



Kottar Diocese And Its Educational Institutions In Kanyakumari District - A Study

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this article is to bring out the Educational institutions of the Kottar Diocese in Kanyakumari District. In the early days the Christian Missionaries and in latter stage the diocesan priests rendered meritorious educational services to the people of this region. Besides imparting education to the ordinary people through Primary and Higher Secondary Schools, the Diocese of Kottar took keen interest to establish technical and higher educational institutions. This article focused the Educational Institutions in Kanyakumari district of Tamil Nadu.

Key Words : Kottar Diocese, Technical Education, Polytechnic Institution, Engineering College, Schools

Introduction

After the arrival of Christianity in India, The Educational institutions introduced a new spirit of understanding and a better appreciation of life in the community¹. Christian education is fully student centered and the education is made more assessable to all both the boys and the girls.

Students from the lower strata are benefited much from these educational institutions. The Christian educational movements have often been imbued with a strong social concern, So the Christian Missionaries provided education to all especially the under privileged and the economically weaker sections of the society, and this adds much dynamism to the progress of higher education .The Christian education forms a common mind and it is a continuing process of life. It is the ladder for Social progress, status and respect. Education makes man to be an integral person and endows him with human dignity and honor. It leads mankind as renewed to a civilized pattern of life, makes it aware of the change of time and equips it to face the challenges courageously. Education gives identity to the society. Everyone is entitled to this education. The Roman Catholic, Kanyakumari District, Diocese of Kottar ensures that every one receive such an education. In 1930, when the new diocese of Kottar was blessed by the bishop of Quilon Aloysius Maria Benzigar, there were seventy five primary schools at various stations of the diocese. There were six middle schools functioning at Carmel Nagar, Madathattuvillai, Nagercoil, Korusady, Kanyakumari and Colachel. The only high school functioning was the Carmel High School, Carmel Nagar, Nagercoil. In 1980, when the diocese celebrated its golden jubilee, it had eighty primary schools, twenty five middle schools, eighteen high schools, nine higher secondary schools, one arts and science college run by nuns, four technical institutes and one teachers training institute. In 2005, when the diocese celebrated the platinum jubilee, it has eighty seven primary schools, thirty two middle schools, twenty two high schools, twenty six higher secondary schools, one arts and science college of Holy Cross sisters, seven technical institutes, one engineering college and three teachers training institutes². It shows clearly about their Educational contribution in Kanyakumari district.

St. Francis School, Nagercoil was founded by Bishop Aloysius Maria Benzigar, the bishop of Quilon on 5th, October, 1907, for Tamil education. The school is hundred years old. It was a pet child of the bishop, who wanted to make future teachers and community leaders from this school. A boarding was attached to it. Fr. Peter Morris and Fr. R. Maria Silva were the early heads of this school from 1907 to 1923. Students from different parts studied in this school. This school was managed by the Franciscans from 1901 to 1923. In 1923, Fr. Boniface Reberira. Who was the chancellor of the Quilon diocese look charge of the school. He had additional charge of St. Joseph's convent school as chaplaincy. During his time, St. Francis School was upgraded as a Tamil high school³. Fr. Victor Rodriguez was the manager from 1932 to 1946. Fr. J. M.

Villavarayan was the manager from 1947 to 1957. In 1980 this school became a higher secondary school and has been serving the people⁴.

Before the formation of the diocese, the Missionary Cononesses of St. Augustine started St. Joseph's convent school in the heart of the city, Nagercoil in 1906-1907 academic year. It was the only English School existed in the diocese for girls. It had separate divisions as primary, middle and high school sections⁵. The other schools established in 1909 were St. Joseph's school at Mulagumoodu. St. Antony's school at Capecomorin, St. Joseph's school at KelAsaripallam. St. Ursulas school at Kulasegaram, RomanCatholic school at Palliyady and Province school at Ritapuram. In 1955, St. Anthony's school at Cape Comorin, St. Lawrence at Madathittuvillai. St. Mary's at Colachel. St. Bernadette's at Mangalakunnu, St. Philomena's at Multom, St. Francis Xavier at Vavarai and St. Joseph's at Thiruthuvapuram, Romancatholic school at Enayamputhenthurai, St. Goretie's school at Manalikai, St. Mary's at Melpalai, Little Flower at Ramanputhur, Roman catholic school at KelaAsaripallam, Infant Jesus at Mulagumoodu, Amala convent school at Thuckalay, St. Aloysius school at Velliavilai and St. Francis school at Nagercoil became high schools. In 1958, St. Antony's Cape Comorin, Carmel school Nagercoil, St. Joseph's Girls school Nagercoil, Amala school at Thuckalay and St. Lawrence school Madathattuvillai were raised to the high school level. These schools became the best schools in the respective educational districts. In 1922, when Kottar was the part of Quilon diocese, Bishop Aloysius Maria Benzigar started the Carmel school at Ramanputhoo, Nagercoil. This school was started in a modest building of 300 feet long under the management of Fr. Bernard Gonsalvaz and Fr. Antony Pereira as headmaster. In 1927, the school was upgraded into a middle school under the management of Fr. Paul Sebastian. The first Bishop Lawrence Pereira of Kottar upgraded the school into a full Hedged English High School. A new building was constructed and Fr. Vincent Fernandez, the junior became the manager as well as headmaster of this school. In 1935, Bishop Lawrence Pereira made contacts with the Belgium based missionary of brothers of charity and five brothers were sent from the English province of Liverpool to Kottar to assist the administration of the school. Brother Dunston, the superior took charge of the school on 9th May, 1936. The other brothers were Lawrence Peter, Alphonse Thadeus, Jerome Justin and Pent Mary. The school became renowned in all scholastic activities, and became famous in the surroundings.

In 1942, when the Indian National Congress launched the Quit India Resolution, the Missionary found it difficult to get officials from home (Belgium) and in 1943, the brothers returned to England. They served in the school for 10 years. They constructed achapel and a priest's residence and these constructions were not completed by them. The brothers also donated a well stocked library in Carmel School. They also contributed a set of all teak church peus, a huge manual organ, an English chiming clock and forty eight desks to the boarders of the school. These brothers were so efficient, self sacrificing and a zealous missionary team. In 1945, the diocese again took charge of the management of the school. In 1947, at the dawn of Indian independence, The Salestian Fathers of Don Bosco from Madras took charge of the management of the school.

In 1950, they left and still 1959 the diocese once again directly took charge of the management. In 1959, the school came under the Jesuit Missionary. Fr. A. Michado S. J. served the school as manager and headmaster. At present the school management is directed by the Jesuit priests.

Infant Jesus Teacher Training Institute

Ever since its formation, The Kottar Diocese took keen interest in promoting education based on the footprints of the predecessors. The Missionaries felt that education alone could serve as the best remedy to remove the malady strongly deep rooted among the depressed and economically weaker sections of the society and so started various educational institutions. Infant Jesus Teacher Training Institute was established at Mulagumoodu in the year 1938 and it is administered by the religious sisters of Immaculate Heart of Mary.⁶ The main aim of this institution is to help the women who are socially and economically very poor. The congregation tries their level best to eradicate ignorance through education. Since 1956 this school has been brought under the administration of the Government of Tamil Nadu. This school provides admission to only 40 female students.⁷ After 1980, the institute took special interest to admit physically challenged persons. The major objectives of the Institute are – to provide available information on the jobs/positions, opportunities, etc. – to provide necessary literature/information, and to conduct seminar. In 1992 the whole system of education was reorganized with the aim of improving the quality as per the directions of the National Council of Education Research and Training (NCERT).

Thousands of students are benefited by this institution.

Morning Star Polytechnic Institution (MSPI)

Morning Star Polytechnic Institution was established on 6th August, 1984 by the Diocese of Kottar at Chunkankadai, of Mulagumoodu Vicariate.⁸ This institution has been progressing steadily for 33 years and emerged as one of outstanding ventures of the Diocese of Kottar in its efforts to promote social welfare by imparting technical education to equip thousands of students, especially the socially disadvantaged youth of this district. The college has been serving the society without any distinction of caste and creed. True to its motto "Towards Fullness of Life" engraved in the emblem of this college, every effort has been sincerely taken by the management to make this college full-fledged with all the infrastructural facilities as per the stipulations of the Government of Tamil Nadu and All India Council for Technical Education, New Delhi. As such the AICTE

has granted extension of approval for all the courses up to the year 2012. On account of the increase in intake and introduction of new branches, the strength of students on the roll has been raised in 2012 to 1306, the highest total ever.⁹The Polytechnic Institution offered the following courses: Diploma in Civil Engineering, Diploma in Mechanical Engineering, Diploma in Electronics and Communication Engineering, Diploma in Electrical and Electronic Engineering, Diploma in Computer Technology and Diploma in Information Technology. It has an enviable distinction of having many distinguished Correspondents and Principals who have striven hard to make this college stand tall among the Polytechnic Colleges. Their dedication is the proof of their enthusiastic involvement in the growth of this great institution. Fr. Charles Borromeo (1986 -1989), Fr. Jesudhasan Thomas (1989 - 1992), Fr. I. Kulandaiswamy (1992 - 1993), Fr. S. Servasius (1993 - 1995), Fr. B. Dionysius (1995 - 1996), Fr. S. Joseph Benedict (1996 - 1997), Fr. A. Jesu Marian (1998 - 2001), Fr. A. Selvaraj (2002 -2003), Fr. A. M. Hillary (2003 - 2006), Fr. V. Victor (2006 - 2010), Fr. Paul Richard (2010 - 2014) and Fr. M. Prima Singh (2014) provided wisdom and strength to take care of the staff and the students and committed to their care with the best of their abilities and those who throng the institution for academic pursuits by making the salt of the world.¹⁰

During the thirty four years of its existence, MSPI has rendered a service that is unparalleled in the part of the country, especially Mulagumoodu Vicariate. Hundreds and thousands of students who have passed out of this institution have been placed far and wide in the globe. They bear witness to the glory of this institution in the nooks and corners of the world. Beneficiaries of MSPI are mostly from the economically underprivileged youth in whose lives new light has been lit.¹¹ In order to make learning process more effective, the institute arranges for meeting of parents so as to have a regular interaction between the parents and teachers. Necessary arrangements have been made and renewed for having extra-coaching to the weak students on Sundays and holidays. Certificate of appreciation and awards are presented to the students who have excelled themselves in regularity in attendance and in the Board Examination.¹² As a regular activity, a weeklong intramural technical symposium is conducted every year and especially, a state level technical symposium has been conducted during the Silver Jubilee year 2009.¹³

St. Xavier's Catholic College of Engineering (SXCCE)

In the year 1998, the senate of the R. C. Diocese of Kottar decided to form a committee to organize and to mobilize the human resources of the lay people of the Kottar Diocese, to establish R. C. Diocesan higher educational institutions. The team comprised of Fr. Servasius, Fr. Amirtharaj and Fr. Dominic KadatchaDhas. This committee, under the inspiring guidance of Bishop A Leon Tharmaraj, courageous coordination of Vicar General Heronimous and the committed team work of the lay people, established Catholic College of Engineering.¹⁴ This college was named after St. Xavier, Patron of Kottar Diocese. St. Xavier's Catholic College of Engineering (SXCCE) was started with 240 students in 1998 by Bishop Leon Tharmaraj at Chunkankadai in Mulagumoodu Vicariate.¹⁵The main aim of starting this college was to render Christian service, and to give quality higher education to poor students in the technical field. The aim of the college is to provide quality technical education to students. Well-defined vision and dedicated leadership facilitated this college of engineering to be in the array of mainstream engineering educational institutions of this country. The institution has a pleasing presence, surrounded by beautiful landscapes with an aesthetic touch in its architecture and amazing earthly environment. It offers higher education in Engineering, Technology, Architecture and Applied Sciences relevant to the current and projected needs of the society. Besides promoting research and disseminating knowledge gained there from, it fosters cooperation between the academic and industrial communities. The college is elevated to a yearly intake of 530 students in 6 UG programmes, which consist of Computer Science and Engineering, Electronic and Communication Engineering, Electrical and Electronics Engineering, Mechanical Engineering and Information Technology and 12 PG programmes engineering , computer applications and management field in the academic year 2016 - 2017.¹⁶

S.no	UG Courses	PG Courses
1	B.E-Computer Science and Engineering	M.E-Control and Instrumentation Engineering
2	B.E-Electronics and Communication Engineering	M.E-Applied Electronics
3	B.E-Electrical and Electronics Engineering	M.E-Construction Engineering and Management
4	B.E-Civil Engineering	M.E-Energy Engineering
5	B.E-Mechanical Engineering	M.E-Computer Science and Engineering
6	B.Tech-Information Technology	M.E- Communication and Ne
		M.E-Communication Systems
		M.E-Power Electronics and Drives
		M.E-Medical Electronics
		M.E-Structural Engineering
		MCA-Master of Computer Applications
		MBA-Master of Business Administration

SXCCE is recognized by AICTE and approved by Government of Tamil Nadu. The college is known for its Research and Development works and its is associated with professional bodies like Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) , Indian Society for Technical Education (ISTE), Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET) , Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE), Indian Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air Conditioning Engineers (ISHRAE), Control System and Instrumentation (CSI) and Association for Computing Machinery (ACM). It is a notable institution with distinct marks of its own in imparting quality technical education, in forming young sculptors of new society, much sought after by persons of good will. The education that is given at SXCCE forms the students to face challenges in their future career and life. Centre for University Industry Collaboration (CUIC) received Sustainable Institute Industry Partnership (SIIP) award for the two consecutive years for the achievements in the areas of industry academia.¹⁷

Objectives of the SXCCE are the following to constantly raise the quality of engineering education thereby to produce superior human resource to match rapid technological developments, to share its academic experience and infrastructure with other institutions for providing quality education across the State and help students to fulfill their dreams, to uphold the highest ethical and professional standards while imparting engineering education and while fulfilling its obligations to students and staff and to serve the society with technological advancement and to actively take part in building knowledge-based society.¹⁸

Vision of the college is that SXCCE shall strive towards a World Class Institution by producing professionals with high technical knowledge, professional skills and ethical values. The college shall be a preferred partner to the industry and community for contribution towards their economic and social development by providing high quality manpower through excellence in teaching, research and consultancy. Mission is at the Centre for International Affairs, strive to develop closer international partnerships for global engagement, in order to promote, strengthen and expand the international links of the college, to encourage students and staff to get involved in mobility projects and to facilitate the integration of international students into our environment.¹⁹

Innovation is the backbone of any progress. The college has been focusing on this theme in all its activities down the years. Students and staff have been performing all their activities, although good many of them were routine in nature, in an innovative manner. This has brought out the desired outcome in terms of academic results, placements and in the overall development.

Mulagumoodu Vicariate has realized this need as a sign of the time and launched into this service. Having successfully crossed the various huddles confronted on its growth, SXCCE has grown in stature and strength in 2010, and equipped itself to overcome the big challenges before engineering education in India, to develop and maintain an international standard in accordance with the scenario of globalization and the international crisis due to economic meltdown.²⁰

Conclusion

The research article reveals the Kottar diocese and its Educational development in Kanyakumari district. Education gives identity to the society. Everyone is entitled to this education. The Roman Catholic, Kanyakumari District, Diocese of Kottar ensures that every one receive such an education. In 1930, when the new diocese of Kottar was blessed by the bishop of Quilon Aloysius Maria Benzigar, there were seventy five primary schools at various stations of the diocese. There were six middle schools functioning at Carmel Nagar, Madathattuvillai, Nagercoil, Kurusady, Kanyakumari and Colachel. The only high school functioning was the Carmel High School, Carmel Nagar, Nagercoil. In 1980, when the diocese celebrated its golden jubilee, it had eighty primary schools, twenty five middle schools, eighteen high schools, nine higher secondary schools, one arts and science college run by nuns, four technical institutes and one teachers training institute. In 2005, when the diocese celebrated the platinum jubilee, it has eighty seven primary schools, thirty two middle schools, twenty two high schools, twenty six higher secondary schools, one arts and science college of Holy Cross sisters, seven technical institutes, one engineering college and three teachers training institutes. It leads to the growth of Educational development in Kanyakumari district.

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