

Book Review

Ministers and Ministreis in the Local Church – A Comprehensive Guide to Ecclesiastical Norms by Sebastian S. Karambai. ST. Paul's Publishers, 2005. Pp. xxix-451. Rs. 220. ISBN 81-7109-725-1.

This publication is a welcome compendium in the field of canon law. For a long time we read about laws that are terse and additional norms or guidelines in separate documents and it becomes very cumbersome to get hold of laws and guidelines in one book. But Karambai, being a man of practical experience has in a masterly manner conjoined the two.

There are references to a number of instructions, directives, complementary legislations to the two codes, which become important in understanding and interpreting the law. The emphasis is on the Latin Church and the Latin Code, but it has many references to the Eastern Code and that makes it an even handier kit. In particular the Syro-Malabar church can profit considerably.

The book consists of two parts. Part I consists of six chapters and deals with the Ministers, both persons and bodies, that serve the diocesan and parish level. Karambai moves from diocesan leadership to leadership at the parish level. The roles of persons in the executive and judicial sections of the diocesan curia and the various consultative and executive bodies of the diocesan curia, their qualification, appointments, responsibilities and powers are spelt out. The functions, rights and obligations of the parish priest, parochial vicars, deacons and vicars forane are clearly outlined. He also tells us of offices that are obligatory and those that are optional. The Bishops, not too familiar with making appointments to these offices, will find this a handy resource.

Part II, consists of nine chapters that focus on the ministries of teaching and sanctifying. It begins with a chapter on the Word of God and proceeds to the sacraments and sacramentals. While in Part I there are only two chapters that have frequently asked questions, here each of the chapters end with this sub title. Karambai has picked up these questions from his years of experience in the field. His scholarly responses stem from his learning and experience as a canonist and consultor. The seven sacraments, its nature, requirements, its celebration and the minister are taken into consideration and given good emphasis. Here again the ecumenical provisions and the references to documents and CCBI regulations make it informative. To a certain extent it can serve as a manual for catechesis of these ministries.

Karambai is clear in his explanations and cites examples to explain a point. He does not give us a commentary on each canon, but his study is broad based, taking into consideration the historical background, the reasons behind the law, the changes from the old code to the new code. He occasionally applies it to situations in India and points out what is lacking in the Indian context, making it more contextual. He provides us with useful appendices. Definitely there is an enormous amount of research, and reflection done to arrive at this compendium. One cannot by pass this book as one to be read and set aside. It is a useful guide to every official and pastor in the church. It gives us a proper understanding of the current discipline in the church regarding ministers and ministries and will help in effective pastoral ministry.

Michael Fernandes

Mother Teresa: A Saint from Skopje. By Hiromi Josepha Kudo Ph.D. Gujarat Sahitya Prakash, 2005. Pp xxiii-216. Rs 250, \$ 25.

This book is the doctoral thesis of Hiromi Kudo under the guidance of Fr. Cyril Veliath, SJ of Sophia University. Miss Kudo received her Ph.D from the University of Saints Cyril and Methodius in Skopje, Macedonia. She is a tenured member of the teaching staff of Urawa University in Japan and also teaches part-time at Sophia University in Tokyo.

Hiromi Kudo has done an admirable research on Mother Teresa and her works. The author has visited Mother's birthplace and interviewed many people to get accurate information about her parents, family members, relatives, etc. She along with her mother has visited Mother Teresa in Calcutta several times and worked as a volunteer at the motherhouse. She and her mother were so much taken up by Mother's faith and dedication to the poor that they eventually received baptism in the presence of Mother Teresa. The author has interviewed Mother many times. She has high regard for the Jesuit contribution in the spiritual guidance of Mother and in the discerning of her second vocation and eventually the founding of the new religious congregation. The five Jesuits who influenced Mother very much are Fr. Franjo Stefano Jambrekovic, Archbishop Perrier, Cardinal Lawrence Picachy, Fr. Julian Henry and Fr. Van Exem. She feels that many authors on Mother Teresa have not given enough importance to the role played by these Jesuits, especially Fr. Van Exem.

The book contains four chapters. The first chapter deals with the early life of Mother Teresa in the city of Skopje, where she was born and brought up. The second chapter deals with Mother's religious life in India and her second vocation. The third chapter gives an account of various activities of the Missionaries of Charity. The concluding chapter is about the factors that led to the state funeral for Mother Teresa something on the lines of the state funeral for Mahatma Gandhi.

The author has taken pains to show that Mother had a special love for her birth place. This is shown by the fact that she had started her work in Macedonia already in 1976. Her mother's ethnic homeland was Albania, where her mother and sister died and were buried. In 1989 Mother Teresa received permission to start a house in Albania and in 1991 Mother went there along with four sisters and started a house. Mother was recovering from her heart attack and it is reported that she struggled against her illness in order to be well enough to visit Albania. Mother's fluency in language must have come from her father who was proficient in many languages such as Macedonian, Serbian, Turkish, Albanian, Italian, and French. Mother had a very good command of Bengali. She was even nicknamed 'Bengali Theresa' because she was teaching in Bengali at the Loretto school. She was also fluent in Hindi, Serbian, Croatian, Albanian and English.

Mother had experienced so much of ethnic conflicts in her homeland that she insisted on working for peace. She did her best to bring about peace between Hindus and Muslims in Bengal especially in Calcutta. She was accepted both by Hindus and Muslims. On 6th December 1992 when there was a big religious riot in Calcutta, in spite of the curfew, having got special permission from the army, she went in a truck along with the truck driver to buy food materials from a distant part of the city. Her truck was allowed to move freely both by the Hindu and Muslim groups who were attacking vehicles and setting them on fire. Thus she was able to bring enough provisions for the inmates. Her concern for world peace is evident from the fact that she sent a petition to both the presidents of USA and Iraq before the gulf war began in January 1991. It is no wonder that she was honoured with the Nobel prize for Peace.

Both the parents of Mother Teresa were very generous to the poor. At the same time her mother was quite strict with her children. Once the children were sitting around their mother engaged in childish talk. This went on for quite some time and their mother remained silent. Finally she left the room and switched off the main switch saying that there is no need to waste electricity on useless talk. The same type of strictness is found in the life of Mother Teresa too. Once she happened to notice a nun admiring herself looking in a mirror. After scolding the nun for such inappropriate behaviour, she painted the mirror. Mother believed in total dependence on God for the functioning of different houses. She insisted on having no regular income or bank accounts. She also believed that serving the poor is equivalent to serving God. She told one of the sisters who had kept watch over a patient overnight without sleeping, "You have done 24 hours of adoration".

The author's great love for Mother Teresa and her works is very evident all through the book. She tries to communicate this enthusiasm to the readers also. This book is historical in nature and very informative. The author's studied reflection and critique of Mother's works are very minimal.

Jose Thayil, SJ