

Pontifical seminary gets first fulltime female prof

Dennis Coday | Jul. 20, 2010 NCR Today



UCA News reports:

Seminary gets first fulltime woman staffer

PUNE, INDA -- India's first Catholic woman to become a fulltime seminary professor says she would work to present the Bible in "a new and meaningful" way.

Assumption Sister Rekha Chennattu was appointed professor of Sacred Scripture in Jnana-Deepa Vidyapeeth (JDV), a major Indian seminary based in Pune, western India.

Her appointment was confirmed mid-June by the Congregation for Catholic Education with the approval of the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

Sister Chennattu, 46, told ucanews.com that she was "excited" about the prospect of "preparing ambassadors for Christ."

The nun joined the seminary faculty to lecture on Scripture in 1996. She has a Licentiate in Scripture from the Pontifical Biblical Institute, Rome, and holds a doctorate in Biblical Studies from the Catholic University of America, Washington D.C.

She is also the first woman to head the Department of Scriptural Studies at JDV, Church officials said.

Sister Chennattu said she attempts "to unravel the biblical texts in a new and meaningful way through research, writing and teaching."

She said she tries to employ "the experience of the oppressed and marginalized in general and that of women in particular as the key for interpreting the Bible."

She attempts to integrate social issues, theological concerns and pastoral insights so as to see the meaning of Christian life, particularly women's life in the social context of the Indian Church.

JDV president Father Job Kozhamthadam said her presence "will bring in the much needed feminine dimension into theological" teaching and make seminarians more "gender sensitive."

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