

Thiru S. X. Swamikannu Endowment Lecture

Thiru S. X. Swamikannu Endowment Lecture is organised every year in honour of the Father of Rev. Fr. Xavier Alphonse, Principal (1992-1995) and member of English Department, Loyola College. Both staff and students of English Literature participated in the lecture organized on Feb 11, 2020 for this year. The speaker of the day was Dr Joseph Dorairaj, Dean, School of Languages, at Gandhigram Rural University, Dindigul with a stint of acting Vice Chancellor in the academic year 2013-2014.

Welcoming and introducing the guest speaker, Dr K. S. Antonysamy, Head, Department of English also iterated the idea of Thomas De Quincey's differentiation on literature of power and literature of knowledge. He further put forth intricate questions on theory, criticism and after theory for audience to mull over before the lecture of Dr Joseph Dorairaj.

Dr Joseph Dorairaj highlighted the significance of reading theories in English Literature classroom. Enumerating on the topic, *Orientation to Theory: Classical to Modern*, he referred to the book, *The Mirror and the Lamp* by M H Abrams, a veteran critic, writer and poet. He stressed relevance of theory dividing the field of study into four sects, positioning it as follows- theory as mimetic, theory as formalistic, theory as expressive and theory as pragmatics. Mimetic theory was

being referred to as life and reality, formalistic was to the texts, expressive theory was to author and pragmatics was to reader. He eventually stroke the balance by situating theory into modern literary studies with appropriate note to literary canon, metanarratives and semantic autonomy. His talk was so laudable as he was suggestive that literary theory is being imbibed from the vast field of sociology, anthropology, psychology, linguistics and semantics. The students were involved with rapt attention and clarifications at the end. His presentation was so engaging and engrossing.