



"The tall, imposing and beautiful off-white structure at the lap of the bluish green Darjeeling hills of the Himalayas near the little sleepy town- that was Sonada, facing folds and folds of mountains stretching away into the plains of Bengal, fondly remembered by thousands of its alumni as the Salesian college"- **Jose Cherian, SCS batch of 1973-76**



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Easter Wishes.

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More Inside



My Dear Friends (Alumni),

Loving and prayerful greetings to all of you as we begin the month of May. As all our students are in the grip of University Examinations, let me share a very relevant thought.

One of the University lecturers wrote an expressive message to his students at the doctorate, masters and bachelors level and placed it at the college entrance in the University in South Africa. And this is the message:

"Collapsing any nation does not require use of Atomic bombs or the use of Long range missiles. But it requires lowering the quality of Education and allowing cheating in the exams by the students."

The patient dies in the hands of the doctor who passed his exams through cheating.

And the buildings collapse in the hands of an engineer who passed his exams through cheating.

And the money is lost in the hands of an accountant who passed his exams through cheating.

And humanity dies in the hands of a religious scholar who passed his exams through cheating.

And justice is lost in the hands of a judge who passed his exams through cheating.

And ignorance is rampant in the minds of children who are under the care of a teacher who passed his exams through cheating.

"The collapse of education is the collapse of the Nation."

God bless you as I pray for you daily.

Fr. Mathew Pulingathil SDB

Rector, Salesian College Siliguri

Dear Friends,



Easter Wishes.

One of the projects of the Platinum Jubilee was to come out with a history of Salesian College in a style and manner that would make engaging reading. A new approach to history by making it a series of narratives by those who actually lived through the experience over the past 75 years. It has taken therefore much time, and is still in the making. Hope it will see the light of day before the 80th anniversary of the college. Many of you have responded in various ways to this project. I want to thank you all, and, in advance, even those who will read and respond once it is printed.

An editing task is in fact an unfinished task. There is always something more that can be stated, or stated better, or nuanced as to capture the sense and intent of the saying. An institution is its past and its future at any given time. Even now, as we engage in creating the transitions of the old into the new, whether in the material constructions of new buildings or in making age old processes of training and education into its newer molds, the past and the future keep merging in the efforts of the 'now'.

May I wish every reader of the AlumNews, itself soon into its 25th issue, a new experience of the 'now' in the ever new 'now'.

Yours, a Salesian,

Fr George Thadathil sdb

Principal

Salesian College





SCS- Four Decades Ago.

Jose Cherian, SCS batch of 1973-76

The tall, imposing and beautiful off-white structure at the lap of the bluish green Darjeeling hills of the Himalayas near the little sleepy town - that was Sonada, facing folds and folds of mountains stretching away into the plains of Bengal, fondly remembered by thousands of its alumni as the Salesian college.

In 1973, I was among the batch of students who arrived at the college after completing studies at Sunnyside, Upper-Shillong. I remember the special welcome our seniors gave us, drenching us with a shower from the terrace (a mild type of ragging) as we started climbing the flight of steps to the college which seems not to have undergone any change even now.

The fondest memories are of the hill behind the college, the 'jhorra' that filled the water-tanks, the small cemetery under the huge blue pines, the grotto below it and the church which gave a lot of solace to souls of the religious scholars during their life there.

Rev.Fr. Logroi, our Master at Sunnyside for the first months, was now the Provincial of Calcutta province which manages SCS. Fr. Joseph Kizhakkekara was the Rector for about a year after our arrival and he was succeeded by Fr. Joseph Punchakkunnel. Fr. Mathew Vellappalli became the Principal after the elevation of Fr. Punchakkunnel as the rector. The ever-shy Fr. Versotto (fondly known as Fr. Capo), a humble and holy priest who taught us 'Salesiana', brought our mail from the post office - that was part of his daily routine, served the sick of the tea garden villages

who came to be treated by him at the college dispensary. Those simple people trusted him so much that embarrassingly for him, they brought patients who had been sent home to die as hospitals thought they could do nothing more to save them. They thought of him in their simple faith as the divine doctor who could heal them with his mere touch.

Fr. Kizhakkekara was an excellent Rector, counsellor and friend, Fr. Puncha was very sincere and friendly in his dealings, Fr. Mathai also taught Economics and was a cheerful and jovial character, Bro. Trophy was our English Professor and the classes were quite interesting. Then later on there was Fr. K U Mathew, our professor of Philosophy, who was friendly and supportive. Fr. Jellici, the Parish Priest of Sonada with his colourful and sleek bicycle with gears which he used for travelling between the parish and the college, was also a member of the SCS community. There was Bro. Mani who looked after the material needs of the college community and it was no mean task.

The college consisted of the main block with its spacious Veranda with the chapel on one end and the kitchen on the other. The main parts of the ground floor were the auditorium which played a very important part of our college days, where excellent programmes were held and varied talents were exhibited followed by the parlour and the dining hall. The food was always good and plentiful. Next to the dining hall was the kitchen. The first floor had the main offices besides the class rooms, the library and a well-stocked reading room which was aptly utilised by the scholars. The top floor was mainly dormitories. May be things have changed these days; I do not know.

The 'brewery' in those days was usually the dormitory for the senior students who come back to write the final part of their university exams after being away on their Practical Training. There was a local musician who used to teach Indian music to the students in one of the rooms behind the 'Brewery'. There was a coal cellar in a nook and then the bakery that would occasionally fill the whole campus with the fragrance of the newly baked bread and cakes.

If I ever heard it right, this 'brewery' was where the Salesian College at Sonada was originally housed. It might be appropriate that this building be declared a Salesian heritage.

There were several excellent and capable young religious who passed out of the Salesian College Sonada, who went on to guide and serve the youth in India and abroad in various capacities. Some of the contemporaries among others of these years are Fr. CM Paul, Fr. Francis Fernandez, Fr. E.C. Michael and Fr. Joseph Palamthatel. There were also some who took the 'other road' and went different ways still bearing the torch the Salesian society and Salesian college had handed over to them. They too live and work in the different parts of the world as models of a tradition they inherited from the way of life learned and lived here.

One of the main extra curricular activities of the students of the college was the work they did in the tea garden villages lying in the vicinity of the college from Tung to Mirik and even to the banks of River Teesta. The students on Sundays, collected the youth in these villages, organising games and sports for them, visiting their homes and the sick and doing many things that contributed to their happiness. The simple people of these villages appreciated the good will shown to them and loved the Brothers and the college grew high in their esteem.

'VOICE FROM THE HILLS' was a handwritten wall magazine giving news of the youth centre activities published on a weekly basis started sometime in 1973/74. I think it continued beyond 1975 with a better look and content in the hands of the new editors. Those youth-centres and the opportunity the students had to interact with the people made them more realistic and humane in spite of the more isolated social life they normally had.

The 'Sunshine Picnics', the frequent hiking and outings, the long walk from Ghum to Kalimpong that we once did in a day's time and the return trip

again on foot on the third day are all embedded in my memory.

There was another adventurous Easter trip we made with Fr. Capo to a very remote village on the banks of the River Teesta, probably in 1975. We travelled on foot and reached the village set deep in the valley on the eve of Easter. There was Bro. KP Paul, Augustine Gomes, may be one or two more, but I can not now remember who else was there. We stayed the night in the isolated mission house where the next morning Fr. Capo celebrated the Easter Mass for a handful of the members of the tiny catholic community there. Later in the morning we were invited by the protestant community to their Easter celebration which we attended in good ecumenical spirit.

That little building in the middle of nowhere had a small hydro-electric unit very ingeniously set up there by an Italian Priest. Water from a small mountain spring was collected into 3'x4' concrete tank and then it was released through a ½" plastic pipe on to the leaf of the fan that turned the little turbine at an appropriate speed to generate sufficient electricity to light two or three tube lights inside the house. I can not recall the name of the village now.

On our way back, towards the late evening as we climbed to the mountain heights from the deep valley, we were overtaken by a very heavy hailstorm that turned Kilometres of the forest terrain into thickly laid carpets of clear-crystal ice, turning our feet numb with cold. We would take a few steps ahead in that numbing snow and would settle down on some fallen tree trunks or on the stumps of some felled trees to massage our feet thinly protected by our walking canvas shoes to warmth. Then after a few steps we had to repeat the procedure to keep us going. It was night and still raining when we got some where on to the main road and then back to the college in the cold night.

It was after the university exams of 1976 that our batch said good bye to Salesian College Sonada, but SCS has never been out of my fondest memories.

[The writer is an alumnus of the 1973-76 batch of the college. He has been an educator ever since his graduation and worked for two more years in a Salesian institution. Since then he has worked in Bhutan, Kenya, The Republic of Maldives and in different states of India. Currently he works for a group of leading engineering colleges in AP as Trainer/Professor of English Communication and Soft Skills.]

He can be reached by e-mail: jcheri58@gmail.com



The College where my Life **Acquired New Dimensions**

Riwas Subba, SCS Batch: 2004-2005

Salesian College Sonada is the place where my life acquired new meaning and new dimensions. I was born and brought up in Ramitay a very small village near Sonada. During my higher secondary and the initial days of my college life, I was very much low spirited but when out of the college, I was not only equipped with a graduation degree but was also bestowed upon with the great life values without which life would have been miserable. It furnished me an aim and filled me with confidence so that I may reach the place where I am right now. I shall always be indebted to my college and the teachers as well.

I always feel that whenever we are depressed we become blind to the opportunities lying in front of us. The learnings and experience I gathered in SCS has exerted a tremendous positive impact on my life and the life of those who were related to me. The ambience of the college itself taught me how to concentrate and meditate. It helped me understand the meaning of solitude and the power I can

derive through it and also the influences and differences I can make on others. The values I learnt there will always remain as my guide.

I was not brilliant and lucky but I was hard working. And my hard work and motivation has rewarded me the job of Inspector, Labour Welfare, under West Bengal Subordinate Labour Service. My primary duty is to see the proper implementation of labour laws that are meant for the protection of the basic rights of small scale labourers working in Govt. as well as private sectors or any other informal set ups. Moreover my duty is to monitor that the Govt. initiated schemes for labour welfare are reaching them fully and they are not deprived. Challenges are always there because of public, politics, work load etc. and I like to face those challenges.

Dear fellow friends, alumni and present students of SCS - "Dream and work hard to achieve it. It will be yours ultimately. The alternative for hard work is hard work but with intelligence. Do have a vision of life and don't forget the values and morals that you have learnt in Salesian College."

Achievement

Tony Thomas, the 2014 batch alumnus of Salesian College Siliguri, shared his view in the Panel discussion organised by Times of India on the Topic "How we can make the city Beautiful". Representing the Chandigarh University where he is presently pursuing his higher studies he was on the panel along with eminent personalities from various fields.



Tony Thomas second from right

From the campus

16th Research Scholar Workshop

On 18 March 2017 Salesian College Siliguri organised its 16th Annual Research Scholar workshop. The objective of the workshop was to provide a platform to share new ideas and research projects in varied disciplines under the theme/concept "Sharing and Learning". More than 20 scholars participated at the workshop to present their research projects and discuss them with experts and fellow academicians. The workshop enabled the research scholars to look at their research from fresh perspectives and incorporate the comments and suggestions.



Conference on Darjeeling and the Eastern Himalayas: A Multidisciplinary Approach

An international inter-disciplinary conference on Darjeeling and the Eastern Himalayas: A Multidisciplinary Approach' was held at Salesian College Sonada campus from on 14 and 15 March 2017. Vice Chancellor of Sikkim Central University Prof. Tanka Bahadur Subba, inaugurated the conference, and Director of Himalayan Study Centre at North Bengal University Prof Karubaki Datta delivered the key note address. Resource persons, scholars and participants from India, Bangladesh, Nepal and Bhutan participated in the two day seminar.



While speaking on the objectives of the conference, Principal Dr.Fr. GeorgeThadathil SDB said, "The conference aims to challenge perspectives, contribute to existing body of knowledge and provide a common platform for researchers working on the region." He added, "The conference will facilitate the convergence of researchers from different countries, studying different aspects of the eastern Himalayas. It will also enable exchange of ideas and dissemination of knowledge and promotion of further research on the region which experienced migration from Tibet to Darjeeling and Sikkim; and engage scholars study the contemporary contestants to hegemony in the hills with the hope of presenting newer ways of understanding the region and exploring the commonalities and differences between the peoples."



Inaugural session also marked the release of Nepali translation of the book 'Brahma Sri Narayana Guru' by T. Bhaskaran translated by Prof George Thadathil for Sahitya Akademi.

Trends in Science and Technology

A two day National level Conference on "Trends in Science and Technology" was organised by the Department of Computer Science and Applications in collaboration with the Department of Mathematics, Salesian College, Siliguri Campus on 27th and 28th February 2017. The main objective of the conference was to bring forward the ongoing trends in Science and Technology and commemorate the National Science Day.



The Chief Guest was Professor Chacko Jacob, Department of Material science, IIT Kharagpur who spoke on "Nanotechnology - Hype, Hope and Reality."

Staff Animation Programme

From 27 to 29 March 2017 a 3-days Staff Animation programme was held at Salesian College Sonada towards NAAC Re-accreditation and Quality Assurance for both campuses. The resource person was Dr. Mario Pinheiro of Panjim Goa.



Workshop for Literary Translation
May 31, June 1 and 2, 2017

We invite applications for the Workshop. Students, young academics, translators — anyone with demonstrable interest in translation may apply.

The Workshop would work with Bangla, Nepali and English. The workshop sessions will aim to encourage consensus translation of literary texts in groups. Texts will be selected keeping in mind the theme—Darjeeling in Bangla Literature; Kolkata in Indian Nepali Literature.

Each group will work together to produce at least one shared translation of an extract. Some of the translations produced during the course of the workshop may be published.

Interested candidates may apply by filling in the form attached and mailing it to jstranswork@salesiancollege.net (a single mail ID or 2 separate mail IDs), along with relevant attachments. The applications must reach us by 19th of May 2017. The forms may also be submitted in hard copy at the CENTIL office on the second floor of the UG Arts Building, Jadavpur University and Salesian College, Sonada and Siliguri. Outstation participants would have to make their own arrangements and fund their travel, accommodation will be provided.

Successful applicants can expect to be informed of acceptance by e-mail by 22nd of May 2017. There will be a registration fee for the Workshop. Application forms are available from the office of the Centre for Translation of Indian Literatures (CENTIL) on the second floor of the UG Arts Building, Jadavpur University and Salesian College, Sonada and Siliguri campus.
(The forms are available online at www.salesiancollege.in.)

For further queries, you may contact us on
033-24572156 (Jadavpur University) | 353-2545622 for Salesian

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Last Day of Application: 19th May 2017 | Date of Acceptance : 22nd May 2017 (by e-mail)

Salesian College in collaboration with Centre for Translation of Indian Literatures (CENTIL), Department of Comparative Literature, Jadavpur University is organizing a Literary Translation Workshop to be held at Salesian College, Sonada. The Workshop will work with Bangla, Nepali and English. Last date of application 19.5.2017. For further details and to apply online please check the link below:

http://www.salesiancollege.in/Dotin/Upcoming_Events_Conference_Seminars/2017/LiteraryTranslation/LiteraryTranslation.html

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