

The Alumni Award of Distinction  
of the Christian Medical College Alumni Association  
for the year 2010

is given to

The Right Reverend Dr. George Isaac

Born in the backwater town of Cochin, George Isaac, 'Achen' to most of us in CMC, became George Isaac 'Tirumanie' in July 1999. He grew up in those parts, going to school as well as college to acquire a degree in economics, history and politics. His aspiration for the future, influenced by his father who worked in the Cochin Port, was to put out to sea. But strange indeed are the ways of God, and this aspiring sea going captain found himself called to give his life for full time ministry. Aided by his parish priest he pursued his vocation, joining the Leonard Theological College in 1965 for the BD course. In 1968, after completion of his course, he was ordained a deacon of the CSI church by Bishop T B Benjamin who also ordained him as presbyter a year later. After a few years as a pastor, he was able to complete the master's course in Theology from Serampore University. He was the Vicar of the CSI Immanuel Church, Ernakulam from 1974 to 1981 when he and his wife Lily Kochamma joined CMC to fill in the gap left by the retirement of Rev. A.C. Oommen.

During his time, the then 'RWD' saw many changes including a change of name to 'Chaplaincy'. In keeping with the requirements of the institution, George Isaac Achen was able to bring into the department a number of others to join him to serve the needs of the growing numbers of patients and students and staff. These included pastors from churches from many parts of the country like the North East and other states so that patients could be helped to worship and be counselled in a familiar language. He introduced the 'pastorate' concept of ministry and ensured that all sections of the CMC community received pastoral care when needed.

The regular weekly Bible study programme for the departments and expansion of the retreat programme were important new initiatives that added to the nurture of the staff and students. Increase in the number of language services in the hospital chapel added to the spiritual nurture of the patients.

Achen's singing talents ably complemented by Lily Kochamma did much to make the retreats and the Bible studies and worship services lively and enjoyable for both the staff and the students.

In 1988, George Isaac was able to go to Chicago for doctoral studies at the Chicago Theological seminary. Doing his research work in the Chicago Medical centre where Dr. Kubler Ross did her world famous work on 'Death and Dying' he chose to work in the area of counselling of the dying and the bereaved. This exposure fostered a dream to start a course in counselling in the hospital context in India. His contacts with the Parkridge Centre for counselling, of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America led to the starting of the 'Diploma in Pastoral Healing Ministry' in CMC in 1994. This has now been recognised as the `Diploma in Clinical Pastoral Counselling' by the senate of the Serampore University and has given the department an academic standing as well.

In 1999, Achen was called to serve his church in the capacity of bishop and he left CMC to be consecrated as bishop of the CSI North Kerala Diocese in July. He has served the Church in a large diocese with its head quarters in Shoranur, travelling to many parishes, speaking in many settings, strengthening his people, and everywhere bringing music and song to bless and encourage.

In recognition of his contributions and service to CMC, the CMC Alumni Association is proud to present the Alumni Award for the year 2010 to The Right Reverend Dr. George Isaac, Bishop Emeritus, Church of South India.

14<sup>th</sup> August 2010  
Vellore.

President  
CMC Alumni Association.