ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The work presented in the thesis was carried out during the period July 2007- April 2012 at the Department of Biotechnology of St Joseph’s College, Tiruchirappalli TN.

I thank the Almighty for the strength and patience I was bestowed with in sustaining the rigours of working through these five years, and today I can stand proud with my head held high. On the one hand, it has been a personal work, since I have spent uncountable amount of time and energy trying to make sense of the complex reality in surmounting the scientific problem. On the other hand, the research also rests on contributions from a variety of people that supported me every step of the way. This endeavour would not have been possible without the presence and motivating role that many people fulfilled. I take this opportunity to acknowledge them and extend my sincere gratitude for helping me make this Ph.D. thesis a possibility.

I start with the person who made the biggest difference in my life, my mentor and guide, DR. GABRIEL MELCHIAS. He has been there, in front of my eyes throughout my teaching career, motivating and inspiring every bit of me towards new possibilities in life. He has been a living role model to me, taking up new challenges every day, tackling them with all his grit and determination and always thriving to come out victorious. It’s his vigour and hunger to perform in adverse situation, which inspired me to thrive for excellence and nothing less. He came to my rescue with his intelligent ideas, casual yet thought provoking discussions and comprehensive understanding to help me sail through the initial fumbling. His attitude of living every moment as it comes, making serendipitous observation and converting them to new possibilities, correlating ideas and understanding the obvious has helped me come a long way and will always guide me in future. To me, he is the “perfection personified”.

My special words of thanks to the Doctoral Committee Member, DR. DAISY, Head of the Department of Biotechnology at Holy Cross College (Autonomous), Tiruchirappalli, for always being so kind, helpful and motivating. She has always been there for me whenever I needed it the most. Her constant guidance, cooperation
and support have always kept me going ahead. I owe a lot of gratitude to her for always being there for me and I feel privileged to be associated with a person like her during my life.

I thank the management of St Joseph’s, through REV. FR. DR. JOHN BRITTO S.J., the Rector, REV. FR. SEBASTIAN ANAND S.J., the Principal, REV. FR. A ALBERT MUTHUMALAI S. J., the Secretary and REV. FR JOHN BOSCO S.J., the Deputy Principal for their encouragement and support in facilitating the physical infrastructure to carry out the research. I thank DR I AROCKIASAMY, Head, Department of Biotechnology for his continued support and guidance. I remember DR. PATRICK GOMEZ, the former Head of the department at this juncture for associating me with St. Joseph’s College. I enjoyed his personal discussion and the warmth he exuded at every moment possible.

I gratefully acknowledge DR. C SASIKUMAR, Head, Department of Biotechnology, Nehru Memorial College, Puthanampatti; Mr J ANTONY PRABHU (Senior Research Analyst, Indegene, Bangalore); A P SASI KUMAR (Research Fellow, Myonji University, S. Korea); and Mr Johnson Selvaraj the Laboratory Assistant who were my colleagues and formed the backbone of the team from which I derived my skills. I would like to thank my friends DR. DEVENDRA DUSANE (Department of Bioinformatics, University of Pune) and DR. AKALABYA BISSOYI (National Institute of Technology, Orissa) for their kind help in providing CLSM images and phylogenetic tree construction respectively, who have been a source of moral support to me and have extended their helping hands without fail.

My sincere thanks to DR. ANAND my colleague, whom I met during the final days of the thesis. His scientific inputs, personal tips and friendly nature made me feel at ease with him and I could always look back on him for any support during my thesis writing. My heartfelt thanks to my students ANTONYSAMY, BALACHANDAR, MEERA, ANAND, GOPI, MADAN, PRAKASH, ANBANANTHAN, SIVAPERUMAL and WILSON for always being there during my wonderful days of Ph.D. My special gratitude to all of my friends especially M. DINESH, for being with me in thicks and thins of life, I find myself lucky to have friends like them in my life. SATISH, SUNDAR, JEYARAJ…the list is endless…thanks to one and all.
I would like to acknowledge all the teachers since my childhood, I would not have been here without their guidance, blessing and support.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the people who mean world to me, my father, V. AROCKIASAMY, my mother, A. SUSEELA MARY and brother, A. ROBIN. I extend my respect to my parents, my paternal and maternal grandparents and all elders to me in the family. I don’t imagine a life without their love and blessings. Thank you mom, dad, and brother for showing faith in me and giving me liberty to choose what I desired. I consider myself the luckiest in the world to have such a supportive family, standing behind me with their love and support.

My special thanks to my father-in-law, I. DAVID, mother-in-law, D. NIRMALA and cousins Mr. D. RAJA, Mr. D. BHARATHIRAJA, Mr. D. PRABHU, for their enthusiastic support. I owe my loving thanks to my wife, E PRAMILA, daughter, E SHALOMITHIN and son, E. SILVON SHARON, who are the biggest joy in my life. They have succeeded to balance my life so that it has not been overwhelmed by science. I feel fortunate to have such a great family. Special thanks for their patience during the last squeeze of this thesis. Their encouragement and understanding has been a helping hand for five years Ph. D research.

AROCKIASAMY EDWARD