

Additional Information

Women's Christian College, Kolkata was established on July 19, 1945 for the education of young women hailing from diverse strata of society. The founders needed to have their self-administered college, following the closure of the Diocesan College for women. The initiative to establish a Christian college for women was taken by Miss Nirajbashini Shome, founder secretary, and Miss Stella Bose, the founder principal of the college. **The London Missionary Society** allowed the founders the use of the ground floor and two rooms on the first floor of the present building for one year free of rent.

The Intermediate in the Arts Course (I.A.) was started with three students in 1945-46 and the figure rose to twenty-two by the end of the session. Calcutta University affiliation for the I.A. course was granted in 1947-48 and that for the B.A. course in 1948-'49. Initially, the Honours Course was extended to Bengali, English, Sanskrit and Economics. In the course of time it grew to include History, Geography, Philosophy, Political Science, Sociology and Education. Its General Stream, at present includes all the subjects in the Honours Stream in addition to Mathematics, Statistics and Journalism & Mass Communication.

The Saroj Nalini Memorial Institution donated furniture to the college while the Sisters of the Oxford Mission, helped with books and furniture. **The London Missionary Society** building was bought by the college along with six **cottahs** of land in May, 1952 for Rs. 30,000/-. The property was augmented by the acquisition of two more premises after seven years. An additional building for the B.A. Course classes and an assembly hall were built with the help of the **State Government and University Grants Commission**. Financial assistance was received from the Methodist Mission, the Baptist Mission and an anonymous donor from the Church of England.

It is this ecumenical origin which helped the college to develop a holistic attitude and inclusive ethos embracing students from varied backgrounds and reaching out to a pluralist cross-section of society. At present the institution is poised on the cusp of change reassessing its roots and looking ahead to the future.

Conclusion

Women's Christian College, Kolkata is a college with a difference. Conceived in sacrifice, nurtured with patience and administered with commitment and hope the institution is an oasis of peace in the turbulent climate of student politics and strife-torn campuses. It focuses on discipline, both the external variety of punctuality, regularity in attendance and decorum and the inner compulsions born of moral values. It tempers the motto of its affiliating university: 'The advancement of learning' with the service orientation of its own motto, namely 'By love serve one another'.

It is this openness of outlook and acceptance of all that characterizes most of its endeavours encouraging one to see it as a pragmatic source of vision and action. Education, at the end of the day is a service rendered with love contributing to the growth of knowledge. This knowledge is not limited to the students (though they are the main beneficiaries) but is the reward of all stakeholders for each learns and grows in his/her way.

The college has a dream. Many dreams, actually. But there is an overriding one where it sees itself as an active agent of change. It is a chrysalis in which diffident girls become confident young women; where students complete the journey and yet remain the eternal student in their thirst for knowledge; where families are saved through the contribution of the educated, working daughter or mother. The dream ultimately subscribes to the reality of an empowered nation, resurgent in faith, impeccable in integrity, and comprehensive and egalitarian in scope. It inheres in the efforts of an institution like ours, small in its physical compass perhaps but expansive in its aspirations, one that is genuinely desirous of developing self, society, nation and world.

On the foundation of this conceptual cornerstone the institution strives to build its superstructure of educational services, administrative acumen and stakeholder welfare all the while maintaining a synthesis of the traditional and the new; the individual and the canonical; and the practical and the theoretical.