

St. Xavier's College [Autonomous], Kolkata.

An Overview – 2008-09

Founder	REV. FR. H. DEPELCHIN, S.J.		
Foundation Day	16TH JANUARY, 1860		
Motto	"NIHIL ULTRA" (NOTHING BEYOND)		
Aim	TO FORM MEN & WOMEN FOR OTHERS		
Place	KOLKATA		
State	WEST BENGAL		
Type of College	CO EDUCATION		
Financial Category	GRANT IN-AID AND SELF FINANCING		
Accredited by NAAC	'A' Grade in 2003		
Autonomy	March 2006		
Centre for Potential For Excellence (CPE)	2006		
Centre of Excellence – 'EMMRC'	1		
Computer Centre	1		
Computer Labs	4		
Research Library	1		
Observatory	1		
Hostels	3		
MOUs	6		
Foreign Collaboration / Exchange	4		
Courses	PG-5	UG-16	OTHERS-6
Students	PG-495	UG-4920	TOTAL-5415
Staff	TEACHING-183	NON TEACHING-78	TOTAL- 261

Principal's Message

St. Xavier's College, Kolkata entered into its 150th year of service to Bengal and the nation on the 16th of January 2009. The Hon'ble Chief Minister of West Bengal, Mr. Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee flagged off the year long celebrations on 21st January. *SeemarMajhe Ashim Tumi*, taken from the Gitanjali of Rabindranath Tagore, which is synonymous to the College Motto, Nihil Ultra, was the theme song of the Sesquicentenary Celebration.

In his speech, Mr. Bhattacharya emphasized the overwhelming relation between education and development. He stressed the importance of education as a crucial factor that contributes to the nation building. He praised St. Xavier's for its service to Bengal and to India and complemented it as a centre of knowledge and excellence.

A word about the earlier St. Xavier's which had its founding in June 1835 – Jesuits from England under the leadership of Fr. Francis Chadwick SJ had started the St. Xavier's College at Murgyhata in the house of one Fathullah Apcar. In its brief career of twelve years, the college changed addresses thrice to accommodate increasing number of students attracted by the high standards it set.

In January 1836, the college was transferred to 3, Park Street for a rent of Rs. 250 per month. Then again in January 1841, it was moved to 22, Chowringee, where now stands the Indian Museum. Due to some unavoidable constraints, the English Jesuits returned home in October 1846, and St. Xavier's had no staff. We remember those Jesuits who had planted the seed of education in the soil of Kolkata.

After a gap of thirteen years the Belgian Jesuits came in November 1859, under the leadership of Fr. H. Depelchin (Rector:1860-1871), the Founding Father of St. Xavier's. They shifted St. Xavier's from 22, Chowringee to the Sans Souci Theatre on 16th January, 1860 which became the honest home of learned professors and zealous students.

It was Fr. O'Neill (Rector: 1904-1913) who gave the college its crest and the motto: Nihil Ultra, a motto, significant and suggestive of a noble ideal, of an unconquerable hope that should urge every Xaverian always to aim high. "Nothing is perfect as long as anything remains to be done". Both St. Xavier's school and college must be proud of their contribution to the cause of education and culture in India. These twin institutions have produced many great educationists and students who earned credit for their Alma Mater.

The list of Xaverians is studded with many scientists, actors, filmmakers, poets and many industrialists in Bengal. It can boast of some of its pupils who became world famous; Rabindranath Tagore and Jagadish Chandra Bose. While Tagore was impressed by the relationship between teachers and students at St. Xavier's, Bose found encouragement for his introduction to science in the person of Fr. Lafont, who was called "the father of science" in India. The list includes three chief ministers of Bengal - H. S. Shurawardy, Siddhartha Shankar Ray and Jyoti Basu and prominent industrialists like B.M Khaitan, Raghu Mady, L.N. Mittal, Vijay Mallya and Sanjiv Goenka.

Modern Indology owes much to the Jesuits like Johanns, Dandoy, Bayart, Antoine, De Smet and Fallon of St. Xavier's College, Calcutta. They contributed a great deal to the intellectual and cultural heritage of Bengal. When some of these pioneering Jesuits began their dialogue with the people of other faiths, especially the Hindus, they added a whole new dimension to their apostolic work.

Fr. Fallon was known as the 'apostle of inter-religious dialogue' in Calcutta. The magazine called *Light of the East*, edited by Fr. Dandoy played a major role in promoting inter-religious and inter-cultural dialogue in India from 1922 to 1946. These visionaries served God and the cause of India in a manner that remains still a source of inspiration for all.

St. Francis Xavier is the Patron of St. Xavier's. There is scarcely an educated Indian who has not heard the name of Francis Xavier. It is to India that Ignatius of Loyola, the Founder of the Society of Jesus, sent his greatest son, Francis Xavier in 1542. Xavier was a zealous "missionary on the move". He sailed to Malacca and Japan in 1549 where he spent two and a half years. In April 1552 he set sail to China via Malacca from Goa, never to return alive. He died at Sancian, a small island facing China, on 2 December 1552. Wherever he went, he plunged himself into charitable and pastoral work preaching the message of God's love to people. He worked in India for 10 years, 1542 to 1552, called the Xaverian decade.

St. Xavier's may have a seeming elitist aura. But that has never stopped the institution from endeavoring to make its educational services easily available to the socially and economically less privileged sections of society. The services of the College go much beyond the four walls of its campus. Thanks to the preferential option of the Jesuits in this regard as well as the generous contributions of the former students and well wishers of the Xaverian family.

While striving for excellence, the College tries to instill in them, a good measure of human, religious and philanthropic values. The long cherished tradition of social service in the College through NSS and the Faith formation carried out by the All India Catholic University Federation (AICUF) from 1948 through its various activities like reflections, camps, surveys etc., are commendably oriented towards these great ideals.

As a Jesuit college, St. Xavier's makes its own contribution towards the transformation of the present day social condition so that principles of social justice, equality of opportunity, genuine freedom and respect for religious and moral values, enshrined in the Constitution of India, may prevail, and the possibility of living a fully human existence may be open before all.

St. Xavier's has always been known for its cosmopolitan and all-India character. Much before the expression "national integration" gained currency, St. Xavier's has tried to foster among its students the spirit and practice of it. Coming as they do from all over India and from various communities, they live in complete harmony, understanding and mutual respect. Thus they are encouraged to develop beyond local and group affinities, loyalties to the country and to society at large.

St. Xavier's stands on many pillars. I want to mention four of them here: 1) the motto of St. Ignatius: *Ad maiorem Dei Gloriam (AMDG)* - For the Greater Glory of God which continues to be the motto that guides Jesuits and their co-workers today; 2) the Ignatian Magis, the fire within - greater service to greater number of people; 3) the motto of Xavier's - *Nihil Ultra* - Nothing beyond and 4) the deep love and loyalty of its teachers and students.

Fr. Depelchin, Tagore, Jagadish Chandra Bose, Ramananda Chatterjee, Fr. Verstreton, Cardinal Pichachy, Frs Joris, Schepers, Beckers, Joseph D'Souza, and many more Jesuits and Teachers have left their footprints in the sands of Xavier's for us to follow. Today we reap gratefully what they had sown. If the harvest is golden, the credit is theirs.

St. Xavier's, an institution with one history but many stories; one fire with many sparks, a fire that kindles many fires; it forms men and women for others, with competence, commitment, conscience and compassion. One of the 10 best colleges in India, credited with autonomy, it is where the mind is without fear and the head is held high; we celebrate its richness; and into the heaven of freedom we march ahead to aim high in the spirit of our motto, *Nihil Ultra*.

Let the 150th year of Xavier's be a period of renewal, introspection and meaningful celebration.

Fr. J. Felix Raj, S.J.

Principal

June 2009.

Glimpses 2008-09



British delegates interacting with staff & students – September '08



Delegates from France with the Chemistry dept. staff – December '08



Fr. George Pattery, S.J., Provincial inaugurating the Jubilee Building in presence of Shri Abdus Sattar, Minority Affairs Minister, Govt. of West Bengal and others – 16th January 2009



The Jubilee building inaugurated on 16th January 2009



Shri Pranab Mukherjee, Hon'ble Finance Minister of India with Jesuit Fathers and others on the occasion of the 2nd Convocation and Valedictory function – 17th January 2009



Shri Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee, Hon'ble Chief Minister of West Bengal and others on the occasion of the inauguration of 150 years celebrations – 21st January 2009



The new administration team with the outgoing Principal – 2nd February 2009



The new Principal Fr. Felix Raj, S.J. taking over from Fr. P.C. Mathew, S.J. – 2nd February 2009

Glimpses 2008-09



Annual Sports - 2009



NCC - St. Xavier's College Unit



Camps at Village organized by Dept. of Social Work



Shishu Mela for underprivileged and differently-abled children organized by Dept. of Social Work



Performance by XADAM - Xavier's Academy of Dance and Music



Performance by Xaverian Theatrical Society



Student Exchange program - SXC students at University of Manitoba



Students working for the annual magazine - THE XAVERIAN