

## Kurien Kunnumpuram: The Person and Message

**Wikipedia Authors**

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

**Rev. Kurien Kunnumpuram S.J.** (born July 8, 1931) is a Roman Catholic Indian Jesuit priest and theologian. Member of the academic staff of the Faculty of Theology at Jnana-Deepa Vidyapeeth (JDV), Pune (India) he has contributed much in the field of ecclesiology, particularly its new understanding brought in by the Vatican II<sup>[1]</sup>

He was the founder-publisher-editor of *Jnanadeepa: Pune Journal of Religious Studies*,<sup>[2]</sup> from 1998 to 2010. He was also the founding editor of JDV's Encyclopedia of Indian Christian Theology, till 2009. He is currently the editor of *AUC: Asian Journal of Religious Studies*.<sup>[3]</sup>

### His Theology

After having taught Catholic theology for more than fifty years, the basic theological outlook can be summarised as follows:

### God: The Deepest Human Longing

Faith in God is the foundation of his theology. This faith is based on his personal experience of God, and not on the rational arguments for the existence of God. Besides, he find faith in God quite meaningful. For only God “meets the deepest longings of the human heart which is never fully satisfied with what this world can offer”.<sup>[4]</sup> And only God provides a fully adequate answer to the ultimate questions of humankind about life and destiny. Moreover, the common experience of humanity leads to faith in God. As Vatican II points out, “For their part, however, believers of whatever religion

has always heard His revealing voice in the discourse of creatures. But when God is forgotten the creature itself grows unintelligible”<sup>[5]</sup>. Perhaps the most beautiful statement on God in the Bible is this: “God is love”.<sup>[6]</sup> The nature of God is love. It is remarkable that the official creeds of the Church usually speak of God as omnipotent, as all powerful. And the liturgical prayers are mostly addressed to almighty God, eternal King or supreme Lord and never to the all-loving God<sup>[7]</sup>. And it is out of love that God created the world. Vatican he has given us a comprehensive explanation of our faith in creation: This one and only true God, of His own goodness and almighty power, not for the increase of His own happiness, nor for the acquirement of His perfection, but in order to manifest His perfection through the benefits which He bestows on creatures, with absolute freedom of counsel, “from the beginning of time made at once out of nothing both orders of creatures, the spiritual and the corporeal, that is, the angelic and the earthly, and then the human creature, who as it were shares in both orders, being composed of spirit and body”<sup>[8]</sup>. This statement makes it quite clear that God did not create the world in order to get anything for himself. In fact, there is no need of God’s that we can supply, no luxury of His that we can provide. Actually, God created world to bestow his blessings on his creatures and to give them a share in his own goodness.

Further, Kunnumpuram holds God’s saving work is based on love. As Vatican II has stated, God in His goodness and wisdom chose to reveal Himself and his plan of salvation. “Through this revelation, therefore, the invisible God out of the abundance of His love speaks to humans as friends and lives among them, so that He may invite and take them into fellowship with Himself”<sup>[9]</sup>. The Fourth Gospel affirms: “For God so loved the world that he have his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but have eternal life”<sup>[10]</sup>. Thus God’s saving plan which was revealed gradually and which culminated in Jesus Christ was from beginning to end based on his love for humankind and the world. It is part of our faith that God is one and three. Obviously the Triune God is beyond the grasp of our finite minds. And human language cannot adequately express the mystery of God. This is what the Church means when it teaches that God is incomprehensible and ineffable. All the same, the doctrine of the Trinity has a great significance for the Christian

community as well as human society at large. As Vatican II points out: “Indeed, the Lord Jesus, when He prayed to the Father, ‘that all may be one... as we are one’<sup>[11]</sup> opened up vistas closed to human reason. For He implied a certain likeness between the union of the divine Persons and the union of God’s children in truth and charity”<sup>[12]</sup>. It is the faith of the Catholic Church that Jesus Christ, whom God has sent to us, is truly God and truly man composed of a rational soul and a body.<sup>[13]</sup> But unfortunately people have not always taken the humanity of Jesus seriously. For many, Jesus is only the divine Lord. But the New Testament pictures Jesus as a true human being. John unhesitatingly declares: “And the Word became flesh and lived among us”<sup>[14]</sup>.

## **The Church: A Divine–Human Reality**

For a casual observer the Church is just a social reality – an association of human beings who profess a common faith, who participate in a common worship and who endeavour to live by a common ethical code. But for believing Christians the Church is also a faith reality. There is a grace-filled depth to the Church. In the Apostles’ Creed we profess: “he believe in the holy Catholic Church.” It is the faith understanding of the Church that will be articulated here. The Church is not a purely human enterprise. God is at work in the origin and development of the Church. That is what we Christians believe. St. Paul speaks of “the Church of God that is at Corinth” (1 Cor. 1:2). This probably refers to the local Christian community there. In The Bible “the Church of the living God”<sup>[15]</sup> most likely denotes the entire world-wide assembly of the followers of Jesus Christ. The Second Vatican Council (1962–65) spoke of the mystery of the Church. The Church is a mystery because it is part of God’s plan of salvation. In the New Testament, particularly in the Letters of Paul, mystery refers to the divine design for the salvation of humankind. It was God’s plan to offer to everyone the possibility of salvation and to assemble in the Church all those who would believe in his Son.<sup>[16]</sup>

1. This plan was realized in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

2. What was once achieved in Christ is now being effected in the lives of the faithful through the work of the Holy Spirit.
3. The Church is thus seen to be part and parcel of God's plan to save all humankind in Christ Jesus.

When we say that the Church is a mystery we not only mean that the Church is part of God's plan of salvation for humankind but also that God is at all times present and active in the Church. As Pope Paul VI stated: "The Church is a mystery. It is a reality imbued with the hidden presence of God."<sup>[17]</sup> The expression, the Church of God, also signifies a Church that is rooted in the experience of God. Just as Israel originated in the experience of the liberating God in Exodus, so too the Christian Church sprang up from the experience of the saving God in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. One becomes a member of the Church by sharing this experience. Against this background we can see how significant it is that in *Ecclesia in Asia* Pope John Paul II exhorts the Church to be ever more deeply "rooted in the experience of God which flows from a living faith."<sup>[18]</sup> Only then can the Church fulfil its vocation to be a meeting place of God and human beings. As the Pope declares: "The Church cannot therefore be understood merely as a social organization or agency of human welfare. Despite having sinful men and women in her midst, the Church must be seen as the privileged place of encounter between God and human beings, in which God chooses to reveal the mystery of his inner life and carry out his plan of salvation for the world."<sup>[19]</sup>

## **The Church: Its Vision and Mission**

From the earliest days of its existence the Church was aware that it has the same mission as Jesus: "As the Father has sent me, so I send you"<sup>[20]</sup>. Now the Kingdom was central to the life and mission of Jesus. It is the main theme of his preaching<sup>[21]</sup>, the referent of his parables<sup>[22]</sup> and the content of his symbolic actions (Lk 11:20; 15:1-3). Hence, the Church too has the mission to work of the establishment of God's kingdom. Unfortunately, some change took

place in the Church's understanding of its mission. Many Catholics tended believe that the kingdom of God is already come and it is present in the Catholic Church. This led to a different way of looking at mission. It was held that the goal of the Church's mission was the salvation of souls to be brought about through the preaching of the gospel and the administration of the sacraments, especially baptism. However, it gradually dawned on the Church that God can save souls (humans) without the help of the Church. This led to a new approach to mission. The purpose of the Church's mission, it was now believed, was the planting of the Church in every new places and among even new peoples and cultures. In course of time even this understanding of the Church's mission was found to be not fully satisfactory.

Vatican II has stated that the Church has received from Christ the mission to proclaim and establish God's kingdom here on earth. In the post-Councilar period to both Paul VI and John Paul II held such a view.

Taking these developments into account, he wishes to adopt a holistic approach to the mission of the Church. To his mind the mission of the Church is to collaborate with God in God's work for the wholeness of the human person, the human community and the cosmos according to the pattern revealed in Jesus Christ. It is an essential element of the Judaeo-Christian tradition that God is present and active in this world of ours. The purpose of God's activity is the promotion of salvation. Wholeness is the nearest English expression for the biblical idea of salvation. But salvation is to be understood in a comprehensive sense. Lots of Catholics still think of salvation as something purely spiritual (salvation of the soul), merely individual (my salvation) and totally other-worldly (salvation in heaven). But Vatican II has rediscovered the richness of the biblical view of salvation. According to the Council, salvation is something personal (spiritual-corporeal), communitarian, societal, and both this-worldly as well as other-worldly. It is a process that begins here and now but which will find its final fulfillment in the age to come.

In recent times, we are becoming increasingly more aware of the cosmic dimension of salvation. The destiny of humankind and that of the cosmos are inextricably intertwined. In the past, Christians

often thought of their relationship to the world in terms of domination, possession, use and enjoyment. There was little awe and wonder before the mystery of the universe. This arrogant and irreverent attitude to creation is largely responsible for the serious ecological crisis we are facing today. But there is in the Christian tradition as well as in the Indian tradition a search for harmony and a quest for communion with nature. In fact, the final destiny of humankind is thought of as life in the new heaven and on the new earth. God is at work transforming the world so that the new humanity which God is fashioning may have a fit dwelling-place.

All this is to be understood according to the pattern revealed in Jesus Christ, according to Kunnumpuram. What is revealed in Jesus Christ is God's offer of unconditional love to sinful human beings. The God of Jesus Christ is not an angry, avenging deity, but a God of mercy and compassion, who lets His sun shine on the good and the wicked. It is also revealed in Jesus Christ that a person who accepts God's offer of love and surrenders himself-herself to this God of love, is totally transformed. S/he becomes genuinely free and is ready to give herself/himself away in selfless love and self-sacrificing service. It is finally manifested in Christ that death leading to a fuller, richer life is the law of human existence.

## References

- 1.^ Kunnumpuram, Kurien, and Lorenzo Fernando. 1993. *Quest for an Indian church: An exploration of the possibilities opened up by Vatican II*. Anand, Gujarat, India: Gujarat Sahitya Prakash.
- 2.^ *Jnanadeepa: Pune Journal of Religious Studies*, Vol 5/1 January 2002, p. 2. ISSN: 982-33315. This journal is owned and published by Jnana-Deepa Vidyapeeth.. He gave up this post in 2010, due to bad health.
- 3.^ *AUC: Asian Journal of Religious Studies*, Vol 50/6 November 2005, p. 2., a Pastoral journal published by Papal Seminary, Pune, India.
- 4.^ Pastoral Constitution On The Church In The Modern World *Gaudium Et Spes* (GS) 41)
- 5.^ Pastoral Constitution On The Church In The Modern World *Gaudium Et Spes* (GS) 36)
- 6.^ The Bible (1 Jn 4:16)
- 7.^ Refer to Indian Christian Theologian Samuel Rayan

- 8.^ Neuner-Dupuis, *The Christian Faith in the Doctrinal Documents of the Catholic Church* (ND)412 ISBN 0-8189-0893-9
- 9.^ Dogmatic Constitution On Divine Revelation Dei Verbum (DV)2
- 10.^ The Bible (Jn 3:16)
- 11.^ The Bible (Jn 17:21-22)
- 12.^ Pastoral Constitution On The Church In The Modern World Gaudium Et Spes (GS) 24)
- 13.^ Neuner-Dupuis, *The Christian Faith in the Doctrinal Documents of the Catholic Church* (ND) 614 ISBN 0-8189-0893-9
- 14.^ The Bible (Jn 1:14)
- 15.^ The Bible (1 Jn 4:16)
- 16.^ See Antony D'Cruz, *Church as a Witness to the Kingdom: Towards an Ecclesiology in India According to G. M. Soares Prabhu, S.J.; M. Amaladoss, S.J.; K. Kunnumpuram, S.J.* Pontificia Università Gregoriana, Rome. Defended on 3.02.2011.
- 17.^ As quoted in A. Dulles, *Models of the Church*, Garden City: Doubleday and Company, 1974, p. 16
- 18.^ John Paul II, *Ecclesia in Asia* (1999), n. 23.
- 19.^ John Paul II, *Ecclesia in Asia* (1999), n. 24.
- 20.^ The Bible (Jn 20:21)
- 21.^ The Bible (Mk 1: 14-15)
- 22.^ The Bible (See Mt 13)
- 23.^ Pandikattu, Kuruvilla, and Rosario Rocha. 2002. *Visions and Dreams: New Horizons for an Indian Church - Essays in Honour of Professor Kurien Kunnumpuram*. 1st ed. Pune: Jnana-Deepa Vidyapeeth. p. 274.

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- (2009) *Towards the Fullness of Life: Reflections on the Daily Living of the Faith*. Mumbai: St Pauls.
- (2007) *The Indian Church of the Future*. Mumbai: St Pauls.
- (2005) *Towards a New Humanity: Reflections on the Church's Mission in India Today*. Mumbai: St Pauls.
- (1993) *Quest for an Indian Church: An Exploration of the Possibilities Opened up by Vatican II*. Anand, Gujarat, India: Gujarat Sahitya Prakash (with Fernando, L.)

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- (2006) *Life in Abundance: Indian Christian Reflections on Spirituality*. Mumbai: St Paul's.
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- Rocha, R & Pandikattu, K (eds) (2002) *Dreams and Visions: New Horizons for an Indian Church: Essays in Honour of Professor Kurien Kunnumpuram SJ*. Pune: Jnana-Deepa Vidyapeeth.



# Quotes of Kurien Kunnumpuram

From Wikiquote

Prof Kurien Kunnumpuram SJ (born July 8, 1931) is one of the well-known Catholic Theologians of India. Currently he is the editor of AUC: Asian Journal for Priest and Religious. He has contributed substantially towards the formation of an Indian Church.

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## On God

\* God did not create the world in order to get anything for himself. In fact, there is no need of God's that we can supply, no luxury of His that we can provide. Actually, God created the world in order to bestow his blessings on his creatures and to give them a share in his own goodness. (Kunnumpuram, Kurien, 2011 "Theological Exploration," *Jnanadeepa: Pune Journal of Religious Studies* 14/2 (July-Dec 2011)).

\* If the world had a finite reality as its goal, then it has only a limited possibility of growth. But when the world has

the Infinite God as its goal, it has endless possibilities of growth and development. (Kunnumpuram, Kurien, 2011 "Theological Exploration," *Jnanadeepa: Pune Journal of Religious Studies* 14/2 (July-Dec 2011).

\* Transcendence is the way God is immanent. God is present in every created reality, without being identified with it. This is the meaning of God's transcendence. (Kunnumpuram, Kurien, 2011 "Theological Exploration," *Jnanadeepa: Pune Journal of Religious Studies* 14/2 (July-Dec 2011).

\* It is our Christian task to make ourselves increasingly more free. As one of the beautiful hymns has it: "It is a long road to freedom". There is a great danger that we will give in to external force or internal compulsion, thus jeopardizing our freedom. (Kunnumpuram, Kurien, 2011 "Theological Exploration," *Jnanadeepa: Pune Journal of Religious Studies* 14/2 (July-Dec 2011).

\* Freedom is for love and service. Our ability to give ourselves away in love and service is the true measure of our freedom. After having declared: "For you were called to freedom", Paul adds: "Through love become slaves to one another". (Kunnumpuram, Kurien, 2011 "Theological Exploration," *Jnanadeepa: Pune Journal of Religious Studies* 14/2 (July-Dec 2011).

\* Normally we think that it was Jesus' mission to reveal the mystery of God to us. This he certainly did. But he also revealed to us the mystery of the human person. As the Council declares: "The truth is that only in the mystery of the incarnate Word does the mystery of the human being take on light" (GS 22). First of all, Jesus pointed out the God-dimension of human person. (Kunnumpuram, Kurien, 2011 "Theological Exploration," *Jnanadeepa: Pune Journal of Religious Studies* 14/2 (July-Dec 2011).

## On the Church

\* The Church of God becomes concrete and visible only in a community of people who have experienced the presence of God and responded to his saving activity. (Kunnumpuram,

Kurien, 2011 "Theological Exploration," *Jnanadeepa: Pune Journal of Religious Studies* 14/2 (July-Dec 2011).

\* I wish to adopt a holistic approach to the mission of the Church. To my mind the mission of the Church is to collaborate with God in God's work for the wholeness of the human person, the human community and the cosmos according to the pattern revealed in Jesus Christ (Kunnumpuram 2011).

\* In recent times, we are becoming increasingly more aware of the cosmic dimension of salvation. The destiny of humankind and that of the cosmos are inextricably intertwined. In the past, Christians often thought of their relationship to the world in terms of domination, possession, use and enjoyment. There was little awe and wonder before the mystery of the universe. This arrogant and irreverent attitude to creation is largely responsible for the serious ecological crisis we are facing today. (Kunnumpuram, Kurien, 2011 "Theological Exploration," *Jnanadeepa: Pune Journal of Religious Studies* 14/2 (July-Dec 2011).

\* Now if the Church's mission is to collaborate with God in his work for the wholeness of the human person, the human community and the cosmos, then this demands that it care for the earth, that it be concerned about life and that it be committed to people. The Church's task is to work along with God for the creation of a new human society which is consciously rooted in God, which is characterized by freedom, equality, love, justice and peace and which lives in harmony and communion with nature. (Kunnumpuram, Kurien, 2011 "Theological Exploration," *Jnanadeepa: Pune Journal of Religious Studies* 14/2 (July-Dec 2011).

\* The one mission of the Church receives its specification from the actual context in which it is exercised in the concrete situations in which it is fulfilled. (Kunnumpuram, K. (2007) *The Indian Church of the Future*. Mumbai: St Pauls, p.26.)

\* Uniformity is the death of life. Wherever there is life, there is diversity. (Kunnumpuram, K. (2009) *Towards the Fullness of Life: Reflections on the Daily Living of the Faith*. Mumbai: St Pauls.)

\* Mission of the Church is to collaborate with God in his work for the wholeness of the human person, the human community and the cosmos according to the pattern revealed in Jesus Christ. (Kunnumpuram, K. (2009) *Towards the Fullness of Life: Reflections on the Daily Living of the Faith*. Mumbai: St Pauls.)

\* All this calls for an attitudinal change in the Church. An inward looking Church gives undue importance to rite and rubrics, orthodoxy and discipline. But God-ward looking Church is concerned with the great human problem of living together in freedom and equality, love, justice and peace as well as in tune with the rhythm of nature. For the world, not the Church, is the primary object of God's love. (Kunnumpuram, K. (2009) *Towards the Fullness of Life: Reflections on the Daily Living of the Faith*. Mumbai: St Pauls.)

\* Christian hope asks us to regard every stage in the growth of a person and every phase in the development of the Church as merely provisional. It has to be transcended. We are still on our way to the final Kingdom. (Kunnumpuram, K. (2007) *The Indian Church of the Future*. Mumbai: St Pauls.)

\* It [Vatican II] does not look upon the 'religious' as one dimension among other dimensions of human existence. The religious dimension intersects with other dimensions. That is why the Council could speak of 'the supremely human character' of the Church's religious mission. (Kunnumpuram, K. (2005) *Towards a New Humanity: Reflections on the Church's Mission in India Today*. Mumbai: St Pauls.)

## On Spirituality

\* The term spirituality is misleading. It gives the impression that we are concerned only with the soul and its activities like prayer and contemplation. The realm of the spirit is thought of as distinct from the material realm, the realm of work, of science and economics. Underlying this dichotomy is the Greek understanding of the human person as a composite of soul and body or as a soul temporarily housed in the body. The classical example of this is Plato's image of the human person as the charioteer in the chariot.

(Kunnumpuram, K. (ed) (2006) *Life in Abundance: Indian Christian Reflections on Spirituality*. Mumbai: St Pauls.)

\* The biblical understanding of the human person is holistic. It makes no distinction between body and soul. The human person is not a soul living in a body, but an animated body, so perfectly integrated that the person in his totality can express himself/herself and be apprehended in any part. "It is the body rooted in the cosmos and related to other human beings, which gives the person his or her identity." (Kunnumpuram, K. (ed) (2006) *Life in Abundance: Indian Christian Reflections on Spirituality*. Mumbai: St Pauls.)

\* There is a lot of piety among us, but not enough spirituality. Piety consists in the performance of external devotional practices and is measured by one's fidelity to these practices. Whether or not the faithful performance of these exercises of piety improves the quality of one's Christian life is a question that is seldom asked. One is at times surprised that priests, sisters and lay people who are obviously pious are manifestly unfair in their dealings with other people. Some of them show so little of the compassion of Christ and are quite unwilling to forgive others. (Kunnumpuram, K. (ed) (2006) *Life in Abundance: Indian Christian Reflections on Spirituality*. Mumbai: St Pauls.)

\* Spirituality is a way of life. It is our total inward quest for growth, meaning and authenticity. And it is manifested in the quality of one's life. In the last analysis, to be spiritual is to be touched and transformed by the Spirit of God. In a person who has been touched and transformed by God's Spirit the fruits of the Spirit will be seen: "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control" (Gal 5:22-23). Besides, "where the Spirit of Lord is, there is freedom" (2 Cor 3:17). (Kunnumpuram, K. (ed) (2006) *Life in Abundance: Indian Christian Reflections on Spirituality*. Mumbai: St Pauls.)

\* To follow Christ is also to identify ourselves with the poor and powerless as he did. The Incarnation is the symbol of this identification. Through his incarnation he inserted himself into the human family and became one with us. As Soares-Prabhu observes, "Jesus 'declasses' himself and adopts the

life of an itinerant preacher without a home or means of subsistence.” (Kunnumpuram, K. (ed) (2006) *Life in Abundance: Indian Christian Reflections on Spirituality*. Mumbai: St Pauls.)

\* Moreover, in the religious traditions of humankind there are at least four ways in which people have encountered the divine. First of all, there is the experience of God in nature, as the power behind natural phenomena. Such an experience usually leads to belief in nature gods. This is clearly seen in Hinduism. Secondly, there is the experience of God in the depths of one’s being. God-ward movement often takes an inward direction. This leads to the cultivation of interiority. The Upanishads bear witness to this kind of an experience of God. It is also found among the Christian mystics. Thirdly, there is the experience of God mediated through the rites and doctrines of religions. This is probably the most valued form of God-experience in popular Catholicism, in which the frequent reception of the sacraments is highly esteemed. Such an approach to the experience of God is found also among the followers of other religions. Finally, there is the experience of God in inter-human relationships and socio-political involvements. This form of God-experience is, I believe, typical of the biblical tradition. The foundational God-experience of Israel was the Exodus – the experience of God in the liberation of slaves. Israel also experienced God as the one who was active on its behalf in the decisive moments of its history. And the early Christians experienced God in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, who was done to death as a political criminal. For us Christians, the human person is the privileged locus of God-experience – we encounter God first of all in Jesus of Nazareth, and then in every man, woman and child. (Kunnumpuram, K. (ed) (2006) *Life in Abundance: Indian Christian Reflections on Spirituality*. Mumbai: St Pauls.)

\* Any genuine experience of God will send us out to serve those whom God loves. And working with people will make us aware of how much we are in need of God, of God’s help and guidance. This will gradually usher in a rhythm of prayer and work – prayer leading to work and work leading to prayer. So the integration of prayer and work takes place existen-

tially. (Kunnumpuram, K. (ed) (2006) *Life in Abundance: Indian Christian Reflections on Spirituality*. Mumbai: St Pauls.)

\* Christian spirituality is a spirituality of hope. St. Paul believes that Christians are those who have hope (1Thess 4:13). Now to hope is to look forward to the new, to what is not yet there, and strive to bring it about. Hence hope is forward-looking and forward moving. That is why a spirituality of hope is a spirituality of change. According to Karl Rahner it is a sin against hope to refuse to change. Those who refuse to change regard the past or the present as the final state of humankind. We are not yet in the new heavens and the new earth. We are on our way to them. And so our spirituality is a spirituality of hope and change. (Kunnumpuram, K. (ed) (2006) *Life in Abundance: Indian Christian Reflections on Spirituality*. Mumbai: St Pauls.)

## On Peace

\* The poor are becoming increasingly aware of the injustice of the system that condemns them to a life of indigence and misery. And they are opposing the system courageously, sometimes even violently. This leads to a situation of conflict. (Kunnumpuram, K. (ed) (2007) *World Peace: An Impossible Dream?*, Mumbai: St Pauls.)

\* The Church has consistently taught that justice and charity are the foundations of peace. It may be right to think of “charity as the soul and justice as the substance of international peace”. (Kunnumpuram, K. (ed) (2007) *World Peace: An Impossible Dream?*, Mumbai: St Pauls.)

\* Peace is the gift of God who through the death and resurrection of Christ, reconciled humans with himself and with one another. However, peace is also a human achievement since it is to be ushered in through the practice of love and justice. (Kunnumpuram, K. (ed) (2007) *World Peace: An Impossible Dream?*, Mumbai: St Pauls.)

\* Pope John Paul II is a tireless champion of peace who has dealt with the theme of peace often and at some length. Like his predecessors, John Paul II sees a close connection

between justice and peace. John Paul II believes that justice is rooted in love and “finds its most significant expression in mercy”. Hence, justice, “if separated from merciful love, becomes cold and cutting.” (Kunnumpuram, K. (ed) (2007) *World Peace: An Impossible Dream?*, Mumbai: St Pauls.)

\* That is why individuals and peoples need a “healing of memories”. This does not mean that they have to forget past events. Rather, they have to learn to look at them in a new way. Instead of remaining prisoners of the past, they have to recover their freedom to forgive. As the pope says: “The deadly cycle of revenge must be replaced by the new-found liberty of forgiveness.” (Kunnumpuram, K. (ed) (2007) *World Peace: An Impossible Dream?*, Mumbai: St Pauls.)

\* To work for peace and reconciliation is central to the mission of the Church. For the Church exists in order to carry on the saving work of Jesus under the guidance of the Spirit. And his saving work is interpreted in the New Testament as reconciliation and peace-making. According to Paul, God was in Christ Jesus reconciling the world to himself. (Kunnumpuram, K. (ed) (2007) *World Peace: An Impossible Dream?*, Mumbai: St Pauls.)

\* The Church in India needs to take more seriously the option for the poor and take concrete steps to alleviate poverty and misery in India. (Kunnumpuram, K. (ed) (2007) *World Peace: An Impossible Dream?*, Mumbai: St Pauls.)

\* The Church in India has to join hands with all subaltern groups – the Dalits, the tribal people and women – in their struggle for liberation and justice. For centuries, the Dalits have been victims of oppression. In recent years violence against them has grown. The tribal people, too, are subjected to various forms of injustice. (Kunnumpuram, K. (ed) (2007) *World Peace: An Impossible Dream?*, Mumbai: St Pauls.)

## Unsourced Quotes

\* As Indians we can be justly proud of our cultural heritage. All the same we need to recognise the fact that historically Indian culture was biased in favour of the dominant



minority, while the bulk of the people were marginalised and culturally deprived.

\* It seems to me that the clergy-laity divide and the consequent lack of power-sharing in the Church are largely responsible for the apathy and inertia that one notices in the bulk of the laity today. There is, to be sure, a small but growing member of lay people who are clamouring for a say in the decision-making process in the Church. But they are not really representative of the lay people of our country who are mostly passive. This is in striking contrast to what is happening in secular society. A large number of Catholics are making significant contributions in the professions, the media, the civil services, the police and the armed forces. The sad state of affairs in the Church, I believe, is the result of the concentration of all power and initiative in the hands of the clergy. In spite of all the inspiring things that Vatican II said about lay people and their share in the life and mission of the Church, no real empowering of the laity has taken place. Hence, it is necessary for us to examine the causes of the clergy-laity divide and find ways and means of overcoming it (Kurien Kunnumpuram "Beyond the Clergy-Laity Divide," *Vidyajyoti*, Vol. 63, n. 11, November 1999.)

\* There really was no clergy-laity divide during the patristic period. It was during the Middle Ages that some significant changes took place which had far-reaching consequences for the life of the Church (Kurien Kunnumpuram "Beyond the Clergy-Laity Divide," *Vidyajyoti*, Vol. 63, n. 11, November 1999.)

\* An increasing number of lay people are asking for a more active role in the thinking, planning and decision-making process in the Church. They are longing for a truly participatory Church. It is, however, surprising that whenever there is a plea for "democratic rule" in the Church, the invariable answer is that the Church is not a democracy. This is quite true. All the same it is noteworthy that Vatican II is quite keen that the structures of the Church should be in tune with the spirit of the times. While describing what the Church has received from the world, the Council states: Since "the Church has a visible and social structure, which is a sign of her unity

in Christ: as such she can be enriched ... by the evolution of social life. The reason is not that the constitution given her by Christ is defective, but so that she may understand it more penetratingly, express it better, and adjust it more successfully to our times" (GS 44). (Kurien Kunnumpuram "Beyond the Clergy-Laity Divide," *Vidyajyoti*, Vol. 63, n. 11, November 1999.)

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## Milestones in Kunnumpuram's Life

Date	Event
July 8, 1931	Birth at Teekoy, Kerala, India
July 11, 1950	Entered the Society of Jesus
March 24, 1963	Ordination to priesthood
1968	Completed Doctorate in Systematic Theology from the University of Innsbruck on "Ways of Salvation."
1969	Started teaching Theology at Jnana-Deepa Vidyapeeth (JDV), Pune, India
1974-77	Dean of the Faculty of Theology, JDV, Pune
1987-1993	Rector of Jnana-Deepa Vidyapeeth, Pune, India
January 1998	Founded <i>Jnanadeepa: Pune Journal of Religious Studies</i> (Editor and publisher) <sup>[23]</sup>
January 2002	Started editing-and publishing <i>AUC: Asian Journal for Religious Studies</i>

# *Jnanadeepa*

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