading from the Global South*, has drawn the attention of "Look East Policy" planners and they ordered 12 copies of our book to address the issues raised by the contributors in planning tourism industries in North East India. The AP-YMCA has also sought permission to reproduce some of articles for planning alternative tourism program. All these indicate that our works are making impact in the larger society.

I am also happy to inform you that SCEPTRE coordinated the publication and distribution of Asian version of ETE-WCC book on (a) *Handbook of Theological Education and Ecumenism* (b) *Ecumenical Vision for the 21st Century: A Reader for Theological Education*. The project is completed now and we thank Dr. Dietrich Werner for the initiative.

The SCEPTRE Accompaniment with Neighbour Countries

During the previous Senate meetings and committees, the members have expressed concern and affirmed our solidarity support to South Asian countries, Myanmar and other South East Asian countries who are struggling to rebuild theological education. We are happy that SCEPTRE could play a small role of ecumenical accompaniment with them and we thank our ecumenical partners for their support. (a) On the request of the Uniting Church of Australia, we visited Bhutan to help in planning Himalayan Theological College, Timpu in February 2015. The construction work, curriculum and text book production are making good progress and the Senate is likely to recognize as examination centre either for DCS or BCS course in near future. (b) On the kind invitation of St. Andrew Theological Seminary, Dhaka, we could be part of facilitating Pastor's Refresher Training program in March 2015 in Bangladesh. (c) On the invitation of NCC Nepal, we took part in facilitating Leadership training program for the lay leaders in Nepal in May 2015. (d) With the support of DanMission and FTESEA, Dr. Kwok Pui Lan and I facilitated "Effective Teaching" seminar for the teachers of ATEM member schools in June 2015. We also helped Myanmar Institute of Theology, Yangon in their annual methodology seminar for new candidates of Th.M, D.Min and Th.D in July 2015. (e) With the support of EMW, Germany, PTCA and SCEPTRE organized a sub-regional seminar on "Indigenous Wisdom and Its Contribution to Asian Theology and Ecumenism" for the South Asian countries where two participants each from Nepal, Bangladesh, Bhutan and Sri Lanka were invited in August, 2015. (f) The churches in Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam are nurtured by theological extension program. With the support of AP-YMCA and SOP, we gave leadership in organizing training program for teachers and pastors, who are involved in extension program in those countries in September, 2015. We were involved in this training program for the last three years. We have extended our help in preparing teacher's handbook for them.

SCEPTRE being located in Kolkata and gate-way for the Northeasterners to connect with other cities in India, the centre facility is heavily used by the churches from NEI. With the support of faculty from the Bishop's College and Serampore College, we have organized 6 leadership trainings for them. We thank the churches from Nagaland and Mizoram for shouldering the expenses of the programs. The church-based NGOs who continue to use and support SCEPTRE centre includes CASA, Compassion East India, Truth Ministry, CNI especially Durgapur Diocese, Serve the Nation, Christian Service Agency, LWS, Harvest Ministry, etc. We were able to coordinate more than 15 activities for them. We wish to thank Dr. Roger

Gaikwad, my predecessor, who laid foundation and we continue to enjoy our relationship with them. This year we faced lot of difficulties due to water connection problem and renovation work. In spite of problem, the SCEPTRE has received Rs. 26,02,527/- (Twenty six lakh two thousand five hundred and twenty seven only) as donation from centre's facilities.

Appreciation and Prayer Request

As I relinquish from SCEPTRE, I wish to record our deep appreciation to churches, institutions, partners, friends and well-wishers who stood firm with us in our journey.

We thank all those churches who have generously contributed to SCEPTRE ministry. We have received overwhelming support from many churches especially from the Ao Baptist ArogoMundang (ABAM), Council of Baptist Churches in North East India (CBCNEI) Baptist Church of Mizoram and Presbyterian Church of Mizoram.

Our special thanks to EMW, Germany, ETE-WCC, Karibu Foundation, United Church in Canada for various programs. Their support gave us tremendous encouragement to move forward with courage. Without their generous support and partnership we would have not realized our dreams and visions.

Our special thanks to Bishop's College, Serampore College, Allahabad Bible Seminary, Madras Theological College & Seminary, Mar Thoma Theological Seminary, Orthodox Theological Seminary, Eastern Theological College, Gurukul Lutheran Theological College, Aizwal Theological College and Calcutta Bible Seminary for their active support and hosting colloquium and contact seminars.

Thanks also to NGOs and Institutions especially PTCA, NCCI, Interfaith Coalition for Peace, HMI, Compassion India, Ram Krishna Mission, Calcutta University, St. Xavier College, Inter-faith HIV Network, Global AIDS ministry of USA and Arunima Hospice, Kolkata for their partnership and support.

Thanks to all the professors, mentors and Extension Committee members for their expertise, active support and guidance.

A special word of gratitude to the Respected Master of Serampore College, Rt. Rev. Dr. John Sadananda for his prayer, support and timely intervention in times of crisis. He stood with us and protected SCEPTRE as an integral part of ONE NATIONAL STRUCTURE of the Senate. We consider that Bishop Master is a great blessing to SCEPTRE and we cannot imagine of carrying out our programs effectively without his counsel and support. Thanks to the President of Senate Rt. Rev. Dr. Isaac Mar Philoxenos Episcopa, who always stood for justice, regional and gender balance. It is indeed a great privilege of working under the guidance of world well-known ecumenist and theologian. Thanks also the Registrar, Rev. Dr. S.K. Patro, my long time friend and colleague, who always stood with us extending all possible support and guidance.

Last, but not the least, I express my sincere gratitude to my colleague Dr. M.T. Cherian and all the staff of SCEPTRE for efficiently and diligently discharging their duties. I thank all of them for making SCEPTRE strong and self sufficient in all aspects. Dr. Cherian was instrumental in connecting SCEPTRE to larger interfaith networks such as Ram Krishna Mission and AMAN. He is giving significant leadership in strengthening Buddhist-Christian dialogue. We are happy that SCEPTRE is now part of inter-faith network in Asia.

Thank you my dear friends, respected principals, senators, committee members and church leaders for the support you have extended to SCEPTRE and to me during the last eight years. I will be taking up the responsibility of the Director of Asia-Pacific Indigenous Research Centre located at Yu-shan Theological College& Seminary, Taiwan and Dean of Program for Theology and Cultures in Asia (a theological movement) for which I solicit your prayer and support. I look forward working with the Senate and BTESSC in different ways in the days to come. Thank you once again and may God richly bless you all.

BTESSC SEMINAR - 2016

INTRODUCTION

Welcome you all for the Board Seminar. Last year we had the theme 'Relocating Theological Education in the Marginalised Context.' and this year we moved to 'Transformative Theological Education and the Future of the Ecumenical Movement.' When the Executive was searching for a suitable facilitator for this topic unanimously we decided to have Dr. Amele Adamavi-Aho Ekue as the right person who is related both to theological education and also to ecumenical movement. She may be new to many of you. Currently she serves as the Programme Executive for Ecumenical Theological Education of World Council of Churches, Geneva. She helped us in organising the dialogue between Senate of Serampore College and Asia Theological Association. Her presentation in the first dialogue opened many new avenues for closer cooperation with ETE and also with Asia Theological Association. We are grateful to her for finding time to prepare this seminar paper with deeply loaded theological insights.

In her paper she describes three stages: "First, I will locate the theme by exploring what transformation means for theological education. Thereafter, my reflections will be dedicated to the way the changes of the religious and ecclesial landscape in the era of World Christianity set important contours for a transformative theological education, and finally, this presentation will conclude by showing how transformative theological education will be decisive for the future of the ecumenical movement, and in which manner the latter has in fact to be understood as the result of a constant individual, collective and institutional transformation. The main assumption proposed for reflection."

We also thank to Dr. Simon Samuel, the Principal of New Theological College, Dehradun for his response. We only gave him three days' time to prepare this response. In his response he argues that, "Theological education must be transformational. Transformation begins with a 'disorienting dilemma' due to an 'internal interrogation' leading to an 'estrangement' so that one can engage critically with one's own sedated spiritual self- understanding and transform it. For this perhaps a physical dislocation, a moving away from the habitual context and content too may be necessary. Transformation also includes a 'ritual disruption' to 'reflexive praxis' and an 'embodied change' and a return with renewed understanding and resultant witnessing. 'Embodied change' is needed at the physical, cognitive and spiritual levels for individuals, churches and the wider society." It is a big challenge to Senate family.

Being part of our fraternity he is raising some questions for our reflection. To begin with he raised a very practical question, "What is the import of this paper in the already initiated curriculum revision at the BD and MTh levels in the Senate system of theological education? Did we act foresightedly? And what shall we do to see its fruit in the ecclesial ground levels of spirituality?" It is really a good challenge and we have to take this question seriously and deliberate here and also in our meetings.

We also thank to Dr. Limuel Equina the Executive Director of Association for Theological Education in South East Asia for his response. In a way I forced him to do this response. I was particular to have his response because he can bring Asian perspective in his response. He appreciates Prof. Ekue by saying "Prof. Ekue's objective valuation of scholarship and formation in theological education. She does not compromise the intellectual rigors of theological education in favour of ministerial skills and pietism. Rather she argues that both the academic aspect of education as a discipline and the ministerial formation are crucial in theological education." Dr. Limuel brings good insights for our discussion and for our future journey. My appreciation to Dr. Limuel for finding time to write this response.

My sincere thanks to Dr. Amele Adamavi-Aho Ekue for her challenging paper and also thank Dr. Simon Samuel and Dr. Limuel Equina for their thought-provoking responses. We hope that their reflections will continue to stimulate and help our Theological Education.

P. Mohan Larbeer
Secretary

03.02.2016

BEING ON THE ROAD TOGETHER: TRANSFORMATIVE THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION AND THE FUTURE OF THE ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT

Prof. Dr. Amélé Adamavi-Aho Ekué

Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us? (Luke 24: 32)

Introduction

Words matter.¹ Or more expressively spoken: the Word matters. It challenges, concerns the whole human existence, and in the best of all circumstances constitutes the source of a life-long transformation. The well-known story of the two disciples walking from Jerusalem to Emmaus contains such a word that matters. It describes vividly how Jesus reveals himself as the risen Lord and Saviour, who - unknowingly and in the appearance of a stranger - walks along with his disciples. The story is paradigmatic for transformation, which occurs in those who believe, and let their eyes be opened and are open enough to be pointed to the Word.

I propose in this presentation to undertake an exploration of the seminar's theme using the Emmaus story reported by Luke in chapter 24:13-35, not in an exegetical perspective, but as a methodological model to exemplify how the image of *being on the road together* can be made fruitful for an understanding of a transformative theological education. In doing so I will expand the classical two-stage interpretation of the text passage to four analytical phases: 1) the reason for being on the road, 2) being on the road as shared journey of estrangement, 3) the ritual disruption of being on the road as transformative event and 4) being on the road and returning. In using a biblical story as analytical paradigm for my approach to the topic of transformative theological education, I wish to emphasise the necessity to ground any serious reflection on theological education in the biblical narrative. This resonates at the same time with the current attempt of the ecumenical movement to intertwine the biblical-spiritual and the social-ethical rationales of engagement with the world. The World Council of Churches' invitation to churches and all people of good will to join in a pilgrimage of justice and peace stands for such a renewed quest for the unity of humanity and the unity of the churches.

I will proceed in three stages. First, I will locate the theme by exploring what transformation means for theological education. Thereafter, my reflections will be dedicated to the way the changes of the religious and ecclesial landscape in the era of World

Christianity set important contours for a transformative theological education, and finally, this presentation will conclude by showing how transformative theological education will be decisive for the future of the ecumenical movement, and in which manner the latter has in fact to be understood as the result of a constant individual, collective and institutional transformation. The main assumption proposed for reflection here is that the ecumenical movement cannot be thought of without a biblically and theologically nourished idea of transformation, of being on the road together.

Locating the theme:

What transformation means for theological education

Exploring transformation in relation to theological education cannot be done in an isolated manner. Both relate to each other intrinsically: theological education is not merely the sum of intellectual, spiritual, moral, ministerial and community formation, although it entails all these aspects, but has to be understood from within a vision and purpose. The vision and purpose of theological education is to enable people to interpret the Gospel message in their engagement with the world, and at the same time to give - always afresh - witness to this Gospel message in the world. If this assumption holds true, theological education cannot merely be

conceptualised or approached in terms of its functionality, for instance with regard to curricular contents and methodologies, but must also, or rather, first and foremost begin with the foundational vision.

If we can agree on the core of the Gospel message as the salvific event in Christ, who suffered, died and resurrected, so that all may live and are liberated, the purpose of any meaningful theological education must consist in leading individual Christians and groups within churches to appropriate this message in such a way that they are enabled to give an authentic testimony of how this event shapes their lives and allows them to make comments on the contexts they live in. Theological education begins - and, as we will see hereafter, ends - therefore with the encounter with Christ. Only if our self-understanding is confronted with, and ultimately brought to maturation by the radical experiences of suffering, dying and resurrecting in Christ, is it possible to speak, in a Christian perspective, genuinely of theological education.

The discovery of Christ's incarnation as related to a transformational process from an engagement with the world that transcends cultural, linguistic, religious and social boundaries, embraces those who are at the margins, to the point of becoming oneself vulnerable, is a crucial and existential finding for comprehending the transformative nature of theological education. The story of Emmaus is instructive in this regard, because it shakes conventional definitions fed by wisdom traditions in the Hebrew Bible, which hold to education as listening to God's word, obedience and discipline, as well as to strands of the Greek-Hellenistic tradition, which emphasise the development of an individual personality.

In the following I would like to return to the thematic lines of the image of *being on the road together*, as previously outlined, to unfold what transformation means and how it relates to theological education. The first line of reflection I would like to embark on is the reason for *being on the road*. In the Emmaus narrative two disciples are on their way from Jerusalem to Emmaus. The scene takes place after Jesus' passion and crucifixion, on the day women witnessed his empty grave. Confusion marks the minds and conversations of the people at the time, and is also mirrored in the talk of the two men as they walk together. Grief-taken after the violent events that have led to Jesus' death they walk together and converse, when they are joined by Jesus, who they first do not recognise. Being on the road together is the image, which translates a physical movement, a displacement from one location to another, but more so a journey motivated by an existential experience. What the disciples have seen is not an ordinary occurrence, rather an experience, which provokes their reflection. Education prompts a similar process, from its Latin origin *educare* means 'leading, or conducting outside,' and therefore hints at the experience of being both physically and intellectually dislocated. The second line of thought is related to the shared experience of estrangement. In the narrative the two disciples do not recognise Jesus and believe to encounter a stranger, with whom they share the turmoil and irritation the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus created. Jesus of Nazareth, whom they have known as the powerful prophet and in whom they had placed their hope for the redemption of Israel, has become the vulnerable victim of the rulers, who sentenced him to death and crucified him. In the encounter with the stranger the articulation of what remains strange and incomprehensible about this existential experience is enabled. Therefore one could state that the estrangement - here in the literal sense walking with a stranger, but also figuratively in any other circumstance in which people are called to turn upside down the habitual logic, the status quo and to reflect on the unfamiliar, or the "disorienting dilemma"² as Jack Mezirow calls it, - becomes a necessary precondition for transformation. More precisely transformation can only begin to grow in the face of the unknown, the unfamiliar, the stranger or strangeness, as it triggers an internal interrogation, which constructively deals with the paradox of the attraction to the "uncomfortable nudity," the vulnerability, of the other, as Emmanuel Lévinas puts it,³ and the temptation to reduce the unknown other to this status. The experience of estrangement is an essential for learning to engage critically with one's self-understanding and the understanding of the other, which in turn bears a decisive transformative potential. Such an experience can be gained by physical dislocation, by moving away from the habitual context, but also by leaving one's comfort-zone, in which all seems all so plausible.

The third aspect, I would wish to highlight, is related to the ritual disruption of being on the road as transformative event. In the narrative, the disciples' invitation to Jesus to stay with them over night

constituted a decisive turning point for transformation. The words and instructions Jesus gave during their common journey were complemented by the important ritual act of sharing bread with them at the table, and made them finally recognise him as Jesus, whom they had known. Transformation is neither limited to a cognitive nor a physical experience alone, it is rather comprehensive and holistic, and manifests itself as a *reflexive praxis*, which ideally leads to an *embodied change*. However, it has to be noted that transformation cannot be ordered, nor can it be claimed as an expected outcome of any educational process. This is all the more true as education, and also theological education, too often aims at professionalization and thus primarily at the acquisition of knowledge. Genuine transformation, however, is the result of a free process of autonomous appropriation⁴ by which an *ethos*,⁵ rather than a fact-based knowledge is developed. It is admittedly difficult to measure and to state a benchmark for transformation, as it is linked to subjective and contextual experiences. What transformation is and how it manifests itself, must therefore always be translated through the lenses of a particular context. It will remain the task of any relevant theological education to create opportunities for the discovery of contextually meaningful transformation.

Last not least, the qualitative question has to be asked at which objective transformation aims at. Asking this question allows us to take into account the fourth strand of reflection- being on the road and returning - which relates to the Emmaus story ("they got up and returned to Jerusalem immediately" Lk 24: 33a). Transformation is not only the realisation of what was once veiled without being able to capture it ("their eyes were opened and they recognised him, and he disappeared from their sight." Lk 24: 31); it leads to an action, which involves witnessing and sharing the revealed truth at the place where the journey began. It is also interesting to note, that the narrative progressively expands from a dialogue of two, a conversation among three to a larger exchange with the other disciples testifying the resurrection of Christ, and is combined with a two-way movement away from the known place, where the recognised religious leaders reside, to the unknown location and back to where it all started.

By way of an intermediary summary one can state, that transformative theological education ideally fulfils what the narrative's imagery conveys on a symbolic level of action: it instigates an *embodied change* with a physical, cognitive and spiritual impact, made visible first inside - "were not our hearts burning within us..." - and thereafter as public witness shared more widely. Transformation can therefore not be understood as an end itself; it characterises all contextually relevant theological education, because it is tied to the *homo novus* motif, the renewal of the human being in Christ, and is therefore intimately bound to the event and story of Jesus. Transformative theological education can thus be perceived as an enterprise of leading individuals, communities and churches to such *embodied change* experiences, by which they can interpret the fundamental human situation against the background of the Gospel message.

How World Christianity sets contours for transformative theological education

The reflection so far was guided by the attempt to explore the understanding of transformation in relation to theological education. In this second part, I wish to deepen the discussion by considering the impact of World Christianity for transformative theological education. Transformation, as previously stated, has to be understood as an attitudinal change, as a disposition, an ethos to engage with the world based on the Kingdom values, not as a mere *perspective transformation*, where only the angle from which someone understands and interacts with the world matters. How can such a transformative theological education be envisaged in an era of growing disparities and divisions in societies and in the churches, among nations and between cultures?

Andrew F. Walls has drawn attention to the contours of World Christianity determining the shape of theological education,⁶ by highlighting especially the geopolitical, religious- demographic, academic and theological factors. His major assumption is that, broadly speaking, the polycentric nature of Christianity as a result of its worldwide missionary spread has tremendous consequences on theological education and scholarship. The demographic and religious patterns of growth have led to significant shifts in Christianity, which scholars have widely commented on, and which by now belong to the canon of agreed academic findings in the history of Christianity.⁷ The development is also crucial for the theological self-understanding

and articulation of churches and theologians in the global South, as well as for the establishment of autonomous institutions of higher theological education in Africa, Asia and Latin America. The inculturation of the Gospel message in these regions, and what the missiologist Lamin Sanneh has called the emergence of "missionary agents of change,"⁸ have significantly contributed to the elaboration of contextual theologies. They have given expression on the way local communities in different parts of the world engage with the Gospel, derive meaning and sense from the biblical narrative for their life journeys. Contextual theologies have also laid the foundation for an academic and ecclesial, often ecumenical, debate on how theological education can contribute to authentic theological articulations and responses to the political, social and cultural challenges in the different regions and for the edification of autonomous churches liberated from domination of the Western Church.

Perhaps one could describe the emergence of contextual theologies as results of individual and collective journeys of enquiry and transformation, of relating the biblical narrative to the narratives of the people, and of translating the experiences of estrangement that they provoke into plausible responses that resonate within the respective contexts.

The main changes in the era of world Christianity, which have to inform a transformative theological education in the twenty first century can be summarised as follows:

- a) The shift of the centre of gravity of Christianity from the West/global North to the East/global South (the polycentric Church)
- b) The pluralisation of the ecclesial and religious landscape with blurred confessional/religious boundaries (migrant/International churches; interdenominational churches; new religious movements)
- c) Increasing economic and political disparities within and between the regions
- d) The divide between Christian traditions and theological interpretations due to the raise of global Pentecostalism (Evangelicals vs. 'Ecumenicals' on church-dividing issues)
- e) (Re)confessionalisation, confessional inward-orientation and loss of motivation for Christian unity (revivalist/fundamentalist movements *ad fontes*; 'aggressive' evangelism; confessional theological institutions)

In light of these changed Christian landscapes, traditional theological education falls short as it compartmentalises studies and research into disciplines, where interdisciplinary and intercultural inquiry would be more appropriate. In the course of such a cross-cultural and multi-disciplinary exchange theological education models could be tested, as for instance the theological education model of interpretation, which emphasises the capacity development of interpreters of sacred texts and texts of Christian history, the theological education model of contextualisation, which highlights the influence of contexts on religious meanings and practices, the theological education model of formation, which stresses the professionalization and preparation of theologians for ministry, and the theological education model of performance, which prioritises practical theological competences like preaching, teaching and pastoral care.

Whereas all the above mentioned models comprise relevant elements for theological education and the engagement with the changes of the ecclesial and religious landscapes in the era of World Christianity, they are all characterised by an underlying functional approach. They are intended to serve a particular, selective purpose and are at the same time subject to a specific understanding of theological education; and although these intentions are all legitimate, they fail to capture the fundamental aim of transformative theological education: to instil in individuals and communities the desire to witness, to celebrate and to share the liberating Gospel, so that it becomes visible in considerate acts of commitment in the world.

Transformative theological education in an era of world Christianity would thus articulate itself - and perhaps this constitutes the most difficult learning - in the loyal attitude of *walking in communion and remaining in dialogue* with people of other confessions, worldviews and other faiths.⁹ Transformative

theological education would not be restricted to prepare for the undoubtedly necessary structural changes in societies to address injustices and violence, but would hold fast to an embodied transformation, which begins with the personal transformation, metanoia, which prepares for listening and considering the other, without abandoning one's own foundations. This is important, as transformative theological education should not be confused with erasing differences, or with false conformity and acceptance of injustice especially in contexts of oppression and persecution. Transformative theological education takes seriously the biases arising from a symmetric power relationships, encourages to naming the challenges and seeks to empower the victimised.¹⁰

Transformative theological education aims at equipping theologians, laypeople and church communities to become engaged and to address issues of justice in their own contexts and to contribute to their transformation. An important aspect is therefore how the new situations in the context of World Christianity have to be read, so that gaps of understanding and relatedness do not occur. Traditional theological education was often primarily understood - and still is perceived in this way by Pentecostal/Charismatic and Independent churches - as preparation for ministry, with the recurrent suspicion that academic theological education would estrange the future ministers from their local church communities. The question of how to read the new contextual situations is important, as they constitute the spaces for real life tests for the future ministers and theological leaders. It is however crucial not to play off academic theological education and ministerial formation against each other, both can complement each other, especially when the Church as transformational community is seen as convergent point of reference for theological education as a whole.

Transformative theological education in the era of World Christianity is thus not bound to a specific content - a catalogue of qualifying criteria. It is rather the attitude of all those, ready to being together, and - in hope against hope- remaining together on the road towards the One, God-Emmanuel, who was, is and remains with humans. Transformative theological education prepares to be part of a communion of hope, in which all are enabled to interpret the story of Christ in light of their life stories (and vice versa), and in which they are able to translate the central Gospel message of love in acts of mutual considerateness in all realms of life, and in shared fellowship with all those whose aspirations for life are so often not considered.

How transformative theological education will shape the future of the ecumenical movement

A theological education, which is designed and practiced from within the redemptive and transformative nature of the cross, and therefore prepares to engage with the major changes of the religious and ecclesial landscapes in world Christianity, will also have a significant impact on the future of the ecumenical movement. It has to be stated that these changes have already influenced the composition and discussion culture in the ecumenical movement over the past two decades. Depending on the position adopted, some have described this impact as crisis¹¹ or as opportunity for a new ecumenical paradigm.¹²

I will in the following, for the sake of concentration, focus on three major trends and explore how transformative theological education will shape the future of the ecumenical movement. First, consideration will have to be given to religious shifts due to demographic projections and migratory movements. Recent research has shown that an increasing number of global migrants will contribute to the establishment and foundation of religious communities outside their countries of origin. Christians and Muslims will constitute by the year 2050 the two largest religious groups in the world; and significant growth in Christian migrant communities is projected, especially for Europe and North America.¹³ This development of migrant communities, with Christian churches of African, Asian and Latin American face in other parts of the world will significantly alter the composition of the ecumenical movement and prompt to redefine the understanding of the vision of unity. Transformative theological education can help building bridges of understanding between migrant and local churches, especially when theological education is itself understood as intercultural enterprise and fosters models of integrative ecumenical learning.¹⁴

This will be of utmost importance, as the denominational character of these new international churches no longer corresponds with the classical confessional definitions. Interdenominational churches, mainline churches with Pentecostal/charismatic worship style and theologies, as well as multicultural communities will challenge monocultural spiritual practices of the local churches in many migrants' host countries. At the

same time many mainline churches in Europe are declining and the plausibility of the Christian symbolic system is being questioned especially among the younger generation. The future of the ecumenical movement will depend on its capacity to integrate those divergent constituencies and articulations of the Christian faith. It will have to pay an accentuated attention on how a new second and third generation of immigrant Christians, often fully integrated citizens, articulates faith, claims representation and defines the theological agenda.¹⁵

A transformative theological education, which intentionally embraces pedagogies of *embodied transformation*, i.e. of transformation, which encompasses learning from and through intercultural encounters without losing sight of the common vision of theological education rooted in the Gospel, will certainly help the ecumenical movement to adapt to the changes that will affect its institutional, representative and communicative character in the years to come. The altered composition of the ecumenical movement, will also urge to reflect afresh on the self-understanding of the fellowship and the understanding of unity for a generation, which has lost the memory of the division of the Church, or for which it has become a normalcy. Perhaps other issues will come to the fore and dominate the ecumenical conversations: already in these times church-dividing ethical issues and questions of moral discernment have created deep rifts, but also new alliances in and outside the ecumenical movement. Transformative theological education will have to remain attentive for the indivisibility of the unity of the Church and the unity of humanity, and may succeed in this task by emphasising the vision and purpose of theological education, over against curricular changes, which tend to remain at the surface, and enable an integral experience of a lived transformational community.

Last not least, transformative theological education will be crucial for the future of the ecumenical movement in re-actualising the quest for a democratisation of theological education. Ecumenical resource sharing, a strand of the ecumenical discussion of the 1980s, will have to be translated into the realities of increasing economic and political disparities and the resulting divergent ecumenical agendas in the different regions of the world. Ecumenical resource sharing would mean to take seriously what it means to belong to the one body of Christ, to suffer and to rejoice with each other. It impinges on the sensitive domain of access to theological education, gender equity in leadership formation, and the integration and visibility of underrepresented groups. This constitutes perhaps the most difficult challenge for the ecumenical movement and its future, as the disparities of the economic landscapes impinge subtly, yet undeniably on the ecumenical relations, dialogues and partnerships in and between churches.¹⁶

Conclusion

In my reflections I have argued that transformation has to be understood as integrative, embodied change, which - from a Christian perspective of theological education - reposes on the biblical narrative and in its centre on the liberating Gospel message. Transformative education begins therefore as an existential, internal process and experience, before it can be applied to cognitive concepts or to practical domains. It is from this understanding that transformative theological education relates to major changes of World Christianity and to the future of the ecumenical movement. I have indicated that a transformative theological education, which is shaped according to the underlying imageries of the story of Emmaus, as *being on the road together*, is different from a theological education, which defines itself functionally with regard to its envisioned and expected objectives. To put it in Jung Young Lee's words: "Nothing can be finished or completed from the marginal perspective, because marginality is a process of movement, creativity and change."¹⁷ Transformative theological education aims at "being-transformed" individuals and communities of hope, embedded in a shared longing for the Kingdom of God.

1 George Steiner: *Real Presences. Is there anything in what we say?* London: Faber and Faber, 1989.

2 Jack Mezirow: *Learning as Transformation*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2000. See also Edward Tayler: "Intercultural Competency: A transformative learning process," in: *Adult Education Quarterly* 44 (1994): 154-174, who refers to "culture shock."

- 3 See Emmanuel Lévinas: *Altérité et transcendance*. Montpellier: Ed. Fata Morgana, 1995; Id.: *Ethics and Infinity. Conversations with Philippe Nemo*. Trans. R.A. Cohen. Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1985; Id.: *Totality and Infinity*. Transl. A. Lingis. Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1969.
- 4 See Paulo Freire: *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. London: Continuum, rev. ed. 2005.
- 5 See David Suh: "An Ethos for Teaching Theology Ecumenically in Asia," in: Hope Antone/ Wati Logchar et al.(Eds): *Asian Handbook for Theological Education and Ecumenism*. Oxford: Regnum, 2013: 642-648.
- 6 See Andrew F. Walls: "World Christianity, Theological Education and Scholarship," in: *Transformation*, 28, 4(2011): 235-240.
- 7 Todd M. Johnson/Kenneth R. Ross (Eds): *Atlas of Global Christianity: 1910-2010*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009; Philip Jenkins: *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity*. Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press, 2011; Alister E. McGrath: *The Future of Christianity*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2002.
- 8 See Lamin Sanneh: *Translating the Message. The Missionary Impact on Culture*. Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1989.
- 9 See Douglas Pratt: *Being Open, Being Faithful. The Journey of Interreligious Dialogue*. Geneva: WCC Publications, 2014.
- 10 This stands in the tradition of liberation theologies, as for instance documented for Asia in K.C. Abraham (Ed): *Third World Theologies: Commonalities and Divergences*. Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1990; Virginia Fabella (Ed): *Asia's Struggle for full Humanity: Towards a Relevant Theology*. Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1980; Aloysius Pieris: *An Asian Theology of Liberation*. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1988; and more recently Peter C. Phan (Ed): *Christianities in Asia*. Malden/Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011. In his address to the tenth Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Busan (Korea), 2013, Bishop Duleep de Chickera from Sri Lanka described the emergence of a victim theology, which not only reclaims the centre for the marginalised, but "constitutes the indispensable stance from which justice and peace is (sic) shaped and articulated." <<http://www.anglicannews.org/features/2013/11/victim-theology-where-justice-and-peace-is-shaped-and-articulated.aspx>> (accessed 10.01.2016).
- 11 *Crisis and Challenge of the Ecumenical Movement. Integrity and Indivisibility. A Statement of the Institute for Ecumenical Research Strasbourg*. Geneva: WCC, 1994.
- 12 Konrad Raiser: *Ecumenism in Transition: A Paradigm Shift in the Ecumenical Movement?* Geneva: WCC, 1996; and more recently Michael Kinnamon: *Can a Renewal Movement be Renewed? Questions for the Future of Ecumenism*. Grand Rapids/Cambridge: W.B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2014.
- 13 See *Faith on the Move: The Religious Affiliation of International Migrants*. Pew Research Centre, 2012.
- 14 See Elizabeth Conde Frazier/S. Steve Kang/Gary A. Parrett: *A Many Coloured Kingdom: Multicultural Dynamics for Spiritual Formation*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2014.
- 15 See Peter C. Phan: *Christianity with an Asian Face: Asian American Theology in the Making*. Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2003 and J. Paul Rajashekar: "Asian North American Christianity, Theology and Theological Education," in: Hope Antone/ Wati Logchar et al. (Eds): op.cit.: 649-655, which stands for a series of contributions from a younger generation of Asian American theologians developing new types of contextual theologies, which can no longer be classified as migrant theologies; for this see Fabbio Baggio/ Agnes M. Brazal (Eds): *Faith on the Move: Toward a Theology of Migration in Asia*. Manila: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 2009.
- 16 Namssoon Kang: *Cosmopolitan Theology: Reconstituting Planetary Hospitality, Neighbor-Love, and Solidarity in an Uneven World*. St Louis: Chalice Press, 2013 and Kwame A. Appiah: *Cosmopolitanism: Ethics in a World of Strangers*. New York/London: W.W. Norton & Co., 2006, both advocate - from different normative standpoints -for cosmopolitanism, as a paradigm of world-citizenship and hospitality as solution for this challenge.
- 17 Jung Yong Lee: *Marginality: The Key to Multicultural Theology*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995: 172.

**Response to
Améle Adamavi-Aho Ekué's
"Being on the Road Together:
Transformative Theological Education and the Future of the
Ecumenical Movement"**

Dr. Simon Samuel

Abstract

Amele Ekué's paper is on transformative theological education in the context of world Christianity for a wider and inclusive ecumenism within and beyond. For transformation one must have a personal conviction of salvation in Christ that must be ecclesially expressed and practised in socio-ethical praxes for creating one new human in Christ. The rise of Global Christianity and the shifting of centers of Christianity are something to be celebrated for a wider ecumenism. Emerging Christian churches (new churches) must be encouraged to engage in transformative theological education and enter into the ecumenical fellowship.

First of all, on behalf of all who gathered here, I express my/ our deep appreciation to Prof. Amele Ekué for her timely stimulating paper on theological education and the future of the ecumenical movement in this annual Board meeting of the Senate of Serampore College, a College which is going to celebrate its bicentenary in 2018. Secondly I congratulate her for writing quite boldly and openly without fear or favour in the true spirit of ecumenicity both evangelically and charismatically, if not pentecostally! Like Luke the Evangelist who wrote to his Theophilus about ecumenism (unity of Peterine and Pauline strands of Christianities), evangelicalism (for the correctness of the Good News), charismatism (emphasizing the role of the Holy Spirit), and socio-political, economic liberationism (Nazareth Manifesto, etc) Ekué too presents to us her paper on theological education so that we who are her 'theophiloi' in theological education here in India now may also know the accuracy of the things that we are catechized into from the Apostolic times and recognize the importance of the ecumenical, evangelical, charismatic and socio- economic, ethical liberational commitments and praxes of our Christian spirituality.

Secondly, prior to penning my response to her paper let me share an experience that might stir us to take her paper seriously. Recently I was in my village (Kidanganur- Mezuveli near Maramon) in Kerala where there are a number of churches within a 10 km radius ranging from Roman Catholic to the Indian and Syrian Orthodox, Mar Thoma, CSI, Salvation Army, Brethren and a few Pentecostal and Charismatic churches. The time of my visit was in the latter half of Dec. 2015 and the first half of January 2016 when there were quite a bit of Christian festive (perunal) and preaching (conventions and other celebrative) activities inside and outside in almost all the churches. It was also the Sabarimala malakayatam and makaravilakku season. What I noticed in the Christian communities, quite unlike from my early childhood days, is that there exists hardly any ecumenical, koinonal initiative or interest in celebrating those Christian spiritual activities. Each church has its own (apnaapna) festival (perunal) or convention confined to its own constituency. These seasonal activities will be over with a few mega conventions such as the Maramon one of the Mar Thoma church where perhaps a few from various other churches too may crisscross and pass through. The sad thing about this phenomenon is that most of these churches are pastored by pastors trained from seminaries of our ecumenical family, studied the curriculum and courses set by our ecumenical Senate. It is evident that our pastors are not translating what they learned from the seminaries about ecumenicity to the ecclesial levels on the ground once they are out of the seminaries. When they are out the spirit of apnaapna takes precedence over the spirit of ecumenism. This calls for our special attention to Ekué's paper today. We need to listen to what the Spirit says to us who are Christian theological educators and institutional leaders.

The Sabarimala pilgrims quite contrary to these Christians in their outward expressions of spirituality in clothing, chanting and celebrating on their way to the temple exhibited an excited ecumenical zeal. Their spiritual expressions bear witness to their unity and oneness in color and call, though perhaps after all the festive fire is over the oneness may extinguish under the unclean flood waters of casteism for the rest of the year.

These two scenarios in one form or another may be replicating in many other parts of India too where Christian churches are increasingly interested in their own ecclesiastical turfs rather than the ecumenical spread. It is in this context that we listen to Amele Ekue's paper for a re-look into the impact of our theological education and ministerial training, for our 'being on the road together' for a visible ecumenism within and beyond.

Finally let me turn to the paper proper. Amele Ekue's 'Being on the Road Together: Transformative Theological Education and the Future of the Ecumenical Movement' is weaved in the texture of a Lukan-Jesus narrative (Lk. 24.13-35) where the risen Lord Jesus 'unknowingly and in the appearance of a stranger' challenges and transforms his confused disciples who were walking back from the Kingdom experience unraveled in Jesus to their sectarian Judean Jewish ethnic and cultural experience. The paper as a result of this biblical weaving and apparent Alexandrian symbolic, if not allegorical, reading (for methodological modeling and analytical paradigm) not only arouses attention and interest of the readers but also gives a biblical base for her paper.

At the rhetorical and reception levels the 'Word' reference at the outset clearly has a Johannine tone. She begins with saying: 'Words matter. ...more expressively the Word matter'. It evokes a Johannine echo and readers hear that Jesus the Logos (Word) and his teachings(words) and the whole salvific event of Christ matter most for transformative theological education and for the future of the ecumenical movement. She strongly argues that this salvation in Christ needs to be individually appropriated (experienced) and corporately expressed in the ecclesial contexts by the followers of Christ for irrupting a new humanity (new creation/ kingdom of God) in Christ in the wider society.

Transforming theological education plays a crucial role in this endeavor. In this the followers of Christ must be together on the road of learning from the Logos Jesus so that they along with their fellow human beings and with Logos Jesus may enter into a triadic intertwining of the biblical-spiritual with the social and ethical aspects of life in the world. The current agenda of the ecumenical movement and theological education is a logotic pilgrimage for justice and peace that would ultimately result in the unity of humanity and of the churches.

The paper invites us to be on the move with the risen Jesus on the road of transformation. In her attempt to go beyond the two stage (which I presume to be both author centered and reader centered) reading of the Lukan narrative (Lk. 24.13-35) she takes us to see four analytical phases in and through this passage. They are: (i) the reason for being on the road (ii) being on the road as a shared journey (iii) ritual disruption of being on the road as a transformative event and (iv) being on the road returning.

The paper then is developed in three stages: first, by an exploration of the very meaning of transformation through theological education; second, by being aware of the changes of the religious and ecclesial landscape in the era of World Christianity and its import on theological education and ecumenism; and finally, she concludes that transformative theological education, by being together on the road with all other stakeholders, is a pilgrimage of personal salvific experience in Christ and engage in a quest for justice and peace for the unity of humanity and churches (oikoumene tou theou i.e., life in the household of God with God's economic norms).

Ekue argues that the purpose of theological education is not only to impart the intellectual, spiritual, moral, ministerial and community formation skills (curricular contents and methodologies), but also to impart

a 'foundational vision,' i.e., to lead individual Christians and groups within churches to appropriate the salvific event of Christ and as a result give an authentic witness outside and shape their lives and make comments and commitment for action in the context they live in.

Theological education must be transformational. Transformation begins with a 'disorienting dilemma' due to an 'internal interrogation' leading to an 'estrangement' so that one can engage critically with one's own sedated spiritual self-understanding and transform it. For this perhaps a physical dislocation, a moving away from the habitual context and content too may be necessary. Transformation also includes a 'ritual disruption' to 'reflexive praxis' and an 'embodied change' and a return with renewed understanding and resultant witnessing. 'Embodied change' is needed at the physical, cognitive and spiritual levels for individuals, churches and the wider society.

Being on the road together also involves being with all the members of world Christianity. In her elaboration of world Christianity Ekue uses the insights of renowned missiologists like Andrew Walls and Lamin Sanneh. They describe world Christianity in terms of shifting centers of Christianity and changed faces and colors of Christians due to missional growth and migration. She suggests that the emerging world Christianity must be challenged to engage in a transformative theological education so that it may not fall into a certain truncated 'perspective of transformation' in the postmodern sense (i.e., ineffectual expressions of Christian spirituality), but to a transformation into the Kingdom perspective. So our concentration should not only be on capacity building (theological education models of interpretation), contextualization and professionalization but also on instilling in individuals a desire to witness, celebrate and to share the liberating Gospel so that 'it become visible in considerate acts of commitment in the world'

Transformative theological education prepares us to be part of a communion of hope against hope in which all are enabled to interpret the story of Christ in light of their own life stories and vice versa and translate the central message of the Gospel of love in acts of mutual considerateness and in shared fellowship with all those whose aspirations for life are so often not considered (the marginalized).

The paper hopes that the theological education which is designed and practised from within the redemptive and transformative nature of the cross prepares us to engage with the major changes in the religious and ecclesial landscapes (new ecclesiastical groupings which includes Pentecostal and Charismatic movements and churches) in world Christianity which in turn will have a significant impact on the future of the ecumenical movement. These changes have already influenced the composition and discussion culture in the ecumenical movement over the past two decades, even though some say it as a crisis, but others as an opportunity for a new ecumenical paradigm. According to Ekue, 'The future of the ecumenical movement will depend on its capacity to integrate those divergent constituencies and articulations of the Christian faith' and its ability to be 'being on the road together,' 'being-transformed'.

As I read Ekue's paper, my memories went back to reading John Stott's first article in his book *Issues Facing Christians Today* written a few years ago at the zenith of a bitter Ecumenical Evangelical Divide. In this article Stott advises and challenges his evangelical friends to translate their biblical-spiritual understanding and experience to social and ethical life of the people in the world. In Ekue's paper she seems to be doing the same in a reverse order asking her Ecumenical friends to connect their zeal of social and ethical praxes with the biblical theological learning and spiritual experiences. Three years ago a similar voice is heard from Dietrich Werner in the floor of the Board and Senate of the Serampore College. The message and the desire of these two separated constituencies are clear now, that is, to bridge the unhealthy divide. The great divide was primarily a European construct of Liberal and Conservative Protestants which slowly got transformed into Ecumenical Evangelical divide worldwide. We who are a minority community in the midst of a vast and increasingly hostile religio-political context in India need not play the European/ western game. Time has come for us to be on the Emmaus road of transforming theological education for a wider and inclusive ecumenism within. It is to this that Ekue's paper is inviting us to enter and enter we must for the sake of the church of Jesus Christ and for speeding up a fuller manifestation of the new heaven and the new earth.

I may end my response with a quote from Eke's conclusion. She says: "Transformative education begins therefore as an existential, internal process and experience, before it can be applied to cognitive concepts or to practical domains. It is from this understanding that transformative theological education relates to major changes of World Christianity and to the future of the ecumenical movement."

Questions for reflection:

1. What is the import of this paper in the already initiated curriculum revision at the BD and MTh levels in the Senate system of theological education? Did we act foresightedly? And what shall we do to see its fruit in the ecclesial ground levels of spirituality?
2. In what way this paper challenges us and takes us forward in our endeavours to bridge the gap between Asia Theological Association of India and the Senate of Serampore College for the sake of guaranteeing transformational theological education? A few colleges that are hanging in the middle and attempting to bring these constituencies together for the sake of a wider ecumenism, are they terribly mistaken?
3. For the sake of a visible wider ecumenism within, can this paper persuade us to think of an intentional approach to bring the Evangelical Fellowship of India, the National Council of Churches in India, the Catholic Bishops Conference and the Fellowship of Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches and Movements in India around a table (not a square table, but a round table!)?
4. How can we hold on to our ecclesiastical, theological etc differences and yet strive for unity at the same time which seems to be the invitation of this paper? If unity is not possible in the ecclesia of Jesus Christ, can we expect any wider unity of humanity in the world out there?
5. Can the paper challenge us to insist on the much neglected requirement for theological education and that is the need for personal commitment to Christ for students and teachers in theological education?
6. Being together on the road of transformation with God in Christ, and churches and Christian theological education in order to be together with all others in the world for creating a new world. In a religiously polarized world is this a realistic, possible goal?

**Response to
Amélie Adamavi-Aho Ekué's
"Being on the Road Together:
Transformative Theological Education and the Future of the
Ecumenical Movement"**

Dr. Limuel Equina

Prof. Amélie Adamavi-Aho Ekué deserves my utmost appreciation for the privilege to respond to the profound insights she has injected in her paper. My response to Prof. Ekué's paper is guided, if not influenced, by my engagement in the works of the Association for Theological Education in South East Asia (ATESEA). As such, my response can be subjective and provisional.

Prof. Ekué's article is an embodiment of her professional commitments, one as a professor at the Ecumenical Institute Bossey (Switzerland), and, second as a Program Director of Ecumenical Theological Education of the World Council of Churches (WCC). Put simply, her position projects a happy marriage between the academe and the church.

I assume that the core contents of Prof. Ekué's reflection may not be absolutely alien to BTESSC and ATESEA given the broad range of ecclesial traditions that comprise their memberships. However, what is special about this paper is how Prof. Ekué develops her theme that enhances our understanding of what transformational theological education is. Indirectly, she is also inviting us to reflect on how transformative our theological education is.

To advance the focus of her paper, she underpins the following assumptions:

1. Transformation and Theological Education are two inseparable entities
2. Theological education is "transformative" when transformation is embedded in theological learning.
3. Transformative theological education is the platform of the ecumenical movement in the future.
4. The road to ecumenism is a shared journey and not "a lone ranger" endeavour.

The above assumptions define the framework of her thesis which she developed based on the Emmaus narrative (Lk. 24.13-35).

Prof. Ekué's above assumptions are constructive. While she has not so obviously stated it, Prof. Ekué proposes a model of Theological Education which is an interface of, not an impasse between the eurocentric view of education and the people's lived encounters with the challenges and realities in society, churches and religions in various contexts. She states, "... theological education cannot merely be conceptualised or approached in terms of its functionality, for instance with regard to curricular contents and methodologies, but must also, or rather, first and foremost begin with the foundational vision."

She remains faithful to the biblical tradition espoused by many seminaries in explicating the vision of Theological Education which is, "to enable people to interpret the Gospel message in their engagement with the world, and at the same time to give - always afresh - witness to this Gospel message in the world."

Prof. Ekué's conceptual understanding of vision for the seminary is Christologically or Reign of God based. This leads to a broad view of the vision and purpose of theological education which may not be institutionally inspired. By institutional, I mean visions that are crafted as a result of a long process of discussions on the expressed and assessed needs of the churches, communities and society. In short, an institutional vision/purpose is a product of an objective process shared by the stakeholders.

However, Prof. Ekue justifies her Christological approach to transformative theological education by arguing that such an educational model is "neither limited to a cognitive nor a physical experience alone, it is rather comprehensive and holistic, and manifests itself as a reflexive praxis, which ideally leads to an embodied change."

Interestingly, she notes that transformation should not be the goal of education. She clarifies this view by emphasizing the qualitative not quantitative character of education, like stressing the notion of transformation not as an event, but an "ethos." The former is historical where learning can be measured, while the latter, the ethos, is rather quantitative. Although she does not intentionally avoid it, this saves her from the imperatives of the outcome-based learning (OBE) as the measure of what good education is.

I appreciate Prof. Ekue's objective valuation of scholarship and formation in theological education. She does not compromise the intellectual rigors of theological education in favour of ministerial skills and pietism. Rather she argues that both the academic aspect of education as a discipline and the ministerial formation are crucial in theological education.

Moreover, Prof. Ekue does not minimize the value of the traditional approach to education. She cites the legitimacy of the following models of theological education, namely,

the theological education model of *interpretation*, which emphasises the capacity development of interpreters of sacred texts and texts of Christian history, the theological education model of *contextualisation*, which highlights the influence of contexts on religious meanings and practices, the theological education model of *formation*, which stresses the professionalization and preparation of theologians for ministry, and the theological education model of *performance*, which prioritises practical theological competences like preaching, teaching and pastoral care.

Contrary to Prof. Ekue's claim, contextual theologians and lecturers would argue that transformation is an integral part of contextualization. In fact, one cannot speak of contextualization if transformation as such is simply treated as an information and not as the aim of ministerial and ecclesial formation.

However, consistent with her "transformative theological education" proposed model of pedagogy, she considers the above traditional educational or "functional approaches" wanting. Her conclusion is based on the changed contexts and landscape in the era of world Christianity.

Commenting on the weakness of the functional approaches, she writes,

They are intended to serve a particular, selective purpose and are at the same time subject to a specific understanding of theological education; and although these intentions are all legitimate, they fail to capture the fundamental aim of transformative theological education: to instil in individuals and communities the desire to witness, to celebrate and to share the liberating Gospel, so that it becomes visible in considerate acts of commitment in the world.

I suppose that Prof. Ekue assumes that transformation as an ethos of education can be the *telos* of education. This happens when transformation "instigates an *embodied change* with a physical, cognitive and spiritual impact, made visible first inside - "were not our hearts burning within us ... and thereafter as public witness shared more widely."

What one can glean from Prof. Ekue's exposition of transformation is its Christological accent grounded in Christ's incarnation. Christ's incarnation breaks all barriers-culture, ethnicity, gender, social status, and the like "to the point of becoming oneself vulnerable." For her, this "is a crucial and existential finding for comprehending the transformative nature of theological education."

For Prof. Ekue, her proposal to consider the "interdisciplinary and intercultural" pedagogical approaches in transformative theological education is encouraging. These approaches can provide the synergy to the educational strategies in contrast to the compartmentalized and specialized approaches based on the areas of disciplines.

What Prof. Ekue is suggesting is a kind of an educational model where the teachers and the learners are given the flexibility to explore some methods of learning which is not only located or limited within the campus but also extends to the highways and hallways of villages.

I assume that in Prof. Ekue's proposed transformative theological education model, she proposes a pedagogical methodology that is learner-centered. What this means is that the curriculum, or the syllabus of a teacher should also be inspired by the contexts of the learners, and not only as a product of the professor's expertise.

In view of the "demographic projections and migratory movements," Prof. Ekue has logically defended her argument for the transformative theological model education which occupies the center stage in her ecumenical agenda. As a faculty of ecumenism and mission, Prof. Ekue invites us to walk the path towards unity not individually but collectively-the overarching theme in her concept of transformation which she has exhaustively expounded.

Lastly, in her paper, Prof. Ekue has invited us to expand our view of transformation in relation to theological education and ecumenism based on the incarnation of Christ. However, the role of the Spirit has not been strongly accentuated in her view of transformative theological education. This is understandable as the focus of her paper centers more on the issues of society-environment, gender, justice, etc., the agenda of ecumenism, which should be reflected in seminary education.

I suppose that the Pentecostal tradition, which embraces ecumenism, has its own special contribution to Prof. Ekue's view of transformative theological education if given special consideration. This is true especially when the Christological grounding and interpretation of transformative education includes the trinitarian (pneumatic) view as claimed by the Pentecostal scholars which has influenced much the Pentecostal spirituality. The stress on the pneumatological gifts has an important bearing on the renewal and transformation of the church and theological education in their levels of engagement with the issues of society.¹

If this is considered, I presuppose that the ecumenical divide among the Christian circle will be gradually minimized and the consortial sharing of resources among the theological institutions will be purposely intensified, thus opening the road to the democratization of learning.

As with Prof. Ekue, I believe this is indeed "Being on the Road Together." This is transformative theological education which gives ecumenism a bright future.

1 For a more comprehensive discussion on the contributions of Pentecostalism to world Christianity, see Amos Yong, "Beyond the Evangelical - Ecumenical Divide for Theological Education in the Twenty - First Century: A Pentecostal Assist," *Theological Education* 49/1 (2014):87-102.

CONVOCATION ADDRESS

THEOLOGICAL EXISTENCE AND PASTORAL MINISTRY. THEOLOGICAL-BIBLICAL REFLECTIONS IN GERMAN- INDIAN CONVERSATION

Rev. Dr habil. Klaus Schäfer,
**Director of Centre for Global Ministries and Ecumenical Relations of the Evangelical
Lutheran Church, Northern Germany**

1. Introductory remarks: Being in transition from training to ministry

The Convocation of the Senate of Serampore College marks for many of you the end of the period of studies in a theological seminary. We pause a moment in order to highlight the transition from theological training in an academic atmosphere and with academic standards, and the move - at least for the most of you who graduate now - into the ministry of your respective church. In reflecting for myself how to address this moment of transition in a Convocation speech, I felt puzzled. Should we look back to the academic training and formulate some general remarks to theological education in India? That would not make much sense, because it's all over now anyhow and there is no chance to correct anything. Should I look forward and make some comments on the ministry that most of you are going to take up in the near future? That would be more suitable, even though perhaps not quite appropriate if I as a German come up with interpretations and recommendations towards the role, task and identity and the challenges of a pastor or priest in the Indian context. I therefore thought to mark this moment in your educational and professional career by pondering for some moments on the connection and links of the academic theological training and the pastoral ministry. The question I would like to place before us is therefore quite simple: How does theological reflection as we have experienced and exercised it in the seminary may in future still inform and influence my pastoral ministry? Or, to put it in a slightly different wording: How and in which way is a pastor, somebody involved in pastoral ministry, also someone living out a theological existence?

While formulating those questions I hurry up to add - just in order to avoid misunderstandings - that I am certainly aware that theological education in India is not simply an academic affair.¹ Reflection and action in interaction give a specific contextual Indian character to the curriculum. Moreover, I am not suggesting either that only academically trained people such as we have become now are involved in theologizing. To do theology is a vital and necessary task of the whole people of God, even though everybody should be thankful that there are people who have gained special knowledge and theological competence. (By the way: "Theological competence" is in our church in Northern Germany the first prerequisite for the ability to be taken in as a pastoral candidate after the academic education at the university).

But what do I mean with the two notions mentioned in the title of this paper: "Theological Existence" and "Pastoral Ministry"? Let me start with some kind of definition or at least explanations of where these wordings come from and how I want to use them.

¹ For the profile of and for discussions on theological education in Asia cf. now the collection of interesting material in: Asian Handbook for Theological Education and Ecumenism, ed. by Hope Antone/Wati Longchar/Hyunju Bae/Huang Po Ho/Dietrich Werner (Regnum Studies in Global Christianity), Oxford 2014. - There is a nice formulation regarding the specific character of theological studies by David Tracy quoted by H. S. Wilson in his article on "Theological Education and Ecumenical Challenges in Asia", loc. cit., p. 625-633, p. 625: "Of all the disciplines, theology is that one where action and thought, academy and church, faith and reason, the community of inquiry and the community of commitment and faith are most explicitly and systematically brought together." - Regarding theological studies in catholic circles in India cf. Georg Evers, Kirche und Katholizismus seit 1945: Vol. 5: Die Länder Asiens (Ferdinand Schöningh), Paderborn/München/Wien/Zürich 2003, p. 361ff.

2. Theological Existence and Pastoral Ministry - some explanatory remarks at the outset

It is quite clear that I can speak here on "*Pastoral Ministry*" neither in totally general terms nor in a more contextual setting. There are different theological conceptions in different denominations; and it would not be easy - and perhaps even not too interesting - to compare discussions on pastoral ministry and the role and function of a pastor in Germany and in India. There are lots of discussions, and search for new orientations for the pastoral ministry. And there is a lot of questioning among pastors themselves of how to understand and perform their ministry and how to function well in relation to the expectations of the people in the congregation, the public and even in response to the standards they have set for themselves. I may briefly summarize what one can read in a book on "Practical Theology" that was recently published in Germany on the debates about identity issues in relation to the service of a pastor. In Germany and in the Western world, it says, we have today an identity crisis in regard to the profession of a pastor, may it be a male or female one. It is still true, of course, that the office of a pastor in the Protestant tradition has - in continuation of the shift in the time of the reformation - an orientation towards the congregation and the importance of communication with people. This rather, even though not exclusively functional understanding of the ministry of a pastor is - rightly so - regarded as quite different from Catholic tradition where the priest is perceived not simply as a functionary within the congregation, but as a representative of the divine realm in this world. Nevertheless, it continues, "we observe an overlapping of historical development and current challenges that give room for very multi-faceted formations of the profession of a pastor: There are still, if not so many, scholarly persons who sit in their studies in the hours of the evening to ponder about historical and theological questions; there are dogmatically armed proclaimers of the Christian truth; there are high-church clerics wearing clerical shirts and other clerical garments besides feminist women pastors, spiritual companions along with managers etc. Common is still the tendency to withdraw towards and into the realm of the (local) congregation".²

In addition one could add to those models a perception that sees the pastor as a kind of community worker or social activist, even though this image is in Germany not so strong anymore as it used to be up to the 1990ties.³

I hesitate to add here references to Indian discussions on the role of the pastor or on the significance of theological education for the candidates here in India. The role as social worker and social activist may be much more in the focus here, due to the particular context of oppression and injustice in the country. In passing I just may mention two other expectations that Indian students shared with me as their aspirations in former years when I still was teaching here in India. There was a frequent mentioning of the wish to become Christians "leaders", a term very prevalent in evangelical circles and within the USA - not so much in use in Germany, for certain reasons -, and I remember vividly one student who told me once that he intended to become a famous and great "revival speaker". Since I don't remember who said that to me, I am not able to see whether his dream had come true.

When I in the following use the term "pastoral ministry" I think in very general terms of the ministry of a pastor - that is a person having been called into the service of the church for - as we say in my Lutheran tradition - the public preaching of the gospel and for administering the sacraments.

The other term I am using here is the term "*Theological Existence*". This term used to be and still is very prominent in Germany. "Theological Existence Today!" was the title of a famous, yet also somewhat controversial pamphlet, that Karl Barth - in those days Professor of Theology in Bonn - published in July 1933. This was a time when the Nazi dictatorial regime was about to settle down in Germany and when there was much discussion in German Protestant churches on the stand that Christians should take in relation to the

² Christian Grethlein, *Praktische Theologie* (Walter de Gruyter GmbH & Co. KG), Berlin/Boston 2012, p. 469.

³ Cf., for example, the presentation of the discussion on the identity of the pastoral service in Friedrich Wintzer and others, *Praktische Theologie* (Neukirchener Verlag), Neukirchen-Vluyn 1997, 5th Edition, p. 12ff.

policies of the Hitler government. The Nazi regime was in those days very eager to get the church and its institutions under their control and to bring pastors and the leadership of the Church inline with the new nationalistic ideology. The German church, was the outspoken demand of the government, should hail the new regime and become an obedient servant of the political and ideological interests of the regime; as a decisively German church, it was stated, the church was supposed to become truly a church of German people exhibiting a German spirit and hailing the German nation, what among other things meant the exclusion of baptized Jews from the church.

Karl Barth begun his essay by mentioning that many of his former students and followers had approached him with the request and expectation that he should say something on the serious "ecclesial concerns and problems" that had irritated and disturbed so many people within the churches. The first thing he then stated in response was that he with his students and in his seminars and lectures would continue - "perhaps in a slightly lifted voice, but without any direct reference" to the problems in society and church - "to do theology and nothing but theology"- and this so "as if nothing has happened".⁴

Karl Barth's pamphlet with these famous introductory remarks presented in those days in reality a heavy criticism against the theological negligence of the German church in relation to current issues. Even many church leaders welcomed the national enthusiasm and had fallen into a mood of excitement about the national uprising, so that one lost - in Barth's view - direction and orientation for what the church would have to say in such a situation of an apparent emergence of a totalitarian regime in the country. In this situation, his essay was indeed a forceful plea for theological reflection and engagement in order to give direction to the Church of his days.

We can see, however, that Barth was in reality of course not doing theology "as if nothing had happened". He even sent his essay to Adolf Hitler, he later denied to take the oath of obedience towards the German "Führer"; Barth took a great interest in politics, and he even had been a member of the Social Democratic Party not willing to surrender this membership when the government urged him to do so. But his motifs for his word towards the situation did not come simply from a political analysis, but from theological reasoning. His attitude then eventually lead, two years after the publication of his famous essay and one year after the famous Barmen Confession of May 1934, to Barth's dismissal from his professorship and to his withdrawal to Switzerland.⁵

Nevertheless, the notion of doing theology "as if nothing had happened" and "without direct reference" to the situation in church and society, is somewhat strange and was even in those days not really helpful. In order to remind his contemporaries on the need and indispensability of theological reflection and reasoning for positioning the church in the public realm, Barth went too far. It was no wonder therefore that Karl Barth's theological approach was later heavily criticised - in Germany as well as in India. I mention here just two critical voices that lead us to take up in some appreciation the title of Barth's essay, but to develop our own theological reasoning in quite a different direction.

In Germany it was Dietrich Bonhoeffer who later in prison criticised Barth, to whom Bonhoeffer actually felt very much indebted, for what he called "revelation positivism" ("Offenbarungspositivismus"). He charged Barth's theology as coming down straight from heaven, framed in dogmatic statements and an inner-church

⁴ Karl Barth, *Theologische Existenz heute!* (1933). Neu herausgegeben von Hinrich Stoevesandt (Christian Kaiser Verlag), München 1984, p. 26.

⁵ For Karl Barth's political orientation and involvement cf. Frank Jehle, *Lieber unangenehm laut als angenehm leise. Der Theologe Karl Barth und die Politik 1906-1968* (Theologischer Verlag Zürich), Zurich 2002, 2nd Edition; for the positioning of Barth and some other German theologians in the time of the Nazi regime cf. for example the publication in English language by Dean G. Stroud (Ed.), *Preaching in Hitler's Shadow. Sermons of Resistance in the Third Reich* (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company etc.), Grand Rapids, Michigan/Cambridge, U.K. 2013.

language that did not have much, if at all, relation to the life experiences and life situations of people of that time. Bonhoeffer felt that this kind of theological positivism, so isolated from the context, had led only to a new form of "restauration".⁶ And he added that the listeners of sermons, inspired by Barth's theology, and readers of Barth's extensive dogmatic elaborations simply had to swallow Barth's affirmations in somewhat indigestible pieces, whether they understand everything or not. "Eat, bird, or die!" became a famous verdict Bonhoeffer's as to Barth's theological approach; "whether it is the virgin birth, the trinity or whatever it might be, every piece of the doctrine is as important and as necessary as the other; thus one has to swallow everything or nothing. That is", Bonhoeffer adds, "not biblical."⁷

I am sure most of you know the critical response that was more than once being formulated in theological discourses in India to the theology of Karl Barth. I only refer here, as an example, to the so-called "Rethinking Group" of the 1930s. The theologians of this group published the famous book "Rethinking Christianity in India" in 1938, just before the International Missionary Council's World Conference at Tambaram, Madras, "as an Indian reply to Hendrik Kraemer's Barthian broadside *The Christian Message in a Non-Christian World*". In that publication the Indian church was, as Robin Boyd wrote, "pilloried because of its subservience to ideas and forms imported wholesale from the West."⁸ The charge over against Barth was here, as later by many other Indian theologians, his insistence on not taking the context in account in his theological reflection, and - moreover - for not acknowledging any positive reality in the world of religions. Because he denied any idea of an "Anknüpfungspunkt" ("point of contact") to cultures and religions, his theology became regarded as a theology developed and shaped in an ivory tower.

But one may ask now why I dwell so extensively on Karl Barth, if there is at the end a rather negative judgement on his theology? One reason is that I still very much appreciate his notion of "theological existence" that I think is a very vital reminder of the need for any minister and the church at large to continuously get involved in theological reflection and reasoning. Along with Karl Barth - who has found many followers at this point - I would affirm that theology is a critical and necessary function of the Church, providing orientation for the Church and its ministry in the world. Another reason is - perhaps that is a personal confession - that I still like, once in a while, to read Karl Barth as a kind of "antidote" against the forgetfulness of the church and its pastors of theology. And finally - this is the main point - I wanted to present this theological methodology as a background for my own reflection on the interaction of theology and ministry that moves into a different direction than Barth's approach.

3. The Apostle Paul as theologian and minister of Jesus Christ - a model for theological existence and pastoral ministry

In search for a more adequate model for exploring the interrelationship of theology and ministry, I would like to turn to the St. Paul and his letters. There are several reasons why Paul would provide an excellent illustration for our deliberations. I mention just some of them:

In the first place, Paul calls himself quite often a "minister" or being in the "service" of Jesus Christ or of the congregations or of the gospel. It may be that this terminology is not so familiar to us, because the different translations of the New Testament in English - as well as in German or in any vernacular language - use

6 Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Widerstand und Ergebung. Briefe und Aufzeichnungen aus der Haft*. Herausgegeben von Eberhard Bethge; Kaiser Taschenbücher (Chr. Kaiser Verlag), München 1990, 14. Edition, p. 140.

7 In the same place, p. 143. The German phrase: "Friss, Vogel, oder stirb!" may in English be rendered: "Like it or lump it!" Cf. Charles Marsh, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, in: David F. Ford (Ed.), *The Modern Theologians. An Introduction into Christian Theology in the Twentieth Century* (Blackwell Publishers). Cambridge, Massachusetts/Oxford, U.K. 1997, p. 37-51, quotation p. 40.

8 Quoted after Robin Boyd, *An Introduction to Indian Christian Theology* (ISPCK), Delhi 1989 (first published 1969), p. 144f. For further references to Karl Barth's theology from among Indian theologians cf. the Index of this book.

different English terms for Greek words that literally should be translated with "servant" or "minister", "service" or "ministry".

The Greek words in question here are on the one hand the words "*diakonia*", "*diakonos*", and "*diakonein*" that are used quite frequently by the apostle Paul for a reflection on his ministry. Another Greek word that also is used in relation to Paul's ministry is the word "*doulos*", usually translated with "slave" or "servant".

The original meaning of the Greek word "*diakonia*" is actually "to serve at the table"; due to this relation to food and service the word later - and that was already the case in the New Testament - was used to describe, as "*diakonia*", the social service rendered to poor people within the church as well as to people outside the church. Already in Paul's letters we find the beginning of this kind of usage, even though the term "*diakonia*" is in Paul's language primarily used for the description of the ministry of Paul as an apostle and ambassador of Christ. The New Revised Standard Version of the New Testament therefore translates quite frequently the word very correctly with the term "ministry". To give at this stage just one example I would like to refer to Rom. 11:13 where Paul says, that he as "an apostle to the Gentiles" "I glorify my ministry".

The term "*diakonos*", relating to the person who carries out the ministry, is often rightly so translated with "minister", sometimes also with "servant" and in a few times with some other circumscriptions. When we read in English translations that Paul calls himself "minister" or "servant" - for example in Rom. 1:1 or Phil. 1:1 or in 2. Cor. 11:23 - we have in the Greek original usually either the word "*diakonos*" ("servant") or even the much stronger word "*doulos*" ("slave").

I don't want to go into too many details, but for those who like statistics I would like to mention that the word field around "*diakonia*" - that is "ministry" or "service" - appears in the NT 34 times; out of these there are alone 22 references found within the Pauline letters. The word "*diakonos*" appears in the whole of the NT 29 times, and within the Pauline letters alone 21 times. The word family is particularly used in 2. Corinthians - a letter in which Paul reflects much about his ministry. We can summarize that even though the words have also in the Pauline letters sometimes different meanings, it is quite adequate to say that the terminology around the word family "ministry" and "minister" are very prominent in Paul's writings.

In relation to a second reason for referring to Paul I don't need to argue so much. It is well known and accepted that Paul has been one of the very great theologians of the Christian history. Instead of referring to a number of scholars who affirm this assessment, I refer here only to a more recently published book on "New Testament Theology". Udo Schnelle writes: "Paul was without doubt the outstanding missionary and theological thinker of early Christianity." And the caption, Schnelle gave to his section on Pauline theology reads: "Paul: Missionary and Thinker".⁹

But there is a third reason to take Paul as a model: The apostle Paul, the ambassador or minister of Jesus Christ, is neither a theologian of the West nor of the Indian context. He is a theologian of the very early Christianity, and therefore a reference and resource for us that goes back and lies beyond theological schools of the West or the East. Paul is a figure of the time when Christianity was still young and fresh, and when the Christian faith was in the very formative period, searching and finding its way to different people of different cultures. Therefore it may be quite interesting and inspiring to look at Paul's interaction between theological reflection and the ministerial performance. It is true, of course, that the ministry of a missionary is not quite the same as the ministry of a pastor, but I think we can still make very interesting observations that help us to orient us today for our ministry in the church. And even though I am very well aware that there are often different interpretations of Paul's theology and that it therefore may be very relative if I say that Paul is beyond our different theological schools and contextual approaches. But nevertheless do we encounter in Paul's writings a companion in theological and ministerial existence who is worth to be listened to.

9 Udo Schnelle, *Theologie des Neuen Testaments* (Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht), Göttingen 2014, 2nd Edition, p. 181.

And as a personal reference I still may add that St. Paul's theology is for me, since the days of my doctoral dissertation on St. Paul's understanding of the church, has been a continuous source of inspiration.

4. Theological Existence and Pastoral Ministry - Pauline Insights

If we now move into an exploration of the relationship of theology and ministry in Paul's writings, there are three dimensions I would like to spell out. 1) The need of continuous appropriation of faith for myself; 2) the communication of the gospel with people within and outside the church; and 3) the ethos of a minister in the service of Jesus Christ.

4.1. Theological Existence and Pastoral Ministry - The need of continuous appropriation of faith for myself

A first area where theologizing plays a vital role in the ministry of the apostle Paul is the reflection on his own understanding of faith. Any minister of Christ needs the reflection and nourishment of one's own faith and the growth within one's own faith. Paul experienced - I guess much more than any one of us - a dramatic conversion; this set him on a total turn of his existence and lead his life in a new direction. But even though Paul used to emphasize on occasions that he received his gospel directly from the Lord, it is quite obvious that he also had to learn about his new faith, to think and reflect about it, to read about it, and to talk about it with other persons in order to be educated in faith and to grow in understanding and strength of the Christian commitment. The metaphoric talk of "infants in Christ", "fed... with milk, not solid food" (1. Cor. 3:1f.) might even give a hint to the notion of different stages in faith.

This growing in faith has on the one hand intellectual and cognitive aspects. Faith has indeed to do with gaining knowledge and reflecting about the Biblical sources, liturgical materials, creeds that had been formulated in course of the history of the church. But since the kind of knowledge in question here is knowledge of God - God-knowledge - it is much more than or something very different from pure academic learning or educational exercise. Religious knowledge has an existential dimension; learning leads to transformation in life, to an impact on my total being, my longings as well as my commitment. I therefore like the slogan that ACTC here in Hyderabad has developed to describe its ministry: "Equipping Men & Women with Knowledge of God that leads to love of God." God-knowledge does not only expand one's brain, but touches also the heart and soul, the body and the relationships of a person. Theology, as an exercise of reflection, has a spiritual dimension; theology and spirituality are like sisters and brothers, for theology without spirituality remains a purely intellectual exercise as well as spirituality without theological reflection remains a vague and hazy thing.

This kind of continuous theological and spiritual engagement as a striving to grasp the reality of God for me and within my life, can perhaps be illustrated by St. Paul's witness about his eagerness to continuously get to know Christ better and deeper. It is interesting that Paul and Timothy at the very outset of the letter to the Philippians in Phil 1:1 call themselves "servants of Christ" - we could again say "ministers of Christ", even though here the Greek word "*doulos*" is used here, what actually is a stronger word than "*diakonos*"¹⁰; later in the letter the apostle writes as one who had earlier introduces himself as "servant of Christ": "I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the sharing of his sufferings by becoming like him in his death..." (Phil. 3:10)

¹⁰ It should be noted that in Phil. 1:1 Paul and Timothy as the sender of that letter are introduced as "*douloi Christou Jesou*" (in the NRSV translated as "servants of Christ Jesus", but actually it should read "slaves of Christ Jesus"), whereas as addressees are mentioned generally "all saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi" and in addition "the bishops and deacons" (*epikopois kai diakonois*) who are apparently office bearers within the congregation or church. While Paul earlier uses the word "*diakonos*" usually for a general description of his ministry, we find here in Philippians a later development of church structures that already know the office of bishops and deacons. Paul himself shifts here as well as in Romans 1:1 to the term "*doulos*", in English usually translated with "servant".

Paul, the "servant of Christ", was a great theologian. He certainly read the Biblical writings for himself, pondering about their meaning and the application of the old words - his scriptures were the Old Testament writings - for his life and the community of faith of which he was part. He also read and transmitted the creeds and confessional formulas that were already formulated by sisters and brothers who had become Christians earlier than he. He sought to understand them for himself, reinterpreting them and relating them always, if necessary, to new experiences, insights, and life situations. The Holy Scriptures are certainly a treasure from where we have to lift up inspiration and orientation. But on the other hand one has to say that Christian faith and Christian confessions are not simply formulated and given once for all, so that they simply can be repeated, and that's all. Christian faith needs the intellectual engagement; theology is not only reproduction of tradition, but also creative production. It is the continuous exercise to pull the Bible into my life, and to pull my life into the Bible.

I would like to give two examples for the illustration of this thought, one from Germany, the other one from India.

Ten years ago biblical scholars in Germany published a new translation of the Bible that is called: "The Bible in Just Language".¹¹ This translation aimed at a "just" or "inclusive" language, following the criteria of "gender justice" (no male-centered language, not even for the names of God), "justice regarding the special, theologically motivated, relationship of Jews and Christians" (no wordings disregarding or discriminating Jews), and "social justice" (highlighting the social context and the social realities of the biblical world). Of course, this bible translation, even though it was developed and published by well-known biblical scholars, met with very controversial responses, particularly due to avoiding for the reference to God and God's names and titles any notion of male gender; even the so-called Tetragram in Hebrew with the capital letters YAHWE, in English translations usually rendered with "the LORD", was replaced with words such as "the Eternal", "the Heavenly" or other wordings that were not related to a male gender bias. This approach was meant to liberate the God-talk from male domination, and was also a reference to the Jewish custom in reverence before God to avoid the usage of the name of God.

However controversial the discussion about that translation was, my point here is to say that it was and is a meaningful attempt to appropriate the Biblical teaching in a new time, for new people, for me. Many women particularly were very happy about this translation, for it met their sentiments and helped them to get new perspectives that aimed at overcoming the male-centeredness still so prevalent in the church and in church-language.

As a second example I refer to the way of formulating for me and my fellow-people my own statement of faith. This may happen in songs and bhajans, in poems and lyrics, in music and in dance. I find it interesting that there emerged new expressions of Christian creeds within the struggle of dalits for human dignity. Such statements, as the following, are current forms of an appropriation of faith by and for people who earlier were perhaps not able to express their own suffering and struggle with Christian language of faith. Here is one of those confessional statements:

"We believe in Dalit Jesus
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
And was born among cattle, of a handmaid of God
He lived and ministered among the polluting people of Galilee
Rejecting social norms, accepted morals and taboos of pollution

¹¹ Ulrike Bail/Frank Crüsemann/Marlene Crüsemann/Erhard Domay/Jürgen Ebach/Claudia Janssen/Hanne Köhler/Helga Kuhlmann/Martin Leutzsch and Luise Schottroff (Eds.), *Bibel in gerechter Sprache* (Gütersloher Verlagshaus), Gütersloh 2006. See also www.bibel-in-gerechter-sprache.de. For further information in English language cf.: www.sbl-side.org/publications/articles.aspx?ArticleId=760.

He assumed the role of bonded slaves
 In order to energise them with the vision of the kingdom
 Because of his identification with the polluting people
 He suffered, was crucified, died and was buried
 Third day he rose again and ascended into heaven
 Affirming a new future for all the crucified people
 He will come again to vindicate the Dalits
 and to judge their oppressors..."¹²

I sum up so far: Theological existence is important, first of all, for myself and my own life before God. The ministry of a pastor is a very demanding job. And yet, it is very important not to neglect the dimension of theological reflection, spiritual nourishment and the search for my own genuine identification with what I tell other people about the Gospel. I need to remain aware of my own integrity in faith and in my theological convictions, and I should not hesitate to address - if needed - my own doubts, pain and afflictions. Martin Luther coined the famous statement that there are three things that make a good theologian: In Latin the words are "oratio", that is "prayer" and means a prayerful life with reverence towards God and the knowledge of God; "meditatio", that is reflection, the pondering and thinking what the Christian faith means to me and to the people around me; and "tentatio", the experience of "temptation" relating to affliction, pain and bitter moments in life that threaten to shake the ground of my life.¹³ Theology, that was Luther's conviction, is actually born out of experiences such as Jona had while in the belly of the big fish, with all his anxiety and agony, or from the experiences of Job struggle with the justice of God, or Jacob fighting with God at the river Jabbok (Gen. 32:22ff.). Here, in such situations one may discover afresh that theological existence is intellectual reflection in a spiritual dimension, intertwined with astonishment and amazement, bewilderment and perplexity, commitment and involvement, thankfulness towards God and open hands that at last only Godself can fill.

4.2. Theological Existence and Pastoral Ministry - Communication of the Gospel with people within and outside the church

A second area where theology is a very important and indispensable requirement for a minister of the church is the communication of the gospel, within and outside the church. We can here again refer to the Apostle Paul who often speaks of his "ministry" - with the Greek words "*diakonia*" or "*diakonos*" - of sharing the gospel with other people. Here are some examples, with translations taken from the NRSV:

- Apollos and Paul are "God's servants, working together; you are God's field, God's building." (1. Cor. 3,9)
- "God... has made us competent to be ministers of a new covenant..." (2. Cor. 3:6)
- Paul is given "the ministry of the Spirit" and "the ministry of justification" (2. Cor. 3:8f.)
- "God... has given us the ministry of reconciliation... So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us..." (2. Cor. 5:18-20)

The dimension of pastoral ministry that is under consideration here is often referred to as "proclamation of the gospel" or "preaching of the gospel". This terminology, very prominent also in Karl Barth's theology, has certainly a basis in biblical language. And yet I rather like to speak here of communication of the gospel instead of preaching or proclaiming the gospel. "Proclamation" and "communication" are two very different

¹² Authored by V. Devasahayam, quoted from Johannes Hoffmann, *Exodus of the Broken People. Dalits and Dalit Theology*, published on his own in 1996, p. 141f.

¹³ For Luther's understanding of theology and of being a theologian cf. the article on "Theologieverständnis" in: *Das Luther-Lexikon*, ed. by Volker Leppin and Gury Schneider-Ludorff (Verlag Bückle & Böhm), Regensburg 2014, p. 679-681, with more literature.

things.¹⁴ The term "proclamation" relates only to one side of a communication process: To the one who voices a message that somebody is supposed to receive. There is certainly the expectation that the recipient of the message will respond positively to the message that was transmitted, but one does not pay much attention to the needs and the awareness of the one who is addressed. There may still be some attention towards the content of the message and the way the content is being transmitted, but it is the sender who formulates the message according to his or her understanding. The gospel being proclaimed in such a way, without awareness of the situation and context of the supposed receivers of the message, is almost understood as the voice in a loudspeaker at the railway station announcing that a train is going to come or being delayed. Sharing of the gospel, however, does not mean to provide information or making an announcement, but it requires an act of interaction of people and it therefore needs a dialogue between the sender and the receiver of a message.

Let me use two examples to illustrate that we have to do here with very delicate matters that call for serious theological reflection:

Robert Schreiter narrated in his book "The New Catholicity" an incident that happened in Japan: When the catholic cathedral in Kyoto was built in the 1950s, stained glass windows were installed. One of them depicted St. George, a famous European saint of the Middle Ages portraying the saint while killing a dragon. This portrayal caused an uproar in Japan, because the dragon in East Asia is not a symbol of evil, as in European and also in biblical mythology, but it is in East Asia a positive symbol for happiness and joy, and it is in Japan moreover a symbol for the emperor. "To have St. George slay the dragon in that setting was tantamount to saying that Christianity destroys Japaneseness."¹⁵

This is a fine example of an unsuccessful communication. There was a good intention on the side of the catholic missionaries who came from Europe. But because they did not engage at all with the cultural context and the symbolic world of the Japanese people, they completely failed to communicate that the Gospel is Good News for people, offering joy and new life.

A second example may underline the importance of getting acquainted with the context and the world of dreams, anxieties and aspirations of the people with whom one wants to share the Gospel of salvation and liberation. In the beginning of the twentieth century, "when a missionary couple begun work in North India as evangelists, the word quickly went around the village that they owned a cat. In this village, only witches kept cats, and they were used to snatch people's souls while they were sleeping. Consequently, the strangers in the village had to be witches. The following morning, the male missionary gathered the men of the village together and addressed them through an interpreter, not knowing about the intense discussion that had gone on the night before. The missionary announced, 'I have come to win your souls for Christ!' The astonished look on the faces of the villagers assured the missionary that he had made his point effectively. The men, however, were wondering who this Christ was, and what he wanted with their souls!"¹⁶

Communication of the Gospel requires communication skills, to be sure. But it also needs theological reasoning. A minister of Jesus Christ, who wants to communicate the gospel, must put himself or herself into a situation of a deep and serious dialogue with people about the gospel. In the encounter with different people, living in different settings of life, the minister must himself first discover afresh what the gospel in that situation actually is all about. We do not have the gospel at hand, so that we simply can distribute it to others, we have as ministers to reflect in interaction with people what the specific content of the Gospel is in a given

¹⁴ For further explanation and reflection on "communication" in theological perspectives cf. Christian Grethlein, loc. cit., p. 137ff.

¹⁵ Robert J. Schreiter, *The New Catholicity. Theology between the Global and the Local* (Orbis Books), Maryknoll, New York 1997, 33.

¹⁶ Loc. cit.

situation. In other words: The gospel in its life-giving, liberating significance for people will emerge only within such an encounter.

For further illustration we can at this point relate to Paul's famous statement about his attitude of communicating the Gospel to people of different cultures or even different religious affiliations or sentiments. In 1. Cor. 9:19ff. the apostle calls himself "a slave to all", a notion that refers in this context to his being a minister who has been entrusted with sharing the gospel with all kinds of people. Even though, he says, "I am free with respect to all, I have made myself a slave to all, so that I might win more of them. To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law (though I myself am not under the law) so that I might win those under the law... To the weak I became weak, so that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, that I might by all means save some."

Leaving aside here a reference to the topic of "winning the many" - the game on numbers in religion is a special problem, particularly in the Indian context - it is obvious here that Paul argues for a flexible approach to different audiences or addressees of the gospel. One should not regard this as a tactical attitude and an arbitrary slandering with the message of the gospel. What Paul states is rather that the gospel takes its meaning and content, its formulations, its signs and symbols, its metaphoric language - one can speak of God only in metaphors - not only from a given storage or reservoir of doctrinal formulas. The gospel, as Good News to various peoples in various cultures and various life conditions and circumstances needs to be communicated in different ways. This, however, is a very delicate theological task, calling for a minister who lives a theological existence and is therefore ready and able to reflect together with people on what the gospel might mean in their particular context. Theology, it becomes quite obvious at this point, is always contextual theology. Communication does not function only from one direction to another; it indeed is a process of interaction, of speaking and listening, of listening and speaking, of relating myself and my knowledge and understanding of the gospel, that is always limited, to people, and hear what they, the others, have to say to it and to contribute to it.

A minister of Jesus Christ thus needs in order to communicate effectively continuously theological awareness and the ability to theological discernment and judgement. Trying to systematize the Pauline approach to the theological flexibility in communication the gospel, we could make at least four distinctions in the relationship of gospel and cultures:¹⁷

1. Christian faith is *transcultural*: This means that certain essential aspects of Christian faith are universal; they are found everywhere in Christian churches: the relation to the scriptures, the notion of salvation and liberation, baptism and eucharist, worship and liturgical elements such as reading of the scriptures, confession of faith, Lord's Prayer etc.

2. Christian faith is also *contextual*: Each particular culture gives its imprint on the expressions of Christian faith and the perception of the Gospel. There are already four Gospels in the New Testament that use very different language for the expressions of what salvation means to people - the kingdom of God in the Synoptic Gospels, the notion of life in St. John's Gospel, the reference to justification or reconciliation in the letters of St. Paul; and there are very different descriptions and titles for who Jesus Christ is in Africa and in Asia and in other parts of the world; Jesus is the "Great Healer" or "Ancestor", he is perceived as "Guru" or "Dalit", he is a "Swami" or "the Enlightened One".¹⁸

¹⁷ For the following cf. Christian Grethlein, loc. cit., p. 190f.

¹⁸ For examples of contextual christological reflections cf. Diane B. Stinton, *Jesus of Africa. Voices of Contemporary African Christology* (Orbis Books), Maryknoll 2004; R. S. Sugirtharajah (Ed.), *Asian Faces of Jesus* (SCM Press), London 1993; Michael Amaladoss, *The Asian Jesus* (Orbis Books), Maryknoll 2006.

3. Moreover, Christian faith is also in certain instances and situations *counter-cultural*, challenging cultural traditions, attitudes, or role models; the caste system in India is certainly one example, but many more could be mentioned. Christian faith, one has to affirm, stands against aspects of culture, because those features contradict Christian faith as well as general notions on human dignity.

4. And finally, Christian faith is also *cross-cultural*. When people of different cultures meet and learn to live together it usually happens that the exchange of cultures and the mutual influence on one another leads to transformation of cultures. In Germany, with the many refugees who come into our country, we just start to learn to live in multicultural settings and to search for a common culture that helps us to grow together in dignity and with mutual acceptance.

Communication of the gospel is thus a very complex matter. The "gospel" as content of communication is never a fixed set of doctrinal sentences, altogether independent of the concrete situation of communication. The exact - liberating or challenging - meaning of the "gospel" will only be generated within the process of communication; the communication remains open, but it is hoped that it leads to a new disclosure of reality.¹⁹ This process of communication of the Gospel needs then people, ministers, who are trained in the art of theological discernment and who understand their ministry in relation to a theological existence - as people who, like Paul the great communicator of the Gospel, seek to engage with people in order to discover for themselves and for and with the people in various contexts ever afresh what a wonderful and liberating message the gospel of Jesus Christ can and will mean for different people.

4.3. Theological Existence and Pastoral Ministry - The ethos of a minister in the service of Jesus Christ

In pondering on Paul and his theological reflection on Christian ministry I need to refer eventually to a third area of concern. Almost on every page of 2. Cor we observe Paul to be involved in some kind of argument on the question what a Christian "minister" is all about. The reason for the interest in this issue is the appearance of other missionaries - rival missionaries, to be precise - in Corinth who claim to be true apostles, real missionaries, more faithful servants than Paul. And Paul, they charge, is not a good minister of Jesus Christ at all.

In 2. Cor. 11:21b-30 Paul presents a very hot-tempered, bitter and sarcastic counter-attack on the charges of his opponents who proudly seem to call themselves "ministers of Christ". This section is usually called the "Fool's Speech" ("Narrenrede"), for Paul presents himself here as a "fool", boasting like the rival missionaries about his achievements. In reflecting and arguing about the character, the habits and basic attitudes of a "minister of Jesus Christ", Paul employs here a rhetorical strategy in arguing his case over against his congregation. Any attempt to persuade people in an argument or speech in a controversial situation, so said the rhetorical doctrine of the day, had to employ elements of "*logos*", that is reason and rationality, "*pathos*", that is an appeal on the emotions of people, and "*ethos*", what means he reference to the character of the person who speaks.²⁰ Talking about the "ethos" of a "minister of Jesus Christ" is what Paul is doing here in 2. Cor. 10-13.

The term "ministers" - in Greek again "diakonoi", in the NRSV translated with "ministers" - is in this section indeed a key word. Paul begins his apology or defense in saying:

¹⁹ Christian Grethlein, loc. cit., p. 156f.

²⁰ For definitions and a short glance at rhetorical rules and the importance of logos, pathos and ethos. cf. the article: Rhetorik, in: RGG, 4 Edition, Vol. 7, p. 492-500. The more recent commentaries often bring excellent analyses of the rhetoric style that Paul is exhibiting and applying; cf. for example the commentary of Thomas Schmeller, Der Zweite Brief an die Korinther (2Kor 7,5-13,13), EKK VIII/2 (Neukirchener Theologie/Patmos Verlag), Neukirchen-Vluyn/Ostfildern 2015, passim.

"But whatever anyone dares to boast of - I am speaking as a fool - I also dare to boast of that. Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they descendants of Abraham? So am I. Are the ministers (diakonoi) of Christ? I am talking like a madman - I am a better one..." (2. Cor. 11:21b-23a).

It is quite obvious that we encounter here different concepts of what Christian ministry is all about. What we can gather from Paul's polemic against his opponents let them appear as missionaries of Jewish background who called themselves "apostles".²¹ They took pride in their origin from Judaism. Apparently the title "apostle" and also "ministers of Christ" were given a honorific meaning, underscoring the esteemed position and air of dignity that surrounded these missionaries. They seem to have been bold and powerful in their preaching, eloquent and superficial. They thought of themselves as fully equipped with the powers of the Holy Spirit, able to speak in tongues and having ecstatic visions. They were so powerful that they could perform miracles such as casting out of demons and healing the sick in support to their preaching. Paul's polemic pictures their attitudes as triumphalistic, bold, aggressive, authoritarian, even rude, as the following example from his attacks betrays:

"For you put up with it when someone makes slaves of you, or preys upon you, or takes advantage of you, or puts on airs, or gives you a slap in the face. To my same, I must say, we were too weak for that!" (2. Cor. 11,20f.)

No wonder that money also played a certain role. The other missionaries expected payment for their preaching and service, while Paul was working with his own hands. For the other missionaries, exactly this non-acceptance of money on the side of Paul showed that he was not a true apostle: He did not even dare to take - that was the charge - the proper reward for what he had to offer to the Corinthians.

These "ministers of Christ" seemed to have competed with one another, and for that purpose they carried so-called "letter of recommendation" around (Paul had already touched on this theme several times earlier in 2. Cor.; cf. particularly chapter 3). Those letters contained descriptions and catalogues of their spiritual gifts and accomplishments, so praising their mighty deeds to the congregations. With those letters from congregations they would move around as itinerant missionaries, commending themselves and their services.

From all we can gather, the dominant self-understanding of these missionaries must have been that of power and strength; they regarded themselves as powerful "servants of (the powerful and triumphant) Christ."

It is most interesting how Paul now responds to all those charges. In 2. Cor. 11:21ff. - the beginning of this section was already quoted - Paul dares to make a comparison between him and the other "ministers of Christ": "Are they ministers of Christ?", he asked, and he then adds: "I am talking like a madman - I am a better one..." (2. Cor. 11:23). He then presents his own catalogue of achievements and accomplishments as a minister of Jesus Christ. However, he does not list his spiritual deeds and talents, Paul presents a long list of his sufferings, of pain, experiences of persecution, tribulations, afflictions, his agony and even his apparent failures. From the point of view of his adversaries, Paul should have been ashamed that God has allowed these things to happen to him.

And yet, the point Paul wants to make here is that the true minister of Christ stands there where the suffering and crucified Christ stands. The true minister is representing the crucified Lord in this world - and not a Christ who is an aggressive conqueror and a glorious victor, crushing people to the ground.

Here we encounter again a deep theological reflection on the character of what pastoral or Christian ministry is all about. Paul's deep theological reflection leads him to spell out criteria that inform the character of

²¹ For a discussion on the particular identity, the origin and theological convictions of Paul's opponents cf. the analytical explorations in current commentaries of 2. Cor.

Christian ministry. The encounter with and the acknowledgement of Christ as the one who identifies with the suffering people in this world, leads Paul to a perception of his ministry as a service in deep solidarity with the suffering people - the people longing and searching for liberation, freedom and justice. When Paul lists his sufferings for the sake of Christ and closes his catalogue in speaking about his "daily pressure because of my anxiety for all the churches" (2. Cor. 11:28b), he says something about his commitment and the character of his service. And when he still adds: "Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is made to stumble, and I am not indignant?" (2. Cor. 11:29), then he makes it very clear that his theological existence leads him to a perception and performance of his ministry that followed the footsteps of Christ.

Theological existence, reflection on the question who Jesus Christ is for us today, leads Paul - and hopefully us - to a perception of ministry that sides the poor and the downtrodden, that takes up solidarity with the people and seeks to foster liberation and freedom. "We do not proclaim ourselves", Paul says in 2. Cor. 4:5; "we proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord and ourselves as your slaves (*doulos*) for Jesus' sake."

I am sure it is neither required that we seek deliberately suffering and pain for and in our ministry. And it may simply be too much for us today to perceive ourselves as "slaves" for the people. But the point Paul wants to make is that the service attitude of a minister of Jesus Christ is informed by a theological vision that Jesus himself has voiced in relation to his own service and identification with the sufferings and needs of the people and for the disciples who want to follow Jesus and live a life that is in contrast to a society where people strive for power and influence, wealth and honor:

"You know", Jesus is quoted in Mk. 10:42-45, "that among the Gentiles those whom they recognize as their rulers lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them. But it is not so among you; but whoever wishes to become great among you must be your servant (*diakonos*), and whoever wishes to be first among you must be slave (*doulos*) of all. For the Son of Man came not to be served (*diakonethenai*) but to serve (*diakonesai*), and to give his life a ransom for many."

Here we find expressed the ethos of a theological vision for Christian ministry. As Jesus "emptied himself, taking the form of a slave" - here again the important word "*doulos*" occurs - (Phil. 2:7), so are the ministers of Jesus Christ supposed to follow this theological vision for the service of the people. Ministers of Christ are supposed to stand there where Jesus Christ placed himself: At the side of the downtrodden, the poor, the needy, the ones who strive for justice, righteousness and for human dignity.

4. Closing remarks

We mark today the moment of transition - the transition from academic education and scholarly exploration in theology towards taking up the ministry of a pastor in the church. It is important that you continue to maintain for and within your ministry the stimulus for theological reflection. This theological existence should inform your ministry - for yourself in an ever new exercise of searching for a theological-spiritual appropriation of faith; for the people with whom you want to communicate the gospel; and for Jesus Christ who as the crucified and risen Lord places you at the side of the suffering, the crucified people of India.

You will be ministers within your respective churches. I wish you that you - as very well trained theologians and as future ministers of Jesus Christ within your church - give a living and convincing answer to questions the Jesuit Indian theologian Samuel Rayan once has raised in relation to the churches in India:

"The fact is that we have a Church or many Churches in India, but do we have an Indian Church, a Church of India sprung from our own Indian experience of Jesus Christ, come in our flesh, dwelling in our midst and bearing our wounds? A Church developing from our own meeting with God in Christ and shaping for itself a social body and a symbol system out of our life and culture?"²²

²² Samuel Rayan, *The Ecclesiology at work in the Indian Church*; in: *Searching for an Indian Ecclesiology*, ed. by Gerwin van Leeuwen (Asian Trading Corporation), Bangalore 184, p. 191-212, p. 196.

COMMEMORATION SERVICE MESSAGE

MINISTERIAL FORMATION: AN ALTERNATIVE CULTURE (OF SOULS)

The Most Rev. Dr. Govada Dyvasirvadam
Moderator, Church of South India and Bishop of Krishna-Godavari
Diocese of the Church of South India

With the ushering in of the new era, the doors were opened for a missionary movement in the beginning of 19th century in India. Serampore, a beautiful city on the river banks of Hoogly received the missionary intervention in the very East of India, in persons of William Carey the morning star and of his associates Marshman and Ward, the Serampore Trio. While we commemorate these spiritual and visionary luminaries we recall their unforgettable contribution that had impacted the larger culture of Indian community be it literacy, abolition of superstitions, introducing new mode of communication, translation and printing of the Bible. It only speaks volumes of a radical transformation of the then pluralistic Indian community. Their constant dialogue in the areas of interfaith and various aspects of the socio-cultural fabric has led to a spiritual Renaissance in India. It is in this context it is appropriate for all of us to pay our heartfelt tribute to the Serampore Trio while we stand firm on the foundations they laid for the theological learning.

We give thanks to God for the diversity of human cultures, for the integrity of knowledge and learning, for the enthusiasm and vibrancy of many young people, for communities being re-built by the constant efforts of establishing justice and peace. These are the signs of hope and the kingdom of God on earth. On the other hand, there are also attempts to dishonour God who is the source of our life, through the practices of exclusion and marginalization, reluctance to pursue justice and unwillingness to live in peace, our failure to cooperate for unity and preservation of the earth. In the light of this, we need to be more sensitive to the call of God to engage ourselves in preserving the dignity of human life and even learning values from other faiths and to work with them to discover the 'image of God'. The ministerial formation in the process of theological education is an invitation to respond in faith to various challenges we face in our land. It is imperative that the efforts in addressing the challenges need to be attested by the Word of God found in the Holy Scriptures and realized through our faith experiences.

Ministerial Formation: A Call to Hope

The proclamation of the Gospel, *evangeleoum (paxromana)* was primarily used in Roman context to give new hope and solace to the sub-servients by the Roman Rulers. The word acquired a new meaning by the coming of our Lord in the word *evangelion* - the 'good news' of our Lord Jesus Christ who promised the kingdom values but not from the worldly perspective. The word of God penetrated into the created world only to renew and re-establish the kingdom values more so particular in the midst of human relations with creation, fellow humans and that of the creator God.

The assurance of the transformation of human values has crept in the teachings and work of Jesus in translating these virtues he did discover the malady of humanity. The individuals found in the Gospels only represent the broken and beleaguered world. More than a million Christians walking out of Syria from their native land as refugees portray a hopeless situation for the humanity to be ashamed of. In this context, we are also reminded of the victims of Kandamal persecution where the perpetrators have not allowed the Christians to come into their villages in spite of seven years intervention of the Government. A new spirit of hospitality at this tragic background is re-enacted in the lines of Jesus' model. The hope in Jesus is that he is both the sufferer and the saviour, refugee and the refuge, the vanquished and the victor. He himself was helpless on the cross yet he stands with open arms to extend hospitality. With this hope you are called to build an alternative community who discover the poverty and wealth, suffering and comfort under the same shade of the cross.

Ministerial Formation: A Call to Build

The Vatican council under the title "The Revealed Word of God" which was later changed to "Transmission of Divine Revelations" contain a subsection which reads "the Apostle and their successors of the Gospel" to indicate the continuity of the act of proclaiming (*kerygma*) and the tradition. The new reflection on the call of "the successors of the Apostle" is to act as "builders" (*oikomane*). As ministers in the making what kind of church do you perceive and what kind of community do you envisage to build in this 21st century. In the wake of Christianity assuming a re-imagining and re-emerging, building of an alternative community is a historic necessity. The institutional church with her historic and traditional shades do possess the strengths and challenges. On the other hand, there have been efforts for the formation of non-denominational and charismatic congregations. The growing para-church and mega-church attitude dramatically changes the ecclesiastical scenario in our country. It is also worth noting that the gap between "belonging" and "believing" is ever growing. The communities on the grassroots are looking for the church that is embedded with spiritual values and at the same time a church that is comfortable to their economic standards and cultural needs. These emerging trends demand the church in particular and community in general, to journey beyond institutional boundaries to transcend and transform the already existing traditional forms. In other words, there has been a shift from *Ecclesio-centrism* to *Christo-centrism*. Therefore, it is a caution and a call to re-build our own faith communities with *Christo-centric* journey towards capturing the kingdom values where people of God and their aspirations for a new spirituality and wholeness becomes the agenda. In this process, not only humans but the whole creation becomes part of our accompaniment. Protecting and preserving God given 'Green Gift' becomes paramount objective in building up the Christo-centric community.

Ministerial Formation: A Call to Peace

The World Council of Churches (WCC) met in Harare had focused on overcoming violence. The council recorded: "we will strive together to overcome the spirit, logic and practice of violence; and that we continue to be the agents of reconciliation and peace with justice" (World Council of Churches, Central Committee Minutes of 51st Meeting, Potsdam, Germany Jan- Feb 2001). We understand that overcoming violence directs us to promote compassion, tolerance and values of co-existence in the present context of intolerance to the "other". Our openness for the inter-religious dialogue will enhance community building. As channels of peace we are called to preach and practice forgiveness and reconciliation. The essence of violence is the denial of justice. In other words, we are called to prioritize the forms of justice and mould the church as the locus of peace as it is ultimately the response to the promise and gift of God: "peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you" (John 14: 27).

At the closure of the year 2015, 147 young Christian women were beheaded in a university and 4 Palestinian Christians were killed recently. More strikingly, the fact that millions of Christians were driven away from Syria, from their native land, demands human intervention in a big way to bring justice and peace. Church is expected to play a constructive role in this situation towards building a community where there is no fear of violence and destruction of human life which is a gift of God, instead of being silent spectators and neutral communities in the Church. It is the gospel imperative on part of us to exhibit a re-invigorated commitment theologically, spiritually and morally to bring about healing and reconciliation to the broken humanity and creation. As called out and equipped agents of God, you represent the church that received the mandate to exercise her responsibility to heal and to build and to be a stewards of God's creation.

Ministerial Formation: A Call for a graceful Disposition

The Church that has sent you for theological training expect you to continue the great legacy of Jesus Christ, who was the Lord, yet assumed the servant hood; was a master yet washed the feet of his disciples. The thrust of Jesus' ministry 'not to be served but to serve' must be the *mantra* and the life-giving inspiration to the ministry. When you begin to minister to the people of God, you would realize that you do not have a ministry of your own but to continue the ministry of Jesus the Christ who is the Lord of the Church. Jesus himself proclaimed the coming of the kingdom, *basileia*, which simply means the 'reign of God' or 'dominion of God'. We are called to have the mind of Christ as we serve communities in His name of Christ. We must put on Christ and cultivate Christ's graceful disposition until it becomes a habit and part of our personality. Cicero,

the Roman orator said, *cultura anima*, which means 'cultivating the souls' towards a new culture of humanity. Understanding God's grace is essential to enjoying the life that God has planned for you. God fills your heart with his grace that you become a 'Grace-giver" to the dejected and those living on the margins.

Conclusion:

I'm delighted to be part of the celebrations of both theological and ministerial formation in India. While I conclude this commemoration lecture, I invite these prospective leaders of the church to discover the 'image of God' on every human face irrespective of the class, caste, colour and gender by living out the kingdom values on earth. I wish you all the best and God's choicest blessings as you move forward to realize what God has in store for each one of you.

Degree of Doctor of Divinity (*Honoris Causa*)

CITATIONS

Citation - I: Rev. Dr habil. Klaus Schäfer

Sir,

I present to you the Rev. Dr habil. Klaus Schäfer, upon whom, on the recommendation of the Senate, the Master and the Council of Serampore College have resolved to confer the **Degree of Doctor of Divinity (*Honoris Causa*)** in recognition of his services to the Church and Society.

Rev. Dr habil. Klaus Schäfer born in Lunen, Germany. After completing his schooling in the year 1968 he took training and apprenticeship before working in the Government Law Department at Dortmund. In the year 1973, he returned to study theology at Hermannsburg and later on Ph. D at the University of Hamburg in 1985. In the same year, he became a pastoral candidate and after completing his training he spent a year as an Intern Pastor in a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America in Hastings, Nebraska, USA. He received his Habilitation in the area of Intercultural Theology at the Augustana-Hochschule in Neuendettelsau. Rev. Dr habil. Schäfer is married and has three sons.

His career as a theological educator began in the year 1988 when he came as a Professor of Biblical Studies and Biblical Languages at the Andhra Christian Theological College (ACTC), Hyderabad and taught until 1993. In 1993, he was appointed as the Executive Secretary and Head of the Theological Study Desk and Publications Department at the Evangelisches Missionswerk in Deutschland (EMW). Since July 2005, he is working as the Director of the Centre for Global Ministries of EMW. Alongside, he also teaches as the honorary Professor in the Institute of Missiology, Ecumenism and Religious Studies at Hamburg University.

Rev. Dr habil. Schäfer is deeply engaged in the Mission of the Church, particularly in promoting intercultural, interreligious and ecumenical ministries. He is the author of several books and numerous articles which are published in national and international journals in German and English languages. Rev. Dr habil. Schäfer has a long association with many organisations, in particular with World Council of Churches, Lutheran World Federation and International Association of Third World Theologians. As the General Secretary of the International Association for Mission Studies he edited Mission Studies journal. In Germany he holds till date many responsible positions and memberships such as, member of the Synods of the United Evangelical Lutheran Church in Germany (VELKD), Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD) and Evangelical Lutheran Church in Northern Germany. He serves as Chairpersons of the Committee on the Cooperation of Churches in Mission and Service (AKZMD) of the VELKD and Committee on Witness and Mission of the Arbeitsgemeinschaft Christlicher Kirchen in Deutschland (ACK/ Council of Churches in Germany). He offers courses on Missiology, Intercultural Studies, Religions of India, Interpretation of the Bhagavad Gita and Theological Discourses in India at the University of Hamburg. He is also a member of several academic organisations.

He is deeply committed to India and has done commendable work on India and promoted the cause of theological education in India in Germany and Europe.

I present to you Sir, Rev. Dr habil. Klaus Schäfer, for the distinction of the **Degree of Doctor of Divinity**.

Citation II: Rev. Dr. Dondapati Samuel Satyaranjan

Sir,

I present to you the Rev. Dr. Dondapati Samuel Satyaranjan, upon whom, on the recommendation of the Senate, the Master and the Council of Serampore College have resolved to confer the **Degree of Doctor of Divinity (*Honoris Causa*)** in recognition of his services to the Church and Society.

Dondapati Samuel Satyaranjan was born in Andhra Pradesh to the parents who were actively involved in evangelism. Rev. Dr. Satyaranjan received his Bachelor degree from Andhra University, got his B.Th degree from Doon Bible College and later on BD degree from the Serampore College in 1963. Rev. Dr. Satyaranjan did his Master in Theology from United Theological College, Bangalore in 1973 and received degree of Doctor of Ministry (D.Min) from San Francisco Theological Seminary, San Francisco, USA in 2006. He started his ministry in North India and later on as Assistant Chaplain in Christian Medical College, Vellore, before he moved in 1965 to Serampore as an Administrative Officer in the Senate of Serampore College (SSC) Office and worked for six years. These years were the most critical phase in the history of SSC. After his M.Th studies, he served as the Registrar of the United Theological College from 1973 to 1978 and during this time he was ordained as a Presbyterian of the Church of South India in Krishna Godavari Diocese. In 1978, he returned to Serampore as the Registrar and remained there until his retirement in 2004. Currently, he lives in Hyderabad with his wife Kamala. He is blessed with two daughters and one son.

During the tenure of Dr. Satyaranjan several bold decisions were taken to bring in structural and administrative changes in SSC. Under 'One National Structure' the Board of Theological Education, which was a unit of the National Christian Council of India merged with SSC. In the year 1989, the South Asia Theological Research Institute (SATHRI) was established to cater to the doctoral studies in India. Rev. Dr. Satyaranjan was instrumental in starting Hindi Medium Seminary in Allahabad and promoting theological education in the Northeast India. External and extension programmes were introduced to provide opportunities to lay members of churches in India to study theology by extension. The Senate Centre for Extension and Pastoral Theological Research (SCEPTRE) was created with an office in Kolkata to coordinate the extension programme and promote pastoral research. Rev. Dr. Satyaranjan will be remembered by one and all, especially the theological educators and church leaders for his outstanding contributions to theological education as an academic administrator. Rev. Dr. Satyaranjan has laid the policy foundations as a University for theological education in the country, not forgetting the ministerial component of theological education in India which has been well-acknowledged world over.

In his 26 long years as the Registrar of the Senate of Serampore College he carried out his task with vision, commitment and sacrifice. His contribution and legacy will be remembered in the annals of Serampore College for centuries to come alongside other great names who built this Institution in last 200 years.

I present to you Sir, Rev. Dr. D. S. Satyaranjan, for the distinction of the **Degree of Doctor of Divinity**.

Citation III: Prof. Mammen Varkki Valiyapurayidam

Sir,

I present to you Prof. Mammen Varkki Valiyapurayidam, upon whom, on the recommendation of the Senate, the Master and the Council of Serampore College have resolved to confer the **Degree of Doctor of Divinity (*Honoris Causa*)** in recognition of his services to the Church and Society.

Prof. Mammen Varkki Valiyapurayidam was born to Rev. V. M. Varkki and Annamma Varkki in Kerala. Prof. Varkki is married to Dr. Sosamma John and have two children. After having had his early education and higher education in Kerala he began his teaching career as a Lecturer in Mathematics at Bishop Moore College, Mavelikara, Kerala. As a young man, he served as a leader of Students' Christian Movement, the Youth President of CSI Madhya Kerala Diocese in 1969, Youth Convenor of the CSI Synod in 1982, the member of Youth Committee of the National Christian Council of India and Christian Conference of Asia.

He went on to become Professor and later as Principal before he retired from his teaching profession. During his tenure he was instrumental in introducing new academic and community oriented programmes in collaboration with overseas Universities. He founded Bishop Moore Community and Counselling Centre and Bishop Moore Institute which initiated Applied Courses. As a Professor he served as Chairperson of the Board of Studies for Mathematics; subsequently, as the Member of the Senate, Academic Council and later on as a member of the Syndicate of the University of Kerala. As the Convener of the Academic Committee of the All Kerala Private College Teachers Association, he drafted a policy document on higher education, a first of its kind in India published by Teachers' Organisation. As a Professor and Church leader, he is committed to social justice and sustainable development, he presented academic papers and attended conferences in foreign universities and international organisations such as World Council of Churches, Council for World Mission, World Communion of Reformed Churches, World Association of Christian Communication. Prof. Varkki authored, co-authored and edited books in Malayalam and English on issues of social concerns, contextual theologies, global economy; on socialism, communism, communalism, secularism, pluralism, Christian response and responsibilities. A popular series writing to his credit titled 'Along with Him' features regularly on themes of discipleship in 'People's Reporter'. Another popular series of booklets titled 'Vichara Dhara' deals with biblical themes as encountered and understood in the contexts.

As a Committed church person, in cooperation with friends he started an ecumenical programme to study, research and publish literature on social issues in solidarity with the poor, the oppressed and the excluded. He started a movement VICHARA in 2001 which primarily devotes in research on socio-political economic issues, theological reflections and publications. There are so far 27 books and 55 booklets published on issues of poverty, justice, discrimination, faith which are grassroot writings and meant for general public. Prof. Varkki is currently the Editor-in-Chief of People's Reporter, a fortnightly Bulletin that engages on issues of national and international concerns circulated in 30 countries.

Prof. Varkki has devoted all his life in promoting Christian values and thoughts. To him following Christ means to be on the side of the poor and marginal.

I present to you Sir, Prof. Mammen Varkki Valiyapurayidam, for the distinction of the **Degree of Doctor of Divinity**.

Affiliated Colleges and the Principals

1.	Serampore College, Serampore	Principal	Dr. Vansanglura, B.A., B.C.S., M.A., Th.D. (USA), Ph.D.
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3.	Bishop's College, Kolkata	"	Rev. Dr. Sunil Caleb, M.A., B.D., Ph.D.
4.	Leonard Theological College, Jabalpur	"	Rev. Dr. Naveen Rao, B.Sc., B.D., M.Th., D.Th.
5.	Mar Thoma Theological Seminary, Kottayam	"	Rev. Dr. Prakash K. George, B.Sc., B.D., M.Th., D.Th.
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10.	Karnataka Theological College, Mangalore	"	Rev. Dr. Hannibal R. Cabral, B.D., M.Th. Th.M., D.Th.
11.	Union Biblical Seminary, Pune	"	Rev. Dr. Shekhar Singh, B.Com., M.Th., D.Th.
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16.	John Robert's Theological Seminary, Shillong	"	Rev. Dr. M. J. Hynniewta, B.A., B.D., M.Th., Ph.D.
17.	Gujarat United School of Theology, Ahmedabad	Acting Principal	Rt. Rev. Silvans S. Christian, B.Com., LLB, B.D., M.Th.
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34.	Odisha Christian Theological College, Gopalpur, Orissa	”	Rev. S. K. Nanda, M.A., B.D., M.Th.
35.	New Theological College, Dehradun	”	Rev. Dr. Simon Samuel, B.A., M.A., M.Phil, Ph.D.
36.	Indian Theological Seminary, Avadi, Chennai	”	Rev. Dr. Saloni Liangao Soto, B.Th., B.D., M.Th., D.Th.
37.	Mar Thoma Episcopal Jubilee Institute of Evangelism, Tiruvalla	”	Rev. Dr. Easow Mathew, B.A., B.D., M.Th., D.Th.
38.	Academy of Integrated Christian Studies, Aizawl	”	Rev. Dr. R. Zolawma, B.Th., B.D., M.Th., D.Th.
39.	St. Thomas Orthodox Theological Seminary, Kalmeswar	”	Fr. Bijesh Philip, B.A., B.D., M.Th., D.Th.(Dharmaram)
40.	Harding Theological College, Tura	”	Dr. Imnanungshi Imsong, B.Th., B.D., M.Th., D.Th.
41.	Dharma Jyothi Vidya Peeth, Faridabad.	Principal	Rev. Dr. Koshy P. Varughese, B.Com., B.D., M.Th., D.Th.
42.	Calcutta Bible Seminary, 24 Parganas, West Bengal	”	Dr. R. L. Hnuni, B.A., B.D., M.Th., D.Th.
43.	Master’s College of Theology Visakhapatnam	Acting Principal	Rev. Paul Augustine, M.A., B.D.,M.Th.
44.	Bethel Bible College, Guntur Andhra Pradesh	”	Rev. Dr. S. Robertson, M.A., M.Th., D.Th.
45.	Bethel Bible Institute, Danishpet	”	Dr. G. Jesudian Vijayasingh, B.Th., B.D., M.A., M.Th., D.Th.
46.	North India Institute of Post-Graduate Theological Studies, W.B.	Registrar	Dr. Limatula Longkumer, B.A., B.D., M.Th., D.Th.
47.	Federated Faculty for Research in Religion & Culture, Kerala	”	Rev. Dr. V. S. Varughese, B.Sc., B.Ed., B.D., M.Th., Th.M., Ph.D
48.	NJPGRC, Faridabad	Registrar	Rev. Dr. P. P. Thomas, B.A., B.D., Th.M, Ph.D.
49.	Regional Extension Centre St. Andrew’s Theological College, Dhaka,	Principal	Rev. Dr. Albert Sundaraj Walters, Ph.D.
50.	Calvin Institute of Theology, Yacharam	”	Rev. Dr. Gopalswamy Jacob, B.Th., B.D., M.Th., Ph.D.
51.	Missionary Training College, Aizawl	”	Rev. K. Lalrinkima, B.Th., B.D., M.Th., D.Th.(SEAGST)
52.	Witter Theological College, Nagaland	”	Dr. Moanungung, B.Th., B.D., M.Th., D.Th.
53.	Kerala Theological Seminary, Kottarakara	”	Dr. Giri K., M.A., B.D., M.Th., D.Th.
54.	India Bible College & Seminary, Thiruvalla	”	Dr. John Alex, Ph.D

Professional Centres:

- | | | | |
|----|---|---------------|--|
| 1. | Christian Medical College
& Hospital (CMCH), Vellore | Principal | Dr. Ravi Jacob Korula, M.B.B.S.,
D.Orth.,M.S.(Ortho), F.A.C.S., |
| 2. | Christian Medical Association
of India, (CMAI), New Delhi | Gen.Sec. | Dr. Vijay Arul Dhas, M.B.B.S. |
| 3. | Thomas Mar Athanasius
Institute of Counselling
(TMAIC), Kottayam | Director | Dr. Jacob Cherian, B.A., B.D., M.Th.,
Ph.D |
| 4. | Life Enrichment Counselling &
Training Centre, Thodupuzha East, Kerala | ” | Dr. Issac V. Mathew, B.D.,M.Th., D.Th. |
| 5. | Mar Thoma Hospital
Guidance& Counselling Centre, Kerala | Course Co-ord | Rev. Mathew P., B.D. |

RECIPIENTS OF THE SENATE PRIZES - 2015

1. **Master's Prize (M.Th.)**
K.M. Vanlalpeka (AA6661) United Theological College, Bangalore
2. **Late Dr. C. Devasahayam Prize for Christian Ministry (M.Th.)**
A. Rebecca Sumi (AA7435) Clark Theological College, Mokokchung
3. **C.S.I. Diocese of Madras Prize in Christian Ministry (M.Th.)**
A. Rebecca Sumi (AA7435) Clark Theological College, Mokokchung
4. **George Howell's Prize in Christian Theology (B.D.)**
Paul Lawrence G (AA2299) Bishop's College, Kolkata
5. **C.E. Abraham Prize in Church History (B.D.)**
Paul Lawrence G (AA2299) Bishop's College, Kolkata
6. **E.C. Dewick Prize in Religion (B.D.)**
Zavi-I Nisa (AA2462) Eastern Theological College, Jorhat
7. **Senate Prize for Autonomous College (B.D.) (for highest grade in the whole examination)**
Andrews Christopher J. (AA5224) United Theological College, Bangalore
8. **Senate Prize in Biblical Studies (B.D.) OT & NT**
Paul Lawrence G (AA2299) (OT) Bishop's College, Kolkata
Jeba Kumar, C. (AA2914) (NT) Leonard Theological College, Jabalpur
9. **Rev. C.C. Pande Memorial Prize in B.D. (for overall highest grade)**
Paul Lawrence G (AA2299) Bishop's College, Kolkata
10. **Union Biblical Seminary Prize in B.D. (for highest grade in O.T. & N.T.)**
Paul Lawrence G (AA2299) (OT) Bishop's College, Kolkata
Jeba Kumar, C. (AA2914) (NT) Leonard Theological College, Jabalpur
11. **Rt. Rev. S.R. Furtado Prize in B.D. (for highest grade in Christian Ministry)**
LamjingShai O Garod Pasi (AA2258) John Roberts Theological Seminary, Shillong
12. **Late Dr. C. Devasahayam Prize for Christian Ministry (B.D.)**
LamjingShai O Garod Pasi (AA2258) John Roberts Theological Seminary, Shillong
13. **Rev. Dr. Mohit Pramanik Prize for Excellence in Field Work**
LamjingShai O Garod Pasi (AA2258) John Roberts Theological Seminary, Shillong
14. **George Howell's Prize in Christian Theology (B.Th.)**
Rajive Viraj Paliawadana (AA5278) Theological College of Lanka, Pilimatalawa
15. **C.E. Abraham Prize in Church History (B.Th.)**
Vimsent Soren (AA5290) Santal Theological College, Jharkhand

16. **Dr. T. Sither Prize by Tamilnadu Theological Seminary, Madurai in B.Th.** (*for highest grade in Senate Examined Papers*)
Rajive Viraj Palihawadana (AA5278) Theological College of Lanka, Pilimatalawa
17. **Rev. C. C. Pande Memorial Prize in B.Th. for overall highest grade**
Rajive Viraj Palihawadana (AA5278) Theological College of Lanka, Pilimatalawa
18. **Rt. Rev. S. R. Furtado Prize in B.Th.** (*for highest grade in Christian Ministry*)
Rajive Viraj Palihawadana (AA5278) Theological College of Lanka, Pilimatalawa

STATISTICAL REPORT - 2015

A. Final Results: 2014 - 2015

	A+	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	Total
D.Th										24
D.Min										13
M.Th			21	89	18	1				129
M.C.S						1	1			02*
B.D.										
B.D. (Auto)			2	17	6	1				26
B.C.S through College										
B.C.S External					2	9	5	2		18*
B.Th.										
B.Th Comp.										
B.Miss				2	4	8				14
DCPC										13
D.C.S					9	30	26	6		71*
Dip.B.T.					1	2	1	3		07*
DWM			2	10	1	1				14

* Exams were held in Oct-Nov, 2014.

B. Graduation

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
D.Th	7	10	6	4	12	16	27	12	24
D.Min	10	10	5	6	6	7	7	3	13
M.Th.	82	75	100	100	131	143	152	144	133
M.C.S									02
B.D.	611	646	689	665	667	776	829	827	943
B.D. (Auto)					21	24	34	16	26
B.C.S	89	80	71	87	71	57	98	90	96
B.Th.	310	319	334	306	320	252	147	74	90
B.Miss								26	14
DCPC	33	20	28	21	29	35	31	18	13
D.C.S	26	64	63	57	51	47	60	54	85
Dip.B.T.						4	3	1	8
DWM									14
	1160	1240	1301	1248	1316	1366	1429	1265	1461

C. Registration

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
D.Th	19	19	21	32	17	30	15	12	36	34
D.Min	11	11	15	15	15	27	34	15	30	29
M.Th.	82	100	115	124	144	146	150	128	170	168
M.C.S							10	12	5	24
M.C.P.									12	15
B.D.	753	744	898	1030	1431	1222	1218	1206	1152	1153
B.C.S	193	193	147	199	205	223	245	248	367	302
B.Th.	399	363	367	155	104	118	75	73	70	73
B.Miss								68	30	15
DCPC	34	28	31	31	35	43	42	30	35	33
D.C.S	100	138	122	131	106	113	159	247	224	294
Dip.B.T.					11	15	13	33	7	63
DWM									14	50
Total	1572	1596	1716	1717	1863	1937	1961	2072	2152	2253

D. Examination

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
CET							54	
M.Th	185	221	244	295	307	319	248	296
D.Min Comp.	11	12	20	12	9	28	32	10
D.Min Entrance								48
M.C.S					10	13	13	16
M.C.P.								12
B.D.	2224	2304	2364	2275	3741	3995	4268	3766
B.D. Auto						34	16	26
B.C.S	450	448	462	497	522	569	539	515
B.Th.	1184	1126	1116	1025	511	348	254	188
B.Th External							17	04
B.Miss							67	66
DCPC					44	40	28	40
D.C.S	205	199	184	188	231	287	282	359
Dip.B.T.			6	15	21	36	30	22
DWM								10
BD_Qual								100
M.Th_Qual								73
ATA M.Div to M.Th								9
ATA B.Th to B.D.							25	23
Mature BD/BCS	19	12	14	9	8	4	-	11
Total	4540	4648	4749	4677	5620	5903	2747	5594

E. D.Th Thesis

	2012 Jan	2012 June	2013	2013-14	2015-16
Submitted	5	20	60	28	42
Sent for Evaluation	5	20	60	28	42
Accepted	1	3	27	14	24
Rejected	1	-	2	-	-
For Revision	3	1	8	22	7
Processed	-	-	-	1	-
Under Process	-	16	23	36	18

F. Miscellany

	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
No. of Question Papers	244	241	239	261	485	571	657	689
No. of Paper-Setters	272	475	440	382	451	344	392	567
No. of Examiners	444	431	432	463	908	564	1214	1234
No. of answer scripts evaluated	37251	34201	35553	41377	43327	49931	59862	65749
Remuneration paid	303946	279813	530920	664006	734280	826360	985016	1236430
Postal bills paid	120424	111338	126318.50	155926	165008	250451	264784	285110
D.Th remuneration paid	-	-	-	104234	186280	114000	238000	46000
D.Th Postal paid	-	-	-	586	1310	1563	4525	-

G. Registrations

Course						
	Internal	External	Directly with the Senate	Internal	External	Directly with the Senate
Dip.BT.	X	7	X	X	63	X
Dip.CS	X	X	224	X	X	294
B.C.S	X	149	109	X	118	184
B.Th	54	8	X	73	X	X
B.Miss	30	X	X	15	X	X
B.D.	1127	X	X	1153	X	X
D.Min.	X	30	X	X	29	X
DCPC	35	X	X	33	X	X
M.Th.	170	X	X	168	X	X
D.Th.	33	X	X	34	X	X
M.C.S	X	X	5	X	15	09
M.C.P.	X	X	12	X	X	15
DWM	X	14	X	X	50	X
Total	1414	243	350	1476	265	502

H. Total number of students who have qualified for Diplomas and Degrees since 1911 is now:

L.Th.	1563
D.C.P.C.	272
Dip.C.S.	538
R.K.	21
B.R.E.	30
B.C.S.	879
B.Th.	10648
B.D.	17437
B.D.(Hons.)	8
B.Miss	14
M.R.S.	10
M.Min.	2
M.Th.	2282
M.C.S	2
D.Min.	67
D.D. (<i>Honoris Causa</i>)	128
D.Th. (By thesis)	225
D.D. (By thesis)	1
Dip. B.T.	11
D.W.M.	14

I. Degrees awarded by the Serampore College (University)

- 1 Degree of Doctor of Divintiy (*Honoris Causa*)
- 2 Degree of Doctor of Theology
- 3 Degree of Doctor of Ministry
- 4 Degree of Master of Theology
- 5 Degree of Master of Christian Studies
- 6 Degree of Bachelor of Divinity
- 7 Degree of Bachelor of Christian Studies
- 8 Degree of Bachelor of Theology
- 9 Degree of Bachelor of Missiology
- 10 Diploma in Clinical Pastoral Counselling
- 11 Diploma in Christian Studies
- 12 Diploma in Bible Translation
- 13 Diploma in Worship and Music

J. List of the Recipients of the Degree of Doctor of Divinity (*Honoris Causa*)

- 1929 George Howell's, M.A., B.Litt., Ph.D.
1940 John Zammerman Hodge
1942 Samuel Pearce Carey, M.A.
1948 C. Eapen Abraham, M.A., B.D.
1948 Aiyadurai Jesudasen Appasamy, M.A., D.Phil.
1950 George Herbert Christopher Angus, M.A., B.D., D.D
1953 John Alexander Mackay, M.A., D.D.
1955 Thomas Sittther, M.A., B.D.
1955 Arthur Marcuss Ward, M.A.
1957 John Stirling Morley Hooper, M.A.
1957 Daniel Thambirajah Niles, B.A.,B.D.,D.D.,D.Th.
1958 Sudhir Kumar Chatterjee
1958 Henry George Howard, M.A, B.D.
1958 Wilfred Scopes, M.A.
1958 Hospet Sumitra, B.A.
1960 Paul David Devanandan, M.A., Ph.D.
1960 A Sigfrid Estborn, B.A., B.D., Th.D.
1961 William Stewart, M.A., B.D., S.T.M.
1961 Emani Sambayya, M.A., B.D., S.T.M.
1961 Sabapathy Kulandran, B.A., B.D.
1962 Joshua Russel Chandran, M.A., B.D (Hons), B.Litt, S.T.M
1962 Benjamin Pradhan, B.A., B.D.
1962 John Aloysius Subban, B.A., B.D.
1964 Rt. Rev. Yuhanon Mar Thoma, B.A., B.D., S.T.M.
1964 Rev. Charles Stanley Thoburn, M.A., S.T.B., Ph.D.
1965 Rt. Rev. John Richardson
1970 M.M. Thomas, B.A.
1972 Rt. Rev. Eric Samuel Nasir, M.A., B.T.
1972 Rt. Rev. Mathews Mar Athanasius, B.A., B.D.
1972 Rt. Rev. H.K. Moulton, M.A.
1975 Rajaiah D. Paul, M.A., I.C.S.
1978 Rev. J.T. Krogh, Chand. Theol.
1978 Rev. W.B. Harris, B.A. (Theol.) M.A., L.T.
1981 Rt. Rev. Solomon Doraiswamy, B.A., B.T., B.D.

- 1982 Rev. Aharon Sapsezian, B.Th., S.T.M.
- 1986 Dr. S.J. Samartha, B.A., B.D., S.T.M., Ph.D.
- 1986 Rt. Rev. S.K. Parmer, B.Sc., B.D., M.R.E., Th.D.
- 1986 Rt. Rev. Thomas Mar Athanasius, M.A., B.D.
- 1987 Rt. Rev. C. Selvamony, M.A., B.D., S.T.M.
- 1988 Mr. Hokishe Sema, B.A., B.D.
- 1988 Rev. Zairema, B.Sc., B.D.
- 1988 Dr. S. Amirtham, M.A., B.D., D.Th.
- 1989 Rt. Rev. I. Jesudason, B.D., M.Th., S.T.M.
- 1989 Rt. Rev. N.V. Ananda Rao Samuel, B.A., B.D.
- 1989 Dr. K. Rajaratnam, M.A., Ph.D.
- 1991 Dr. Mother Teresa
- 1991 Rev. M.A. Thomas, B.A.
- 1991 Rev. Earnest Stafford, B.A., B.D.
- 1992 Met. Philopose Mar Chrysostom, B.A., B.D.
- 1992 Rt. Rev. Dinesh Chandra Gorai, B.A., B.D., D.D.
- 1992 Rt. Rev. John E. Ghose, B.A., B.D., Dip.Ed.
- 1993 Bp. C. D. Jathanna, B.A., B.D., M.Th., D.Th.
- 1993 Bp. Geevarghese Mar Osthathios, M.A., B.D., S.T.M.
- 1993 Rev. K.I. Aier, B.D., M.A.
- 1993 Rev. W. Maners, B.A., B.D.
- 1994 Dr. T.V. Philip, B.Sc., B.D., Ph.D.
- 1994 Dr. Ms. B.V. Subbamma, B.A., B.Ed., B.D., M.A., (Edu.) M.A. (Miss.), Ph.D.
- 1994 Dr. T. Lunkim, B.D., M.Th., D.D.
- 1995 Rt. Rev. Dr. P.V. Premasagar, B.Sc. B.D., M.A., Ph.D.
- 1995 Rev. Y. D. Tiwari, M.A.(Hindi & Sanskrit), B.D., Sahitya-ratna, Shashtri
- 1995 Prof. Ninan Koshy, M.A.
- 1995 Mr. Joy Gnanadason, B.A.
- 1995 Lt. Dr. D. Mark Buntain, DHL
- 1996 Mrs. Annamma George, B.A., B.D., M.A.
- 1996 Rt. Rev. D.J. Ambalavanar, B.A., B.D.
- 1996 Rev. Gilbert Marak, B.D.
- 1996 Rev. Fr. James Douglas Maswell Stuart, B.A., M.A.
- 1996 Rt. Rev. Vasant P. Dandin, B.A., B.D., M.A., D.L., D.D.
- 1997 Dr. Lothar Engel, Dr.Theol.
- 1997 Dr. Thomas W. Gillespie, B.A., B.D., Ph.D.

1998 Dr. Preman Niles, M.A., Ph.D.
 1998 Mrs. Aruna Gnanadason, M.A., B.D.
 1999 Dr. Robin Boyed, Ph.D.
 1999 Dr. A. D. Mannuel, D.Litt.
 1999 Rev. Lorendra J. Sangma, M.A., B.D, M.Th.
 2000 Dr. Graham S. Staines (Posthumous Award)
 2000 Rev. Gordon Shaw, Ph.D.
 2000 Dr. Saphir P. Athyal, Ph.D.
 2000 Mrs. Navamani Elia Peter, B.Sc., B.Ed., B.D.
 2000 Rev. H.S. Luauia
 2000 Mrs. Gladys Staines
 2002 Rev. H.M. Rapphap, B.D., M.Th.
 2002 Rev. Khuanga, B.D.
 2002 Rev. C. Pazawna, B.D., D.P.S., M.Th.
 2002 Rev. Lalzawma, L.Th., B.D., M.Th., D.Th.
 2002 His Holiness Baselios Marthoma Mathews II, B.D.
 2003 Rev. Martin Heath
 2003 Rev. C.A. Arangaden, B.A., M.Th.
 2003 Rev. L.N. Ralte, L.Th., B.D., S.T.M., M.A.
 2004 Rev. T. Laikai, B.A., B.D., S.T.M.
 2004 Dr. Frederick Sheldon Downs, B.A., B.D., Ph.D.
 2004 Revd. Canon Ivor Smith – Cameron, B.A.
 2004 Rev. David Gill
 2004 (Dr.) Ms. Jessi B. Tellis Nayak, B.A., B.T, Ph.D.
 2005 Rev. Iarington Kharkhongngor, B.A., B.D.
 2005 Rev. Ruolneikhum Pakhuongte, B.A., M.A., M.Th.
 2005 Mr. Theodore Bhaskaran, M.A.,
 2006 Dr. Malayilpeedikayil Abraham Oommen, Ph.D.
 2006 Rt. Rev. Kenneth Edward Gill
 2006 Rev. Dr. Joachim Wietzke, Dr. Theol.
 2006 Mr. D. Dethwelson Lapang, B.A.
 2007 His Excellency Shri S. C. Jamir, B.A., LL.B
 2007 Rt. Rev. Dr. Joseph Mar Irenaeus, B.D., S.T.M., D.D.
 2008 Dr. Ahn Jae Woong, B.A.,M.Div.,D.H.L.
 2008 Rev. Fr. T. J. Joshua, B.A., B.D., S.T.M.
 2008 Rev. Khiangte Than Chungnunga, L.Th., B.D.,B.R.E.

- 2008 Mr. Jyoti Sahi
- 2009 Rev. Dr. E. C. John
- 2009 Rt. Rev. Dr. Masilamani Azariah
- 2010 Most Rev. Dr. A.M. Chinnappa
- 2010 Rev. Eberhard Will
- 2010 Rev. Lalchhuanliana
- 2010 Rev. Edward Holman Bentley Williams
- 2011 Rev. T. Alemmeren
- 2011 Rev. Dr. Thadathil George Koshy
- 2011 Mr. Samuel Njuguna Kabue
- 2012 Rt. Rev. Dr. Zacharias Mar Theophilus, B.Sc., B.Ed., B.D., Th.M., D.Min.
- 2012 Rev. Dr. James Alan Bergquist, B.A., B.D., Ph.D.
- 2012 Rev. Hrilrokhum Thiek, B.Sc., B.D., M.Th.
- 2013 Rev. Robert Scheuermeier
- 2013 Rev. Vangchhia Lalzawnga
- 2013 Rt. Rev. G. Devakadasham
- 2014 Rev. Dr. Dietrich Werner, M.Th., Ph.D.
- 2014 Rev. Dr. Robert Rieweh Cunville, B.A., B.D., M.Th., M.A., D.Miss.
- 2014 Dr. K. C. Abraham, B.Sc., B.D., Ph.D.
- 2015 Rev. C. Vanlalhruaia, Th.D., G.Th., HSLC, B.Th., B.D.,
- 2015 Rev. Helmut Grimmsmann, M.Th
- 2016 Rev. Dr habil. Klaus Schäfer, Ph.D.
- 2016 Rev. Dr. Dondapati S. Satyaranjan, B.A., B.Th., B.D., M.Th., D.Min.
- 2016 Prof Mammen Varkki Valiyapurayidam, Ph.D

K. List of the Recipient of the Degree of Doctor of Divinity (By Thesis)

1948 James Mindow Sweetman

L. List of the Recipient of the Degree of Doctor of Theology

- 1970 James Edwin Orr, M. A., Ph.D., D.Phil. (Oxon)
1971 John Thompson Seamonds, M.A., B.D., S.T.M.
1972 Jonathan H. Thumra, B.D., S.T.M.
1974 Lenn Alton de Silva, B.D., S.T.M.
1976 Manapurathu Varghese Abraham, M.A., B.D., M.Th.
1976 Metropolitan Mar Aprem, S.T.M., M.Th.
1976 Manthanathu John Joseph, B.Sc., B.D., M.Th.
1976 Metropolitan Paulos Mar Gregorios, B.A., M.Div., S.T.M.
1976 Harry Parkin, M.Th.
1978 Dharam Vir Singh, M.A., B.D., M.Th.
1978 Anugraha Behera, S.T.M., B.D., M.Th.
1980 Suppogu Joseph, B.D., M.Th.
1982 Theodore R. Doraiswamy, B.D., M.A.(Theol. & Ed)
1982 Godwin R. Singh, B.A., B.D., S.T.M., Th.D.
1983 R. Paulraj, B.A., B.D., S.T.M., Th.D.
1984 Abraham Philip Athyal, M.A., M.Th.
1984 Charles W. Karunaratna, B.D., M.Th., Ph.D.
1985 K.P. Aleaz, B.D., M.Th.
1986 Zaihmingthanga, B.D., M.Th.
1986 Abraham Kuruvilla, B.Sc., B.D., M.Th.
1987 T.P. Abraham, M.Com., B.D., M.Th.
1987 R. Yesurathnam, B.D., M.Th.
1987 J. Vijayakumar, M.A., B.D., M.Th.
1987 Jacob Kurien, M.A., B.D., M.Th.
1988 Hielke T. Wolters, M.Th., P.G., Res.Dip.
1988 V. Devasahayam, B.A., B.D., M.Th.
1990 D.A. Jeyakumar, B.A., B.D., M.Th.
1990 Israel Selvanayagam, M.A., B.D., M.Th.
1990 O.L. Snaitang, B.A., B.D., M.Th.
1991 Arun I.S. Gopal, M.A., B.D., M.Th.
1991 C.V. Mathew, B.A., B.D., M.Th.
1991 F.J. Balasundaram, B.A., M.A., B.D., M.Th.
1991 Ezamo Murry, B.D., M.Th.
1991 P.S. Daniel, B.D., M.Th.
1992 M. Kipgen, B.D., M.Th.

1992 T. Hembrom, B.D., M.Th.
 1992 K.J. Gabriel, B.A., B.D., M.Th.
 1992 T.I. Varghese, B.D., M.Th.
 1992 D.J. Muthunayagam, B.Sc., B.D., M.A., M.Th.
 1993 Leelamma Athyal, B.Sc., B.Ed., B.D., M.Th.
 1995 Roger Gaikwad, B.A., B.D., M.Th.
 1995 Jacob Thomas, B.A., M.A., B.D., M.Th.
 1995 H. Vanlalauva, B.A., M.A., B.D., M.Th.
 1995 Takatemjen Ao, B.Sc., B.D., M.Th.
 1995 Varghese Mathai, B.Sc., B.D., M.Th.
 1996 A. Wati Longchar, B.Th., B.D., M.Th.
 1996 Dr. K. A. Abraham, B.D., M.Th.
 1996 R. Lianhnuni, B.A., B.D., M.Th.
 1997 Issac V. Matthew, B.D., M.Th.
 1997 Daniel Prem Kumar, B.D., M.Th.
 1997 D.A.M. Clement, B.A., B.D., M.A., M.Th. (Posthumous Award)
 1998 S.C. Paul Raj
 1998 Hannibal R. Cabral, B.D., M.Th.
 1999 Sam P. Mathew, B.D., M.Th.
 1999 Vanlalchhuanawma, B.D., M.Th.
 1999 O. Thomas, B.D., M.Th., M.A., P.D.P.T.
 1999 V.J. John, B.A., M.A., B.D., M.Th.
 1999 Jose K.G., B.D., M.Th.
 1999 Evangeline Mary Kamalini, B.Sc., B.D., M.Th.
 2000 Hans Ucko
 2000 Narola Imchen Jamir, B.D., M.Th.
 2000 Sabu K. Kuriakose, B.Sc., B.D., M.Th.
 2000 Baby Varghese, B.D., M.Th.
 2000 J. Siromony, B.A., B.D., M.Th.
 2000 N. Luther Paul, M.A., M.A., PGDES, M.Th.
 2001 M. Deenabandhu
 2001 K. David Udaykumar, B.D., M.Th.
 2001 J. David Rajendran, B.Sc., M.A., B.D., M.Th.
 2001 T. Swami Raju, B.Sc., B.D., M.A., M.Th.
 2001 Akheto K. Sema, B.Th.Mar (USA), B.D., M.Th.
 2001 Aphuno Chase-Roy, B.A., M.A., B.D. M.Th.
 2000 Shimreingam Shimray, B.D., M.Th.
 2001 Sam Mark Harry, B.Com., M.A., B.D., M.Th.
 2002 T. Vanlaltdani, B.D., M.Th.
 2002 Abraham Philip, B.Sc., M.A., B.D., M.Phil (Oxford)
 2002 Lima Jamir, B.D., M.Th.

2002 Santanu Kumar Patro, B.A., B.D., M.Th.
 2002 Sr. Pauline Chakkalalal
 2002 Rongsennangba, B.D., M.Th.
 2002 Yiepetso Wezah, B.D., M.Th.
 2002 J. Paramananda Das, B.D., M.Th.
 2003 Monikaraj Daniel, B.A., M.A., B.D., M.Th.
 2003 Shekhar Singh, B.Com., B.D., M.Th.
 2003 Y. Moses, B.Sc., B.D., M.Th.
 2003 M.T. Cherian, B.D., M.Th.
 2003 S. Robertson, B.D., M.Th.
 2003 Ivy Singh, B.Sc., B.D., M.Th.
 2003 G. Sobhanam, M.A., M.Th.
 2003 V. V. Thomas, B.D., M.Th.
 2003 Lalnghak Thuami, B.D., M.Th.
 2003 Brightstar Jones Syiemlieh, B.Sc., B.D., M.Th.
 2003 S. Sobanaraj, B.D., M.Th., M.A.
 2004 M. Peter Singh, B.A., B.D., M.Th.
 2004 Kavito Zhimo, B.D., M.Th.
 2004 J. Daniel Kirubaraj, B.D., M.A., M.Th.
 2004 Hemkhochon Chongloi, B.A., B.D., M.Th.
 2004 V. Kanagu Nelson, B.Com., B.D., M.A., M.Th.
 2004 Lalnawmi Ralte, B.A., B.D., S.T.M., D.Min.
 2004 W. S. Annie, B.D., M.Th.
 2004 Mathew C. Vargheese, B.Sc., B.D., M.Th.
 2004 Limatula Longkumer, B.A., B.D., M.Th.
 2005 P. P. Joy, B.D., M.Th.
 2005 Ms. Marina Ngursangzeli, B.A., B.D., M.Th.
 2005 Johnson P.J., B.D., M.Th.
 2005 Koshy Kunju P. Varughese, B.Com., B.D., M.Th.
 2006 Vanlalnghaka, B.Sc., M.Sc., B.D., M.Th.
 2006 Blateiskhem L. Nongbri, B.D., M.Th.
 2006 Ch. Pramoda Rao, B.D., M.Th.
 2006 D. Burnabas, B.A., B.D., M.Th.
 2006 Hrang Than Chhungi, B.Com., B.D., M.Th.
 2006 Joe Joseph Kuruvilla, B.A., B.D., M.Th.
 2006 Ramsay Chhuanliana Kawlni, B.A., B.D., M.Th.
 2006 Vanlalthlana, B.D., M.Th.
 2006 C. Lalhlira, B.D., M.Th.
 2006 R. Sashikaba, B.D., M.Th.
 2006 Samuel, B.D., M.Th.
 2006 L. Imsutoshi, B.D., M.Th.

2006 Hukashe Zhimomi, B.A., B.D., M.Th.
 2006 B. Atola Longkumer, B.D., M.Th.
 2007 Naveen Rao, B.D., M.Th.
 2007 Geoge Kutty K. B., B.D., M.Th.
 2007 Jacob Philip N., B.D., M.Th.
 2007 Aswathy John, B.D., M.Th.
 2007 T. Mercy Rani, B.D., M.Th.
 2007 John G., B.D., M.Th.
 2007 S. L. Soto, B.D., M.Th.
 2008 Prakash K. George, B.D., M.Th.
 2008 Pray S. James Vethamuthu, B.D., M.Th.
 2008 P. Rajendra Babu, B.D., M.Th.
 2008 Imnanungshi, B.D., M.Th.
 2008 Tlang Hming Thanga, B.D., M.Th.
 2008 Let Kho Thang Haokip, B.D., M.Th.
 2008 Bolinkar Sohkhlet, B.D., M.Th.
 2008 I. Asongla Pongen, B.D., M.Th.
 2008 D. John Jayaharan, B.D., M.Th.
 2008 Praveen Paul, B.D., M.Th.
 2009 H. G. Mithra, B.D., M.Th.
 2009 G. Jesudian Vijayasingh
 2009 R. Sahayadhas
 2009 A. Temjen Jamir, B.Th., B.D., M.Th.
 2009 D. John Winslow
 2009 John Philip A.
 2010 Woba James, B.D. M.Th.
 2010 R. Edwin Jebaraj, B.D. M.Th.
 2010 Songram Basumatary, B.D. M.Th.
 2010 Lalrindiki Ralte, B.D. M.Th.
 2011 Ms. Pracey Varghese, B.D., M.Th.
 2011 Rev. A. John Prabhakar, B.D., M.Th.
 2011 Rev. Epratha Sarathy, B.D., M.Th.
 2011 Samuel George, B.D., M.Th.
 2011 Mr. Thongkhosei Haokip, B.D., M.Th.
 2011 Rev. Vanlalchhawna Khiangte, B.D., M.Th.
 2011 Rev. Jayachitra L., B.D., M.Th.
 2011 Mr. Giri. K, B.D., M.Th.
 2011 Ms. Lovely Awomi G. Jamaes, B.D., M.Th.
 2011 Mr. C. Somu Ebenezer Ross, B.D., M.Th.
 2011 Hamries Rymabai, B.D., M.Th.
 2011 Rev. H. Lalrinthanga, B.D., M.Th.

2012 Margret Kalaiselvi, B.D., M.Th
2012 Vanguri Manikya Rao, B.D., M.Th
2012 Jacob Mathew, B.D., M.Th
2012 Zolawma, B.D., M.Th
2012 S.Akatoli Chishi, B.D., M.Th
2012 Moanungsang, B.D., M.Th
2012 Sangtemkala Ao, B.D., M.Th
2012 Easow Mathew, B.D., M.Th
2012 W.Along Jamir, B.D., M.Th
2012 T.M. Emmanuel, B.D., M.Th
2012 Thomas Yohannan, B.D., M.Th
2012 John Alex, B.D., M.Th
2012 A. Limasangla Lemtur, B.D., M.Th
2012 Bendangtemjen, B.D., M.Th
2012 Vekutulu Lohe, B.D., M.Th
2012 Mrs.Laila .L, B.D., M.Th
2013 Jerald Praveen N., B.Th., B.D., M.Th.
2013 A. Rayappan Isaac, B.Sc., M.A., B.D., M.Th.
2013 Sentiwate, B.D., M.Th.
2013 I. P. Asheervadam, B.A., B.D., M.Th.
2013 S. Samuel Rajadurai, B.D., M.Th.
2013 K. Dhanbir Rai, B.D., M.Th.
2013 Nelavala Gnana Prasuna, B.A., M.A., B.D., M.Th.
2013 Asish Thomas Koshi, B.A., M.A., B.D., M.Th.
2013 Kaholi Zhimomi, B.A., B.D., M.Th.
2013 Walotemjen, B.A., B.D., M.Th.
2013 Johnkutty A. J., B.Sc., M.Sc., B.D., M.Th.
2013 Mathew K. M., B.Com., B.D., M.Th.
2013 Shiju Mathew, B.Sc., B.D., M.Th.
2013 Sunny P., B.D., M.Th.
2013 P. R. Hmuaka, B.Sc., M.A., B.D., M.Th.
2013 Jose L., B.D., M.Th.
2013 Atula Ao, B.A., B.D., M.Th.
2013 Biju S. Thankachan, B.Sc., B.D., M.Th.
2013 John V. Mathew, B.Com, B.D., M.Th.
2013 Shanbha Hayong, B.A., B.D., M.Th.
2013 Hukato N. Shohe, B.Sc., B.D., M.Th.
2013 Roji T. George, B.A., M.A., B.D., M.Th.
2013 Jayasree K. B., B.Th., B.D., M.Th.
2013 Jose T. M., M.A., B.D., M.Th.
2013 John Vijaya Raj R., M.A., M.Th.

2013 Justin Moses M., B.A., M.A., B.D., M.Th.
 2013 Sunni E. Mathew, B.Sc., M.A., B.D., M.Th.
 2014 C. Vanlaldika, B.D., M.Th.
 2014 Gladstone Robert N. B., B.A., B.D., M.Th., Th.M.
 2014 H. Adlin Regina Bai, B.Sc., B.D., M.Th., B.Ed.,
 2014 Esmael Murmu, B.D., M.Th.
 2014 A. Tali Ao, B.D., M.Th.
 2014 Paluri Wilson, B.Sc., B.D., M.Th.
 2014 C. V. Varghese, B.D., M.Th.
 2014 James George, B.A., B.D., M.Th.
 2014 L. Bimol Singh, B.D., M.Th.
 2014 C. Thankappan, M.A., B.D., M.Th.
 2014 L. H. Rawsea, B.Com., B.D., M.Th.
 2014 D. Christu Das, B.Th., B.D., M.Th.
 2015 Tekayaba, B.A., B.D., M.Th.
 2015 George Philip, M.A., M.Th.
 2015 T.B. Premjith Kumar, B.D., M.Th.
 2015 A. Abeni Patton, B.Th., B.D., M.Th.
 2015 R. Lalthanmawia, B.D., M.Th.
 2015 Gilbert Jose J., B.D., M.Th.
 2015 J. Gnanaseelan Jacob Sunder Singh, M.Th.
 2015 Ganiniliu Kamei, B.D., M.Th.
 2015 Bethel Krupa, B.D., M.Th.
 2015 Joel Patrick, B.D., M.Th.
 2015 R.D. Mawia Ralte, B.Sc., B.D., M.Th.
 2015 Mariamma John, B.D., M.Th.
 2015 A. Israel David, B.D., M.Th.
 2015 Sobana I., M.A., B.Th., B.D., M.Th.
 2015 S. Temjen Imchen, B.A., B.D., M.Th.
 2015 A.J. Yesu, B.A., B.D., M.Th.
 2015 Christ Sumit Abhay Kerketta, M.Th.
 2015 Bendanglemla Longkumer, B.A., B.D., M.Th.
 2015 B. Sunil Varakumar, M.A., B.D., M.Th.
 2015 Bhanu Samuel, B.D., M.Th.
 2015 Jacob Mathew, M.Th.
 2015 Abraham Mathew, B.D., M.Th.
 2015 J. Stanley Jones, M.Th.
 2015 Sethe P.A., B.D., M.Th.

M. President and Speakers at the Convocation

- 1915 H.E. the Rt. Hon. Thomas David Gibson, Baron Carmichael of Stirling, C.C.I.E., K.C.M.G., Governor of Bengal.
- 1917 The Hon. Mr. P.C. Lyon, C.S.I., I.C.S., Vice President, Bengal Executive Council. The Hon. Mr. P.C. Lyon, C.S.I., I.C.S., Vice President, Bengal Executive Council.
- 1918 H.E. the Rt. Hon. Lawrence John Lumely Dundas, Earl of Ronaldshay, G.E.L.C., Governor of Bengal.
- 1920 The Hon. Mr. W.W. Honrell, C.I.E., M.A., Director of Public Instruction, Bengal.
- 1921 The Most Rev. The Lord Bishop of Calcutta Metropolitan of India.
- 1922 The Rev. J.H. Oldham, M.A., Member of the College Council.
- 1924 H.E. the Earl of Lytton, P.C. G.C.I.E., Governor of Bengal.
- 1925 The Hon. Sir Even Cotton, Kt., C.I.E., President of the Bengal Legislative Council.
- 1926 The Hon. Justice Sir William Ewart Graves. Kt., M.A., Vice Chancellor, Calcutta University.
- 1928 H.E. Lt. Col. the Rt. Hon. Sir Francis Stanley Jackson, P.C., G.C.I.E., Governor of Bengal.
- 1930 Jan. The Rt. Rev. Frederic Fisher, D.D., F.R.G.S.
- 1930 Dec. The Most Rev. the Lord Bishop of Calcutta; Acting for H.E. the Rt Hon. Baron Irwin of Kirby Underdale, G.M.S.I., G.M.E.I., etc. Viceroy and Governor General of India.
- 1932 The Rt. Rev. V.S. Azariah, L.L.D., D.D., Bishop of Dornakal.
- 1934 Jan. Dr. S.K. Dutta, Principal, Foreman Christian College, Lahore.
- 1934 Dec. The Rt. Rev. J. Sandegren, M.A., D.D., Bishop of Tranquebar.
- 1936 The Very Rev. J.A. Graham, C.I.E., D.D., of Kalimpong; Ex-Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.
- 1938 The Hon. Sir Harold Derbyshire, Kt., M.C., K.C., Chief Justice of Bengal.
- 1939 Sir Daniel Hamilton, Kt., Gosaba.
- 1941 The Rev. J. Z. Hodge, Secretary, National Christian Council of India, Burma and Cylon.
- 1944 Dr. W.A. Jenkins, C.I.E., D.Sc., Director of Public Instruction, Bengal.
- 1948 Feb. The Rt. Rev. J. Sandegren, M.A., D.D., Bishop of Tranquebar.
- 1948 Dec. The Rt. Rev. S. Kulandran, B.A., B.D., Bishop of Jaffna, Ceylon.
- 1950 The Rev. G.H.C., Angus, M.A., D.D., Master of Serampore College.
- 1952 H.E. Dr. H.C. Mookherjee, M.A., Ph.D., Governor of West Bengal.
- 1953 Mr. P. Mahanty, M.A., Master of Serampore College, Speaker: The Rev. J.M. Mackay, M.A., D.D.
- 1954 Jan. Mr. P. Mahanty, M.A., Master of Serampore College, Speaker: The Rev. D.S. Wells, A.C.A.
- 1955 Jan. Mr. P. Mahanty, M.A., Master of Serampore College, Speaker: Rev. A. Marcus Ward, M.A., D.D.
- 1957 Jan. Mr. P. Mahanty, M.A., Master of Serampore College, Speaker: Dr. R. Pierce Beaver, M.A., Ph.D.
- 1958 Jan. Mr. P. Mahanty, M.A., Master of Serampore College, Speaker: Principal N.H. Snaith, M.A., D.D.
- 1959 Jan. Dr. H.J. Taylor, M.Sc., Ph.D., Protem Master, Serampore College. Speaker: The Rev. C.E. Abraham, M.A., D.D.
- 1960 Jan. Rai Bahadur Samuel Das, M.A., C.I.E., Master, Serampore College. Speaker: Shri Rajaiah D. Paul, M.A.
- 1961 Jan. Rai Bahadur Samuel Das, M.A., C.I.E., Master of Serampore College. Speaker: Miss. H.M. Lazarus, B.A., F.R.C.S., (Ed.), F.R.C.G.O., C.B.E., F.A.C.S.
- 1962 Jan. Rai Bahadur Samuel Das, M.A., C.I.E., Master of Serampore College. Speaker: Rev. J. Robert Nelson, B.D., D.Theol.
- 1963 Jan. Rai Bahadur Samuel Das, M.A., C.I.E., Master of Serampore College. Speaker: Most Rev. Lakdasa de Mel, Metropolitan of the Church of India, Pakistan, Burma and Ceylon.
- 1964 Jan. Rai Bahadur Samuel Das, M.A., C.I.E., Master of Serampore College. Speaker: Rev. A.E. Inbanathan, M.A., B.D., Ph.D.

- 1965 Jan. Rai Bahadur Samuel Das, M.A., C.I.E., Master of Serampore College. Speaker: Max Hunter Harrison, S.T.M., Ph.D.
- 1966 Jan. Rai Bahadur Samuel Das, M.A., C.I.E., Master of Serampore College. Speaker: Rt. Rev. William Stewart, M.A., B.D., D.D.
- 1967 Jan. Rai Bahadur Samuel Das, M.A., C.I.E., Master of Serampore College. Speaker: Rt. Rev. Lesslie Newbiggin, M.A., D.D.
- 1969 Oct. Prof. M.N. Biswas, Principal, Serampore College. Speaker: The Rev. Cannon P.T. Chandy, Vice-Chancellor, Gorakhpur University.
- 1970 Jan. Lakdasa de Mel, M.A., D.D., Master, Serampore College. Speaker: The Most Rev. P. Solomon.
- 1971 Jan. Mr. A.D. Khan, I.C.S., Master, Protom of Serampore College. Speaker: The Rev. E.L. Wenger, M.A., B.D.
- 1972 Feb. Rev. L.F. Knoll, M.A., M.Th., Master of Serampore College. Speaker: The Most Rev. L.T. Picachy, S.J.
- 1973 Feb. Mr. A.D. Khan, I.C.S., Master of Serampore College. Speaker: The Most Rev. Eric Samuel Nasir, M.A., B.T., D.D.
- 1974 Feb. Mr. A.D. Khan, I.C.S., Master of Serampore College. Speaker: The Rev. J.D. Hughey, B.A., B.D., Ph.D.
- 1975 Feb. Mr. A.D. Khan, I.C.S., Master of Serampore College. Speaker: Dr. Shoki Coe.
- 1976 Feb. Mr. A.D. Khan, I.C.S., Master of Serampore College. Speaker: Charles W. Ranson.
- 1977 Feb. Mr. A.D. Khan, I.C.S., Master of Serampore College. Speaker: Dr. C.T. Kurien.
- 1978 Feb. Mr. A.D. Khan, I.C.S., Master of Serampore College. Speaker: Rt. Rev. Paulose Mar Paulose.
- 1979 Feb. Mr. A.D. Khan, I.C.S., Master of Serampore College. Speaker: Fr. Samuel Rayan, S.J.
- 1980 Feb. Mr. A.D. Khan, I.C.S., Master of Serampore College. Speaker: Dr. Chandran D.S. Devanesen, M.A., Ph.D.
- 1981 Feb. Mr. A.D. Khan, I.C.S., Master of Serampore College. Speaker: Dr. Hans Jochen Margull.
- 1982 Feb. Mr. A.D. Khan, I.C.S., Master of Serampore College. Speaker: Rev. Aharon Sapsezian.
- 1983 Feb. Mr. A.D. Khan, I.C.S., Master of Serampore College. Speaker: Rev. Dr. John Mbiti.
- 1984 Feb. Mr. A.D. Khan, I.C.S., Master of Serampore College. Speaker: H.E. Sri Hokishe Sema, Governor of H.P.
- 1985 Feb. Mr. A.D. Khan, M.A. (Cantb.), I.C.S. (Rtd.), Master of Serampore College. Speaker: Dr. Harold H. Wilke.
- 1986 Feb. Mr. A.D. Khan, M.A. (Cantb.), I.C.S. (Rtd.), Master of Serampore College. Speaker: Dr. S.J. Samaratha, S.T.M., Ph.D.
- 1987 Feb. Mr. A.D. Khan, M.A. (Cantb.), I.C.S. (Rtd.), Master of Serampore College. Speaker: C. Selvamony, M.A., B.D., S.T.M.
- 1988 Feb. Mr. A.D. Khan, M.A. (Cantb.), I.C.S. (Rtd.), Master of Serampore College. Speaker: Dr. Howard M. Mills, B.A., M.Div., S.T.M., Ph.D.
- 1989 Feb. Mr. A.D. Khan, M.A. (Cantb.), I.C.S. (Rtd.), Master of Serampore College. Speaker: Dr. Samuel Amirtham, M.A., B.D., D.Th.
- 1990 Feb. Mr. A.D. Khan, M.A. (Cantb.), I.C.S. (Rtd.), Master of Serampore College. Speaker: The Very Rev. Lois M. Wilson, O.C., B.A., D.D., D.C.L.
- 1991 Feb. Mr. A.D. Khan, M.A. (Cantb.), I.C.S. (Rtd.), Master of Serampore College. Speaker: Dr. J.R. Chandran, M.A., B.D. (Hons.), B.Lit., S.T.M.
- 1992 Feb. Dr. K. Rajaratnam, M.A., Ph.D., D.D., Master of Serampore College. Speaker: Metropolitan Paulos Mar Gregorios, B.A., M.Div., S.T.M., D.Th.
- 1993 Feb. Dr. K. Rajaratnam, M.A., Ph.D., D.D., Master of Serampore College. Speaker: Dr. Kosuke Koyama, Ph.D.
- 1994 Feb. Dr. K. Rajaratnam, M.A., Ph.D., D.D., Master of Serampore College. Speaker: Dr. T.V. Philip, B.Sc., B.D., Ph.D.
- 1995 Feb. Dr. K. Rajaratnam, M.A., Ph.D., D.D., Master of Serampore College. Speaker: Rt. Rev. Dr. P.V. Premasager, B.D., M.A., Ph.D.

- 1996 Feb. Dr. K. Rajaratnam, M.A., Ph.D., D.D., Master of Serampore College. Speaker: Rt. Rev. Dr. D.J. Ambala Vanar, B.D., M.Th.
- 1997 Feb. Dr. K. Rajaratnam, M.A., Ph.D., D.Th., D.D., D.Litt., Master of Serampore College. Speaker: Dr. Lothar Engel, Dr. Theol.
- 1998 Feb. Dr. K. Rajaratnam, M.A., Ph.D., D.Th., D.D., D.Litt., Master of Serampore College. Speaker: Dr. Premaseelan Niles, M.A., Ph.D.
- 1999 Feb. Dr. K. Rajaratnam, M.A., Ph.D., D.Th., D.D., D.Litt., Master of Serampore College. Speaker: Dr. Robin Boyd, Australia.
- 2000 Feb. Dr. K. Rajaratnam, M.A., Ph.D., D.Th., D.D., D.Litt., Master of Serampore College. Speaker: Dr. Saphir P. Athyal, Ph.D.
- 2001 Feb. Dr. K. Rajaratnam, M.A., Ph.D., D.Th., D.D., D.Litt., Master of Serampore College. Speaker: Dr. Nyambura Njoroge, ETE, WCC, Geneva.
- 2002 Feb. Dr. K. Rajaratnam, M.A., Ph.D., D.Th., D.D., D.Litt., Master of Serampore College. Speaker: His Excellency Hans Joachim Kiderlen, Deputy Ambassador, Federal Republic of Germany
- 2003 Feb. Dr. K. Rajaratnam, M.A., Ph.D., D.Th., D.D., D.Litt., Master of Serampore College. Speaker: Justice K. T. Thomas, Former Judge, Supreme Court of India
- 2004 Feb. Dr. K. Rajaratnam, M.A., Ph.D., D.Th., D.D., D.Litt., Master of Serampore College. Speaker: Rev. Dr. Frederick S. Downs, Ph.D.
- 2005 Feb. Dr. K. Rajaratnam, M.A., Ph.D., D.Th., D.D., D.Litt., Master of Serampore College. Speaker: Rev. Dr. John H. Thomas General Minister & President, United Church of Christ (USA)
- 2006 Feb. Dr. K. Rajaratnam, M.A., Ph.D., D.Th., D.D., D.Litt., Master of Serampore College. Speaker: Rev. Dr. Joachim Wietzke Former Director, Northelbian Centre for World Mission and Church World Service, Germany.
- 2007 Feb. Dr. K. Rajaratnam, M.A., Ph.D., D.Th., D.D., D.Litt., Master of Serampore College. Speaker: His Excellency Shri M. M. Jacob, Honorable Governor of Meghalaya
- 2008 Feb. Dr. K. Rajaratnam, M.A., Ph.D., D.Th., D.D., D.Litt., Master of Serampore College. Speaker: Mr. Ahn Jae Woong
- 2009 Feb. Dr. K. Rajaratnam, M.A., Ph.D., D.Th., D.D., D.Litt., Master of Serampore College. Speaker: Dr. E. C. John, M.A.(Cantab), Dr.Theol.
- 2010 Feb. Dr. K. Rajaratnam, M.A., Ph.D., D.Th., D.D., D.Litt., Master of Serampore College. Speaker: Most Rev. Dr. A.M. Chinnappa, SDB, DD, Ph.D.
- 2011 Feb. Rt. Rev. Dr. John S .Sadananda, M.A., B.D., Dr. Theol., Master of Serampore College. Speaker: Mr. Samuel Kabue, B.A., M.A. (Nairobi), M.A. (Bir.)
- 2012 Feb. Rt. Rev. Dr. John S .Sadananda, M.A., B.D., Dr. Theol., Master of Serampore College. Speaker: Rt. Rev. Dr. James Alan Bergquist, B.A., B.D., Ph.D., D.D.
- 2013 Feb. Rt. Rev. Dr. John S .Sadananda, M.A., B.D., Dr. Theol., Master of Serampore College. Speaker: Rev. Dr. Henry S. Wilson, M.A., Th.M., Ph.D.
- 2014 Feb. Rt. Rev. Dr. John S .Sadananda, M.A., B.D., Dr. Theol., Master of Serampore College. Speaker: Rev. Dr. Dietrich Werner, M.Th., Ph.D.
- 2015 Feb. Rt. Rev. Dr. John S .Sadananda, M.A., B.D., Dr. Theol., Master of Serampore College. Speaker: Rev. Helmut Grimmsmann, M.Th.
- 2016 Feb. Rt. Rev. Dr. John S .Sadananda, M.A., B.D., Dr. Theol., Master of Serampore College. Speaker: Rev. Dr habil. Klaus Schäfer, Ph.D

N. Presidents and Convenors of the Senate

- 1919 Rev. Dr. George Howells, M.A. B.D., B.Litt., Ph.D.
1920 Rev. John Drake, M.A., B.D.
1921 Rev. Dr. George Howells, M.A. B.D., B.Litt., Ph.D.
1922 Rev. Dr. George Howells, M.A. B.D., B.Litt., Ph.D.
1924 Rev. John Drake, M.A., B.D.
1925 Rev. John Drake, M.A., B.D.
1926 Rev. Dr. George Howells, M.A. B.D., B.Litt., Ph.D.
1928 Rev. Dr. George Howells, M.A. B.D., B.Litt., Ph.D.
1930 Rev. G.H.C. Angus, M.A., B.D
1932 Rev. G.H.C. Angus, M.A., B.D
1934 Rev. G.H.C. Angus, M.A., B.D
1936 Rev. G.H.C. Angus, M.A., B.D
1938 Rev. G.H.C. Angus, M.A., B.D
1939 Rev. G.H.C. Angus, M.A., B.D
1940 Rev. G.H.C. Angus, M.A., B.D
1941 Rev. G.H.C. Angus, M.A., B.D
1944 Rev. G.H.C. Angus, M.A., B.D., D.D
1948 Rev. G.H.C. Angus, M.A., B.D., D.D
1949 Rev. G.H.C. Angus, M.A., B.D., D.D
1950 Rev. Dr. C.E. Abraham, M.A., B.D., D.D.
1951 Rev. Dr. C.E. Abraham, M.A., B.D., D.D.
1953 Rev. Dr. C.E. Abraham, M.A., B.D., D.D.
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