



Reflections Friendship

'THERE is nothing on this earth more to be prioritised than true friendship' said Thomas Aquinas. Many centuries before around 300 BCE, Thiruvalluvar, the greatest scholar of Tamil literature known for his exceptional and widely cherished work *Thirukkural* said,

'Udukkai izhanthavan kaipole aange

Idukkan Kalaivatham Natpu'.
(Kural 788) — meaning like

the hand that moves reflexively when the dress slips, a friend reacts swiftly to remove woe.

There are number of such good motivational sayings about friendship in the secular and sacred texts.

True and good friendship helps to lead healthy and happy life. History has good examples of how true friendships have helped to thrive in life. Socrates and Plato were said to be good friends in spite of 'master-pupil' power dynamic. Thiru-

valluvar and his wife Vasuki were said to be more friends than husband and wife. Such a friendship seemed to have aided his efforts to produce the best Tamil couplets *Thirukkural*.

The Wright brothers Orville and Wilbur were very thick friends and stuck with each other when they were going through the invention of first flying bicycle. Abraham Lincoln even after becoming the president of USA was said to have continued his friendship

with Joshua Speed who helped him in his early stages of poverty-stricken life.

There are number of research findings that confirm lack of friendship results in the increase of depression and suicide. A bad friendship breeds evil and toxic enmity. Given the enormous increase of social media platforms, there are huge possibilities to get in contact with lots of people and the likelihood of developing friendship with those contacts is plenty.

I have heard and seen a few of my companions who had life changing bad experience with sudden friendships. Therefore, it is important to be wise in choosing good friends and at the same time have courage to part with bad ones 'One who has unreliable friend soon comes to ruin, but there is a good friend who sticks closer than a brother' (Proverb 18:24).

**Darline Joseph Marianathan
St. Boniface Okehampton &
Holy Family Chagford**