Conclusion
CONCLUSION

The foregone study reveals that Fr. Adrian Caussanel, the founder-father of the Brothers of the Sacred Heart had cherished certain ideals in starting this Congregation. Started in 1903, it had to do much practical spade work in the fields of service and conversion to strengthen and spread the devotion of the Sacred Heart of Jesus among the heathens. Begun at Irudayakulam, an interior pocket of Tirunelveli, the Congregation grew to an exalted position with many branches in and around Tirunelveli and all the other districts of Tamil Nadu besides Kerala, Karnataka, Andhra and Madhya Pradesh even abroad. Recently, the Brothers opened a school at Liberia in Africa.

The objects for which Fr. Caussanel laid the foundation for this Congregation were realized to a greater degree by its religious, social, educational and public services. The land of Tirunelveli has a great historic past. The people believed in many customs and superstitious beliefs. Caste and communal considerations had a greater say in the social, religious, economics and public life. Certain castes and communities were marginalized and kept at the periphery. They were ill-treated, their women were a laughing stock of the high castes. Education, social gathering were totally denied to them; the position of widows and unmarried was wretched. Heavy men of these castes were kept as Adiyal (servants and brutal attackers).

In order to eradicate many an unwanted superstitious beliefs, the Brothers were wholeheartedly serving for the welfare of the people for the past one hundred and ten years. The French priest of the Society of Jesus led the Congregation in the right direction and made it a reputed socio-religious institution, looking into the purification
of the soul, healing the physical disabilities of many and feeding a large number of the deserted, depraved and deprived members of the society.

This Congregation is run by Brothers. Completion of hundred and ten years of service in various fields, particularly to the poor and the needy is a hallmark. The Congregation has been a model and trendsetter in various ways. It has been indigenous in its approach to reach the people and achievements have been greater and inspiring during these 100 and ten years of service. The first ten decades that followed were decades of consolidation and expansion. The labours of the Brothers have borne abundant fruit. Today with more than 240 young and energetic Brothers, the Congregation has spread its wings in 16 dioceses covering five states of India. They have completed a special course of training meant for them. The study includes mental and physical control by doing Yoga Asanas and meditating the Holy Scripture, lessons in arts and crafts, organizational administration and management of the institutions. The organizational set up of the Congregation is looked after by the Superior General and his Councillors. They have a general assembly, advisory bodies, committees and groups meant for internal administration. They conduct the affairs of the Congregation by holding elections to the high post, holding meetings, discussing the problems faced by the Congregation, especially financial matters. All these are conducted in the Mother House where the Superior General resides. The administrative head is all powerful and is assisted by Councillors and Secretaries.

Although materials about its organization are found wanting, necessary materials regarding its administration are available. It also faces administrative problems from its members. On such occasions they discuss and dissolve the differences and come to a common conclusion. As it is run purely by men, it has its own limitations as all are expected to lead an austere, pious and devoted life. All the
Brothers of the Congregation try to adhere to the founder-father’s ideals and intentions. Any organization can successfully be run provided its financial position is sound and secure. But this Congregation though started with meager finances is able to do creditably well. Finances came from various sources—Government subsidies for running the educational institutions and from the press, other contributions, donations and foreign funds.

When the Congregation was founded, India was educationally backward and certain sections of the society were denied educational opportunities. The educational service of the Sacred Heart Brothers is a tangible testimony to the commitment of society. The Brothers would discern the needs of the time and respond to their Charism and the directions of the founder. The Congregation has approached the problem of educating the mass in a systematic way. It has concentrated on educating the poor, the down-trodden and the neglected sections of society. They emphasize that their schools should not remain places of mere academic excellence and pursuit but they should be efficient agents for integral human formation. Their commitment to the poor and the marginalized should in the first place be reflected in their educational institutions. The Congregation runs the Arts and Science colleges, educational college, nursing college, higher secondary schools, teacher training institutions, industrial training institutes and other educational institutions under strict watch and ward.

The crowning glory of the founder is the founding of the St. Xavier’s College at Palayamkottai now an autonomous institution of high potential and great excellence. It was his singular devotion that made it possible amidst great oddities and opposition. Besides, the cultural entertainments and functions are conducted to infuse new blood among the teachers and students. Now the educational ministry of the Brothers has been spread over other countries also. They run a school at Monrovia District of Liberia.
in Africa. Their educational contributions have direct impact on the social and cultural life of the people.

Social service has been another area of priestly benefaction. Service is indispensible to the lives of the priests. It is not of secondary character or an additional responsibility entrusted to them, but one that gives relevance to their ministry. The meaning and creditability of the order of priesthood is enhanced by the embodiment of service. The objectives and purposes of the Brothers of the Sacred Heart are to provide human, educational, social, cultural and moral development of the people. Their main aim is to improve the economic condition of the people by various means by adopting improved methods of agriculture, by providing technical education by creating job opportunities by starting cooperative societies, small scale industries, etc.

A remarkable achievement of the early Brothers was the service rendered to a large number of tribals called the Kanis of Kattalaimalai in the Western Ghats. From 1905 onwards the Brothers performed many services to these tribal people and dedicated themselves for their improvement. All social activities are coordinated by the Generalate of Palayamkottai. The Brothers dedicated their lives for the improvement of many tribals and others at different places. Christian foundation for children and aged was started for the benefit of poor students. St. Mary’s Educational and Social Development Society was organized in 1997 to provide human, educational, social, cultural and moral education to the people of Vickramasingapuram and its environs.

Towards a new vision in Social Service of the Brothers have opened many technical institutes both formal and non-formal mainly for school drop outs and physically handicapped. They run many orphanages and old age homes. A Social Action Commission is convened in every year and good schemes are being prepared for
the improvement of child labour, street wandering children, aged and the handicapped.

In the year 2004, when Tsunami attacked the coastal areas, the Brothers did emergency relief works such as assisting in rescue work, organizing temporary tenements and distributing food, cloths, medicines etc. The Brothers of the Sacred Heart follow the foot-steps of their founder Fr. Caussanel and do implement many social activities run many centres and launch many welfare measures for the upliftment of the poor and those who are living with HIV-AIDS, the physically challenged, the Dalits, tribal women and youth.

The founder-father gave primary importance to the Religious Ministry. He reached parishes and sub-stations to nourish his flock with spiritual food. Till 1936, the only apostolate of the Brothers was preaching the good news among non-believers and tribals. Besides, they were assisting the priests at various levels: visiting villages and bringing many to the Catholic faith. They never failed in teaching the truths of Catholic Christian religion. A remarkable achievement of the early Brothers was the conversion of a large number of tribals called Kanis of Kattalaimalai in the Western Ghats. Later, the evangelization has assumed a new dimension. They never fail to adopt the modern techniques in this ministry. Through mass media and literature and other indigenous methods they are effectively taking the word of God to the people. In their apostalate work they make use of Indian literature, especially Tamil, which is rich in spiritual and social material.

They also engage themselves in various religious movements. A movement called the Friends of the Sacred Heart was started in 1976. At present, four major evangelization centres are functioning with devotion and dedication. The evangelizing groups adopt small villages as ‘Gospel Villages’ for their intensive field work. Apart, the Brothers are interested in inter-religious worship. To avoid ups and downs in the
society, they involve in such worship. Many young men and women have joined in this movement and very often the Brothers conducted workshops and rallies regarding the Inter-Religious Unity to create awareness in the society.

The tiny seed sown by the founder in 1903 has now grown into many splendoured trees with its roots in the love of the Sacred Heart and has branched out far and wide. This is how the Congregation of the Sacred Heart of Jesus has gone into the hearts of many of the people of South India, Madhya Pradesh and Liberia. They have achieved many of the objectives of the founder-father, who lived here in a distant place and cherished the lives of the natives and the converted. They have helped many to free themselves from the use of the muscle fewer, but shown the way use the mental power. They were lead to know that pen is mightier than award. The Congregation has, in fact helped many to shed their superstitious beliefs and led a happy spiritual life. The highly educated ones have found their ways abroad and settle there and achieve greater laurels in life. It has also helped many to find new lease of life by getting some kind of employment to win their daily bread. Thus in the religious history of Tamil Nadu and elsewhere, the Congregation of the Brothers of the Sacred Heart at Palayamkottai has carved out a place for itself.