

Mother Cesira Gallina – The foundress

Mother Cesira, the foundress of this reputed institution, a Salesian sister – Daughter of Mother Mary Help of Christians, was driven by an unwavering commitment to ameliorate the lives of the less fortunate. Mother Cesira was a dedicated Salesian Sister who exhibited boundless love and compassion, serving as a nurturing figure to countless orphans. Her fervent commitment extended beyond caregiving, as she also emerged as a visionary leader, a tireless educator, a magnanimous missionary, and a steadfast citizen of India. The unwavering fervor of this devout woman of faith radiated even more brightly as she embarked on the ambitious endeavor of expanding her service to humanity, with a particular focus on empowering women through the facilitation of higher education.

In the annals of 1952, a pivotal moment emerged when the Salesian sisters felt compelled to labor tirelessly in pursuit of noble causes, driven by their unwavering commitment to their country, its people, and their profound devotion to the Almighty. With the expansion of Vellore town northward and allocation of land for the establishment of higher education institutions, a proposal from the government, influenced by the sisters' commendable track record in North Arcot suggested that the Salesian sisters extend their educational mission into the domain of collegiate education for women in Katpadi.

Upon receiving this charge, Mother Merlo, soon to depart for Japan, entrusted the mission to Sr. Cesira Gallina, her successor. This Italian missionary, possessing practical acumen, unyielding fortitude, foresight, and a profound sense of service, was confronted with a momentous decision. Mr. Abdul Khadir, deeply impressed by the sisters' educational endeavors in North Arcot, ardently advocated for their role as pioneers in women's collegiate education in Katpadi. In contemplative prayer and counsel with well-wishers, Sr. Cesira discerned the divine plan. The Right Reverend Dr. Louis Mathias, SDB, Archbishop of Madras, Mylapore, lent his support, further emboldening her resolve. Mother Ermelinda Lucotti, the Superior General of the Salesian Sisters, also gave her blessings.

Undeterred by discouragement and the manifold hardships they encountered, Mother Cesira Gallina, the esteemed founder, along with her steadfast companions, Sr. Nancy Pereira, Sr. Helen Fernandes, and Sr. Anna Abraham, embarked on the daunting task of transforming the barren terrain for construction, fueled by unwavering faith in the promises of Christ. On the auspicious day of April 18, 1953, Rt. Rev. Msgr. David Maria Nayagam, Bishop of Vellore, sanctified the construction site. Mother Cesira and Sr.

Helen tirelessly navigated government offices to fulfill the requisite formalities for launching a college. The indefatigable St. Nancy, working alongside laborers day and night, bore witness to miraculous occurrences, bestowed by the blessings of Mother Mary.