ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I bow in gratitude to the sweet conspiracy of the universe in generating this thesis not intellectually but experientially, by opening sealed lips and hidden doors. Throughout this pilgrimage, the hands of the Nazarene had been holding me aloft with serenity and strength. In gleaning the pearls of truth, He had burnt me with a fire that had light, had fanned the sparks of love, had been my wound and my balsam and had passed through this hollow reed with musical strains of the universe.

I bow to the tutelage of Dr. E. James R. Daniel, my Research Supervisor and guide, who helped me to cast off my moorings and move in deep waters. When I was struggling in ignorance and helplessness with my title, he rose as the cornerstone on which I could safely put up an edifice. I felt the first rays of light awakening within me that guided me throughout my inconclusive pursuit. Words fall short to thank this literary giant who scrutinized patiently all my drafts, especially the first ones that were far from cogency and focus. I thank him for all that he is to me and I specially thank Prof. Susheela James for her hospitality and words of encouragement.

I sincerely thank my Co-guide Dr. J.G. Duressh, Head, Dept. of English and Centre for Research, Scott Christian College (Autonomous), Nagercoil, for helping me access important reference materials, for his warm and constructive suggestions, corrections, valuable leads, energizing and refreshing critical pronouncements and comments. I owe my gratitude to Dr. S. Chella Kumar Rose (former Principal), Dr. M. Jezer Jebanesan, Principal and the entire faculty of the Dept. of English of the Research Centre.

Now my pen sets down to acknowledge the insight of Dr. Suresh Kumar, the recipient of the President’s award who became a way side shrine to me in my motley academic journey. It is with him that I picked up another thread of guidance for my quest.
His guidelines and directions had been inevitable roadmaps in all my academic pursuits. I thank him sincerely for his most beneficial responses to my manuscripts. Also I thank Mrs. Sreelatha Suresh Kumar for her intellectual sharing, warmth and love.

As my mind rummages through the portrait gallery of memory, significant people who lavished a fine taste in me for Gibran loom large. I am gratefully indebted to Dr. Sr. Felicia who touched a coiled cord among my longings in 1986, and released into urgency the desire to fathom life’s meaning by introducing Gibran to me. Also she gave me the benefit of her intelligence and insight over my maiden introductory chapter. My academic and spiritual debts to her are numerous. My unripe virgin knowledge of Gibran started gathering more motive force when Sr. Mesmin supplied me with The Prophet from Holy Cross College Library and I thank her for evincing keen interest in my progress since then. I am grateful to these two great academicians for having converted every stroke of my pen into a visual meditation, struck the right chord whenever I felt unsure and this thesis reflects their rays that enfold every word. My brother Hubert Satheesh gifted me with some more books of Gibran and in these books I found a support and confirmation of my fledgling longings. My fiancé then, Mr. Hamilton fetched me the complete works of Kahlil Gibran, in the pages of which I began to hear the sounds of consciousness. There are many more unnamed souls who had been instrumental in creating a concatenation of unexpected circumstances that triggered this quest further in me. Eclipsed by my own shortcomings and limited understanding, I failed to comprehend them in my ignorance. However, the direct and authentic source of inspiration came from late Dr. Dharan, who during my first and final casual meeting with him suggested this title for my research topic. I do record a deep sense of loss here for destiny nipped the intellectual nourishment which I would have otherwise got from this great academe.
I specially thank my mom Mrs. Delphine Marian and Dad Mr. Susai Marian who are my destiny’s agents, since my infancy. They continue to compose the picture of my life, sing the unfathomable song of life and pipe through this little string of their hearts, their yearnings and desires of unfulfilled academic dreams. I thank my maternal aunt Mrs. Baby Caspar, sister Anne Shyla, my brothers Franco and Shelinco, my sisters-in-law, brothers-in-law, all my uncles, aunts, my nephews and nieces for having touched a responsive chord in my heart with regard to my academic pursuits.

Other souls who gifted me with a piece of their cosmic wisdom before surrendering their sheaths to nature are Mr. Marceline (Grandpa), Mrs. Simrose Ammal (Grandma), Mrs. Genoby M. George (Mother-in-law), Mr. Caspar, Mr. Jerome (my uncles), Dr. Ruth Joy (my aunt), Mrs. Rani Devadas (my Prof.) and my paternal grandparents. For all my early academic inclinations, I am both remotely and closely indebted to these noble souls.

My heart throbs in gratitude and joy when I think of the management of Holy Cross College who has placed so much of trust and hope in me. My sincere thanks to Dr. Sr. Rosalie (former Principal) for sending me on FIP and tracking my progress till date. I record my gratitude to all my former Principals - Sr. Emily, Sr. Scholastica, Dr. Sr. Felicia, Sr. Rosamma, Dr. Sr. Mercy and Dr. Sr. Elsy George. I specially thank Dr. Sr. Gerardin Jeyam (Principal), Dr. Sr. Basil (Correspondent) Dr. Sr. Selvi (Vice Principal), Dr. Sr. Sophie (Controller of Examinations), Dr. Sr. Jancy (Librarian), Dr. Sr. Doris Thomas, my teacher and mentor, and former Secretaries, Librarians and all the other Sisters of the Cross for their support, wishes, encouragement, recognition and love. I take this opportunity to thank the entire Crossian family. I wish to place on record the two major academic forums of Nanjil Nadu JAMES (James Academy of Modern English Studies) and NESS (Nagercoil English Speakers’ Society), with whose members,
especially Dr. Kamaraj (Psychiatrist), Er. Mohandas (Writer) and Prof. Panneerselvam, it had been a pleasure and a privilege for me to interact, collaborate and participate in knowledge dissemination, paper presentations and research pursuits.

I extend my thanks to all the library staff of Holy Cross College (Nagercoil), Scott Christian College (Nagercoil), S.T. Hindu College (Nagercoil), Fathima College (Kollam), University of Kerala (Trivandrum) and other libraries of Chennai and Madurai whose services I availed through close or remote access.

I thank all the people whom I’ve met either by happenstance or introduction, who in their own ways, have helped me catch glimpses of the beyond, collect my faculties and work towards my goal. I thank the unnamed many who had been instrumental in my progress by assisting me in my print, reading and material collection needs, and all other domestic needs during the course of my study. I thank Mr. John who assisted me in my transport needs.

The two mirrors larger than life in which I behold all my endeavours are my husband Mr. Hamilton George and my daughter Shelzy. They are the vast green fields where the springs of my hope walk in green garments daring the seasons and braving tempests. The magic and mystery that came into my life through Shelzy and Hamilton’s flexibility, vision, holistic perspective, keep steadily catapulting the unseen and the unknown in me enabling me to see the entire universe as an extension of my own being. Rather than seeing me as a mouldable raw material, he has always seen me as a unique individual capable of blossoming in my own way, in my own space and time. In fact both of them have helped me arrive at the essence of my thesis though it may be a small drop in a boundless ocean. Mr. Hamilton has also been an extremely critical and challenging editor whose debates with me over successive versions have greatly improved the eventual outcome. I owe my special gratitude to my Department Heads down the years –
Sr. Lucy, Dr. Sr. Felicia, Mrs. Philo, Mrs. Prema Latha and Mrs. Elizabeth Mabel and all my colleagues in the department of English and all the administrative staff who have helped me in all possible ways.

I would like to acknowledge my indebtedness to UGC for giving me the opportunity under the Eleventh plan and M.S. University for offering me the chance to register for my Ph.D.

I wish to place on record all my teachers, right from LKG till date, especially Ms. Thangammal who instilled values in me at a very tender age. I acknowledge with love, the pivotal role played by my alma mater St. Joseph’s Higher Secondary School in scripting my personal legend. I am greatly indebted to existence for its bounteous blessings, sleeping secrets and its all inclusive God-language. I thank Dr. A.J. Dhason Dept. of English, University of Mysore who sowed the seeds of delight on aesthetics during a brief meeting. I accord my thanks to my friend Geetha, who stood with me in thick and thin, Ms. Caroline who accompanied me in my early academic visits, Ms. Subha who helped me in my typing and photo-copying needs and Ms. Sathya who assisted me during my work. My final thanks to Sipca computer centre for the final printing and binding work.

S. Mary Josheela