The teacher in charge of the Caring School Programme of S.M.K. Subang Jaya I was Pn. Margaret James. She had her early education in Penang and became a Normal Trained teacher specializing in English. She has had more than 25 years of experience in Secondary Schools and also works as the Afternoon School Counsellor.

A proactive and independent person by nature, she started the Kelas Bacaan in 1997 which later developed into the Caring school Programme of S.M.K. Subang Jaya I.

It was solely through her influence and initiative that sponsorship was obtained for the Caring school Programme. She is actively involved in the Independant Christian Renewal Society (ICRS) which was the sponsor for the Caring School Programme. She is also involved with social issues and is the head of the Sunday School at a large Catholic Church in Taman Megah. She is happily married and is the mother of two grown up children.
6.4 The Sponsor

Sponsorship

The main sponsor for the Caring School Programme of S.M.K. Subang Jaya was the independent Christian Renewal Society (ICRS). Basically this society is a service organisation existing within the Catholic Church to renew the members spiritually and enable them to be of service to society in general.

Pn. Margaret James, the student councillor for the Afternoon Session of the school is a member of ICRS and it is through her influence that sponsorship was obtained for the school programme.

The rationale for the existence of the ICRS is self renewal and service. This is done through a series of meetings which include prayer, reflection and a written plan for service. People like us are rushing around. Modern living drives us at such a fast pace that we seldom find time to pause, to sit down and to think and to discuss things more deeply. Our relationship with people, the everyday chores at home or at work, family life take so much of our time that we often neglect to discover the significance of the different things which make up the very fabric of our daily lives.

Yet these different things no matter how small reflect the intensity or sluggishness of the Christian Faith. Faith should be accompanied with works. The ICRS proposes that people should take the necessary time to sit down and think, to share and reflect on what is going on in our environment, our milieu, our society. It addresses itself to couples, to housewives, to men and women in responsible positions in society so that they can access this life of responsibility in the light of the message of Jesus Christ. The ICRS is a movement to help people to break through the barrier of individualism in sharing occasionally with other groups of like minded people in Malaysia and in the world.
Practical Advice For Meetings Of The ICRS

Time: The group meets fortnightly, once every three weeks, or monthly at any suitable time agreed upon by all members.

Place: meetings should take place in homes if possible on a rotating basis. The couple or person who play host to the meeting see that the meeting place is adequately prepared and reasonably free from outside interference. The meeting can also be the occasion of a social reunion. This is why some groups like to meet with a meal, tea or coffee. All this is encouraged as it helps members to feel at home. We should only see that the social aspect does not prevent a real exchange.

Structure of the group: The group has a president, who convenes and leads the meetings. It has a secretary who takes down minutes that will be shared later on with other groups and a treasurer who collects the monthly subscription which enable the secretariat to face expenses of co-ordinating the groups of the movement.

Titles of meetings

Meeting 1  Who are we?
Meeting 2  The world we live in.
Meeting 3  Our family
Meeting 4  The community of believers: the Church.
Meeting 5  Creating the world with God.
Meeting 6  We assess ourselves.

ICRS in brief

The ICRS is a movement of men and women holding responsibilities in society, from a more affluent milieu who come together fortnightly or once a week or monthly, to:

- share the events which affect their lives
- reflect on what is the will of God in our society today.

The group is never isolated. It is linked to other groups in the church, the country and in the world. Your group shares with many other groups the same concern about a Christian society and about the message of Jesus.
6.5 The Responses of the Students

The students who were selected for the Caring School Programme of S.M.K. Subang Jaya I, were truly thankful to be given an opportunity to be part of this meaningful and memorable programme. The following were some of the responses:

1. I was glad to be selected. The teacher was very kind to me.
2. I enjoyed the singing sessions.
3. We were given food and drinks. I had a chance to serve my friends.
4. I needed the clothes and spectacles which I was given through the programme.
5. I was able to read the stories in the programme.
6. Many of my friends wanted to be part of this programme but they did not get a chance.
7. The teacher did not scold us.
8. We were a special group.
9. If I have a chance I would like to continue in this programme.
10. We all enjoyed it.
7. A Detailed Study of Five Students

In 1998 some of the students of the Caring School Programme reached Form III in the Morning Session of the school.

A detailed study of five selected students was conducted with the aim of understanding them better. They were the following:-

1. Murali a/l Chanderasekaran (3 Pintar) 1998
2. Saraswathy a/p Thivandran (3 Pintar) 1998
3. Nagenthiran a/l Ramachandran (3 Yakin) 1998
4. Lim Ooi Wei (3 Jaguh) 1998
5. Thnaletchumy (3 Akur) 1998

Information was gathered on six of the subjects by using different methods. These methods included the following:-

- a) Interviews
- b) Participant observation
- c) Teachers’ views (valuable as a cross reference)
- d) academic records

To facilitate gathering of information from students, two questionnaires were used. Samples of both are attached in the Appendix.

The first is the Pupils Background Questionnaire which is straightforward and simple to answer. In must be stated here that the questionnaire was administered by the interviewer asking the questions and writing down the answers given by the student.

The second test, the Bledsoe Self Concept scale sought to find out more about what the students are like in their own eyes. In other words this test helped them to describe themselves as they are and as they would like to be. There are no right or wrong
answers. Each person may have different ideas and all answers were to be given according to their feelings. Honesty is an important ingredient. It must be stated at this juncture that some words of the words used in this self concept scale - like friendly, obedient, cautious, fair, etc may not be understood by the students. Fortunately the interviewer was able to translate these words to their nearest Tamil equivalent. As five of the six students interviewed are Tamil speaking the language barrier was overcome. The remaining one student of Chinese origin was well versed in Bahasa Malaysia and could easily understand the Bahasa equivalent of the given words especially when accompanied with examples.

Information was gathered from each student on the following items:

- Name, Age, Class
- Address, House
- Parents - Name and Occupation
- Siblings
- Hobbies and Interests
- Friends
- Other information - religion, what teachers say
- Academic Standing
- As a student some observations
- self-concept
Name of Student: Murali A/L Chandrasegaran

Age: 14 years

Class: 3 Pintar

Address: No 33 Jln SS 13/1K, Kg. Baru 47500 Subang Jaya

Father: Chandarasegran

Deceased - Died of heart attack at the age of 34.

Mother: C. Jayalechumy, aged 34

She works at Tinkerbell Kindergarten as a helper. She is able to return home in time to prepare lunch for the family. As a single parent she is only able to provide the very basic needs of the family.

siblings:

Murali has an elder brother and sister, two younger sisters and a younger brother.

The ages of the children range from 17 to 5 years.

Home:

Murali lives in a squatter village called Kg. Baru. The house has a hall, two rooms, a bathroom and kitchen. There is water and electricity. It is quite comfortable though a bit
crowded. The books in his house are mainly school textbooks. The atmosphere is not conducive for studies.

Hobbies and Interests:

His hobby is reading but the real interest in his life is playing football. He plays for an average of an hour a day from 5 to 6 p.m. His greatest regret is that he does not own a football. He has to borrow a ball to play his favourite game. His other interest are tamil songs and watching television.

Friends:

He has many friends among his neighbours but not among his school mates. He is loyal of his friends and will not hesitate to protect them if they are accused wrongfully. This has happened.

Other information:

Murali would like to go for tuition but is unable to do so because his mother cannot afford the fees. He is close to his mother and tells her all his problems. He helps her around the house to complete the household chores. The family is close to his relativges on his mother’s side and have visited them in Perak. Murali has a spiritual aspect and prays in the morning and at night. According to him he asks for God’s help in his studies and to develop a good character. He believes that God is everywhere and seeks His help to be good and study hard and to be obedient. He would like to join the army when he leaves school.

Academic Standing:

The following are the results of Murali’s March Monthly Test.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subjects</th>
<th>Marks (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bahasa Malaysia</td>
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<tr>
<td>English Language</td>
<td>15</td>
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<td>Science</td>
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<td>Geography</td>
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<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living skills</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moral</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Murali as a student: some observations

Murali is in 3 Pintar which is the second last class in the Form. There are twelve Form Three classes. In class he is shy and retiring. The only class activity he is fully in control is taking down notes. His attention span is very limited and he cannot concentrate for long. As he does not understand what is going on he gets bored easily. At times like these he gets into squabbles with his fellow students and like his peers constantly complains to his teachers, “Dia bising cikgu”, “Dia ganggu cikgu”.

In class he is quite shy to ask questions and prefers to ask his friends if he has any problems with his studies. When he does not understand how to go about doing certain exercises he takes the easy way out by copying from his friends. His weakest subjects are Mathematics and English.

At home he is encouraged to study by his mother. However because of her limited education and because she is too busy catering to the material needs of her children she is unable to help him. His elder siblings have stopped schooling and are now working. He usually studies in his room and sometimes helps his younger siblings with their homework. His family cannot afford to send him for tuition. He is upset in school because he does not have enough money to buy workbooks and his teachers keep asking him to buy them.
Daily Routine:

5am    gets up
       prepares himself for school
1.10pm goes back home
       has lunch
3pm    does house chores
5pm    plays football
8pm    does homework
9pm    bedtime
Name of Student: Saraswati A/P Thivanidran

Age: 14 years

Class: 3 Pintar

Address: No 32 Jln SS 13/1K, Kg. Baru, 47500 Subang Jaya

Home:
Saraswati lives in a two room house with a hall, a bathroom and kitchen. There is water and electricity supply.

Father: Thivanidran, aged 40
He works as a lorry driver with Indah Water Corporation. On Sundays he earns extra income by cutting grass.

Mother: Saroja, aged 39
She is a cleaner in a factory. Fridays and Saturdays are her off days when she is able to fully care for her family.

Siblings:
Saraswati is from a family of seven children. She has two older brothers. One of them is waiting for the S.P.M results and the other is in Form IV. Four younger brothers and sisters are studying, one of them is in Form one and the rest are in primary school.
Hobbies:

Her hobbies are reading English and Bahasa story books. She watches television and loves singing and cooking. She is able to cook for her family and can make simple dishes and serve complete meals. Her other interests include playing netball.

Friends:

She does not have many friends in school. She mixes with the neighbourhood girls of the same age. She is allowed to talk and play with them in the evenings.

Other Information:

Saraswati is a frail and thin student of average health. She is unable to eat much and is sometimes beaten by her mother for this. Her family has good relationship with relatives on both her father’s and mother’s side who live in the same kampung and in Shah Alam respectively. She goes to the temple on Tuesdays and Fridays seeking special blessings in her studies and for the health and happiness for her family specially her mother.

Academic Standing:

The following is the results of the March Monthly Test.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subjects</th>
<th>Marks (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>23</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bahasa Malaysia</td>
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<tr>
<td>English Language</td>
<td>16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geography</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living Skills</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Saraswati as a student: Some observations

Saraswati is in 3 Pintar which is the second last class in the Form. In class she is shy and quiet. She does not have the courage to ask questions to her teachers if she does not understand what is being taught. She prefers to ask her friends. She manages to finish her homework by herself and seldom copies from her friends. Her mother is illiterate and the father is very busy, thus it is impossible to get help from her parents. She usually gets help from her elder brothers and her uncle who is staying with her family. She studies in her room and says that she is seldom disturbed by her younger siblings. However the house is congested as there are nine direct family member and a relative staying in a two room house. Privacy is minimal and the atmosphere is not conducive for studies. It can be said that home conditions do not promote academic excellence.

Her parents encourage her to study by telling her about the importance of education. She would like to go for tuition classes but like the other students in this group she cannot afford it. However she is able to but all workbooks required for her studies.

Daily Routine:

5am  gets up

preparing her siblings and herself for school

1.10pm  goes back home

have lunch

4pm  does house chores

8pm  does homework

9pm  bedtime
Name: Nagenthiran a/l Ramachandaran
Age: 15 years
Class: 3 Pintar
Address: No 4 SS 13/1J, Subang Jaya

House:

His home is a two bedroom flat with a bathroom, hall and kitchen. They have adequate water and electricity supply. His is a small family and there are no relatives staying with him, so there is sufficient space and the conditions afford privacy and is suitable for studying.

Father:

His father’s name is Ramachandaran a/l Subramaniam. He is 45 years of age and is a lorry driver.

Mother:

His mother is Pakiam a/p Subramaniam. She is 40 years of age and works in a factory making books.

Siblings:

Nagenthiran belongs to a small family with only one sister, he being hte elder of the two.

Hobbies:
Like many of his classmates, Nagenthiran’s hobby is playing football. He plays with his friends in the evening.

Friends:
Nagenthiran has only a few friends and at other times he is very much by himself.

Other Information
He celebrates a variety of Hindu festivals like Deepavali, Thaipusam, Ponggal, The Hindu New Year or Varstapurapu is also celebrated. Nagenthiran has a strong spiritual aspect. This factor emerges from conversations with him. He not only believes in God but practices his religion by saying prayers and making offerings of food to the Gods. He says that religion teaches him to be good, to love others and to be truthful and honest.

His ambition is to be a teacher. He goes for tuition for which a sum of RM25/- is paid for all subjects. Though he has a good relationship with his family, he fears his father.

Academic Standing
Nagenthiran’s March Monthly Test Marks are as follows:-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subjects</th>
<th>Marks (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bahasa Malaysia</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>English Language</td>
<td>13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Geography</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living Skills</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moral</td>
<td>Absent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Nagenthiran as a student: Some Observations

Like the other students interviewed Nagenthiran is shy and reserved in class. Thus he does not ask questions to settle his doubts about his lessons. He seeks assistance from friends. Like Saraswati, he seldom copies from friends. He is fortunate to have a tuition teacher to help him. This is an advantage that many of the others interviewed do not have.

Nagenthiran is often bored in class. This is a conclusion one can arrive at considering the fact that he does not understand most of what is going on in class. His attention span is limited.

Daily Routine

6am gets up
1.10pm goes back home
    has lunch
3pm does house chores
5pm play football
8-10pm tuition
10pm bedtime
Name of Student: Lim Ooi Wei
Age: 14 years
Class: 3 Jaguh
Address: No. 140 Kg. Baru, Subang, 40150 Shah Alam, Kuala Lumpur

Home:
She lives in a three room brick and wooden house with a hall, a kitchen and two bathrooms. It is sufficient for this family and the facilities in the house are better compared to the others interviewed.

Father: Lim Seng, aged 48
He has completed primary education. He is a carpenter by profession

Mother: Lee Ah Ngor, aged 44
She has studied till Form 3 and is a housewife

siblings:
Lim Ooi Wei is the youngest of four children. She has an elder brother and two elder sisters. Her brother and one of her sisters are working. The other sister is waiting for her S.P.M. results.
Hobbies:

Her main hobby is reading comic books. Over the years Oi Wei has managed to acquire a few skills. One of this is tailoring. She learnt this from her elder sister. The other is computer skills. She can type well and is the typist for several class projects including Kemahiran Hidup Projects. She plays computer games and surfs the internet. The fact that she is computer literate sets her apart from all her friends and gives her self confidence and enhances her self esteem.

Friends:

She had a large number of friends both at home and at school. She enjoys a happy and close relationship with them. She shares her problems with them, jokes and laughs and goes jogging together on Sundays.

Other Information:

Lim Ooi Wei is the richest of the 6 subjects interviewed. She gets a total of RM100/- as pocket money from her father, brother and sister. She goes for tuition 3 times a week, studying bahasa Malaysia, English and Mathematics. The family does not face any difficulty paying the RM85/- tuition fee.

Ooi Wei also makes herself useful at home. She helps her mother with the household chores including tidying up the house and cooking. She is able to cook simple dishes especially if it means heating tined food. She washes her own clothes and is quite independent. Ooi Wei is a Buddhist, she prays at home and goes to the temple on rare occasions. However she is filled with many fears including failure in examinations and bodily harm.
Academic Standing:

Ooi Wei’s March Monthly Test results are as follows

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subjects</th>
<th>Marks (%)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Geography</td>
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<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>36</td>
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<tr>
<td>Living Skills</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moral</td>
<td>Absent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Lim Ooi Wei as a student: Some observations

In class Lim Ooi Wei is better adjusted than some of her peers. She has the self confidence that stems from the knowledge that she has the skills to make herself useful to her friends (eg. computer typing skills). Her family is well off comparatively and they have no problems providing for her needs. As the youngest she has a special care and protection from her family. All this shows up in her behaviour in class.

She is also fortunate to have older siblings who are good in their studies and are able to help her with her homework. She is still weak in certain subjects, for example Mathematics and English. She finds that these subjects are difficult to learn and master quickly. On the whole she is well adjusted and do not give any problems in class.
Name: S. Thanaletchumy
Age: 14 years
Class: 3 Akur
Address: 52A, Jalan SS 13/1K, Kampung Baru 47500 Subang Jaya, Petaling Jaya.

Home:

Thanaletchumy lives in a 2 room wooden house with a hall, kitchen and separate bathroom. Conditions are extremely unfavourable with 9 people sharing this house. The parents sleep in the hall while the room are shared by the children.

Father:

S. Sivalingam aged 40. He works with the town council of Petaling Jaya (MPPJ).

Mother:

S. Logambal aged 41. She works as a clearer in a furniture factory.

Siblings:

Thanaletchumy is the fifth of six children. The eldest is a lorry driver while the rest are schooling. They are studying in schools in Subang Jaya in classes that range from Std 5 to Form IV.

Hobbies

Unlike the others interviewed, Thanaletchumy has a specific hobby that is playing badminton. However she plays the game only as a hobby and does not participate in competitions.
Friends:

Thanalechumy has a number of friends both in school and around her home. Her cousin Saraswathy is her best friend.

Other information

Festivals (Hindu) play an important part in Thanalechumy’s life. She celebrates Deepavali, Thaipusam and Ponggal (Harvest Festival), with her family and relatives. These celebrations give her an opportunity to know who her relations ate and helps her develop a network of people with whom she can relate to and share a few happy moments in what is otherwise a drab, routine filled life. She has a spiritual aspect and has a firm belief in God. Her ambition is to be a teacher. The family is too poor so she cannot afford tution, however she gets RM1/- a day as pocket money. Thanalechumy helps her mother with household chores and has a useful and significant role to play at home.

Academic Standing

Thanalechumy’s March Monthly Test results are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Marks (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Mathematics</td>
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<td>Geography</td>
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<td>Living Skills</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moral</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
S. Thanaletchumy as a student: Some observations

In class Thanaletchumy is quiet and withdrawn. As a weak student she is unable to respond to the teachers' questions. Her greatest fear is not finishing her homework. More often than not her fears become a reality because she is unable to understand the given task.