

Chaplain brings love, faith to work on campus

BY JENNY WATERS
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The smell of meatballs and pasta lured about 200 students into the Noble Room of Hendricks Chapel on Nov. 14.

They left barely enough room to move as people stood shoulder to shoulder in anticipation of the free meal.

The number of students made making acquaintances easy, according to Mondana Nicksolat, an Iranian graduate student in the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs.

"I really met a lot of people here, a lot of friends," Nicksolat said as she finished eating her dessert. "I came three times this semester."

The weekly luncheons, where students come each Thursday to enjoy the food and take a break from the stress of college life, are sponsored by Dr. T.E. Koshy, Hendricks Chapel's evangelical chaplain of 24 years.

"We are here to serve you without any strings attached," Koshy said to the crowd of mostly international students.

Although Koshy is a man of short stature, his life is based on a set of high principles, said Suresh Thiagarajan, one of Koshy's co-workers.

"I've been working with

Dr. Koshy for 14 years," he said. "He is a man of vision, and he loves people.

"Our goal is to build bridges."

Man of the people

After the luncheon, Koshy took a break and sat down for the first time all afternoon. He talked about what motivates him to serve others.

"I don't represent a religion or denomination," Koshy said, sitting in an office full of dirty pans and other cooking supplies.

"Religion divides. Jesus unites. I'm all things to all people, and I do what I do not out of duty but out of love for all people.

"The most powerful thing is genuine love."

As Koshy raised his hand and pointed to the heavens, he said the love in his heart comes from a greater power.

"People are equally important in God's eyes," he said with a smile. "I came to know Christ when I was 10," he added. "My mother led me to the Lord. (Since then), I had a deep desire to be a witness for Christ to others."

Many people do not know this true love and try to fill their heart with materialistic ideas, Koshy said.

"We talk about love and don't know what it is," Koshy said. "True love is seeking God's best.

"After 31 years (at SU as

a student and chaplain), God's love has not failed me."

Change of scenery

Originally from Kerala, India, Koshy came to the United States to study journalism at the S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications.

Because of his experiences as an international student at SU and at the Moorland Bible College in London, Koshy said he is able to identify with the needs and concerns of international students.

"They are under pressure and stress," he said. "They feel this (luncheon) is a home for them.

"They can get a feeling of belonging."

When foreigners come to the United States, they face many problems, Koshy said, citing the weather and the food as such concerns.

"(One student) said she would have gone back to her country without the support of our ministry," Koshy said.

Katherine Granja, a sophomore in the School of Visual and Performing Arts, is another student who said she appreciates Koshy's ministry.

"I like the way he encour-

ages people," said Granja, who is originally from Bogota, Colombia.

"He especially understands the needs of international students.

"He is always willing to lend a helping hand."

Although

many people have been touched by his ministry, some do not understand why he would want to be a chaplain, Koshy said.

He earned a bachelor's degree in literature and philosophy and a law degree from the University of Bombay, a degree in theology from

Moorland Bible College, and a master's degree in journalism from SU.

He later received a Ph.D. in mass communications from SU.

Because of his qualifications, Koshy said people did not expect him to work as an evangelical chaplain.

"God is my employer," he explained. "I do what I do because of my commitment and loyalty to Him who loves and cares for people regardless of who they are."

He spoke of the time when a student confronted him about this matter. With five different degrees from

three different continents, the student said she thought that Koshy could find something better to do.

"I am a chaplain not because I couldn't find anything else to do but because this is the best the Lord would have me do," Koshy said, smiling.

At one time, Koshy said his career in journalism gave him the opportunity to meet many famous people, but he said he gave up that life when he offered himself as an instrument of God at SU.

"I used to rub shoulders with the senators and congressmen," he said, pointing to a picture of himself in a press conference at the White House with former President Lyndon Johnson.

Koshy said the experiences did not go to waste but equipped him to be a better chaplain.

"I didn't want to be known as a so-called Christian worker," he said. "Otherwise, the non-Christian would look at me as a propagandist.

"I wanted to give God the very best so no one could look down on me."

Koshy said he wants to be known as a chaplain who practices love in action and spreads the hope of Christ.

"God's eternal love moves to serve others in love," he said.

"Love seeks to serve others selflessly."

"I'm all things to all people, and I do what I do not out of duty but out of love for all people."

T.E. KOSHY

Hendricks Chapel
evangelical chaplain