

'Delighted to be here'

Our Students in conversation with our Rector and Correspondent Fr. Bellarmine, Sdb



To have been the Salesian Provincial of the Chennai Province must be a task entrusted to one who has a higher calling for such office, which in turn calls for one who has been endowed with the qualities of leadership, nobility of thought in the ways of the Founding Father, St. John Bosco. So the role went to Rev Fr. Bellarmine who is presently our Rector and Correspondent. No wonder our boys, Masters S. Francis Kevin Raj, T.T. Annamalai and S.P. Caleb Rubin had the pleasure of having him in conversation.

on being the rector and correspondent of the School

I am delighted to be here at St Mary's, and it is a privilege for me to be the Rector and Correspondent of this School with great purpose. While the motto of the school has served the purpose in inculcating gentlemanly behaviour and noble character, the shift to 'in pursuit of excellence' will bring about solid change in the overall activities and performance of the school.

As the Salesian provincial then, you must have had an overall assessment of the salesian schools. How did you rate St. Mary's?

Among the schools I would say St Mary's was rated high as a good school. Planning for the integral development of the student has always been its priority with the full participation of the teachers. St Mary's has been one of the successful schools achieving good results.

on the subject of 'youth formation'

I am happy to be in charge of youth formation. Yet standard values among the youth have fallen short. Youth have to be honest to overcome the hurdles that come in the way of good character formation. They must stand for truth and be honest with themselves.

What would you like to tell the boys in their role as students?

Every person is a gift to the world. Youth should grow up to be conscientious and responsible citizens.

your church duties and role as rector and correspondent of the School: how do you balance the two?

Fulfilling my duties as a priest is a priority. Even as Rector of St Mary's I fulfil my church duties. As Rector and Correspondent of the school, I set aside some time for the school, to spend time with the boys and follow the activities of the school. I participate in the programmes and attend every staff meeting.

What is it that makes youth act differently nowadays?

Youth are diverted by many things. They get distracted easily. They should know their priorities and focus on their goals. The school environment has a good purpose for them. They should make good use of this and work towards their goal.

What is your message to the students and staff in this jubilee year?

To carry out the legacy of St Mary's and what it stands for requires dedication. Every staff member and student must be committed to take the school to higher levels.

MEET FR. GREGORY DEVARAJAN, OUR PRINCIPAL



To be in the right place at the right time is something unique. Rev. Fr. Gregory Devarajan, our Principal, just fits in here at St. Mary's like a glove - at the right time. He is able, competent and works with such missionary zeal, that we could say of him - 'you made it possible.' with his vast experience and friendly disposition, he has made a turn-around for St. Mary's at this very important juncture of its history, the 175th year of its founding, upgrading the infrastructure and installing modern technology in keeping with the times.

In spite of all this, Fr. Gregory would attend to his duties as Headmaster and Principal. Academics, sports and games and cultural have seen St. Mary's in the forefront under the able and competitive direction of Fr. Gregory himself. His friendly and loving approach to all - be it students, parents, staff, past pupils and government officials - have made him most sought-after. Definitely his message in action is Love. The culmination of his efforts could be seen in the excellent manner in which the year-long Quartaosept centennial celebrations were conducted.

St. Mary's has become the most happening school in this period of its history. what has made this so? To find out, we had to talk to the person himself Here we have Masters S. Francis Kevin Raj, T.T. Annamalai and S.P. caleb Rubin in conversation with Fr. Gregory, while masters Imtiyaz and Philip Marian Edison zoomed in on their cameras.

On his taking charge as the Principal of the School

St Mary's is not new to me. I have worked here as a teacher in 1983. That being the case, I had come to know some of the staff members. My own sister was here as a teacher for 11 years.. Naturally I used to visit the school sometimes, and go to the Church as well. Most of the principals were my friends. My posting here at St. Mary's is like a home-coming.

your expectations about the school?

My aim is to run the school smoothly. There was an untoward incident. But the staff and students have reached the point of resilience. They have recovered quite quickly. This helps me to head the institution with much ease. Wherever I go I carry out my duties according to the need of the school. I knew St Mary's very well before I came here. I wasn't expecting much to be done knowing how well the school was run. This has made it easy for me.

A Priest and the Head of an institution: how do you balance the two roles?

To be a Priest and the Head of the institution are not two separate roles as I see it. I am always a priest 24x7. Being the Head of an institution is a role that comes on and off. My duties in the school are fulfilled without neglecting my primary call as a priest. Sometimes I may have to meet officials of the educational department when the need arises. All the people I deal with are good. I see them all in a positive light.

On spending time with Jesus in prayer

We are basically religious. I joined the seminary in 1973. I personally spend an hour every morning in the presence of Jesus. This practice which I have been following for the past 28 yrs, helps me settle down for the day and remain calm. There are ups and downs in dealing with people - parents, staff and students. Many people from outside argue and become angry especially at the time of admission. But after I speak to them they leave the office as friends. The credit goes to the Lord Jesus who trains me during that one hour I spend with him.