

On the hot seat

As principles of leading arts and science colleges in the country, these women display a phenomenal amount of grit and compassion while educating India's young.



Sr Jasintha Quadras, Principal of Stella Maris College (SMC), Chennai

Tech-savvy administrator- by *Preethi Ann Thomas*

Describing her role as that of an academician and administrator, Sr Jasintha Quadras calls the journey to principaldom challenging, exciting and rewarding. She took over as principal of Stella Maris College (SMC), Chennai, in 2008 after having spent three years as vice-principal. With a PhD in mathematics, Sr Quadras also completed a course in theology at Jnana Deepa Vidyapeeth, Pune.

Reputed to be a tech-savvy administrator, Sr Quadras has been involved with various activities in the college (for instance, automating the day-to-day working of the campus through intranet) since she joined the department of mathematics in 1996. She now ensures that the 3,800 students,

who are currently studying at SMC, are able to meet the challenges of the world. “I like to think of this as a mission, rather than a job. To see hesitant, diffident young women metamorphose into confident, strong individuals, empowered to take on the challenges of life at the end of their studies makes it all so worthwhile,” she says.

Since she took over, various changes have been implemented — streamlining of credits across programmes in 140 UG and 90 PG programmes, introduction of new certificate courses, increased industry linkages, establishing a UGC-sponsored Centre for Women Studies, student mentoring, development of English language skills, soft skills training, coaching for civil services, NET, eco-initiatives, food and water security programme, etc.

SMC offers students extensive opportunities to foster creativity and leadership skills. “As a college community, we work to create a positive impact through service on our immediate social environment. We want to work towards the creation of a world community of peace, justice and equity, where our students will be agents of social transformation.”