



Institutional Distinctiveness

“ASHA DEEP”

St. Kuriakose Elias Chavara: The Visionary Reformer and an Ardent Advocate for the Marginalised

St. Kuriakose Elias Chavara, a Saint of the Indian Catholic Church, and an influential social reformer of 19th century Kerala, has left an indelible mark on the social history of Kerala for his pioneering services in uplifting the marginalised and the vulnerable slave castes in Kerala. St. Chavara persistently advocated education for all without caste distinctions, universal literacy and women's empowerment, displaying his genuine dedication to the dignity and advancement of all people. He established the first Catholic Sanskrit School in Mannanam, Kottayam in 1846, welcoming students from all backgrounds, including those from slave castes, who were traditionally denied education and were severely oppressed. St. Chavara was a visionary social reformer, who championed the rights of the oppressed and worked tirelessly to eradicate several social evils. He introduced the concept of "Pallikkoodams" (schools attached to churches), which served as learning and community development centres. These schools became instrumental in promoting literacy and social awareness among the marginalised communities. St. Chavara, deeply concerned about the elderly and sick, established charitable homes to provide food, shelter, and medical care for the aged and needy.

Empowering through Education and Service

Kuriakose Elias College, Mannanam is named after St. Kuriakose Elias Chavara to honour his unique contributions to social reform and spiritual leadership. In the spirit of his enduring legacy, K.E. College, Mannanam, has become a pivotal institution fostering inclusivity and equitable access to high-quality education for all segments of society. Through its "Asha deep" initiative, K.E. College exemplifies a strong dedication to community welfare, focusing on uplifting marginalised communities, women, children, and the elderly. To advance these efforts, the college established the Kuriakose Elias Development Action & Service Society (KEDAS) in 2012, which serves as the driving force behind the Ashadeep initiative. These initiatives are primarily focused in the nearby Panchayats of Athirampuzha and Neendoor, specifically the





adopted colonies of Onamthuruth, Nalpathimala, Ambedkar, Kuriyattukunnu, Rajiv Gandhi, Kallunkalparambu, Mission Parambu, Ambika Vilasam Harijan, and Vikas Nagar. Besides, the college is wholeheartedly committed to empowering differently-abled students, as demonstrated by its annual state-level cultural festival, "Awake."

“Awake”: Celebrating Unique Talents

The college has been proudly hosting "Awake" since 2007 - an annual cultural festival uniquely crafted for differently-abled students in Kerala. This event brings together participants from different special schools spread across Kerala. The festival features various competitions, offering these exceptional children an inclusive platform to showcase their talents and creativity.

Holistic Support for Children

One noteworthy initiative of K.E. College is the provision for scholarships and financial assistance to children from marginalised backgrounds. The Talir Scholarship Program provides educational scholarships to economically disadvantaged students, offering them comprehensive support, including educational kits, free tuition services and counselling. “Kalikoottam”, a gathering of children held on the second Saturday of every month, offers skill development classes, personality development sessions, vocational training and career guidance by professionals. Summer camps are conducted for children focussing on imparting essential life skills to them. The college has conducted awareness sessions and street plays on critical legislations such as the Child Labour Amendment Act 2016 and the POCSO Act 2012. To encourage a culture of reading, the college established libraries at several schools and set up a Children's Club in the Nalpathimala area. Celebrations such as Children's Day and drug abuse prevention programs are organised in several schools. Education is supported through two Community Learning Centres in adopted villages.

Empowering Women: Path to Self-Reliance

The college is deeply committed to fostering entrepreneurship and self-reliance among women through meticulously tailored programs. The Entrepreneurship Fostering Program offers free tailoring and hand embroidery courses, empowering women with the skills to become





entrepreneurs. A tailoring unit within the college provides practical training and employment opportunities to women to produce high-quality products. Women's clubs in the adopted villages support and empower women through literacy drives, health education campaigns, child protection measures etc., all designed to improve their overall well-being.

Enriching the Lives of the Elderly

The college provides much-needed care and support for the elderly, addressing their critical needs through counselling, palliative care, legal assistance and medical aid. The Elder's Club at Nalpathimala, in the Athirampuzha Panchayat, fosters community support and a recreational platform for senior citizens. With the support of Ahalya Eye Hospital, a free eye testing and cataract surgery diagnosis camp was organised. An elderly helpline was introduced to provide immediate assistance and healthcare guidance. The college promotes lifelong learning for senior citizens through educational, cultural, and social activities, enhancing their quality of life and keeping them engaged and integrated into the community.

Community Health and Awareness Drive for Marginalized Communities

A series of health and awareness initiatives were launched in Neendoor and Athirampuzha panchayaths to improve the well-being of marginalised communities. In collaboration with CARITAS Hospital, Thellakom, a free medical camp was held at Neendoor Public Library. Awareness sessions for migrant workers covered drug abuse, COVID-19, hygiene, digital banking and worker's rights. Cancer awareness was effectively promoted through the documentary 'Sparsham,' while the short film 'Avarakoppam' provided valuable education on leprosy, enhancing public understanding of both critical health issues. A family planning class at Ambedkar Colony provided vital reproductive health knowledge, aiming to build a healthier and more informed community.

A Legacy of Inclusivity and Advancement

Kuriakose Elias College stands as a living testimony to the enduring legacy of St. Chavara, reflecting his profound dedication to social reform, education, and spiritual enlightenment in the 19th century when the concept of social inclusion was unheard of. The college's dynamic initiatives champion inclusivity and diversity, blending academic excellence with holistic





development of the people and communities in its neighbourhood. By addressing social issues and promoting lifelong learning, the college catalyses socioeconomic advancement keeping alive the ideals of St. Chavara. The unflinching dedication to the teaching and ideals of St. Chavara by K.E. College ensures that the transformative impact of the Saint continues to inspire future generations, making the institution a true beacon of his lasting legacy.



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