ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I whole-heartedly acknowledge
The blessings of my loving God, Lord Jesus Christ.

I am deeply indebted to

Dr. M. A. Akbarsha, Professor and Head, Department of Animal Science, Bharathidasan University, Tiruchirappalli-620 024, who guided me through this research with keen interest, perception and understanding. I gratefully appreciate his scholarly guidance, expertise in meticulous attention to detail, analysis and interpretation of findings and also for his steadfast encouragement and unconditional support extended to me with which I have been able to complete the work in time.

I offer my heartfelt thanks to

Dr. Oommen V. Oommen, Professor and Head, Department of Zoology, University of Kerala, Kariavatton, Thiruvananthapuram – 695 581, for introducing me into caecilian reproductive biology research and for his valuable suggestions, concern and encouragement throughout this work.

Dr. M. Md. Ibrahimsha, Reader, Department of Zoology, Jamal Mohamed College, Tiruchirappalli – 620 020, for the laboratory facilities made available to me to carry out the immunological work. I am extremely grateful to him for his efficient guidance, skillful assistance and consistent encouragement.

I owe my gratitude to

Dr. Mark Wilkinson and David J. Gower, Associate Professors, Department of Zoology, The Natural History Museum, Cromwell Road, South Kensington, London, UK, among the pioneers caecilian biology research in the contemporary scenario, who have been an inspiration for my entry into this field and also for having been very kind and prompt in helping me with considerable literature that I have used in my study. I also acknowledge their gracious visit to our lab, perusal of the results presented in the thesis and the kind words of encouragement.

I gratefully thank

Dr. (Mrs.) P. Geraldine, Reader, Department of Animal Science, Bharathidasan University, Tiruchirappalli – 620 024, for her kindness, concern, constant support and help.

I express my profound sense of gratitude to my teachers

Dr. (Mrs.) P. Daisy, Dr. (Mrs.) Agnes, Mrs. K. Jayamani, Dr. (Mrs.) Prema, Dr. (Miss.) C.D. Lethi, and Dr. (Mrs.) Alice, whose valuable suggestions, understanding, reassurance and moral support have contributed immensely towards the completion of my work.
I gratefully acknowledge the help I received from

Dr. K. V. Krishnamurthy, Professor and Head, Department of Plant Science, Bharathidasan University, Tiruchirappalli – 620 024, towards laboratory facilities;

Dr. G. Subramanian, Former Director National Facility for Marine Cyanobacteria (NFMC), and Dr. (Mrs.) L. Uma, New Director, NFMC, Bharathidasan University, Tiruchirappalli 620024, for the photomicrography and gel documentation facility;

Dr. M. Krishnan, Reader and Head, Department of Eco-Biotechnology, Bharathidasan University, Tiruchirappalli – 620 024, for the support and laboratory facility;

Dr. K. Balasubramanian, Head, Department of Biochemistry, and Dr. (Mrs.) Anna Pulimood, Department of Gastroenterology, The Wellcome Trust Research Laboratory, Christian Medical College and Hospital, Vellore, for permission to use the transmission electron microscope facility; and

Mr. V. G. Jagannathan, Technician, Department of Gastroenterology, The Wellcome Trust Research Laboratory, Christian Medical College and Hospital, Vellore, for the technical assistance in the electron microscopy.

I do thank

My senior in research, Dr. V. Tamilarasan, Head, Department of Zoology, Raja Sarfoji College, Tanjavur, for his exemplary life and support at all times.

I warmly appreciate and thank

My colleagues in research Miss. R. Girija, Mr. B. Kadalmani, Miss. A. Faridha Banu, Miss. K. Kanchana, Mrs. S. Anandhi, Mr. V. Arunachalam, Mr. V.S. Periyasamy, and Mr. S. Kamalakkannan for the excellent assistance and untiring help extended to me in all possible ways.

I express my special thanks to

Mr. Sudhakar, Software Engineer, Macrodreams Software Solutions, Tiruchirappalli for his skillful assistance and support at all times.

Research scholars Mr. R. Siva, Mr. Kumar, Mr. S. Selvakumar, Mr. Jayakumar, Mr. P. Balamurugan, Miss. Saraswathi, Dr. B. Ramanathan, Mr. M. Rajkumar, Mr. R. Sankar, Dr. S. Achiraman, Mr. R. Chandrasekar, Mr. Arul, Miss. P. Muthu Meenakshi, Miss. Kaveri, Miss. Sumithra, Miss. K. Tamilmani and Miss. Brejit Sneha for their support on several occasions.

I do appreciate the help of

Dr. Francis Sunny, Reader, Department of Zoology, University College, Tiruvananthapuram, and Miss. Smita Mathew, Research Scholar, Department of Zoology, University of Kerala, Tiruvananthapuram, for their support and technical assistance.
I do acknowledge the help I received from

Administrative Faculties, Dr. P. R. Bhaskaran and Mr. R. Natarajan, and Office staff Mr. K. Manohar, Mr. A. Innachi and Mr. Nazar.

I express my sincere thanks to

Mr. Denny who promptly supplied animals inspite of several constraints pertaining to the collection of caecilians.

I acknowledge

The financial assistance from The University Grants Commission, New Delhi by way of Research Fellowship in the Project No. F-3-209/2001(SR-II), Govt. of India dt. 25.12.2001, granted to my guide, Dr. M.A. Akbarsha.

I am indebted to

Dr. Frederic W. Harrison, Editor, Journal of Morphology, John Wiley & Sons, Publishers, for publishing a part of the research findings of this thesis in the esteemed Journal.

I am immensely grateful to


With due pride I acknowledge and appreciate

Rev. Mother Bertha, Provincial Superior, and Rev. Sr. Georgeena, Rev. Sr. Jose Sartho, Rev. Sr. Anice and Rev. Sr. Little Flower, Provincial Counsellors, SABS Provincial House, Thodupuzha-686 670, Kerala, whose faith in me has encouraged me towards progress. Their understanding, ever-optimistic encouragement, exemplary life and prayerful support have been constant source of inspiration to me.

I gratefully value the assistance of

Sr. Anit, Sr. Philamine and Sr. Able, SABS Provincial House, Thodupuzha-686 670, Kerala, for their ever-willing help in collection and transport of animals.

I thank

My father, mother, brother and sisters (Sr. Lincy and Sr. Ancy, SABS) for their care and constant prayerful support throughout this work.