

## PAUL HARRISON AWARD - 2002

Every year the Paul Harrison Award is bestowed upon an alumnus of Christian Medical College, Vellore who has made an outstanding contribution to the health and welfare of people in need. This year the award goes to Dr. G.M. Jeyabalan of the batch of 1959.

After completing his M.B.B.S., Dr. Jeyabalan underwent 15 months of special training in the field of leprosy at SLR&TC, Karigiri and CMC Vellore. This was because he had chosen to serve the leprosy-affected people of Peikulam in Thuthukudi district – an area hyper-endemic for leprosy. After his training, he joined the St. Luke's Leprosarium at Peikulam in 1967 and has served there continuously for the past 35 years. During this period, the prevalence of leprosy has dropped from 300/10,000 to 3/10,000 in this area.

The leprosarium run by Dr. Jeyabalan has 260 inmates at present. It has always been his ambition to try and run the institution on local contributions rather than depend on foreign aid. He has had considerable success in this respect. At present, expenses for 265 days in a year come from local contributions and he hopes that by the end of 2003 the total expenses can be met in this manner.

Dr. Jeyabalan has also made significant contribution to community education and development. He has organized programmes to systematically cover all teacher training schools throughout Tirunelveli and Thuthukudi districts to improve the level of public awareness on leprosy.

Dr. Jeyabalan has also shown keen interest in farming. He has encouraged farmers to adopt water saving and other profit yielding horticultural practices, and has established a model farm and nursery. He has also introduced new varieties of crops into the area that has revolutionized the economy of farmers in Thiruchendur and Sattankulam taluks.

His wife, Chandra Jeyabalan, is also a doctor and so are their 3 daughters. After retirement, Dr. Jeyabalan plans to start a hospital for AIDS affected people and a home for children orphaned due to AIDS.

Dr. Jeyabalan has eminently demonstrated his caring concern for people in need and has devoted his life to helping the disadvantaged and thereby transforming lives. His life has exemplified the motto of his alma mater – not to be ministered unto but to minister. In recognition of his life long service and outstanding contribution, the Christian Medical College, Vellore is proud to bestow the Paul Harrison Award for the year 2002 upon one of its illustrious alumni – Dr. G. M. Jeyabalan.

Director  
Vellore  
7 October 2002

Principal