I. SPECIAL NOTICE

II. Spicer's New School Year Starting Delayed a Month

   Rajendra Prasad <rajendra.prasad2000@yahoo.com> May 27:

   We were told last Wednesday that the inspection team of the Maharashtra State Govt. would be visiting Spicer on
   Friday.

   The high profile team consisting of 10 members including vice chancellors, bureaucrats, technical experts, etc, were
   here Friday morning, visited the campus, had several queries, met with the available faculty without the college
   president, but left in the evening with a positive hint that they would recommend to the State Govt. about granting a
   university charter to Spicer subject to its submitting some more documentation and undertakings by the end of this
   month and the college is busy again doing the needful.

   With God's grace and will, and our ardent hopes and prayers, there is a likelihood of the bill on the proposed charter
   being discussed and passed in the State Assembly early in June and our getting the University Charter soon after so that
   we could start the programme from this academic year (2014-2015) itself. Hence the College administration felt it prudent to postpone the reopening of the college to July 1, 2014 to avoid possible confusion among new students about which programme to join.

III. Sunny Wycliffe Congratulates Kerala's New Governor

   March 11, 2014
   Her Excellency Smt. Sheila Dikshit
   Governor of Kerala
   Trivandrum

   Your Excellency,

   I am requesting you to be so kind as to accept our heartfelt congratulations and best wishes on this auspicious day
   when you take the sacred oath to be the next Governor of Kerala State -- my home state.

   On behalf of the ardent supporters of the Congress Party, here in the United States of America, we pledge our prayers
   and support to the Governor of Kerala State.

   I had the humble honor of meeting you twice in your home when you welcomed the World President Dr. Jan Paulsen
   of the Seventh-day Adventists with its world headquarters here in Maryland, USA. Arattukulam John Tito and I were also
   in his entourage to India. In 1985, when Hon. Rajiv Gandhi came on an official State Visit to the United States, I had the
   humble honor to organize a public meeting for him in Washington, DC. In March 1989, the late Elder Neal C. Wilson,
   former World President of the Seventh-day Church visited India, Rajivji invited him also to his official residence and had
   a discussion on issues concerning the people of India and how the SDA Church could assist the people of India in various

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On one of the occasions my wife, Dr. Tresa, our Jeff and I had the high honor of visiting Soniaji in her office to discuss about the Congress supporters in the USA.

I am dedicate these four famous lines of Robert Frost to you which were also the favorite of Pandit Nehruji:

"The woods are lovely dark and deep,
But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep,
And miles to go before I sleep."

Kerala is a tough but loving and lovely state with its loving people.

We pray that God will shower His Blessings upon you and grant you wisdom from Above to guide the Kerala Government officials and its people. We will always remember you and lift you up to the Throne of Grace. God Bless. Jaiho!

With warm regards,
Sunny Wycliffe
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IV. Kish Poddar Leads British Students on India Project

It was a cold but thankfully dry February morning. The time was 6 AM on Sunday 16 February, when a team of Stanborough School students, staff and two parents, eight in number, met at the school to begin a life changing trip to warm tropical India. The mission was to teach for two weeks, at the BESSO Nursery and Primary school, which has 62 orphan pupils and was started by a young couple Mr. and Mrs. Ganesh.

The five Year 10 pupils together with their teachers had been planning and preparing for this trip since the previous September. The preparation included raising funds by participating in a 24 hour sponsored badminton, carol singing in the local supermarket, surviving vaccinations, shopping for the orphans, lesson preparation and the packing. With all the preparations completed the team were ferried to London Heathrow airport to board a flight to Bangalore. With all the check in formalities completed they proceeded to the Gate for boarding. When the call for boarding went out one of the team members discovered that she did not have her passport or boarding pass. There was a frenzy of frantic searching but without success. So we gathered together for there was only One who would be able to sort this little dilemma out at such short notice. We prayed that He would intervene and let us find the documents to enable us to board the flight. We retraced the steps that she remembered she had taken and one of them led to a dust bin.

She had already looked there twice without any success but nevertheless we went through the motion of emptying the dustbin with passengers moving all around us. Having got to the bottom there was no passport or boarding pass. Next to it was a second dustbin for recycled plastic but she was sure that she had not put it in there. We started emptying the second one and within seconds there was the passport waiting to be rescued at the bottom. We picked up the passport and next to it was the boarding pass. They were both thrown away inadvertently. To say that there was elation and relief would be an understatement. There were hugs and tears of joy and gratitude to the One who delivered as He had promised so many times before. As soon as we were seated on the plane we huddled together and thanked Him for confirming at the start of our adventure that we had nothing to fear about the trip because He was going to be with us and bless us with His presence. And that is how it proceeded day after day.

The Stanborough pupils each chose the year group they wished to teach, Nathan Year 1, Eve Year 2, Paul Year 3, Christopher Year 4 and Aswin Year 5.

They had taken resources from England, prepared the lessons in the evenings and like seasoned teachers delivered a whole day's lessons to the orphans.

Each day began at 9 am with worship with the children. The timetable for the day was nine periods of 40 minutes each with breaks for lunch and play. This went on for two weeks. Each day the visiting teachers became more innovative and creative than the day before. What was so encouraging to watch was the bond they formed with the orphan children. On the first day they made name tags which speeded up the bonding and within two days they were scooping up the children in their arms and playing with them during any break in teaching. As the days past the visiting teachers became more and more involved in the teaching and in the welfare of the orphans. Even when on a sightseeing trip they seemed to be consumed with buying specific gifts for each child in their class. These Year 10 pupils turned out to become devoted teachers to their cohorts even if it was just for a short time.

On one day towards the end, we planned a picnic to the zoo. Needless to say, because this is an infrequent occurrence, the children were very excited - all dressed up in their socks and shoes and well pressed uniforms. One of the volunteers from England generously financed the whole event.
Everyone had a wonderful day out. On the final day the school organised the Annual Sports Day in which the visitors from Stanborough School served as judges, time keepers and track officials which was a new but fun experience for them. After the prizes were awarded, we had a party for all the children and staff. We had pre-ordered the food from a local restaurant. It was one of their favourite menus - masala dosai, idli sambar, coconut chutney, payasum and laddoo for dessert. The Stanborough team served the food. What impressed the visitors was when the children received their food on stainless steel plates, they went to their place on the floor, sat down and waited for everyone to be served before singing grace and only then did they tuck in. And to their hearts content too.

It was interesting and at the same time moving to learn how this trip had affected the Stanborough students and staff. Paul commented that he "gained a better appreciation of basic things like clean water, food, a roof over my head" and a "general appreciation of how much God has blessed me."

Eva said that this trip to the beautiful country of India has been the most life changing experience I have ever had. I gained a pure joy which only God can give through the cheerful eyes of the young orphans. I also learnt to appreciate small blessings and unseen ones, for life and breathe and everything and everyone I take for granted."

Christopher said "I have gained an appreciation for teachers, a new view point on life and I have made some great new friends. I have gained a better appetite and I am now less picky with what I eat." Aswin said "I have recognised how lucky I am. As friends we've all grown closer and learned a little more about each other. I learnt a lot about myself. I gained an appreciation for teachers." Nathan learned how to deal with spicy food, how to be organised and how to be a teacher. He also said he gained weight.

The adults too shared their experiences. Vanesa said, "I fell in love with their bright eyes and their smiles and with how open their hearts are.

This trip taught me a lot. But mostly how simple the Gospel really is. How powerful love is". "Zeny said, "I thank Jesus for all the blessings I have in life. I truly learned to be happy and content with what I have". Mira said, "she gained a lot of things but probably the most was realising how blessed I am. I am really thankful that I have Jesus is my life and this trip really opened my eyes, that if I want to be a follower of Jesus I should change some things."

By God's grace we all arrived safely back. Some of the students did not want to return home but having joined their families back in cold wet England, they had already learnt to cherish and value their own more than ever.

-- Kish Poddar, March 2014, British Union Newsletter ~~~~~~~~~~ V. Andrews University Audit Team Visits Spicer Rajendra Prasad <rajendra.prasad2000@yahoo.com> April 1:

Spicer witnessed the visit of a high level delegation from Andrews University, Michigan, USA, February 25 to March 2, 2014 to audit its affiliated graduate and undergraduate programmes here including the BBA and MBA programmes affiliated to Griggs University. The 5-member team included Dr. Lynn Bartlett, Director of Off-Campus Programmes, Dr. Keith Mattingly, Dean of College of Arts and Sciences; Dr. Lynn Merklin, Assistant Provost for Effectiveness, Dr. James R. Jeffrey, Dean, School of Education, and Dr. John Stout, Professor Emeritus from the Department of Biology at Andrews.

The team was introduced to the college family by the VPAA during the chapel period on Thursday morning when Dr. Jeffery addressed the gathering with inspirational thoughts.

After group photos outside later, the team continued with their hectic activities of going through our Self-Study Reports, meeting the members of the administration, the Deans, HoDs and faculty, department-wise, and evaluating minutely the administration; facilities like the library, industries, high school section, student centre, House of Prayer and upcoming Management building; as well as the faculty, programmes, general school climate, teaching-learning procedures and material including the syllabi, textbooks, and classrooms. In the afternoons Dr. Merklin conducted a 2-day seminar-cum-workshop for all faculty on Accreditation and Assessment Training held on the topics, 'Connecting Course Assessment to Programme Assessment' and 'Creating Rubrics for Courses and Programmes' respectively.

The team spent the weekend participating in the church activities also. Dr. Mattingly preached on Friday night during vespers on the theme 'God of the Unlikely' and Dr. Bartlett, on 'Don't Be Afraid, Trust in Jesus' during the Divine Service. Later they were invited to the faculty pot-luck lunch in the College President's porch where there was a delicious spread of a wide variety of culinary delights. Later in the evening they had a leisurely and quiet supper in the VPAA's home. Before they boarded their planes on Sunday afternoon they were treated to a buffet lunch in Pune's popular 'Le Meridian' but when the bill was presented, Dr. Bartlett coming to know that that day was the College President's birthday, paid it in his honour.

Spicer had traditionally been quite blessed and inspired by the periodic (often biennial) visits of these Audit teams, led by great team leaders like Dr. Merlene Ogden, Dr. Charles Tidwell (Jr.), recently Dr. Niels-Erik Andreasen, the AU
President himself, and now Dr. Lyn R. Bartlett. They are more like friends, guides and mentors with patient hearing, generous commendations and valuable recommendations rather than traditional inspectors with hawk's eyes ready to pounce on the faltering personnel. Special mention needs to be made about Dr. James Jeffery, Dean, School of Education at Andrews who has been like our Santa Claus, each time bringing huge boxes full of books, electronic equipment like laptops, projectors, CDs, etc, and not forgetting small cute gifts like pens, post-it pads, purses and pocket calculators during his nearly nine visits, some of which included even faculty from his own School of Education at Andrews University at their own expense to teach our students here for a week or two along with him. God bless their hearts! They literally follow AU's Motto: "Seek Knowledge, Affirm Faith, Change the World". Spicer looks forward to seeing the team members again with their spouses during the college centenary celebrations early next year.

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