

# Beyond THE GREY SHIRT

FATIMA OLD BOYS' ASSOCIATION // NEWSLETTER

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ISSUE

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## COMMEMORATIVE ISSUE

### The Principal's address

**The year 2020 marks the 75th Jubilee of Fatima College. It began with our Anniversary Mass on Friday January 17th with the Archbishop Jason Gordon as Chief Celebrant assisted by three other Bishops, Archbishop Harris, Bishop Galt and Bishop Llanos of St. John's, Antigua himself a Fatima Old Boy. Also present were the Superior General of the Holy Ghost Fathers Fr. John Fogarty, whose official visit coincided with that of the Anniversary Celebration. Priests of the Diocese, Government officials, Religious Sisters, Old Boys, parents, teachers and students of the College.**

This splendid evening culminated with a cocktail reception in the quadrangle. Little did we know that this would possibly be the only official function of the Jubilee year! We did have our Sports Day and Carnival Show, both branded with the Anniversary Logo; and, the Old Boys hosted the Annual Carnival Fete.

Then came March 12th. This period provided us with an opportunity to stand back and reflect on our purpose as an institution. I am proud to say that the response of the College

to the Pandemic was exceptional. We were able to conquer many of the obstacles that presented themselves, and to continue the excellence that is our tradition at Fatima.

Mention must be made of the devoted staff at Fatima College—all hands were on deck in the response to our online initiative. Classes were conducted every day ending at mid-day for Forms 1 to 4; Forms 5 and 6 had already completed the syllabus and so were given past papers and class sessions in the afternoon.

Every aspect of College life was held online, from Monday Morning Assembly, to Heads and Deans Meetings, Parents Meetings, Prefects Meetings the Career Day (postponed from April to May), Marian Devotions, Mother's Day, and Father's Day celebrations.

The new Academic year, which began on September 1st, showed us the stark reality that virtual teaching and learning would continue for some time. On Friday 28th August the staff met with Fr. Matthew D'Hereaux, an Old Boy. He posed a challenge to us: that this experience should not merely be consigned



to memory but must be of meaning, both personally and communally. This exhortation has influenced our operations for the past two months.

The Jubilee has called us to reflect upon our practice at Fatima—why do we do what we do. Over the decades, the College has sought to offer a quality education.

The Teachers who have worked here have shown a dedication and commitment beyond comparison. In more recent years, the support of the parents have led to a collaboration that serves as a model for parental school involvement. Our Old Boys Association has a synergy with the College Administration that can only

be described as perfect. Lastly, our students have proven time and time again that those to whom much is given, much is expected. It is always heartening to see their response when a challenge is put before them. Fatima Boys truly answer the call fearlessly.

Fatima was born in the final year of the Second World War, a year of trial and of triumph. Seventy-five years later, we face a different trial, confident that we will conquer.

May Our Lady of Fatima continue to inspire all. In addition, may the words of our motto ring ever true *“Nitendo Vinces.”*

**Fr. Gregory Augustine**  
Principal

## Fatima College History—Archbishop Jason Gordon

I ENTERED FATIMA COLLEGE IN 1971. AND THINGS WERE VERY DIFFERENT IN THOSE DAYS.



**There was no Audio-Visual room, no Sixth Form block, and the ‘Tuck Shop’ was a little space to buy with nowhere to sit! There were no buildings on the northern boundary, nor on the northwest. There were only three classrooms downstairs, and the 3X classrooms were upstairs. So, in terms of physical space, the school has grown significantly since my time as a student.**

On the eastern boundary, there was the Hall, the Physics Lab, a hut for the Dean of Form Six, and one classroom. Notably missing from today’s picture are the rows and rows of bicycle sheds that once occupied the space where the Form Six block now stands.

School began at 8:15 and if I arrived with my bike at 8:10 it was difficult to find a parking spot. When I left Fatima in 1978, there was only one bike shed on the northern boundary and you could have picked any place to park your bike at any time of the day. This is the most profound image of the school’s transformation during the seven years that I was there.

In 1971, Fatima was a sort of ‘village school’ with boys coming mainly from the communities around. St. James, Mucurapo, Woodbrook, Newtown, St. Clair, and Belmont. Most boys had bikes and that was their main form of transportation. On the way to school, you would always meet someone either riding or walking. After school, there was always a band of brothers in khaki and grey making their way home through Woodbrook and onwards to areas e.g. Newtown. This allowed a great freedom for after school activities. However, when parents began to pick-up their sons from school, this freedom was challenged.

When I left Fatima, there was a traffic jam every morning and evening as boys were dropped-off and picked-up every day. This

was the transformation in Trinidad and Tobago during those years. We went from mixed communities, that operated as a village where the lawyer and servant lived in the same community and worshiped in the same church, to the urban sprawl, where we moved into communities defined by social class and upward mobility.

I was a Scout, and that really shaped the way I experienced College life. We went where our bikes took us—swimming, rowing, camping and down-the-islands were our main activities. Formation was what Fr. Girod drilled into us during Scout meetings and ‘Christophers’—a weekly meeting of spirituality that gave us the opportunity to grow in our faith.

Fr. Ryan, the Principal, went to Ireland during the August holidays of 1971 and never returned. So, when I entered Fatima Mr. Clive Pantin, was the first lay Principal of the school. In the beginning, there were no female teachers. That changed, and well... the boys were delighted. When Ms. Kelsick, Zakour and Harewood joined the staff the boys tested them at every turn. But we soon got accustomed to the female teachers, and them to us.

Mr. Pantin, like your current Principal Fr Gregory, commanded the respect of all the boys. He was an innovative leader. He instituted an Activity period on Wednesday afternoons.

During that period, you could have chosen from over 50 different activities/skills that interested you, included: chess, football, table tennis, swimming, music, steelpan, drama, and auto-mechanics. The idea was to expose the student to a wider education in areas in which he/she may have had an interest but no opportunity to pursue.

By the end of my time at Fatima, lots of fathers who attended St. Mary's College were now sending their children to Fatima.

Today, thanks to the leadership of Fr. Gregory and his staff, Fatima is now a first-choice school for many boys from all over our country.

**The Most Reverend  
Dr. Charles Jason Gordon**  
Archbishop of Port of Spain  
Class of 1976/1978

## Reflection - Fatima College's 75th Anniversary

AS WE CELEBRATE FATIMA'S COLLEGE'S 75TH ANNIVERSARY, I AM MOVED TO REMEMBER MY OWN COLLEGE DAYS BETWEEN 1970-1977 WHEN THINGS WERE SOMEWHAT DIFFERENT FROM TODAY.

**It was a real transitional period from priests and Irish prefects to mostly lay teachers with Mr. Clive Pantin, its new principal. Latin was no longer taught, and the college had female teachers for the first time. At that time, Fatima College excelled in football, cricket, the Music Festival, and the National Drama Festival and Mr. Holman started up the College Steelband. They were great times. Fatima seemed to be changing at a rapid pace and developing for the better during those years. Clearly, a foundation was being built upon which the College would develop into the great institution it is today.**

For obvious reasons, that is, to keep pace with a rapidly developing and changing world, Fatima College is now structurally and technologically quite different from the Fatima of my school days. I believe that Fatima's status as a premier educational institution in Trinidad and Tobago is in no small way due to the effective involvement of the Fatima Old Boys' Association over the years. Committed principals and the many members of staff who loved their school over the years have all made this possible.

More important for me, however, and what stands out even more is what has not changed and what makes Fatima the special school that it is. It is Fatima's ability to maintain a healthy balance between the spiritual, intellectual, physical, and psychological development of its students. There is a discipline in the school that is possible because the ethos of Fatima College over the years favours the student as a person. This has not changed even though the school has advanced in many ways, and this is a good thing.

My hope for Fatima in the future is that it would continue to seek out excellence in all its programs. Even though the challenges ahead appear to be very difficult and overwhelming, that Fatima will remain anchored in what is tried and tested, what builds faith and hope and what gives moral grounding to its staff and students. In the end, if Fatima nurtures in its students a spirit of service and justice in its pursuit of excellence, it has done well.

May our Lady of Fatima  
protect and bless her school  
in the years to come.



**Bishop Robert A. J. Llanos**  
Diocese of St. John's-Basseterre  
Class of 1975/1977



## Seventy-Five and Striving on STILL!!!

**Dear Reader, Greetings. I hope this celebratory message finds you safe and well in the midst of these difficult pandemic times.**

Trusting that all is indeed well with you, I would like to express my sincere and heartfelt congratulations to Father Gregory Augustine, the Principal, and all the Faculty } of Fatima College on the 75th Anniversary of the College's founding.

I think you will agree with me that when we conceptualize time, more so in relation to the human timespan, the absolute number of 75 years brings to mind a time when life begins to slow down a bit, scaling back on both one's activities and commitments. I am quite happy to say that this is not the case in the Fatima-sphere! Everything I've been privy to during my time as part of the Fatima family, especially during this most different of different years that is 2020, '75 years' in this instance speaks to growth; it speaks to an entity that has opened its wings, ready to soar to an even brighter future, ready to emphatically move forward, ready to build on its distinguished history of academic and institutional achievements.

Fatima College, already recognized country-wide as one of the most prestigious institutions of higher learning, is also recognized internationally as one of the foremost centers of academic excellence in the Caribbean. Today, our graduates can be found in leadership positions in every sector of society—from the corridors of Government, to corporate boardrooms, to cutting-edge research centers, in the media and in the entertainment industry, and virtually everywhere else in between, all over the globe.

Fatima College has continuously invested over the years in building an outstanding faculty with an amazing ability to deliver the College's balanced curriculum with its stresses on the fundamentals of higher learning—academics, religion and sports. A faculty of top notch professionals that work as a team with a singularity of focus—what is best for the students. At Fatima, we embraced the innovative steps embarked upon in 2015 with the provision of digital teaching, instituted at a time and on a

scale that it was ground-breaking for Trinidad and Tobago. The school-wide implementation of the Smart Board programme (back then was considered overly ambitious by many outside our walls!), has seen itself become the de facto norm today. With distance and tele-communicative teaching/learning being the order of these 2020 pandemic times, our leadership and faculty have already been in this vein for years. This sort of dedication to forward-thinking and enacting of innovation reaffirms our place as firm pillar of modern-day learning in our twin island Republic.

It should go without saying that an outstanding educational institution can neither be built overnight nor by a single individual. Fatima College is no exception. During the past 75 years, its place as the leading institution of higher learning in Trinidad and Tobago was secured through the hard work and selfless devotion of many. The College has been fortunate to have had the excellent leadership of former Principals; a quality present in and perpetuated by its current visionary Principal, Father Gregory.

Over the past 18 years of my involvement with the Fatima Old Boy's Association I have seen the College grow from strength to strength under Fr Gregory's astute stewardship.

As the school has grown, so too has the Association. Many of our celebrated successes over the years could not have been achieved without the support of the Principal and scores in the Fatima Community, nor without the assistance of the teachers, parents, and students when called upon, coupled with the selfless volunteerism of the members of our various Sub-Committees, plus the tireless work of the Executive and Management Committees.

I would like to thank you all sincerely for your contributions to the Association. Your assistance has helped us to help the College journey to the display of 75 years of Excellence you see here today.

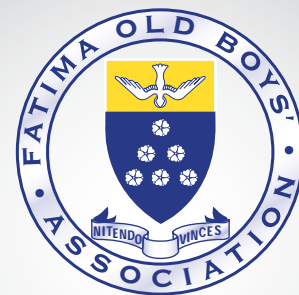
In closing, may I once again express my very best wishes to this exceptional establishment on the achievement of its 75th.



I look forward to being around to see the heights attained by the time of its centennial.

God Bless  
**Nintendo Vines.**

**Ruthven Thompson**  
President, Fatima Old Boys Association



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## Fatima 75th Anniversary — Vice-Principal

I REMEMBER THE DAY IT WAS ANNOUNCED THAT SCHOOLS WOULD BE CLOSED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE. AS I WATCHED THE STUDENTS LEAVING THAT AFTERNOON, A STRANGE SENSE OF QUIETNESS PERVADED THE SCHOOL COMPOUND. AN OMINOUS SILENCE. STILL, I NEVER BELIEVED THAT THE YEAR WOULD COME TO AN END WITHOUT FATIMA BEING ABLE TO CONTINUE CELEBRATING SUCH A MILESTONE IN ITS HISTORY. INITIALLY, THIS DISAPPOINTMENT WAS OVERWHELMING.

**However, the disappointment gave me a chance to recall the mission of the College and to realize that despite the pandemic, Fatima College has still achieved this mission.**

Staff members have come and gone in the last 75 years. Amazingly, the culture, work ethic and comradery of the staff has not changed. As the third term began in April, so did the online classes in spite of no clear mandate from the Ministry of Education to do so. The younger teachers took charge of the technology needed for delivery of online classes. Videos were created to assist those who were not as tech-savvy. Timetables were produced in record time. When it was announced that essential workers only should be on the roads, several teachers braved police checkpoints to come to school to collect books and resource materials. There was excitement amongst the teachers to learn the new platforms of instruction. Assemblies and special events continued on Zoom—as though that was how it was always done! Rosary Nights commenced, allowing us a unique opportunity to see students with their families in their homes. Students produced many memorable music videos from

their homes, these then shared and admired nationwide.

As this 75th Anniversary year comes to an end, I applaud the remarkable coming together of the Fatima Community. The Staff, Students, Old Boys and Parents all worked together to ensure continuity of our culture and ethos. I believe that this was how Our Lady intended for us to celebrate this year—maybe not with all the planned big events but with the amazing knowledge that Fatima College will always be ready to overcome any challenge!

The school grasped the opportunity this year to be a pioneer in the field of education as it has done time and time again over the last 75 years, thus fulfilling its mission even though the world continues to change so drastically. I have been on staff for almost 30 years and I have enjoyed every minute of it.

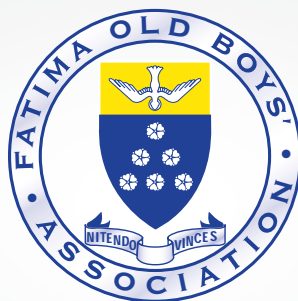
I continue to be proud to be a teacher at this amazing institution and fittingly, I take this opportunity to thank Father Gregory for his leadership, mentorship, strength and wisdom especially during this last year.



May Our Lady of Fatima always watch over our school, her College, teachers and boys...and continue to guide us as we move into the next 75 years.

**Gillian Ramdass**

Vice-Principal, Fatima College



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## Message from Parents Support Group

FOR AN INSTITUTION TO EXIST UNINTERRUPTED FOR 75 YEARS IS A GREAT ACHIEVEMENT. HOWEVER, TO CONSTANTLY DEVELOP OVER THAT TIME AND EXCEL IN PRACTICALLY EVERY SPHERE IN WHICH YOU ARE ACTIVE; IS MORE THAN AN ACHIEVEMENT—IT IS DISTINGUISHED SUCCESS.

**On behalf of the Parent Support Group of Fatima College, I want to salute our school on its success over the past 75 years.**

I came into Fatima as a student in 1982 a few years after my two older brothers had left. At that time, Fatima still seemed to carry a touch of what I would call "little brother syndrome". Often we were compared with St. Mary's College and at some level made to feel like an adolescent sibling still finding their way. Despite this, my years at Fatima were very happy ones and I often look back fondly on the many memories I have of those days.

I became a Fatima parent in 2014 and immediately noticed a significant difference in my school's demeanour. Fatima College had grown up and become an adult. Fatima is comfortable in its own skin and charts its own course...and what a wonderful journey it has been, and in what a wonderful place it is.

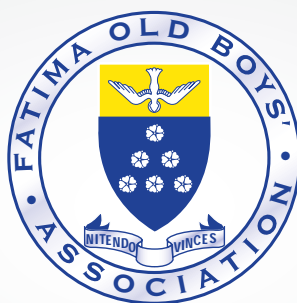
I can go on to list the numerous achievements of so many of the Old Boys, leaders and innovators in so many fields but I will leave that for the historians. What I however find even more remarkable is the spirit I see and sense

in all who come into contact with the College. There is an essence that is everywhere and in everyone who is a part of Fatima. It is in the teachers, the administration, the parents, the Old Boys and most importantly, the current crop of Fatima Boys. This spirit draws you in and let's you know that you are experiencing something special.

This did not happen overnight nor did it happen easily. It is the result of many years, many minds and many hands who have all contributed to make the College what it is today. As current members of the Fatima family, it is our job to ensure that we continue to nurture that spirit so that our beloved school endures for many years to come, to serve the students of future generations.

**Congratulations on a job exceptionally well done.  
Strive on!**

**Douglas D'Abadie**  
President  
Parents Support Group



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## Fatima 75 Testimonials – Alumni



**Ian Benjamin** (Class of 1980)

**Fatima has grown immensely and recognizably since I was a student (and briefly a teacher) at the College.** Thinking first of all of students who will go out into the world I could not be prouder of those students whom I had the privilege to teach, and see them grow to be mature men, some as fathers of Fatima boys themselves, returning to serve Fatima in various capacities as parents or past pupils. I believe that for the future, Fatima will have to rely more on the dynamics of not only the faculty and staff of the College but also its Parent Support Group and as well the Fatima Old Boys' Association.

More impressively has been the way the College has adapted. That is of course a tribute to the leadership from its Principal, Vice Principal, Deans and Heads of Departments, as well as its incredibly capable and committed staff, and the talented cohort of the student body. The College's adaptation has been more than curriculum delivery but also the rich array of cultural and co-curricular activities that showcase the students' talent, and enrich the whole of College life.

Through all of these elements working together for the upliftment and enrichment of the lives of the young men, Fatima, I hope and pray will continue to grow and evolve with the times as one of the premier educational institutions in the country.



**Dennis Ramdeen** (Class of 1975)

**Fatima has strengthened its teachers, parents and Alumni community, bringing all three arms together towards the pursuit of common goals. This means we have a more cohesive and committed community.**

Father Gregory Augustine has provided the transformational leadership to make this change possible. Each group has also supplied their own inspiring leaders to organise and mobilise their peers.

My hopes for Fatima in the future:

- That it will twin with Mucurapo Secondary, to share our experience, knowledge and resources, so as to improve the performance of their Mucurapo Secondary students;
- That we strengthen our tech/voc curriculum because not all students want to work in an office.



**Anthony Jules** (Class of 1984/1986)  
2017 Hall of Achievement Inductee

**The most striking aspect that has changed is the physical expansion of the College.** The new facilities for science and classrooms, and the general upgrade of the school has continued apace. It is wonderful to see the progress so far, and continued effort must be maintained to give future students access to the types of facilities needed to prepare for the rapidly evolving future.

In reflection/reflecting on the College's 75th Year, how has Fatima changed since you were a student, and what are your hopes for it in the future?



Another big change has happened both at Fatima and in the broader community: the shift from British based exams and preparation to a more Regionally applicable curriculum, has been a great shift. Students are better prepared for our world in the Caribbean. With that has come more acceptance and expectation for local and Regional primacy.

What strikes me however, is that some of the things have remained the same. Fatima College is still focused on building well-rounded, principled young men who care about their religion and their community, and who are committed to striving for excellence in all of the highly varied enterprises in which they engage. Strive on Fatima Boys. Strive On.



**Dominic Hadeed** (Class of 1991)  
2015 Hall of Achievement Inductee

**Oh how they have changed over the years—and changed for the better!**

When I attended Fatima, the school was still considered a "top school" but it honestly lagged behind a couple of other schools in North Trinidad and a few in South Trinidad, against whom Fatima is usually compared for multiple reasons. It felt to me that the

school was living off its past greatness, and the actions and efforts of the leadership at the time when I attended, were not contributing to sustaining the past greatness of Fatima, definitely were not contributing to strengthening the reputation of the College going forward. But that is no longer the case today, —Fatima is on top and deservedly so!

In my view, the Fatima that I see today is leaps and bounds ahead of what I experienced when I attended, and the students that graduate today are far more well-rounded and prepared to face the challenges and opportunities that they will encounter in this world. Fatima's history has shown that getting to the top is actually a lot easier than staying at the top. So I do hope and pray that the monumental efforts and attributes that were displayed by the leadership, faculty, parents and past students over the recent years are well documented, understood and cherished. And that everyone in the future who is privileged to have the opportunity to be involved in any aspect of Fatima, will do so with pride, care, passion and honour.

This I wish so that Fatima's present leadership position and its life changing contribution to the students, for their invaluable contribution to the wider society of Trinidad and Tobago and the Caribbean, not only remains intact, but can continue to improve over the coming decades, just as it has over the past decades.



**Robert Wickham** (Class of 1986/1988)  
2015 Hall of Achievement Inductee

**Incredibly, it has been almost 35 years since I was a student at Fatima College. During this time, the most dramatic change has been the faces in the staff room. Gone are the titans of our era - Garcia, Ramdass, Sunderji, Romero, Joseph, Achille, Girod and of course Moore**

- to name just a few. These faces were emblematic of what Fatima represents - teachers with the passion, devotion and commitment to nurture, mould and develop the next generation of T&T men. My hope is that whilst the faces of the faculty may have changed, this fundamental mission that sets Fatima apart will continue to endure.



**Kwame Ryan** (Class of 1985)  
2015 Hall of Achievement Inductee

**For me, Fatima College in 2020 fulfills a lot of the promise it showed in the 80s.** It seems to offer more to a wider range of student, and ask more of the individual student. My sense is that because the College understands and communicates its values and ethos so clearly, the boys can identify and adopt the role model of their choice. It's great to see.



**Dr. Andre Cropper** (Class of 1978)  
2015 Hall of Achievement Inductee

**On my return to Trinidad after leaving Fatima College in 1978 to pursue a career in Engineering and Science (based on the love for Math and Science which was nurtured and developed at Fatima College along with my Core Values), I was extremely excited to observe the addition of the Computer Lab and Science Wing. These were not present when I attended Fatima.** I was also impressed with the extra Music class option/activities, and the development/adaptation of the

Electronic Classrooms. Also, the diversification of the Teaching Staff has changed to include more female teachers. Overall, the school has grown steadily to be one which gives me great satisfaction to declare myself an "Old Boy". I am proud to be part of the many former students who have attained excellence in our chosen careers all over the world, and I know that the future is in good hands. God Bless and Happy 75th!



**Mitchell De Silva** (Class of 1989/1991)

**As I sit at my desk, with my son's school tie draped around my neck, (yes, I still have to organize his tie for him when he wears his dress uniform!) reflecting on this question I realize many things have changed since I left.** The introduction of a dress uniform for one, the pervasive use of technology in delivering education, the new wing, revamped hall, Air Condition(!) in the classrooms...the list goes on. These physical differences are easy for me to see, appreciate and admire. That said, what is more astounding to me, is how much has not changed.

As I relive my time at the College through my son's experiences, I have come to recognize that there is a culture to the school that has defied time; the boys seem to laugh at the same things we did, the staff room continues to be filled with personalities that you will remember for the rest of your life, and the Principal seems to know everyone by name. My son may perceive that what he lives now, will be unique to him. Like me, I hope as he interacts with boys from different years he will come to see that what the school offers is a lifelong bond to it and the friends that he will make there. This is the essence of the College, its ability to defy time and circumstance. As I look to the future I draw inspiration from the College song and I pray that we remain... "Fearless and true loyal to you..." Strive on Fatima Boys, Strive On!!!





### **Dr. Alvin Corneal HBM**

(Class of 1953/1955)

2015 Hall of Achievement Inductee

**I am pleased to express my congratulations to the staff, members of the FOBA and the students of the Fatima College on their 75th Anniversary.**

It was in the year 1949 that I had the opportunity to attend the school. There was the anxiety of my parents starting my Secondary School education in an institution which had already been ranked as a top College in the country. The seven years which I spent in this wonderful environment showed me priests, lay Masters and many vibrant young men, all seemingly expecting brilliant futures prior to moving on.

What I enjoyed and properly understood was the excellence of the teachers in each of the classrooms and the solemn atmosphere demanded by the Principal (Fr. Brett at the time) and the other Catholic priests who were rendering yeomen service. My classroom work had been good for me among some of the truly advanced guys in class. I was able to measure Sport as my extra curriculum as that had seemed to be more demanding than even my classroom work.

There was no doubt that the success of the school in the classroom still allowed the student to express ourselves and enjoy our days in sport events, seeing them as an ideal part to school life. My seven-year term at the institution was filled with almost every bit of Sport, Music, Choir, and numerous other forms of participation which had produced some excellent students. The expansion of my College activity after reaching form five was with an average level of performance as the College was pointing students towards a higher quality.

My life was aided by what appeared to be the natural requirement for moving ahead in academic achievements—something which the school espouses even up to this day. In hindsight, my 60 years have taken me to numerous areas of sporting life—an experience which allowed many of the lads during my era to make themselves legends, and carry the image of Fatima to the highest point.

Having been appointed to a position of Head Soccer coach at the North Carolina State University, I spent a period of seven years not only teaching and coaching soccer to the students, but demonstrating to them the enormous benefits of utilizing various methods in forms of study from some of the finest professors at universities in the USA and Europe.

This is my Proposal for LFC: an institute of Education, Art and Culture, with Sport generally. Try it Fatima.

The years ahead will produce even more professors and head coaches internationally. I am certain that successful past students who have contributed amazingly, will be pleased to offer more of their inspiration to turn the future Fatima College students into some of the best all-round personalities in the world. Thank you.



### **Fr. Harold Imamshah** (Class of 1975)

Servant of Mary for Jesus

**One remarkable change in current Fatima College life from the time I was a student in the Class of '75, is the absolutely enjoyable very cultural Annual Concerts—filled with a wonderful blend of Music and Drama by both Fatima boys and Holy Name girls. Of course, a major good and welcome change have come from the dynamic leadership of Fr. Gregory Augustine, former Fatima boy.**

The College Hall, with its mezzanine and renovated Stage, adds charm and beauty, as does the artistically renewed Chapel interior, bringing fresh life to this 75-year-old edifice.

The unique use of the quadrangle and back lawn for the Opening Mass of the 75th Anniversary was a nice surprise. Humbly,



### **Nesta Boxhill aka Sekon Sta**

(Class of 2006)

**This is yuh boy Sekon Sta! Well actually, this is Nesta Boxhill as my teachers would say, a former Fatima student and proud Fatima Alumnus. I'm so happy that we are celebrating 75 years now as it is an absolutely amazing accomplishment.** Given the contributions we have made to the society, it speaks volumes.

What has changed since I left is that the Old Boys have been definitely doing a lot—there is a new wing, the TD classes are better outfitted (up to the times), we have AC in the class rooms, smartboards and even an upgraded basketball court.

We also have our contributions to Carnival with our great All Inclusive which is one the largest and best fetes for the entire year!! There have been so many impressive changes since I left school, I think that Fatima has to continue in this direction, with each generation making it better. Once we play our part as Old Boys, the school only has further to go. Through the guidance of God, and the leadership of Fr. Gregory, we will succeed, because Fatima Boys Are Good Boys.

Yuh know, I think we should change that "Good" to Great Boys now!

## Fatima 75 Testimonials – Teachers



**Marian Hubbard, Former teacher and Dean** (Retired 2013 after 34 years service)

Each generation of Fatima's administration and students regard their era as the best, the most progressive, the most innovative. And yes, this is true. But each generation has contributed to the improvement and modernisation of the physical and academic infrastructure.

However, what has never changed and has kept Fatima grounded, is the deeply entrenched, all encompassing, Catholic principles and values, laid down since its inception 75 years ago.

No matter what the physical and human challenges faced, these moral and spiritual tenets have remained steadfast, and are the bedrock on which the successes of the College are based.

It was the guiding force of Fatima in the past. It is still so in the present. It will continue to be in the future.



**Francisco Garcia, Former teacher** (Retired 2013 after 41 years service)

I left Sixth Form, St. Mary's College, in June 1972 and took up an undergraduate teaching post at Fatima College in Sep-

tember 1972. In that era, the academic combatants were St. Mary's College and Presentation College San Fernando. 'Girl' schools were yet to emerge as top academic achievers, and only eight national scholarships were awarded along with one girl's scholarship.

I first taught lower form Science and Mathematics for one year and then returned in September 1976 as a graduate Physics and Mathematics teacher assigned to Sixth Form Physics and Mathematics. I began noticing that some of our top O Level Science performers were transferring to St. Mary's College; and I recall that two of the transferred students went on to win the two National Science Scholarships offered at the time! This shook me, yet it seemed to make little depressive impression on the Fatima administration. Upon further consideration of this apathy, I realized that the culture at Fatima was one of producing good, all-round students although it often came at the seeming expense of academic excellence.

My own competitive nature drove me to try to challenge this culture for more positive change, as I felt that there was no need to sacrifice any part of a student's education to achieve excellence in all parts. Other members of staff shared my vision, and collectively, we began to reposition the teaching approach. As a result, Fatima's academic profile began to improve well into the 1980s and beyond. I make reference to one particular student, Robert Wickham, who is an exemplar of what can be achieved by striving for excellence in all aspects of life. His record is well documented under FOBA website and he is one of the first inductees into their Hall of Achievement.

I retired in 2013, but noticed in my last 10 years or so, a decline in the academic hunger that was catalysed in the 80's. This diminishing trend occurred despite the College attracting the best students at the Form 1 level in the northwest region. In fact, a wider examination of secondary school performance highlighted that there was a general decline in performance among male students in the North-West, the reason or reasons for which are yet not fully known. Addressing the problem(s) has been a high priority for the school. It is a topic that has generated much discussion,

In reflection/reflecting on the College's 75th year, how has Fatima changed from your unique perspective as a teacher, and what are your hopes for it in the future?

and Principals Mr. Anthony Garcia and Fr. Gregory Augustine have worked tirelessly to identify solutions.

Fatima's location, physical geography and its beautiful adjacent playfield have significantly lent to its attraction over the years; and these factors have undoubtedly contributed to its immense successes. Not only have we pioneered and excelled globally in many areas of education, but we have also produced world-class athletes in a variety of sporting areas.

The ever-growing interest and involvement of Staff, Old Boys and parents cannot be underestimated, because it has only been through collective action that the school has continued to develop and achieve.

Fundraising activities mandated by the Concordat have helped to provide all that is required to maintain and improve the education program and physical plant of the school. The successive Principals have all gone beyond the call of duty to contribute to the school's legacy, and to making Fatima College a school that any student would be proud to attend.

Under the current leadership of Fr. Gregory, the institution has continued to transition into the new demands of the digital age. With the ongoing investments being made, Fatima College has positioned itself to ensure that both current and future generations of young men will have a school that affords them the opportunity to realize their full potentials – academically and otherwise.

Strive on Fatima Boys, Strive on...



**Glen Roach, Former teacher**

(Retired 2008 after 36 years service)

The story of Fatima is aptly captured in the school's motto, *Nitendo Vinces*. Fatima is decorated with many impressive buildings, most notably the new Form Six wing housing classrooms, Art and Drama rooms and FOBA's office. This is a college that started in a simple two room building in the compound of St Theresa Intermediate.

To the north stood the bicycle shed and the carpenter's work space. Today some students drive to school. Then, many students and a few teachers rode to school. Remember, students generally came from Woodbrook and St James.

I joined this great institution in 1972 and my first class was in the "African Hut". This was a building situated between the Physics Lab and the AV Centre, then under construction. It was a Form Six classroom and the Dean's office. I am sure this building inspired Arrow to compose *Hot, Hot, Hot*. It was later demolished to make way for the Science Lab, sponsored by the Amar Foundation. The Form Four Dean's office was the site of the Cafeteria, managed by Miss Campbell.

In the Seventies, I was privileged to work with Fr Farfan, Fr Brett, Fr Charles, Fr Girrod, Fr Theodore, Fr O'Dwyer and Fr DeFour. Fr Corcoran lived in Fatima but he had stopped teaching. Fr Farfan, in particular, never hesitated to remind us that this was a Catholic School. In fact he became a spiritual advisor to many of us. We became members of the Legion of Mary which enriched our spiritual and social life. The day

he realized that I loved stale jokes, we became the best of friends.

Fatima was designed to create a sense of community, cooperation and informality. The buildings surround an open space which leads to easier interaction amongst the student body. 1972 Fatima was an all-male staff, the only female employee was the secretary, Miss King now Mrs Garcia. We organized a football game between the new staff and the old staff. They destroyed us. Their team comprised Fr Farfan, Clive Pantin, Mervyn Moore, Ray Holman and Francis John. Fr Farfan was the goalie and not even a young Francisco Garcia could get past him. In 1973 we welcomed our first female teachers, Daphne Heywood and Jeanette Zakour. Today Fatima's Vice Principal is a female, Gillian Ramdass and previously Anne Gomes -Phillips held the post.

How does Fatima of the Seventies compare with the Fatima of today? The institution is a modernized plant with cutting edge technology. We once had a typing room. Now we have a Computer Lab. The personnel have moved on but the culture, philosophy and core values of the school have remained intact. Fatima has struck a delicate balance between upholding traditions, keeping apace of curriculum changes and responding to contemporary needs and challenges.

Fatima's response to the COVID-19 pandemic has been remarkable and inspiring. Fatima is first and foremost a Catholic School, a fact emphasized by all the Principals. The Catholic Ethos is very strong. It has always been so. The students are exposed to Catholic culture and traditions and partake in daily prayer, retreats, Holy Mass, Stations of the Cross and praying of the Rosary. The Liturgical Calendar is rigorously observed. The welfare of the students is at the heart of Fatima's philosophy. "For the good of the boys" was a statement that we heard quite frequently. "Every student counts" was another.

Boys participate in a wide and varied range of activities. Students must enjoy their school life. There is something for everyone. Students are also prepared for a life of earned leisure.

Support groups are vital to the success of a school. Fatima is fortunate to have a vibrant Parents Support Group and a dynamic, business-like, forward thinking Old Boys Association. They have assumed responsibility for sporting and major capital projects in the school.

Fatima has an excellent Religion Programme designed to suit the needs of each Form. This was once the domain of the clergy but in the Eighties, lay teachers were asked to get more involved. Students leave Fatima with a solid grounding in the Catholic Faith and the Catholic perspective on major issues.

The spirit of family is very powerful in Fatima. All activities bring together the entire community whether Mayfair, All Inclusive, Graduations, Cook Out or Sports Days. Fatima has a rich social calendar. There is always something to look forward to in this institution.

Fatima's future is very bright. All the ingredients are there for it to remain a foremost educational institution that cares about its pupils—viz., visionary leadership, dedicated staff, meaningful structures, clear objectives, supportive parents, past pupils, a rich culture and solid traditions, guided by the teachings of Jesus Christ.

Fatima has always had a committed and hardworking staff with a special love for the school. It is something that impressed me when I joined Fatima's staff. The teachers virtually lived in Fatima. They were in Fatima at all hours and on Saturdays. This trend has continued with the present crop of teachers.

(Of course it is difficult now with the COVID restrictions, but we know the spirit is there!)





**Harry Ramdass, Former teacher and Dean** (Retired 2010 after 39 years service)  
2015 Hall of Achievement Inductee

**Fatima, the 'school of choice' today, has over the years, undergone many changes from the Sixties, quite a few innovative: the "tuck shop" is now the Form Four Dean's office, the Form Five Dean's office is now the computer office.**

Fatima was one of the first schools in the country to establish a language lab and to introduce Computer Science. The former accountant's office is now part of the computer lab layout. The Form Six block alongside the river was the students' bicycle shed. The "Grey Pocket" and outlying paved area served also as a bicycle shed reserved for teachers (Masters). If a student dared to park there he did so at his own risk! The carpark in the courtyard was once a full-fledged lawn tennis court where on many an afternoon students and teachers would engage in friendly competition. The grass quadrangle outside the form one was the home of many a baseball game until the introduction of the popular Form One midday league. Not only have there been changes to the existing structure but recent construction has seen the addition of a new wing and a mezzanine in the College Hall.

Fatima can also boast of being one of the few schools with an Old Boys' Office on the compound. Sports is no longer confined mainly to cricket and football; at present there are approximately 25 supervised activities from which to choose. In Sport, the school has produced several national and world class athletes in swimming, badminton, tennis, hockey, track and field, cricket, and football. It continues to supply the business world with young academics of vision and integrity, and probably, most of all, young men who quietly and unreservedly give of themselves without any thought of reward.

The success of this hallowed institution is sorely indebted to its innovative leaders and diligent staff over the years. Lest we forget, they include: Fr. Byrne our founder, Fr. Ryan, Fr. Farfan. Mr. Pantin, Mr. Moore, Mr. Garcia and our present dynamic duo of Fr. Gregory Augustine and Mrs. Gillian Ramdass.

Is it any wonder that it continues to be the 'school of choice', seeing the 'repertoire' of these illustrious leaders? The dedication and quiet perseverance of leaders and staff continue to propel our students to strive for excellence in all spheres.

Congratulations on a milestone built on hard work! May Our Lady of Fatima continue to shower us with her blessings and guide us daily in all that we do.

Happy 75th Anniversary!



**Mervyn Achille, Former teacher** (Retired 2005 after 34 years service)

**In mid 1965, the curriculum offered was the Cambridge GCE grammar type education which catered for the professions of Law, Medicine, Teaching and Engineering as well as the Public Service and Banking jobs.**

Higher Certificate (HC), the forerunner of GCE 'A' Level was limited to Science (Maths, Physics, Chemistry) and Languages (Latin, French, Spanish, Economics). Biology at 'A' Level was added in the early 1970's so students who wanted to do Medicine no longer had to go to St. Mary's College to study 'A' Level Biology.

Blessed with Educational Visionaries as were Fr. Gerard Farfan and Clive Pantin, Fatima saw the introduction of a language lab for foreign languages, Audio Visual facilities and the transformation of the choice

of subjects for 'O' and 'A' Level. This resulted in a Timetable nightmare (or daymare!) which saw the mass movement of students from Forms 4 to 6 after every period compared to the old method where only the teachers would be moving.

The beauty of this change was that students could choose any subject they wanted, and not be constrained by the subject groupings at 'A' Level.

Attempts were made by our visionaries to introduce Technical/Vocational subjects to our curriculum but approval was not granted by the Ministry of Education (who told us to send our students to the Comprehensive schools!). Our workshops for those subjects were to be built on lands across the river.

An activity period was introduced on Wednesdays after lunch, to which students would be assigned. Ms. Heywood taught them pastry-making. Neal and Massy sent their chief Auto Mechanic Instructor Mr. Roderick Haynes to help. Technical drawing was started after school by retired Mr. Edwards until it was put on the daily timetable.

The late 1970s also saw changes in staff as female teachers joined the team. Changes in syllabus and curriculum saw students such as Brian Morris, Marlon HooFat, Anthony Jules form their computer club and with the advent of Fr. De Four we grew to be even prouder of our Computer Facilities. As we move into the new millennium, we are being bombarded daily with demands for a change to the Education System. Yet, not one of these protestors has offered an alternative or a solution.

We have to ask ourselves: what type of citizens do we wish to produce? What curriculum will produce a well-rounded citizen? Do we want disciples of Mammon? Or, do we educate to fill the job market?

Fortunately for us, our late Principal Mr. Mervyn Moore has shown us how we have to be our brother's keeper. We must never lose sight of that. We must revisit our plans for a quasi-technical institute with hybrid/electrical cars, hydroponics farming and solar-powered homes becoming the norm. We have to be the leader.



**Fenrick DeSilva, Class of 1965**

**Former teacher** (Retired 2005 after 34 years of service)

**Fatima College was just 15-years-old when I entered Form 1A in 1960. It was a bewildering moment for me, coming as I did from a little country school...and one week late to boot!**

I settled in fairly quickly and soon realized that foreign languages came naturally to me. In Form One at that time, Spanish and Latin were the foreign languages introduced, with French being added in Form Two. For one group of students, that experience only arrived in the Third Form. That was because for the first time (if my memory serves me correctly), the school took the decision to fast-track an entire class. I was among that group of students that became known as the "X" class. So we all did our Form Five exam, known then as Senior Cambridge, after four years. And we did very well! For me opting to do languages as my "choice" subjects was a no-brainer, as was continuing in that vein in the Sixth Form. Then came another "upheaval in the routine.

On entering the Sixth Form, we were told that a switch was being made from the Cambridge Examination body which held their exams in November/December, to the GCE exams body and their exams were mid-year. So here we were again, with an exam preparation-time challenge. But, again with God's help, and really dedicated teachers, we overcame.

It was the practice of the College administration at that time to employ Sixth Form graduates, many of whom would use the opportunity to save what they could, or simply to get work experience before heading off to other pastures. For me, that meant that five and a half years after occupying that second to last desk in 1A, Room #19, next to the door, I was being

introduced to the student body assembled in the hall, along with other colleagues who had opted to take the option offered, as a new member of staff...complete in long sleeved white shirt and tie!

In the staff room it was bizarre—for me at least, now being encouraged and even expected to address senior teachers as 'Clive' (Pantin) and 'Mervyn' (Moore) among others. Clive was "sir", my Spanish teacher just two months before! However, it was the start of a journey that ended in September 2005—40 satisfying years!

The all-male staff was made up mostly of St Mary's and Fatima alumni as lay-staff, as well as a healthy representation of priests and ecclesiastical prefects, mainly from Ireland, with a few locals among them. The late Archbishop Anthony Pantin (hopefully soon-to-be Venerable!) was teaching us French in the Sixth Form when his appointment was confirmed.

We worked long hours by today's standards, 8:10 to 3:25, and stayed back on Friday afternoons to 'fill out Judgment Books'. My memories are of a hard-working group of diligent, committed people under the guidance of a firm Principal, Fr. J.H. Ryan. My personal experience with him as a student and as a teacher was that beneath his stern exterior, there was a kind heart.

We also had fun. Teachers were referred to as "Masters" and so there was the "Masters' room" instead of "staff room"; and the annual "Masters-Students Football Match" was always a big draw. Also, annually and usually around Christmas time, there would be two socials: one for the lay-staff sponsored by the clergy and the other with the lay-staff returning the gesture.

The big change came, of course, when the College began to employ female staff.

We had already begun welcoming onto the staff individuals from other than the Fatima/St Mary's pool; then inevitably, the all-male tradition broke. In the early to mid-Seventies, we welcomed our first female members of staff. We got a female secretary-typist and three female teachers. What worked for us as a group of teachers was that there was always an atmosphere in our staff room that was almost divinely designed to break down barriers and so new staff soon became "old" staff. On the lighter side though, as the ladies num-

bers increased and their voices collectively began to demand to be taken seriously in the running of the annual sports meeting there was an undercurrent of grumbling from some quarters—"This is a boy school; they want to turn this into a girl school with sports" (referencing march-past activities and some of the events which were considered 'alien' to a sports meeting for teenage boys!).

However, I daresay the College has benefitted tremendously from its efforts to adapt and has continued to stride forward in what Fatima has always prided itself in being: a well-rounded institution that has managed over the years of its existence to fulfil its mission, due in no small measure to the diligence and dedication of its staff. Over my years on the job, I have seen people from many different backgrounds come into our staffroom and fit right into the ethos that has characterized this institution, plus with a zeal that ensured more often than not, the success of that mission.

Fatima did not confine its efforts and its zeal to within the College walls. The school reached out to our 'neighbours' in several ways. There was an initiative which saw a group of the then Mucurapo Junior Sec. enter into our Fourth Form stream; and who could forget the "A La Orden" series of Spanish lessons?! Our football field even became the Senior Comprehensive 'home' ground.

Meanwhile, in the College several groundbreaking achievements were being racked up. We setup a language lab, a first among Secondary Schools; later, in our Computer Lab (another innovative first), we would play host to students from several schools that were not yet so equipped. In our new building bordering the river, complete with Library, Chem. Lab and classrooms, we established an Audio-visual Center which became a 'nursery' for talent from which the national broadcasting industry benefitted for many years.

It is said that where there is no vision the people perish...so without much fanfare, the College over the years has managed to stay relevant to the demands of the time and even forge ahead with an uncanny perception of what is needed. From a past when, for example the Sixth Form was either languages or science, the College's

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In reflection/reflecting on the College's 75th year, how has Fatima changed from your unique perspective as a Secretary, and what are your hopes for our College in the future?

”



**Kathy Ann Garcia** (Retired 2008 after 37 years service)

**I entered Fatima College in 1971, replacing Mr. Ormond Gabriel as Secretary. Fr. Ryan, who was the Principal, welcomed me into the Fatima Family and I was immediately accepted by the Teaching Staff and students. At that time, there were no women at Fatima, either in the Teaching profession or in a secretarial capacity.**

There were priests and Prefects at Fatima during that period. Fr Ryan explained to me that I was now a member of the Fatima Family and as such I was to carry out my duties with distinction. He expected only perfection in whatever function I was to perform at the school.

In those days, the priests and Prefects occupied the top floor, the teaching and secretarial staff occupied the first floor and the kitchen staff were on the ground floor. The printing room was located on the top floor. I was expected to wear several hats apart from my secretarial duties. I was also given the task of accounting (which included merging several accounts into one account), printing exams, etc., for the students and assisting the Old Boys Association with some accounting.

A little later on, Mr. Clive Pantin introduced the Activity period where every member of staff had to choose an activity to do with the students once a week for the last two periods. I taught students typing in Forms 4 and Lower 6. Some of the students did very well and went on to do exams in this field. Although I had to work late on most days to accomplish these tasks, I was ably assisted by students who came to help me whenever they had some free time, and parents who volunteered their time so generously. As time went on, the school started to move into the digital world with computers replacing the typewriters. Two additional persons were requested from the Ministry of Education by the College to join the Civil Staff, relieving me of some functions.

Meanwhile Fr. Ryan's legacy continued to be passed down, with the entire staff working as one cohesive family striving to do the best in their respective fields. The Principals, Fr. J.H. Ryan, Mr. C. Pantin, Mr. M. Moore, Mr. A. Garcia and present Principal Fr. G. Augustine, all did their part in achieving excellence at Fatima College... the focus always being to develop an all-round student who would be equipped to face the challenges that lay ahead, and graduates who would be proud to claim Fatima as their Alma Mater.

The Old Boys and the Parent Teachers Association continue to play a pivotal role in fundraising, with some of the biggest contributors being the Annual Fatima Carnival Fetes and the Cookout. Today with their help, the school, under the supervision of The Holy Ghost Fathers and Principal Fr. Gregory Augustine, has risen to new heights, with: the refurbishment of the Hall to accommodate all the students, the building of new classrooms, upgrading the labs and the library, setting up smart boards in each classroom, and installing air-conditioning throughout the school. An Old Boys Office and store were also added on-site.

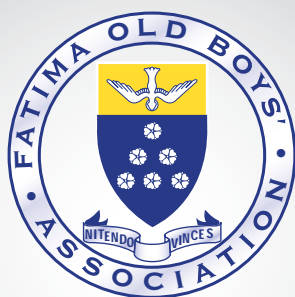
Fatima has surely come a long way from the Seventies. Yet what has persisted is the spirit of family that continues to define the school's social architecture, thereby providing an important foundational element for its continued growth and success.

I see only great things in the future for the school, its staff and students.

students now have options that open up pathways to a myriad of professional careers. Indeed, as the times changed so did the school's curriculum, being constantly adjusted to accommodate each new reality. I'm confident that the demands of 21st century living will continue to be met head-on with this approach. Much kudos to a visionary administration and staff that have been willing to run with the mission!

When I retired in 2005, Fatima College had occupied 45 years of my life. Two of my brothers and all of our sons have been through Fatima, and even now I have two grandsons attending—with two more eyeing places for next year, God willing! So we're in it for the long haul.

It is probably an understatement to say that these are challenging times. But I never underestimate the capacity of human beings to overcome. Resourcefulness, on the part of both teachers and students, will win the day. And it cannot hurt to embrace in a meaningful way what the Apostle Paul so confidently affirmed. "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."



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# History of Fatima College



Fatima College opened on  
January 17th 1945



The college before the east and west wings  
were added 1945 - 1946



A view of the college from the undeveloped  
field in 1945

**FATIMA COLLEGE WAS FOUNDED IN JANUARY 1945 BY THE HOLY GHOST FATHERS IN THEIR RESPONSE TO THE NEED FOR MORE SECONDARY SCHOOL PLACES IN THE ISLAND. THE SCHOOL BEGAN IN A CLASSROOM AT ST THERESA'S INTERMEDIATE ON PETRA STREET IN WOODBROOK, WITH FR. BYRNE AS ITS FIRST PRINCIPAL, MICHAEL MCCARTHY (A PREFECT) AND ANDY COCKBURN (LATER A HOLY GHOST FATHER).**

**Shortly thereafter, construction of the early College at Mucurapo Road was completed, and the building was blessed by Archbishop Ryan in December of 1945.**

Fr. Byrne set the tone for the new College, establishing the communal atmosphere from the inception. He designed the Crest of the College, and was also responsible for the building of the East and West blocks. Many of the Administrative functions were similar to that of St. Mary's College.

In 1955, the baton was passed to Fr. Ryan. The enrolment at that time was 600 students with 25 members of staff. The staff at the time comprised of members of the Holy Ghost Fathers Congregation and Laymen.

Mention must be made of the Prefects; scholastics of the Congregation who were preparing for the Priesthood. They taught at the College for three years and were in charge of the extracurricular activities.

Fr. Ryan was a dedicated Principal who introduced Advance Level studies and many extra-curricular activities to the school's timetable. He oversaw the acquisition of the playing field in 1961, the construction of the Pavilion in 1970, the first Sports Day in 1963, and the launch of the Fatima Old Boys' Association in 1964 led by its first president Derek Johnson. The College celebrated its 25th Anniversary in 1970 with appropriate fanfare and pride. In 1972 Fr. Ryan retired and returned to Ireland.

Mr. Clive Pantin succeeded him. Mr. Pantin was a transformational leader, he abolished the 3X class (skipping from Forms 1 to 3), and established classes in alphabetical order. Mr. Pantin discerned the importance of recognizing the ability of all students; this was seen in the ease by which he called each student by name. He built the Audio-Visual Room, Library, Form 6 block in 1972 under the supervision of Fr. Farfan, and the Language Lab in 1973. Also in 1973, Fatima saw its first female teachers: Ms. Daphne Heywood and Ms. Jeanette Zakour.

The House System (six Houses) and an Activity Period on Wednesday afternoons were introduced in the late 1970s. During this period, Fatima rose to the helm, competing handily in popularity with its rival St Mary's.

The College gained its first National Scholarships in 1976. The Mucurapo School Community Project was another initiative of Mr. Pantin—a collaboration with the 'new schools on the block', eventually having its content aired on TTT as 'the first of its kind in the country'. During this period, Fatima was seen as the leader of Technology in Education.

Mr. Pantin resigned as Principal to take part in the National Election of 1981, and was succeeded by Mr. Mervyn Moore. Mr. Moore's style of leadership was very different. His religious faith and concern for individuals was firmly bestowed. During his tenure, he oversaw the extension of the AV

Centre to include the Physics and Chemistry Labs, and an additional Form 6 classroom. In the 1980s, Fatima began to see the results of the renewed curriculum of the 1970s. In 1982 we won four Open Scholarships and gained our first President's Medal—our successful student Kieron James. In 1984, Fatima won the President's Medal again, in Mathematics. Mr. Moore was Principal for 18 years, and retired in December 1999.

Anthony Garcia came to Fatima College with a wealth of experience, having served as a teacher at both the Primary and Secondary levels, as President of the Trinidad and Tobago Unified Teachers Association, as well as President of the Caribbean Union of Teachers.

He accepted the mandate given to him by the Board of the Holy Ghost Fathers to improve the all-round development of Fatima College, and he went about that task with diligence, compassion and wisdom. Mr. Garcia's first task was to share his vision of Fatima College as an institution where excellence would abound. But his greatest insight and foresight was his realization that the fulfillment of his mandate was only possible with the active involvement of **all** the stakeholders.

He therefore engaged the Ministry of Education and the Teaching Service Commission to ensure that Deans and Heads of Departments were appointed. He encouraged teachers to improve themselves, both academically and professionally, thus

strengthening the cadre of teachers available to the Fatima community.

Anthony Garcia saw the wisdom of working closely with the Old Boys' Association and the Parents' Support Group, two very important stakeholders at Fatima College. During the Garcia tenure, Fatima College, with the engagement of these two bodies, achieved significant improvements in the academic performance of students, with many securing academic scholarships. Students excelled as well in the Sports areas of cricket, football, rugby, swimming, as well as in several cultural activities.

He believed in his staff of Fatima College, teachers as well as ancillary staff. It was Anthony Garcia who coined the phrase: **"Fatima Boys Are Good Boys"** to describe the product of Fatima College. He spoke those words at every assembly, and on every available occasion. He instilled that belief in the boys and no one doubted that he spoke the truth. Anthony Garcia retired from Fatima College in March 2009, going on later to serve as Minister of Education.

Fr. Gregory Augustine took the helm in January 2009 building on the management style of Mr. Garcia. Fr. Gregory was the first old boy to occupy this position of Principal. Having "grown up" in the College in the 1970s he was very aware of the strong community atmosphere of the College. Fatima had always prided itself on being a well-rounded institution, and so Fr Gregory set about the task of ensuring that the curriculum reflected this holistic character. This philosophy was born out of the belief of the College motto **by striving you conquer**, seeing the possibilities for both students and educators as being boundless.

Academically, new subjects were introduced: Industrial Technology/Electrical, Music and Drama at CSEC level; Entrepreneurship and Environmental Studies were brought in at

CAPE level. Heads of Departments strengthened the coordination of their departments to ensure greater output and higher standards of performance. This resulted in all subjects achieving in the mid to high 90% pass rates at both CSEC and CAPE level examinations.

Co-curricular activities took greater focus, as every student was required to enrol in a discipline, which was evaluated at the end of every Term. Cultural activities gathered greater momentum the Carnival Show was expanded to include Traditional Mas presentations, Stick-fighting and Panorama. The concert **Gifts of Blue and Gold** became a highlight at the end of November, taking shape as a spectacular display of student talent. The College Band was formed, the House System revamped (four Houses), the 5K was introduced, and sporting activities were expanded. New disciplines included Dragon Boat, Track and Field, Table Tennis, Karate, Judo, Technology Club, Steelpan and The Mystical Rose Prayer Group, and were all given equal exposure in the school environment. Fatima saw the reintroduction of the Blazer for the Senior school, a jacket clearly enhancing the students' self-image.

Physically, the College has seen some major transformations; assemblies returned to the Hall after the building of a mezzanine; the Library, Washrooms, Physics Lab, Biology Lab and Chapel were all refurbished. The Religion Room was converted to the Electrical Room and the AV Room was converted to the Music Room. All rooms in the College were air-conditioned. A new wing was built at the northern end of the College in 2014 to house additional Form 6 classrooms, Art, Drama, Technical Drawing and the FOBA office. Smart boards were placed in every classroom, reflecting 21st century learning equipment. On the playing-field, the Basketball and Small Goal Courts were upgraded in 2019, and the Pavilion now houses a fully equipped gym.

It is no surprise that all this had been made possible by the harmonious relationship which exists amongst the various bodies of the College—students, teachers, parents and Old Boys.

Fatima in its 75th year can be proud of a strong self-image, and an admirable track-record that enables our College to answer the call of the next 75 years...and beyond.



Archbishop Count Finbar Ryan at Fatima College on the visit of the Pilgrim Virgin after the east and west wings were added 1949



College Assembly Hall added in 1951



College Assembly Hall added in 1951

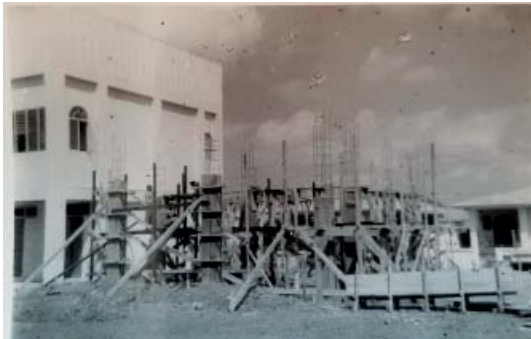


New Chapel and three extra classrooms added in 1954



Chapel interior as of 1954





Extenction of the College Building on the West Wing late 1950s



Chapel interior after the elevated altar was replaced in 1961



College field acquired in 1961



College field acquired in 1961



College field opened in 1963



Audio Visual Room and Library being constructed in 1971-72



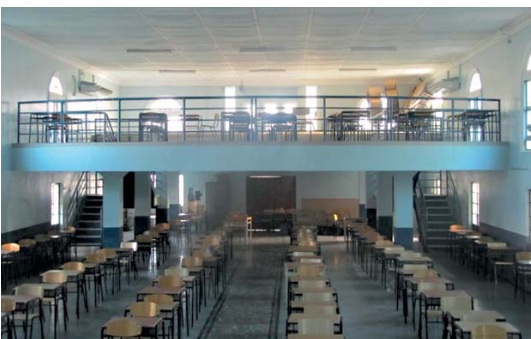
Audio Visual Room, Library Unit and Form 6 Block 1973



College Cafeteria constructed in 1976



Form 6 block in 1986/87



College Hall Renovation Project 2010



College Library Refurbishment with Form 6 Study Room 2011



College Pavillion and Gym Renovation 2012







New College Wing Constructed and Opening in 2013



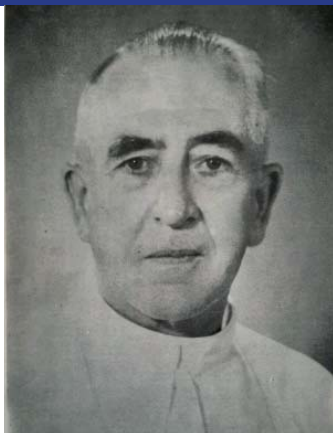
Blessing of the renovated Chapel in 2017



Basketball Court Renovation 2019



## Principals of Our Lady of Fatima College



Fr. Byrne Principal from 1945 to 1955



Fr. Ryan with some of the Holy Ghost Fathers celebrating their Centennial at Fatima College in 1963



Fr. Ryan (front) Principal from 1955 to 1972 pictured with Count Finbar Ryan



Fr. Ryan and Staff 1968. Most notably present in the group are C. John, E. Pouchette, C. Pantin, R. Holman, M. Brash, M. Moore and F. John

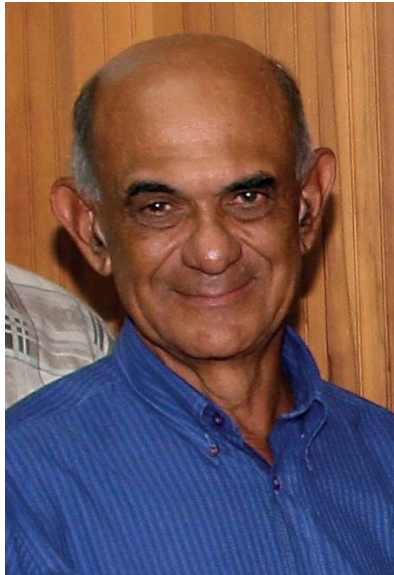


Clive Pantin, with his staff school year 1973-74 and introduction of the first female teachers at far left Ms. Daphne Haywood and at the right Ms Jeanette Zakour

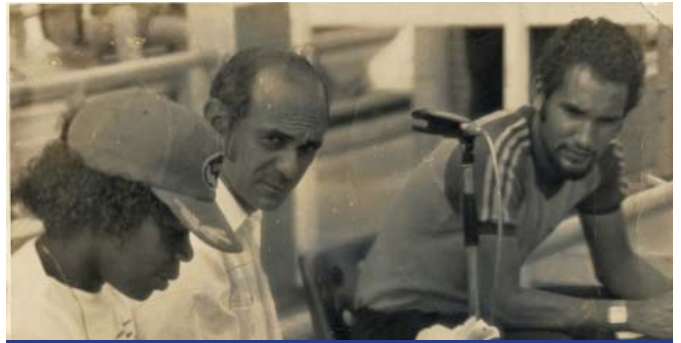




Clive Pantin, first lay Principal from 1973 to 1981



Mervyn Moore Principal from 1981 to 1999



Mervyn Moore with Colin Murray first PE teacher at Fatima College



Mervyn Moore sings with his staff at the annual Christmas Concert in 1989



Anthony Garcia Principal from 2000 to 2009



Fr. Gregory Augustine Principal from 2009 to Present



Fr. Gregory and the Old Boys of the Class of 86 who donated new computers to our lab in 2012



Anthony Garcia with the Form 6 students as he receives an honorary award in 2016



Fr. Gregory Augustine with our scholarship winners from 2017



# College Life 1945-1965



Students in the Chemistry Lab in the 1950s



First Fatima Sea Scouts 1953



Fr. Power and Cadet Leader 1960s



GCE Form 6 students in 1964



Fatima Basketball A team 1963



Fatima First XI Football team 1963



The Dominic Savio Choir in 1963 with director Fr. Corcoran in front of the college

# College Life 1965-1985



Fatima Winning intercol Team 1965



Fatima First XI Meets President Sir Ellis Clarke late 70s



Fatima First Eleven Hockey Team 1979-80



National Intercol Winners against St Augustine Senior Comprehensive 1979



Fatima Football Team 1966





Fr. Girod and His Scouts in the 1970s



Legion of Mary 1984



Fatima Giants Cricket Team 1979



Cadets during inspection 1983-84



The Mighty 3 Canal and the Razors perform 1980



Clifford Roach Accompanies quartet at Carinval Calypso Competition 1980

## College Life 1985-2004



Fatima Mayfair late 1980s



Students Perform at the 1989 Christmas Concert



Chess Club in 1986



Fatima College Steel Orchestra 1996



Sports day on the field in the early 80s



Blessing and opening of the Computer Lab with Fr. De Four 1985



Fatima Swim Team in 2001



# College Life 2005-2019



Fatima College First XI 2005



Tug O War in Preparation for Sports Day 2010



Fatima Sea Scouts back from Down the Islands Camp 2010



National Cross Country Championship Competitors with Coach Mr. Nigel Cooper 2011



Gifts of Blue and Gold 2012



Fatima Dragon Boat Team 2012



Sports Day 2013



Sports Day 2013



Mayfair 2015 Rock Climbing



Mayfair 2015 Scout Stall



College Band and Choir Perform Prize Giving 2016



Guitar Ensemble Gifts of Blue and Gold 8 in 2016



Blessing of the Renovated Chapel 2017



Scholarship Winners of 2017 addressing the Form VIs



Students view a Robotics Presentation at Career Day 2018



Fatima College Students and Staff Participate in RBC Race for Kids 2018





Fatima Boys Volunteering at Nelson Street Girls for the National Day of Caring 2019



Under 14 and 16 Water Polo Team at Schools Water Polo Tournament 2019



Fatima Triathlon Team at the National Aquatics Centre 2019



Hockey Team Champions 2019



Chess Club Tournament 2019



Under 14 Rugby Team 2019



Public speaking Participants 2019



Feast Day Procession to St. Theresa's 2019

## Memorium To Everard Pouchet (Continued)

EVERARD POUCHET BEGAN HIS TEACHING CAREER AT FATIMA COLLEGE IN 1966.

**Over the years, he taught English Language, English Literature, History, Accounts and Religion. He also served as Dean and Vice Principal. He showed a keen interest in Chess, Cricket, and Basketball. Everard played the steel pan as a young man before he got married. His brother Junior was the Head of Silver Stars.**

Mr. Pouchet married Marlene Koo on June 22nd 1964 and they had six children.

He was a very private individual. His daughter Melanie shared that he always had a short wave radio, liked Western Movies and listened to Classical Music. Over the years, he

collected a number of historical and detective novels.

On the surface students knew him as a serious teacher who always wore a long sleeve white shirt, black tie and dark trousers. However, Mr Pouchet was more than that. He challenged us to think, to read and to express our opinions. He had a breadth of knowledge and experience that inspired you as a young person.

In the mid 1980's Mr. Pouchet joined the Opus Dei and added to his collection, a number of theological and spiritual books, Fulton Sheen being one of his favourite spiritual writers. He



also had a sense of humour and developed a cordial relationship with members of staff. He was the archetypical educator, devoted to his students and his profession.

May he rest in peace.



# #FatimaFlashback

1st Fatima Sea Scouts (11th Trinidad Sea Scouts) -

The 15th World Jamboree (1983) Photos courtesy Edward Kacal (Class of 1984/86)

In July 1983, the Fatima Sea Scout Troop sent representatives, for the first time ever, to a World Scout Jamboree. This, the 15th World Jamboree, was held in Calgary, Canada. The ten Fatima representatives were Mark Assam, David Assam, Anthony Assing, Richard Batson, Steven Cheng Wing, Whitney Chin, Joseph Chin Cheong, Stephen De Gannes, Edward Kacal and Amar Bahadoorsingh. Scout Master Raul Poon King was unable to make the trip. There were over 15,000

persons in attendance at the recreational park venue. Activities included meeting Scouts and Guides from other countries, trading badges, exploring different sub-camps, and participating in official patrol activities such as trap-shooting, handicapped sports and tasks, tree-planting, BB gun shooting, river rafting on the Kananaskis River and archery. Almost every night, there was a sub-camp fire where participants sang with other countries their national songs.



Assembling at Piarco



Assembling at Piarco



Assembling at Piarco



Drying out after a hailstorm which flooded the tents



Drying out after a hailstorm which flooded the tents



The camp area. Fatima tents are the blue ones

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## Letters to the Editor

Anyone wishing to send letters to the editor of FOBA Newsletter "Beyond the Grey Shirt" can email their contributions to: [contact@foba.fatima.edu.tt](mailto:contact@foba.fatima.edu.tt)

We invite all Fatima Alumni to register on our database and be part of our ever growing membership and to join any of our 4 sub-committees (Sponsorship, Events, Benefits and Recognition, Alumni)

Visit <https://www.foba.fatima.edu.tt/about/sub-committees/> to learn about the sub-committees. To register and/or join a sub-committee, visit <https://www.foba.fatima.edu.tt/alumni/registration/> for details.

