near us has died, it is nice to receive cards and letters and flowers and visitors and phone-calls. It is good when people find time to play with us or help us with our reading or hobbies or activities. Maybe it is our grandparents who have more time for us than our parents, as sometimes our parents are very busy. Sometimes busy people do not realize that other people need them and they have to be asked. "Please can you give me some time? There are things I want to talk to you about." When I was a very busy minister in England and when my husband was alive, I remember one day, talking to someone over the phone, making an appointment to see them – and my husband called to me from the other side of the room, "Please may I make an appointment to see you?" I felt very ashamed to realize that I was becoming too busy. It is possible for married people not to give each another enough time. I hope you and your parents make time to talk to each other. Everything is changing so fast. You are changing. The world is changing. It is so important that we keep communicating with each another in our families. The most valuable thing we can give someone is our time. Be generous with your time.

We should also be generous with our talents. In school, if you find a subject difficult and your friend is good at it, it is very nice when he or she takes time to explain that subject to you. If you have a gift for singing or sports, dancing, music or art, it is lovely if you can be generous with your talents and gifts to others. We can all benefit so much if we share our talents.

Finally, we can be generous with our money. All good religions encourage us to remember the poor. There are good organisations through which we can give money to the poor. One of the most obvious way of being generous is to pay those who work for us enough for them to live decently and look after their families properly. Some wages in Bangladesh are very low and this can tempt people to be dishonest.

So let us try to live generously especially when God has been very generous to us. God bless you.

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SCHOOL PRAYER 7. BRAVE

Assembly 39 – Tuesday March 11th 2003

I told you in the last Assembly that we were going to start fire practices. What I did not tell you then was that, when you are really good at fire practices, we shall start to have earthquake practices. If you feel afraid of the idea that we could have a fire here and that Dhaka could have an earthquake then that is perfectly normal. We are all afraid of danger – that is why we need COURAGE – we need to ask God to make us brave.

The sentence we are looking at is 'Make us generous and brave'. On Sunday, we thought about being generous with our time, our talent and our treasure. Now we have to face the fact that life is often frightening. That is one of the many ways that life is difficult. If we pretend that life is easy, then we are fools. If we think we do not need courage *(oot-hosh)* then I do not know what world you are living in. Every day, it takes courage to get out of bed. We do not know what the day may bring. Every day we walk through streets where there are accidents and thieves. Every day, we risk a lot, just by living our lives.

The moment you say you will do anything, you have to face the fact that you may fail. Every time you try to accept responsibility or do a job, you risk doing it badly. When I was offered the job of being Principal of this school, I was afraid. What a big responsibility! What if I do and say the wrong things? What if people do not like me? Every day, you and I have the choice to be a mouse or a tiger – to run away or face up to what every day brings to us.

There are times in life that need special bravery, special courage. Maybe you have someone in your family who is facing serious illness – that takes a lot of courage. And there are lots of

other problems that need you and I to be brave. I do not know anyone who has not got a problem of some kind or another – although some lives have more problems than others.

One of the most important things your families and teachers can do for you is to help you to live your lives with courage. When we met some parents last Thursday, we had to tell them that some of you are little mice in class. You may talk to your friends but when the teacher asks you to answer a question, you are silent. Some of you must learn that is OK to give a wrong answer but it is not OK to give no answer. You must try to answer questions. You must try to think and then speak. Be brave and express what YOU think. This is a skill you need when you study all subjects in school. But it is also a skill you need in life – in all your relationships. It is right for you to have the courage to say what you think, to your parents, to your friends and to your teachers. Then you can have good discussions as you are helping them to understand you.

If you do not speak out, you cannot help your friends when they are tempted. Maybe one of your friends picks up a cigarette or talks about taking drugs or is driving a car dangerously. Are you going to sit there and say nothing? Young people can be a very good influence on each other but they can also be a bad influence on each other. So much depends on which members in the group have the courage to speak out when the others are being stupid. That can mean being very brave as some of your friends may laugh at you at the time, but, later, some of them will be grateful to you that you have stopped them doing something stupid.

When you read about people who have been heroes and heroines, so often, it is because they have been brave. It is right that we should want to be like that also - and so, every morning in school Assembly, we ask God to make us brave.

God bless you.

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SCHOOL PRAYER 8. PURE

Assembly 40. Wednesday march 12th 2003

Yesterday, I hope, you saw why we needed to ask God to make us brave and today, I hope, you will see why we need to ask God to make us pure. You may think, "But we are children – we are pure already because we are innocent so that we do not need to bother with purity." But there is a big difference between innocence and purity which you need to understand.

Little children are innocent because they do not know many things about life. The word 'innocence' means not knowing. But as you move up the school, from *there* (Year 2) to *there* (Year 11) you come to know a great deal more about life and how you are made and how people behave and what you could do, if you had the chance, and what you should not do, whether you have the chance or not. So you become much more open to temptation BECAUSE you know. It is at the point when you lose your innocence, that you need to develop purity. When you have to make choices, purity is being able to say NO to bad things. Purity is being able to choose NOT to do what you could do because you now know what you could do. Purity is choosing to live a clean life because you come to know what is dirty.

Sometimes the advertisers use the word 'pure' to describe things that you clean the house with. "Why not make YOUR bathroom as pure as snow, with . . . our product." Pure is also used in Bangladesh to describe the drinking water that people need. We all need to drink pure water and not dirty water so that we are not sick. That is why this school did a lot of research on which drinking water was best for the drinking machines we have here. Many countries, including Bangladesh, has a lot of work to