ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I cannot begin to express my pleasure for the opportunity to work with one of the best I've known – Prof. Julio B. Fernandes. I am honoured to have been a part of his research group. Without his encouragement, patience, guidance, overwhelming wealth of knowledge and inspiration throughout, this would still be a dream. Thank you Sir, for believing in me enough and helping me last right through the end.

I sincerely thank Prof. J.S. Budkuley and Prof. K.S. Rane for the constant encouragement throughout the course of this investigation.

Thanks to Prof. Newman Fernandes, Principal, St. Xavier's College, Mapusa and the 'Xavier's Family' for the encouragement.

I am greatly indebted to Dr. Sajo P. Naik, University of Tokyo, Japan, for the valuable suggestions, scientific discussions and all the help rendered to me especially the XRD, FESEM, catalytic studies and teaching me to use the GC.

Special thanks to Dr. M. Sudersanan, Rtd. Scientist, Analytical Chemistry Division, BARC, Mumbai for allowing me to use the facilities; Mr. Ashish Satpati, ACD, BARC, for helping me immensely with the CV measurements and constantly encouraging me whenever needed and the discussions as well. And not to forget Mr. Thomas and Mr. Dalvi for waving the 'magic wand' whenever the instrument was down.

I am also grateful to Prof. J.L. Figueiredo, University of Porto for permitting me to use BET and TPD instruments; Dr. Carmen Rangel, INETI, Lisbon for electrochemical studies and to Fundación Oriente for the scholarship and making this visit to Portugal possible for me. I appreciate and cherish all the friendships developed in Portugal.

To all my teachers at the Department of Chemistry, who have positively affected my life in all these years that I have spent at the University and for providing useful suggestions and constructive criticism especially during the annual research presentations.

Thanks are also due to the non-teaching staff of Department of Chemistry, Goa University library and office for always being very helpful and kind. I am grateful to Mr. Jai Prakash and Mr. Lopes, USIC, Goa University for the help rendered to me.
To all research colleagues from our group, research scholars in the different branches of the Department of Chemistry, as well as the research fraternity at the Goa University, I do cherish the pleasant moments we've had.

How can I forget Dr. Asha D'Souza, a great friend and ex-research colleague? I can never thank you enough Ash, for helping me especially when I had just begun research, the fun times we've shared, as well as for introducing me to chai.

And Dr. Purnakala Samant (Purna), I will forever remain indebted to you. Thanks for your constant encouragement, support, suggestions and valuable discussions. Despite the many obstacles you had yourself, you were yet available to assist me at a moments notice.

Thanks to Mitendra Alve, DIKSHA Education Centre, Margao, for the timely and prompt help rendered to me all the time.

To those friends, who have unknowingly rejuvenated my pleasure in the "simple things", many thanks for sharing parts of your lives with me. And I cannot forget the welcome "wuffs" and doggy tales of my dearest Snoopy; at the end of an exhausting day were the most soothing of all.

I owe all of this and much more to my entire family for their love, prayers, constant support and assistance in ways I cannot tell, despite all odds and ends that have aided me to this point of my life.

Finally, I am grateful to my Lord Jesus Christ, who continues to be my refuge and my guiding light.

Jeanette S. Rebello