

PAUL HARRISON AWARD - 1999

Miss Chandraranee Kanapathipillai joined the Christian Medical College, Vellore in 1949 as the first medical student to be sponsored by the Jaffna Diocese of the newly formed Church of South India. Soon after graduating in 1954, Dr. Chandra joined the McLeod Hospital for Women in Jaffna, specializing in the medical needs of women. She secured the Membership of the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of England in 1963, and its coveted Fellowship in 1978.

Dr. Chandra married Mr. David Jeyaratnam Ambalavanar, who entered the ministry of the church and became the Bishop of Jaffna in 1971. Even as the clouds of ethnic strife were gathering, this loyal couple devoted their considerable energies and leadership qualities to the service of the troubled and anxious church in Jaffna. They became a tower of strength and a symbol of hope and dignity, not only to the Christians but to all the Jaffna Tamils, even as the conflict escalated into the continuing civil war. The untimely death of Bishop Ambalavanar and the infirmities of her advancing years, have not deterred Dr. Chandra from continuing to do her best for the women of her strife-torn country.

Apart from periods of postgraduate training and some other assignments abroad, Dr. Chandra has served in Jaffna since 1956 to date, first in the McLeod Hospital and thereafter in the Green Memorial Hospital in Manipay. These hospitals have worked and continue to work, under the paucity of staff and essential supplies and the physical hazards, Dr. Chandra has kept these institutions going. Even during the evacuation of Jaffna in 1995 when the Jaffna Christians lived in poultry sheds, the Bishop and Dr. Chandra shared their lot and she continued to conduct clinics for the displaced people. That Christian medical work continues in Jaffna today is in no small measure due to Dr. Chandra's indomitable spirit of fortitude and dedication.

Dr. Chandra is a shining example of the kind of doctors her alma mater strives to produce: professionally competent, socially sensitive and spiritually alive. With pride and gratitude, the Christian Medical College presents the Paul Harrison Award of 1999, for sustained service in a needy area, to Dr. Chandraranee Ambalavanar.

CMC

4/10/99

VELLORE

DIRECTOR

PRINCIPAL