

Dear St. Mary's,

It was by sheer chance I joined you; in March 1984, when I was waiting for my M.Phil. results with the intention of going for a lecturer's post in some college, Br. Christopher asked if I would look after Class 4A for a month until the appointed teacher arrived. No problem, I said.

Before the month passed, the 5B teacher went on long leave, so I stayed on... and on... By the end of the year, I was hoping even the college that had called me in December would change its decision. By February of '85, after two and a half months in the college, I was sure I had found my niche. I came back to you.

Twenty-five years in Class 4A has equipped me for life. I learnt about loyalty and dedication, I learnt about giving generously of time and energy, I learnt about diligence and perseverance, I learnt about accepting people and situations and things as they are, I learnt about empathy and sympathy, I learnt about trust and faith. I learnt to cherish every day's every little satisfying moment that the little ones found delight in, their accomplishments, their dreams, their lives in your **mystifying divine arms**.

There is no denying that there is a **Divine Presence** here, manifest in the people and the beautiful hills and valleys and the dam that surround you, the flora and the fauna that thrive in your campus; fauna that is wild and not so wild, the monkeys and our Great Danes (now nine in number). Such environs must perforce be blessed and sacred. And no one has experienced the Guiding Light of this Divinity more than I, particularly in the last nine years at the helm.

I took on this responsibility full of trepidation, particularly fearful of the times I would have to address large groups of students or parents or the general public and worried about finding qualified, English-speaking Science and Maths Teachers! [And I never got over it!]

The ex-students were appalled! A female, and a Sophian to boot! The students were apprehensive. She is so strict! The Staff? They would wait and watch as they would do their utmost to assist.

I met my God in these years. I realize Him to be all that He promises to be, my problems were in His ken before I turned to Him. In His time, all fell in place. What I thought were happy coincidences were really His Hand on the wheel. Not that I did not blunder at all; I did, but that was when I tried to go at it on my own.

The Management stood rock-solid behind me, and I needed that from day one. Admission pressures that landed me in the local court in the first week of my tenure, threatening calls and letters from the highest Offices...

Parents took some time to come round to accepting me in the Office. After the Brothers, Mr. Vase and then – Ms. Mary? As always, however, I need not have worried. I found support when needed.

We have a wonderful Staff here, as all the students will vouch. Their selfless dedication to their service to our students is what builds the rapport among the teachers and the students; the connection that draws all ex-students back to you.

Our students are gems in their own right. They shine brilliantly given the chance and they have taught me more lessons than I taught them. Their willingness to listen to reason, their resilience in

the face of disappointments, their grace in victory, their openness, their generosity, their trust, the camaraderie, their ready help in any task makes me thank my God for placing me amidst them.

The Office, the admissions, the time-tables, the calendar, competitions, the Concerts, the Annual Sports and Drills and Aquatic Meets, the Exhibition, the hobbies, the daily games, the tournaments, the walks, the Chapel, the Kitchen, the Dorms, the Hospie, the Maintenance, the Management, the Admin. Staff, the Co-ordinators, the Teaching Staff, the Support Staff and last but never ever the least, our students down the nine years have cooperated with me all the way, and I am truly, truly grateful to each one of them. Some Staff members have passed on, a few have retired, students have passed the Boards and gone on to colleges and careers, and some Staff and students have moved on to other places. Kudos to them all! I thank them for their company on our journey.

Another phase of your existence begins now, and I am sure the future holds great nurture and developments at the hands of the new [not so new actually, as the Brothers take over once again] leadership. Grow strong! All power to you!

Although physically away from here, my thoughts and good wishes will always be with you, SMS. I hope and pray that, as envisioned, you will be a KG - ISC School with infrastructure to compete with the best very soon. May you send forth into the world men and women of great spiritual, mental and physical stature who will make their parents and teachers and you proud; people with concern for the less fortunate, aware always of their duty to the natural universe, their heads held high as global citizens who make a difference; the Marian standard held high – PROMITE VIRES!

I hope I have not let you down when you trusted yourself to me. Forgive me my errors. Know always that I did what I thought was the best.

Yours in gratitude forever,

Mary.