

**Loyola College (Autonomous)  
Chennai - 600034**

**Department of History**

**Ashok Mehta Endowment Lecture**

**22<sup>nd</sup> September 2016**

**Theme:** Christian Heritage Architecture in Madras

**Speaker:** Dr. R. Antony Paul Gnanasekar,  
Head, Department of History Arulanandar College, Karumathur.

Prof. Ashok Mehta endowment lecture is the third day in the series of the endowment lectures for this academic year on "Christian Heritage Architecture in Madras" by Dr. R. Antony Paul Gnanasekar, Head, Department of History, Arulanandar College, Karumathur, Madurai.



The programme started with invocation of God's blessings. The hosting of the programme was very well done by Jayashree, M.Phil student. The welcome address was delivered by Dr. Selvanathan, Head, and Department of History. He thanked the Guest Speaker Dr. Antony Paul Gnanasekar, who was the professor of our Principal Rev Dr. Arockiasamy Xavier, S.J. Mr. Muthu Shankar, UG Secretary (cultural) honoured

our Guest Speaker with a memento and Dr. ArputhaSelvi introduced the Guest Speaker.

Dr. Antony Paul Gnanasekar is a member of Board of study in various colleges in Tamil Nadu. He has produced 7 M. Phil and five Ph.D graduates. He has also organised 7 state level seminars and workshops and has successfully completed two UGC sponsored minor projects. He is a multi- talented personality.



Dr. Antony Paul Gnanasekar began his lecture by focusing on the meaning of the word '*Heritage*'. He explained that it means the transformed custom, manner, habit, etc. He also said that this world is God's heritage monument. He then questioned the gathering about the origin of the name 'Madras'. It was derived from the name, '*Madre De Deus*' which means 'Mother of God'. He highlighted the architectural features and the importance of the seven famous churches in Madras and the church of 'Christ the King Church' at Loyola is one among them. He explained about the heritage aspects of Loyola College. He also informed the gathering that the *Chennai Metropolitan Development Authority has recently granted Heritage status to Loyola College*. It shows that the building is of historical importance and has to be protected. There was a survey conducted by a committee in 2012-'13 by Chennai Metropolitan Development Authority under the Justice of High Court Mr. Padmanabhan, with seventeen members in order to protect the monuments and the greatest solution possible was to award heritage status.

Chennai has as many as 2,460 heritage buildings out of which 434 buildings are selected. The first list contains 66 names, second list has 22 government buildings and 20 private structures of which there are 7 churches of which the Church of Christ the King is one. Then he started explaining the predominant features of the following:

1. Baroque architecture
2. Military or Defense architecture
3. Palladian architecture
4. Non- Gothic structure
5. Non-Classical architecture
6. Symbolic structure

Baroque art can be seen in *NossaSennohra Da Luz* (Church of Our Lady of Light). He also said about the history of this Baroque art. The unique feature of it is the stucco steep work. *St. Mary's church* has been built in Gothic model with Roman arches. It is defence architecture. The technology they have used it is in such a way that, when it was bombed the bomb bounced, thus the building was safeguarded. In Andrew's Kirk church they have used Palladian architecture. This design was developed by Andrew Palladio. The striking features of this architecture are

1. Triangle shaped design, this shows the neo- classical model
2. Hemi-spherical dome from the top till the bottom, this resembles the Greek structure.
3. Doric, Ionian, Corinthian. They are constructed with 150 pillars



The church of *Christ the King* is a replica of Ulm minister in Germany. The significant features are: *German spire, wheel window, flying buttresses, Gothic model land set, etc.* The very appearance of this church gives the ultimate view of a naval battle ship.

Dr. Antony Paul sincerely thanked for the rare opportunity given to him by the Head of the Department Dr. Selvanathan.



The vote of thanks was delivered by Dr. I. Princes. The series of endowment lectures came to a successful end with the National Anthem.

