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Beno Zephine visits alma mater

DC CORRESPONDENT
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Soon she would be a high-flying Indian Foreign Service officer, but on Thursday she touched base not just to thank the teachers who moulded her at Little Flower Convent for Blind but also meet the students of the institution.

N.L. Beno Zephine, the 25-year-old woman from Villivakkam and the first visually impaired IFS officer, exchanged smiles and advice with the students. As a living example of the adage that if there is a will there is a way, she said one has to strengthen one's strength and weaken one's weaknesses and make use of the resources — only then one can climb the ladder.

When K. Aishwarya, a class 6 student who aspires to become an IAS officer, asked her the secret behind her success, she said, "You need to be focussed and continue working hard."

Another student, M. Latifa from class 12, asked her if she has a role model. "I admire people's characteristics, features and qualities. I would want to inculcate them. But, at the same time, I am

kind of individualistic. So, I have no role model as such."

She said she braved the odds as being visually impaired she had to face a lot of challenges. "I thank all my teachers, principal and my family. It was because of their constant support and encouragement I got confidence. Our teachers took extra effort to make us understand whatever we were taught. Such analytical skills enabled me to reach the level where I am today," she said.

She thanked all her professors from Stella Maris College and Loyola College from where she did her graduation and postgraduation, who helped her for the civil service examination. She specially thanked BJP leader, Dr Subramanian Swamy.

Lutz Grace, Geography teacher for the past 26 years, said, "She participated in many extracurricular activities like literary meeting, debate and oratorical competition and stood first in many."

Her English teacher, C. Margaret, said, "She had a flare for English. When she used to speak extempore, people would be confused whether I was speaking or she. I was like a model for her."



First visually impaired IFS officer N.L. Beno Zephine paid a visit to her school Little Flower Convent at Anna Salai on Thursday. —DC