CHAPTER – IV

EDUCATIONAL SERVICES OF THE DIOCESE

India, that is Bharat, is the cradle of great religious and the hallowed soil for spiritual springs and perennial philosophies. Religion is man’s attitude towards ‘Reality’ which is regarded as something trans-human, something more than man. There is hardly any people, or race which is devoid of the sense of religion in some form or other.\(^1\) Man may try through his technical advances to roll up the sky itself as if it were a piece of leather, with all that he will never succeed in achieving peace and the end of his sorrow without realizing the luminous divine within him. Today we suffer from over civilization and under humanization resulting in bogha (pleasure) and rejecting tyaga (Sacrifice).

The pathetic human situation with science versus spirituality creating a crisis of the soul is best expressed by General Omar Bradley “We have too many men of science, too few men of God. We have grasped the mystery of the atom and rejected the Sermon on the Mount by Jesus Christ. The world has achieved brilliance without wisdom, power without conscience. Ours is a world of nuclear giants and ethical infants. We know more about war than we do about peace, more about killing than we do about living.”\(^2\)

The way to relieve man of his miserable condition is not to teach him to dispense with religion but to remind him of the great teachers like Krishna, Buddha and Christ that it is the spirit that quickenth, the flesh profiteth not and that in this

---


world which is full of misery, the only thing that profiteth is indomitable will to find and realize the infinite and imperishable that is in all of us.

If one possesses a bit of spiritual bent of mind, he may bear the voice of God with in oneself. It is not just the belief in God that gives us happiness but also the peaceful atmosphere that prevails at such places. This significant concept concerning spirituality is need of hour not only for individual but also prerequisite for mighty nations.³

Bloodiest battles have been fought in the name of religions which the creators or founders of different religions never intended. Great prophets of all religions have always preached love, equality and universal brotherhood and peace. We are strange mixture of hate, fear and gentleness. We are both violence and peace. There has been outward progress from the bullock cart to the jet plane. But psychologically the individual has not changed yet.⁴

Christianity is a religion of love, sacrifice and service. Love has to manifest in one’s actions continuously. Mother Teresa of our times with her Missionaries of Charity incessantly served the poor, the sick and the homeless. The whole personality of mother radiated unconditional and selfless love to the mankind. This is the real Christianity of Christ, service before self and even the very breath of life.⁵

Christianity came into our country immediately after Christ, with St.Thomas carrying the gospel to Kerala. Its testimony is in ancient churches preceding western

entry into India or western embrace of Christianity. The undeniable fact is that the roots of this faith are deep and strong, growing in spiritual companionship with great native religion.\textsuperscript{6}

Thus India, the land of spirituality and philosophy considers religion as an integral part of its entire tradition of all the denominations. The Roman Catholic Church is the largest organization in the world today and it comprises about 60\% of all Christians.\textsuperscript{7} It is the third largest religion in India at present. The Indian Christianity is almost as old as Christ himself. With the advent of other religions, our country has become an enormous library and laboratory of religious pluralism. Although Christianity a small community, it wields influence in the national life to a great extent.

There is ample evidence that Roman Catholic Missionaries on their way to China visited northern parts of India during the 14\textsuperscript{th} century. They did not remain for more than a year or two.\textsuperscript{8}

Two major developments in the 16\textsuperscript{th} century altered the course of Indian History. First, Babur, the founder of the Mughal dynasty which shaped and guided the destiny of India for the next two centuries. The second major development was the arrival of the Portuguese explorer, Vasco-da Gama, who landed in Calicut in 1498 with two shiploads of adventurers, traders and one missionary.\textsuperscript{9} A few years’ later

\textsuperscript{6} V.R. Krishna Iyer, \textit{op. cit.}, p.186.
\textsuperscript{7} Ivor Morrish, \textit{The Thoughtful Guide to Religion}, p.229.
\textsuperscript{8} A.C. Moule, \textit{Christians In China before the year 1550}, p.171.
\textsuperscript{9} J.V.Vilnilam, \textit{Religious communication in India}, p.40.
Dominican Franciscan Jesuit and Parish missionaries came to India and succeeded in establishing certain practices which were helpful in making religious communication and social action though evangelization easier in Tamil Nadu and other parts of India for the later generations of both Catholic and Protestant Missionaries.

These missionaries paved the way not only for the establishment of modern educational system based on European model in India but also development of press in indigenous languages. As Victor Hugo has rightly pointed out, “There is one thing stronger than all the armies in the world and that is an idea whose time has come.” That idea is none other than the dynamic idea of the enormous Mission work that has been done by the Catholic missionaries in the filed of education in shaping the mental and moral outlook of the younger generation in India for several decades. Of all the European Missionaries the Jesuit missionaried were the most predominant in spreading the gospel in Tamilnadu.

Robert de Nobili, the celebrated Jesuit and the founder of Christianity in Salem tried to make his religion to suit the line of Indian culture. He changed himself as an Indian Guru not only by his dress, but also by his behaviour and worship and celebrated the church feasts in Salem and other regions of Tamilnadu where he established mission stations.

To converse with the people it was essential to have not only fluency in Tamil but also love towards it. So, he did all the most to have Tamilization in all his service rituals and festivals. His regards with Tamil language is known from his private

---

10 S. Sasivalli(ed), *The contribution of the Tamils to Indian culture*, p.167.
11 Ibid., p.169.
letter to his relative Sora. It goes as follows “It is hard to learn the language spoken by the people of this land. It is finest and richest. By God’s grace, I have learnt it within 6 months. With any one’s help I can give sermon. More over the letter written by Laezio to Rome clearly shows the efficiency of Robert de Nobili in Tamil “Even a Brahmin Scholar cannot pronounce clearly as he does. He has read a number of books in Tamil and Sanskrit as well. He has learnt by heart all the important verses of Tamil and Sanskrit poets especially the hymns. When he sings spiritual hymns, everyone is astonishing and appreciates him greatly.”\(^\text{12}\)

These Missionaries compiled Grammar, dictionaries and their exposition of Catholic doctrine represented the earliest prose works in Tamil and other Indian languages.\(^\text{13}\) There were great pioneers in this field. Robert de Nobili, Ellis, Caldwell, Constantine Joseph Beschi (Veeramamunivar), William Carey, Rajaram Roy and others who toiled hard to bring vernacular languages to the printed page.

Robert De Nobili alias ‘Thatuva Pothakar’, the founder of small Christian community in Salem in 1623 was one of the pioneers in writing Tamil prose as well. He enriched Tamil with many words and phrases adopted from Sanskrit works. He was the first European Sanskrit scholar and a man says Max Muller, who could quote from Manu from the puranas must have been far advanced in the knowledge of the sacred language and the literature of the Brahmins. His most famous Sanskrit work is Sri Kristu Gita (The Psalm of Christ), probably composed with Hindu sacred book,
Bhagavad Gita in mind. He is considered to be the first Christian writer of original Tamil works.

Two of his most famous books are Punarjanma Aksepam and Nitya Jivana Collapum. Catholics and Protestant in Tamilnadu follow his worship and prayer terminology even today.

A man hailing from Valluvar caste met Robert de Nobili on July 31st 1626 at Salem. He was impressed by his Tamil book “Sign of True Religion” and got himself baptized with the name. ‘Mukthi Udayan’ (Blissful one). This shows Robert de Nobili’s eloquence in Tamil which had a tremendous impact on the evangelical service rendered by him in Salem region.

**Socio Cultural writers of Salem**

Salem has the fortune of getting English scholars as the administrators named William Joseph Henry Le Fanu, Robert Sewell and F.J. Richards who have carved special niche for themselves in the historical literature of this famous land. Le Fanu’s Salem Manual is a classic and fountain head for the information and history of Salem district from the period of Britishers up to the seventies of the 19th century. He was collector of Salem from 1896-1998.

Robert Sewell, the author of the famous historical work, ‘The Forgotten Empire’, served in Salem as acting Collector as well as the acting District Sessions Judge. His work ‘The List of Antiquities In Madras Presidency’ is an exhaustive

---

14 J.V.Vilinilam, *op.cit.*, p.60.
survey of the monument of Madras Presidency. He reports the presence of a Jain Statue close to the bank of River Thirumanimuttaru in the Salem town and another between the Anglican Church and the Collector’s House.

F.J. Richards came to Salem in 1903 and his Salem Gazetter is the source book for all modern researchers and writers of Salem history. Another significant French missionary named Abbe Dubois came to Salem in 1872 and spent nearly a decade here. He is famous for his observations on ‘Hindu Manners, Customs and Ceremonies’ written in French. It was later translated by Henry K. Beauchamps a member of Royal Asiatic Society with a preparatory note of F. Max Muller. Most of his observations were made in Salem region. Another striking feature of his writing is that this western scholar was acquainted with classic and spoken Indian languages. He also studied India through Tamizh and has provided valuable information about Indian culture.18

In a bid to develop social intellectual and general advancement of the community of Salem, James Fisher (1832 – 1873) founded the Salem Mutual Improvement Society in 1872. He donated Rs.500 for the developmental activities of Salem town people. Now, the name of the society has been changed with an aura as Salem Literary Society.19

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, has testified in his “The Discovery of India” to the pioneering work done by the Christian Missionaries in India:

---

18 Ibid., p.124.  
19 Ibid., p.13.
“The printing of books and newspapers broke the hold of the classics and immediately prose literatures in the provincial languages began to develop. The early Christian missionaries especially of the Baptist mission at Serampore, helped in this process greatly. There was no difficulty in dealing with the well-known and established languages, but the missionaries went further and tackled some of the major and undeveloped languages and gave them shape and form, compiling grammars and dictionaries for them. They even laboured at the dialects of the primitive hill and forest tribes. In this respect, as well as in the collection of folklore, it has undoubtedly been of great service of India.”\textsuperscript{20}

Of the creative achievement of the Catholic missions in various departments one could not naturally give more than a brief outline. Geography has gained much from the scientific explorations undertaken by some Jesuits. Father Neel drew up maps and gave descriptions of Calicut, Tuticorin and Goa. His accounts were made use of by the Royal Academy of Sciences in Paris.

Father Tieffenthaller (1710 -1785) is the first geographer to draw up a rather accurate map of Ganges. His greatest work “Historical, Geographical Description of India” contains accurate accounts about the Indian birds, trees, plants and flowers that he came across during the 29 years of his tour throughout the country. Father Lafent of St. Xavier College, Calcutta, was responsible for the introduction of modern science into India. It is from him that Sir J.C. Bose received his early training.\textsuperscript{21}

\textsuperscript{20} Catholic Association of Madras, Who’s who and what’s what in Catholic India, p.145.
\textsuperscript{21} Ibid., p.146.
Salem lies in a picturesque valley. In the beginning of 20th century it was the fifth largest place in Madras Presidency with the population of 70621. First impulse to education in the Madras Presidency was given by a government educational enquiry into the matter proposed by Sir Thomas Munro in 1822. It also showed that there was approximately one school to every 1000 of the population and the instruction imparted in these indigenous institutions was of little practical value. A Board was therefore appointed to organize a system of public instruction with an annual grant of Rs.50,000 was sanctioned by the British Government for the establishment of schools in all districts including Salem in the Madras Presidency. In 1859, these 460 educational institutions in the presidency with 14,900 pupils and the number of students had risen to 3,27,800 by 1881.

Efforts of the British Government to Improve Education

The British made their educational effort in 1813 when the British parliament sanctioned a lakh of rupees per year for promoting education. In 1822, an educational enquiry revealed that the few schools that existed in Salem were nothing but Sanskrit and Tamil Veda patasalas (Religious Schools). Due to the introduction of English education in India by Lord William Bentinck, the British started schools for imparting elementary and higher education in Salem region from 1856.

---

23 Ibid., p.117.
24 Ibid., p.118.
26 C.Ramasamy (ed), Gazetters of Salem, p.547.
The first elementary school was opened at Salem in 1856 under the auspices of Sri A.J Arbuthnot. Thus English education became means of social transmission of culture from one generation to another. One of the educational institutions that marked a turning point in Catholic education in Tamilnadu was St. Joeshph college founded at Nagapatinam in 1844 and moved to Trichirapalli in 1882. The Sisters of Cluny came to Salem in 1896. The Sacred Heart School at Yercaud was founded in early 1900. Monfort School at Yercaud was opened in 1917 in Salem District. Brothers of Holy Cross established their famous English medium school in 1963.

The philosophy of Christian education has been set forth in the Degree on Education of the Second Vatican Council. The seeking to produce better men and women in the country, the Catholic educational institution attempts more than to exercise the right of a minority community to run its own educational institutions, as envisaged in article 29 of the constitution of India. While this right is precious there may be regions where the Catholic educational institutions serve a largely non-catholic climate. Catholic education has kept pace with the rapid expansion of education in recent years.

In the modern period education has become a powerful instrument not only of personal realization but also of national development. It is the prime force of the welfare of a nation and of mankind in general. The destiny of India is now being shaped in her classroom. In the era of science and technology, it is the education that

\[\text{\cite{Ibid., p.548.}}\]
\[\text{\cite{S.Lakshmi, \textit{Challenges in Education}, p.163.}}\]
\[\text{\cite{AINCAS, \textit{Christianizing Catholic Education}, p.31.}}\]
\[\text{\cite{Ibid., p.142.}}\]
determines the level of prosperity, welfare and security of the people. It is considered as an important component of human development. Hence, the Decree of Vatican Council II read “The church has a great role to play in the progress and development of education since it is concerned with the whole of man’s life.” According to Swami Vivekananda “Education is the manifestation of perfection in man.” Education guides the human beings to seek the truth and live a life of purity.

It is less than a century ago that the great English Church man and educationalist in his celebrated volume ‘The Idea of a university’, stated that the true purpose of education is the full and harmonious development of all the powers of the individual, so as to enable him to use these powers to maximum advantage. Here are his exact words: “Liberal education does make the Christian, but the gentleman. It is well to be a gentleman, It is well to have a cultivated intellect, a noble and courteous bearing.”

Catholic Church declaration on Education describes that a true education aims at the formation of the human person with respect to his ultimate good and simultaneously with respect to the good of those societies of which, as a man, he is a member, and in whose responsibilities, as an adult he will share. One of the anguishing problems which India has to face at present is illiteracy. When the British left India in 1947 the percentage of illiterates in this land of ancient culture was 86%. The catholic apostolate with a Christian spirit of service to nation involve actively in the educational ministry in order to eliminate illiteracy in the shortest time.

31 J.H. Newman, *The Idea of a University*, p.120.
The origin of the word ‘Education’ is from the Latin root ‘Educare’. Educare means to lead out or bring forth. It implies that through organized questions, the knowledge, understanding and the potentialities of children have to be brought out. Gandhiji’s definition of education in the Harijan issue 1937 fits into the meaning applied here. “Education is drawing out of the best in child and in man-body, mind and spirit.”\textsuperscript{33} Swami Vivekananda also has defined education in a similar way. According to him, “Education is the manifestation of perfection in man.” Education guides the human beings to seek the truth and live a complete life of purity.

Heads of the states who convened at UN General Assembly Special session on children in May 2002 pledged to make education for all children an essential part of building a world fit for children. Despite decades of attention to this issue some 122 million Children are out of school and 65 million of them are girls.\textsuperscript{34} A recent report on the extent and depth of child poverty in the developing world found there to be some 135 million children between 7 and 18 years old without any education at all. Girls are in double jeopardy because of their gender and other poverty. Nearly 12% of the boys and 17% of the girls in the developing countries like India are living in poverty.\textsuperscript{35}

The diocesan priests and the religious brothers and sisters run several educational institutions in Salem diocese with the chief objective of imparting qualitative and life oriented education to all the children of this region especially to

\textsuperscript{33} R.C.Mishra, \textit{Women Education}, p.1.

\textsuperscript{34} \textit{Ibid.}, p.5.

\textsuperscript{35} \textit{Ibid.}, p.21.
girls belonging to rural areas of the Salem district. These devoted religious along with their schools masters carry out selfless service through these catholic institutions known for high standard with holistic approach. This is the Church that renders to the poor and the downtrodden in remote villages in the diocese. They also regard the education of the girls and women as a fundamental human rights and developmental necessity and have been actively educating them for several decades in the diocese.

The diocese opened large number of schools and technical institutions. During the period of Henry Prunier the first Bishop of Salem (1930-1949) many Government Aided Schools were started. He appointed Fr. Florance as the Rector of the seminary who started St. Theresa’s Technical Institute for the young students with the guidance of Fr. Mischotte at Maravaneri, Salem to get training in technical education. Pupils belonging to all castes are admitted and given special care in order to remove social disabilities. Education is the primary concern of the church to promote socio–economic development in the regions where Christian institutions are established.³⁶

The religious sisters have opened up many educational Institutions for the sake of promoting literacy among girls of rural areas in the diocese. Their chief motto is to transmit from one generation to another and to the accumulated wisdom and knowledge of the society. The religious sisters and brothers and priests prepare the young boys and girls for their future endeavors and membership in society and active participations in its development. Thus selfless dedicated consecrated people with the support of lay people serving in their institutions take consistent efforts to make the

Charism of liberating involvement with powerless in the power of Jesus Christ true in their life. Thus education to them is not an individual activity, but a social collective activity of the members to the Salem diocese.

Prior to the advent of the missionaries, the universal system of education was not practiced. In the caste-ridden society, the opportunity for education was provided only to upper caste and rich people. The lower caste and poor people were denied the educational opportunity.

The Christian missionaries made consistent efforts to uplift the social and economic condition of the people through education besides they strived hard for liberating the downtrodden and reducing the social inequality by imparting education to the rural masses. The diocesan priests, the religious brothers and sisters in the diocese of Salem made strenuous efforts for imparting value-based education in this region. The efforts of the British to introduce western education in India and the support extended by the British government in India favoured Christian missionaries to continue their service. They were convinced that the best service they could render a nation was the dedication of their lives to the training of its youth with high ideals.

Today there are a great number of schools run by the diocesan priests, religious brothers and sisters in the Diocese of Salem. The quality of education imparted in these institutions is of relatively high. It is a matter of great rejoicing that Catholic Educational Institutions have made great strides in Salem District since the creation of the Catholic Diocese in 1930.

---

37 Jesuit Educational Association of India, *Educational Perspectives In Modern India*, p.176.
Vision of the Ministry of Education

The Catholic Educational Institutions play a significant role in the progress of education in Salem through the efforts of the service-minded Christian missionaries. Tamilnadu Catholic Educational Association formulates the vision of their ministry in the field of education.

1. In order to build up God’s kingdom on earth, Catholic education should first and foremost be faith inspired.

2. Education has to be clear and sound. It has to lead to a harmonious development of physical, mental, spiritual and psychological aspects of the students.

3. To impart wholesome, secular and religious education to the children and women of neglected sections of the society, and,

4. Catholic Mission is a common mission entrusted by God to the whole academic community, lay and religious and therefore called to be active partners in this mission.  

Education imparted in the Catholic institutions in the Diocese is not merely an individual activity but a collective activity of the church. The clergy, religious and the laity engage in the educational ministry.

Types of Educational Institution

Formal school education is divided into 3-4 years stages: elementary, secondary, and higher secondary for a total of 12 years. Countries such as Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Japan, Mexico, Kuwait, UK and U.S.A. have adopted this most popular choice, the 12 year model for school education.

38 Mary Hefferman, Vatican II, Declaration Of Outlines of 16 Documents, p.100.
The Catholic Institutions, which involve in active educational ministry in Salem, can be classified into 3 divisions namely

a. Elementary, Secondary, and High School Education

b. Higher education

c. Vocational educational.

**Elementary, Secondary, and High School Education**

Elementary education is preceded by a year or more of early childhood education, to prepare pupils for school by developing habits, attitudes and skills. According to M.C. Borrowman of the University of California at Berkeley, “Children who develop an interest in learning before they enter elementary school are more likely to do well in school than children who have not developed such an interest.” 39

These educational centers run by diocesan priests, religious brothers and sisters aim at safeguarding the right of every person to formal education a right enshrined in our constitution but denied in practice to millions of Indian citizens. They take a strong stand in favour of universal, free and formal education at the elementary level. 40 Hence the diocese concentrates more on the progress of elementary and middle school education. They are running more than 50 such schools and thereby they have made free and compulsory education a reality. 41

---

41 The Diocese of Salem has 3 higher secondary schools, 10 middle schools, 31 elementary schools, 4 English schools, one nursery school, 3 Matriculation Hr. Sec. School and one Technical Education School. Total No of Diocesan Schools: 50 and Religious Schools of both men and women: 77; Directory of Salem Diocese, 2010, p.3.
The preferential option of the Catholic schools is for the poor in the field of education. They serve the poor, particularly in the backward and rural areas of the diocese. The purpose of running primary schools is to impart basic education to the children in order to eradicate illiteracy and child labour and to raise their standard of living. Admission is given to all irrespective of caste or creed. Special attention is given to the poor. The diocese encourages the poor children to concentrate on education and to grow in every aspect of their life. They are also given education in health, values and moral.

Pre-primary education takes the form of crèches and kinder garden attached to the village primary schools. These primary classes free the older children, particularly girls to pursue their formal education without the need to look after their toddler brothers and sisters. At middle school level, there are associations like Junior Red Cross and Guide. Children are encouraged to save money through Sanjayeka Scheme. Through the clubs and associations, unity, solidarity and service mindedness is promoted among the young children.

Article 45 of the Indian Constitution seeks to provide free and compulsory education up to the age of 14. Our country spends [3.9\%] more than China [2.71\% of Gross Domestic Product] and Srilanka [3.5\%] on education. In spite of it India had 48\% of illiterates in our country in 1991. The target of universalization of primary

---

42 Interview with Sr. Virgin, Headmistress, Savariyar Palayam, Salem, dt.15 July 2012.
43 Their potentialities are brought out through competitions and celebrations. Christmas, Diwali and Pongal are celebrated to impart the values of unity among the students.
44 School Diary, St.Philomena Middle School, Salem Camp, 2012, Mettur Dam.
46 S. Lakshmi, op.cit., p.164.
education for our children can be made possible if every citizen takes it up as his onerous duty to spread literacy in our country.

Catholic middle schools in the diocese further develop the skills acquired by the children in elementary schools and equip them with additional knowledge, skills and techniques for advanced work in high school. Their high schools prepare the pupils entrusted to their care to be responsible citizens and to earn a living or to pursue additional academic work. Among the states, Kerala has the highest literacy rate exceeding 93.9 percent while the lowest literacy rate has been Bihar with 63.8 percent. Literacy rate of Tamilnadu is 80.3 percent.

Among the States, Kerala has the highest literacy rate exceeding 93.9. It is because of the fact that universalisation of elementary education was taken over by the State or some Christian religions missionaries in princely state like Travancore (Kerala). This has helped the people of Kerala almost achieve universalisation in the contemporary society based on strong foundation laid in the past.\textsuperscript{47} The Catholic institutions are still attracting young children for their infrastructure and well trained accomplished teachers who are pillars of a strong educational system render their service under the guidance of the religious brothers, sisters and priests with unflinching commitment, competence and dedication for the welfare of the young minds given to their care. They make an indelible mark and a dramatic difference in the pupil’s life. They lay great stress on the moral upliftment of the pupils studying in the catholic schools run by the religious of both men and women and the diocesan priests. Certain principles and values which help to mould the children into good and

\textsuperscript{47} Kasturi & Sons, \textit{op.cit.}, p.49.
useful citizens of India are strictly followed. Various functions have been celebrated
to bring out their innate talents and potentials in curricular and co-curricular activities
including sports and games. Thus they do a yeomen service for well being of the
young children. 48 For the sake of children belonging to the rural areas, there are
nursery schools attached with the elementary schools. The children from poor and
middle class families are given preference in educating them through English medium
of instruction without charging heavy fees like the other private nursery schools
where the dictum earlier was “Educate to Learn.’ But now it is “Educate to Earn.”

Some decades ago late Gopal Krishna Gokhale, the prominent leader of the
Indian National Congress from his place in the Imperial Legislative Council said to
the Governor General of India, who was presiding over the deliberations remarked,
“My Lord, If the history of elementary education throughout the world establishes one
fact or more fact clearly than another, it is this, that without a resort to compulsion on
state, it can never ensure a general diffusion of education among its people. England
with its strong love of individualism stood out against the principle of compulsion for
as long as she could, but had to give way in the end all the same. 49

Diocesan schools and other schools run by religious congregations in Salem
diocese make the best use of the quality enhancement programs through the agencies
of District Primary Education Programme and Sarva Siksha Abhiyan enrolment has
been enhanced. Now the Right to Education Act of 2009 also gives impetus to
primary education.

The major problem that most of the primary schools in India are facing at present in the size of the class which is an important factor in academic learning. Larger the class, lesser the attention pupils receive from the teacher. Further, large size often prevents students from class participation and seeking help from the teacher. In fact, the current system in which the pupil–teacher in above 50:1 in Govt, aided and unaided schools not only discourages teacher–student interaction, it also dampens or even destroys the originality in students. A pupil–teacher ratio is the elementary school classroom should be 20:1.\textsuperscript{50} Government should take immediate measures towards this goal to ensure qualitative education for our young children as it is followed in most of highly developed countries. Learning through ‘doing’ is emphasized at this level in order to enable the child to exercise his capacity for observation and discovery from the very beginning more or less in his own way and time. The system of giving mere information to the children in the rudimentary and formative years should be avoided at any cost. It is because the education has been undergoing a certain revolution during the past and teaching methods have changed and so has the teacher–pupil relationship. Generally the methods have moved from a predominantly teacher-directed, teacher controlled approach to a teacher pupil interactive system in which discovery learning is considered an integral part of the process. When both the teacher and the child, hand in hand, experience the same thrill of discovery, the same flash of understanding, the conditions for the child’s growth are perfect. According to Aristotle, “Educating the mind without educating the heart is no education at all.” The educational apostolate of the diocese should

\textsuperscript{50} Kasturi & Sons, \textit{op.cit.}, p.57.
stress more on imparting value based –life oriented education. Of late there are some abysmal signal formed in our social system such as

i) Politics without Principles
ii) Wealth without work
iii) Commerce without morality
iv) Education without education
v) Pleasure without conscience, and,
vii) And worship without love and sacrifice.

It is imperative on the part of educationist serving in the diocese to clear of these danger signals by laying emphasis on character and morality in their portals of wisdom which is considered as the cornerstone of education.

**Higher Education**

The introduction of nunneries, convents and parochial schools attached with parish Churches helped the education of boys and girls marked by the status of women in Salem region. Religious Brothers, Sisters and the Diocesan Clergy make combined and consistent efforts to promote literacy among the youngsters of Salem region. Pupils studying in their institutions are given holistic education with ample opportunities given to the students of higher secondary of both boys and girls to excel in academic. The religious of both men and women run about 77 schools. Besides academic activities they take an active participation in seminars. Value education, retreat and motivation camp etc., National services like NCC, NSS, Consumer Forum, Scout, Rotary Club, Young students movement are conducted to instill service mindedness in the youngsters and promote dignity of labour.
The religious sisters strive hard to raise the status of women by empowering them through means of quality education coupled with indomitable will power to face the challenges of life. The students who pass out of Catholic institutions in Salem occupy place of pride in different walks of life. They have attained better position in the society due to the excellent quality of education received through these institutions. Thousands of non Catholic have studied and still study in missionary schools, and the Salemites welcome and appreciate the contribution of those great learning centers make to the culture and moral welfare of the country.\textsuperscript{51}

Since the products of Catholic Schools and other institutions of learning are the future citizens into whose hands the responsibility of deciding the nation’s destiny is entrusted. The highly advanced nations in technology are planning for universalization of higher education. As a matter of fact, Catholic Higher Education Schools in Salem maintain high standard and value-based education.\textsuperscript{52} They strive hard to impart qualitative education to the students studying at higher secondary school level. The Diocese runs one renowned Mat. Hr. Sec. School by name St. John’s Mat. Hr. Sec. School located at Fairlands, Salem. The religious of Salem Diocese run 10 English schools and 6 Mat. Hr. Sec. Schools.\textsuperscript{53}

It is worthwhile to study about the origin and development of two age old and reputed Diocesan Higher Secondary Schools namely,

1. Little Flower Hr. Sec. School, Salem. 7.

\textsuperscript{51} Octogenarian Souvenir(1930-2010) of Little Flower Higher Secondary School, 2010, Salem, p.47
\textsuperscript{52} Interview with Bro. John Britto, Principal, Holy Cross Hr Sec School, Salem. dt. 19.06.2000.
\textsuperscript{53} Interview with Fr. Theodore, Manager of Diocesan Schools, Salem dt. 15 August 2002.
The Little flower Hr. Sec. School, the unique citadel of great learning in Salem was started on 2nd June 1930; as an elementary school by the first Bishop of Salem diocese Henry Prunier with strength of 70 boys with Fr. R.H.Mischotte as the Head Master. Since 1950, the Diocese has been directly managing the school for the intellectual, moral and spiritual formation of the young generation of students of Salem. It is one of the outstanding schools for the boys in the State. It has rendered about 75 years of remarkable educational service to the society. Fr. Leo Depigney, a great veteran missionary priest and also competent engineer built the ‘H’ Shaped High School building to replace the temporary structures of Fr. Mischotte.

The achievements of this school are multidimensional. More than 50 students have dedicated to serve God and community as priests; a gallery of old boys are serving the country in a variety of high professionals, to name a few Mr. V. Subramanian [Class of 1940], Manager, Southern Railway, Mr. Natarajan, [Justice], M. R. R. Srinivasan I. P. S., Superintendent of Police, Mr. A. C Ashokan, [Cine Artist] and there are thousands and upon thousands who serve the country in vital professions. St. Paul’s Hr. Sec. School, Salem-7 is another renowned school run by the diocese in Salem. Bishop Henry Prunier started this school in 1939 with two teachers and 52 boys with the sole aim of imparting education to the weaker section of the society. This institution was upgraded into High School in 1965 and Higher

55 Dhina Mani, dt. 27 March 1999, p.3.
56 Bishop Micheal Duraisamy, Message On The Occasion Of Golden Jubilee Of LFHS, 7 December 1981.
Secondary School in 1979 respectively. This institution owes its existence to the dedicated, committed and service-minded Diocesan priests.

The school celebrated its Platinum Jubilee (1930-2005) in 2005 and octogenarian jubilee (1930 – 2010) in 2010 with pomp and show. Salem is a city of peace. Where there is peace, there will be joy and prosperity. Salem is famous for steel, mango and magnesite. The panoramic geography of Salem with its green summer resorts of Yercaud and Kolly Hills, with the largest Stanley reservoir at Mettur, with its green summer sago factories and textile mills in and around Salem, with a complexity of educational institutions and training centers, with a multifarious health care clinics, it is always a developing town in the state of Tamilnadu.

Its cultural heritage, religious spirit and the rural background are attracted the foreign mission priests of Paris in the early sixteenth century. To develop the innate longings of the Salemites, the MEFS inaugurated the “Little Flower School” in honour of St. Theresa who was declared a saint in 1925. All through these 85 years of existence it has served and enriched the lives of Salemites in all earnestness. Situated right in the centre of the town, it welcomes people from all walks of life. The spacious playground, well maintained garden, inspiring disciple, thought provoking teaching and learning situation, the collegiality of the staff, the humanitarian friendliness of the administration and the dynamic charismatic leadership are a few salient features of the Little flower. 58

Cluny, Holy Angels, St. Mary, Jayarani and St. Fatima Hr. Sec. Schools are the most sought after schools in Salem for the best education provided to the female

students belonging to all sections of society. This well known school was started by the sisters of Cluny in 1960. During this half century of its existence the Cluny has achieved the status symbol of the premier educational institution in Salem district.

The main aim of the school is to help every child confided to it, to develop their relationship with creator, fellow men and nature. This school provides students ample opportunities to develop both academic and co-curricular skills. Iswarya Shobana participated in the international level FIDE open chess Tournament for women in 2003 and won the second place. In 2009 K.L. Aarthi, S.S. Shanthoshima and V. Sanjana had the honour of representing India in the 6th soft Tennis championship held at Mungyeong at Korea. In the sphere of academics, Tenth and Twelfth students who appear for board exams bag ranks at district and state level periodically.

To develop confidence and courage to communicate effectively and to foster imagination and creativity, the school encourages the students to participate in extracurricular activities in the school and to enter interschool competitions conducted by Golden Gates and Holy Cross School, Salem. School Annual Magazine is published every year to communicate to the parents and well wishers, the school activities and to bring out the literary skills of the Cluny girls undoubtedly.60

Along with Diocesan schools, other Higher Secondary and Matriculation Hr. Sec. Schools run by the religious Sisters and Brothers have captured a prominent place in the map of top educational institutions in Tamilnadu. They run as many as

59 Souvenir released on the Occasion of Golden Jubilee of Cluny School celebrated in the year 2010, p.11
60 Ibid., p.19.
Schools in the Diocese of Salem. These institutions provide ample opportunities to develop the talents of the students. School Band, Guides, Bulbuls, Bharathanatyam Class, Interact Club with community service scheme attached, Science Club, Quiz Club, Scouts, N.C.C, Y.S.M and Y.C.S, and different Clubs and Associations which carry out various curricular and extra-curricular activities throughout the year. In these schools special certificates are awarded annually to those who distinguish themselves in studies, games, sports, co-curricular activities, leadership training, social service, speech contest, singing, etc.,\textsuperscript{61} All the above said activities are conducted routinely in all the Catholic Schools of the Diocese.

Most of the schools in the Diocese perform extremely well in the 10\textsuperscript{th} and 12\textsuperscript{th} public exams even by securing cent percent results. Many students obtain very high marks with several students getting state rank in various subjects. Matriculation schools functioning in the diocese create a healthy competition to produce remarkable results in the public exams. In a case study to analyse the performance of the Catholic Schools in the public exams, it is found that they produce invariably very good results every year. The student of the Catholic institution get admission in to government medical and engineering colleges on merit basis. Jayarani Hr. Secondary School bagged the State rank in the S.S.L.C Examination held in the year 2002.\textsuperscript{62}

Holy Cross Mat. Hr. Sec. School is yet another Catholic school in the Diocese of Salem rendering yeoman services in the field of education for about 50 years to the society by providing qualitative education. Besides securing impressive results every

\textsuperscript{61} School Dairy, St. Joesph’s Mat. Hr. Sec. School Salem-6, year 2010-2011.
\textsuperscript{62} Cluny Mat. Hr. Sec. School obtained first place in Science and French in Matric Exam held in the year 2002. Holy Cross Mat. Hr. Sec. School run by Brother of Holy Cross at Ammapet secured state first in Matric Public Exam held in the year 2005, St.Mary’s Hr. Sec. School, Mettur secured district first in the tenth public exam almost every year in the Sankari Educational District, Salem.
year, this institution concentrates more on all round development of the pupils. District level competitions are held in cultural programmes, games, sports, quiz and science exhibition. Utmost care is taken to provide ample opportunities to the rural school students of the district to take an active part in these contests in order to bring out their hidden talents. Because of its academic excellence and all-round development, the Sun T.V has placed this school in fourth place in the state in the ranking test conducted by Neilson & Group in the year 2004.  

Many institutions in the Diocese have completed more than 50 years of their service for the noble cause of education. Few such age old and pioneer schools are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the School</th>
<th>Year of Establishment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>St. Joseph’s School, Yercaud,</td>
<td>1917</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Monfort Anglo-Indian School, Yercaud,</td>
<td>1917</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little Flower Hr. Sec. School, Salem,</td>
<td>1930</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Mary’s Hr. Sec. School, Arisipalayam,</td>
<td>1934</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Theresa’s Industerial School, Salem-7,</td>
<td>1934</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Paul’s Hr. Sec. School, Salem-7</td>
<td>1939</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Joseph’s Teacher Training School, Phagalpatti,</td>
<td>1947</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Joseph’s Girls Hr. Sec. School, Suramangalam</td>
<td>1947</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Mary’s Girls Hr. Sec. School, Mettur Dam,</td>
<td>1952</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Anne’s Girls Hr. Sec. School (Now in Dharmpuri Diocese)</td>
<td>1952</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nirmala Higher Secondary School, Kolathur,</td>
<td>1953</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Joseph Mat. Hr. Sec. School, Linemedu, Salem-6</td>
<td>1958</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cluny Girls Higher Secondary School, Salem</td>
<td>1960</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Jayarani Girls Higher Secondary School, Nethimedu 1960
St.Mary’s Hr.Secondary School A.N.Mangalam 1962
Holy Cross Matriculation Hr.Sec.School, Ammapet 1963
Fatima Girls Higher Sec. School Omalur 1963
St.Antony’s Hr.Sec.School, Elathagiri (Now in Dharmpuri Diocese) 1966
Holy Angels Girls Hr.Sec.School, Fairlands 1967

Vocational Education

The Hunter Commission in the 1980’s of the last century spoke of the necessity and importance of vocationalizing our education and harness the varied talents of youth to national productivity and provide education and employment for them. A strong effort was made by the diocese to establish a vocational education. Accordingly in 1931, St. Theresa’s Industrial School was founded by Fr.Mischotte to provide vocational training to the poor boys. He started this institute in a thatched shed with 8 poor boys as a school of wood working trade with the recognition of the Government.64 This is one of the oldest vocational institutions in Tamilnadu.

By 1945 new buildings were constructed and two more vocational courses namely “Smithy and Bricks Laying” were introduced. Subsequently these courses were discontinued and instead of them, Motor Mechanic Trade was started in 1957. In 1969, one more course ‘Turner’ was added. The Department of Employment and Training Industrial School Certificates are issued to successful trainees at the end of their final exams. The poor helpless orphan boys are provided with boarding and lodging facilities free of cost. The products turned out of carpentry and engineering

64 Golden Jubilee Souvenir, Diocese of Salem, 1980, p.185.
sections are sold out and income derived out of this is spent for the noble cause of
feeding the inmates and general maintenance. Hence it is one of the self-help model
vocation centres which remains a roll model for other institutions.

**Teacher Training Institute**

The first teacher training institution in the form of normal school was established in Calcutta in 1947. These days teacher training prevalent in India was first stated and developed in England from the monitorial system. Prior to this, no other system existed in India. Andrew Bell a Christian Missionary when he was in Madras between the years 1789-1796 started monitorial system in Madras Presidency.

The Monitorial system was kind of mutual instructions system. A senior student, who used to help the teacher in class room teaching, was to be involved in teaching by the teacher in class room. The teacher assumes an important role in shaping the younger generation. In order to train the teachers with extraordinary qualities of mind and heart to mould the students community, the first Bishop of Salem, Bishop Rev. Henry Prunier established St. Mary’s Teacher Training Institute within the premises of St.Mary’s High school, Arisipalayam in 1947. This institution was shifted to St. Joesph Girls Hr.Sec. School, Suramangalam in 1979. Now it is functioning at Phagalpatti under the administration of Gonzague Sisters in the name of St.Joseph’s Teacher Training Institute at Phagalpatti. This institute

---

65 Interview with Fr.Rajamanickam, Principal, St.Theresa’s Industrial School, Maravanery, Salem dt.15 June, 2012.
promotes service mindedness in students and enlightens them to the spiritual way of life and to develop leadership qualities among the women.

The curriculum taught in this centre is Tamil, English, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Physical Education etc. Its extra curricular activities include making and using of model and charts, training in handicrafts, catechism, value education, literary talks, practice of dramas, debates, group games, competition and study are arranged. Through this institute all round development is given to the teachers. This centre admits students from other religions and creed and train them to serve for the cause of education.

**Teacher’s Day Celebration**

It is celebrated on 5th September every year in memory of Dr. Radha Krishnan, former President of India at Epiphany Centre. The Bishop presents the report on the educational achievements of the catholic schools in the Diocese. More than 2500 teachers from among 127 various schools take active part in the one day seminar arranged exclusively for the teachers. Resource persons in the field of education are invited to address the teachers on the importance of Teacher’s role in the society and the need for utilizing latest techniques and on the teacher’s nation building mission. Schools which produce centum results and obtain distinction in various subjects in 10th and 12th public exams are honored with shields and prizes. Teachers who retire in the religious and diocesan are also honoured on that day.

---

69 Diary, St. Josesph’s Teacher Training Institute For Women, Phagalpatti, Salem. Year 1995-1998.

Ramsay Mac Donald speaking of education says “The educated man is a man
with certain spiritual qualities which make him calm in adversity, happy when alone,
just in his dealings, rational and sane in the fullest meaning of the word in all the
affairs of life.” The most reputed catholic schools are appreciated by people of all
walks of life for their dedication to offer good quality education to all sorts of
children. Parents of Salem city prefer these schools for their wards to get educated
because of their academic excellence is possible only because of the right amount of
moral guidance and discipline. Prayerful atmosphere helps everyone to be aware of
the presence of God and His glory. The Inter-religious, and special talks, inspire the
children to reflect on the high values, characteristics and qualities of great
personalities. Regular catechism classes are conducted for the catholic children.

In order to instill in the minds of the children the need to share their resources
with the under privileged and to expose them to the harsh reality that exists around us,
to appreciate the kind of life that God has given them, these schools encourage
children to participate in social service activities. Visits are organized to Anbu Illam,
Home for the mentally challenged and physically handicapped and Henry Home for
the Aged.71

Some of the Catholic schools in Salem Diocese under take prison ministry.
Young Children Visit Salem Central Prison and help the rehabilitation programmes
organized for the prisoners and their families.

71 Golden Jubilee Report of Cluny Higher Secondary School, Salem, presented on the occasion of its
Golden Jubilee celebration in 2010, p.15.
Donations of a computer, serving machines, cycles, and musical instruments have been made and the educational needs of several children of prison inmates have been sponsored by them.\textsuperscript{72}

When both the minds of Protestant and Catholic missionaries and the government officials in the olden days dwelt upon the need of education in India they thought of the old-fashioned education of the few for leadership. The schools and colleges established by both those agencies were directed to the end of the development of Indian leadership in state and church. The missionaries felt that there was a vast portion of India which needed to be helped in eradicating illiteracy among the Indian masses and involved actively in setting up schools and colleges in various parts of India to this end.

Secondary Education in India was never thoroughly taken in hand by the government until 1854, prompted then by the famous educational dispatch of Sir Charles Wood, the rulers sought to lay the foundations of a government school system on a grand scale. Not until 1882 did the elementary schools feel the full impetus of the educational movement. Only 32.8 percent of the boys and 5.9 percent of girls of the school age in British India attended school. Within these areas the missions are far in advance of the government.\textsuperscript{73} To this day, despite the excellence of the government schools in which strict religious neutrality prevails, and despite the founding of private schools for both sexes and all classes by generous donors eager for their own faiths, many pupils from non-Christian families attend the mission schools. They acknowledge that what they seek is the moral life and religious atmosphere of these

\textsuperscript{72} Ibid., p.16.
\textsuperscript{73} Santhosh Thomas, \textit{Christianity and Culture}, p.212.
schools. Particularly this is true of the girls’ schools. Schools established by missions for defectives, as for example the blind, are still far in advance of the government schools.

In January 1912, when Mr. Tokoname, Vice Minister of education, announced to a meeting of representatives of the press that the government had decided to recognize Christianity as a religion, he said; “The culture of national ethics can be perfected by education combined with religion. At present, moral doctrines are inculcated by education alone. It is impossible to inculcate fair and upright ideas in the mind of the nation unless the people are brought into touch with the fundamental conception known as God, Buddha, or Heaven, as taught in religions.” He ended by expressing the hope that Christianity would step out of the narrow circle within which it was confined and endeavor to conform to the national polity and adapt itself to the national sentiments and customs in order to ensure greater achievements.

What sculpture is to a block education is to the soul right says a maxim. Education which aims at mere passing of information can never be true education at all. A child cannot be taught but he can be brought up. So education is a process of bringing out hidden potentialities of the child. It also forms as a powerful and fundamental instrument in shaping the life of a man. It plays a predominant role in influencing the destiny of an individual and the future of mankind. Education, is a value generating force in society, rejuvenates the present civilization and lays the foundation for future one. In India women and girls receive for less education than men due to social norms. The country has the largest population of non school going working girls. Eradication of female illiteracy has been one of the major concerns of

74 Ibid., p.183.
the government since independence. Even before independence the Christian missionaries have been laboring hard to bring down the illiteracy rate both among the boys and girls. In Salem diocese educational apostolate involve actively in educational emancipation which is a prerequisite for attaining socio-economic emancipation. They strive hard with selfless sacrifice to develop potentials of the youngsters whom they serve through their institutions and empower them especially the girls and women by generating energy and fastening development and protecting their rights.

Thus education is the prime force for the welfare of the nation and of mankind in general. It exerts ever mounting influence on the social progress of this modern age. Hence the Diocesan priests, religious men and women take active part in social transformation through providing life oriented and value based education. They have been taking utmost care to impart education to the children of socially weaker sections even before the introduction of reservation system. The quality of education maintained in these institutions is relatively of very high standard. Thus the educational service done by the Diocese of Salem is praiseworthy.

---

75 Sanjay Prakash Sharma, Women Education and Women, Rights In India, p.1.