

STELLA MARIS COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS) CHENNAI 600 086
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

M.A. DEGREE EXAMINATION – SEPTEMBER 2020
II M.A. ENGLISH

COURSE: POSTGRADUATE-CORE

COURSE CODE: 15EL/PC/LM44

COURSE TITLE: LITERATURE AND MYSTICISM

TIME: 1 ½ hours

MAX. MARKS: 50

Section A

I. Answer any one of the following in about 500 words. (1x15=15)

1. Do you detect a note of irreverence in the poems of the mystics? Respond with reference to Sundarar, Donne and Rabia.
2. What has been the take-away for you from this course on Literature and Mysticism? Your response should draw upon specific texts you studied.

Section B

II. Answer any one of the following in about 750 words. (1x20=20)

3. Identify, illustrate and comment on aspects that are common to all the mystical traditions prescribed for study.
4. How do the mystics forge a personal relationship with God—one that is often in conflict with established socio-religious structures?

Section C

III. Analyse the following passage in about 750 words with reference to aspects of mystical experience. (1x15=15)

Hints: the complementarity of presence and absence, pride vs humility, the shift in the use of the word 'you', comparison with Denise Levertov's poem "Against Intrusion"

5. **God's Absence** – *Mechtild of Magdeburg*

Ah blessed absence of God,
How lovingly I am bound to you!
You strengthen my will in its pain
And make dear to me
The long hard wait in my poor body.
The nearer I come to you,
The more wonderfully and abundantly
God comes upon me.
In pride, alas, I can easily lose you,
But in the depths of pure humility, O Lord,

I cannot fall away from you.
For the deeper I fall, the sweeter you taste.
