



Editorial:

Genuinely Christian and Truly Indian

How does the Church relate to the larger world? What is the relationship between the “spiritual” Church and the “political” country? For a Christian there is a necessary connection (though not identification) between worldly progress and the ushering in of the salvation that Jesus has brought about. So commitment to the country and devotion to the Church has to go hand in hand. There can never be real tension between the two, as illustrated in the life, writings and vision of Prof Kurien Kunnumparam, an eminent Post Vatican Council thinker.

So these articles explore the creative relationship between the Church and the country.

A church in India is in need of continual metanoia, freed from clericalism with its legalism, authoritarianism and centralization. Dr Paulose Mangai, Vidyajyoti School of Theology, New Delhi, pleads for a Church, led by the Holy Spirit and enters into creative dialogue with political, economic and cultural factors of the nation. This needs a radical conversion, a continual metanoia, leading to a way of the beatitude.

Based mystical convergence between the Hindu advaita and Christian theosis, Dr Sebastian Painadath, Sameeksha, Kalady, pleads for a Church that is enculturated and fully at home in the Indian soil. That is a Church that draws from the rich heritage of Indian religiosity, both in its classical and subaltern diversities.

The next article talks of the leaders of the church as servants, based on Kurien's book *Called to Serve*. PT Mathew, Professor (Emeritus), Vidyajyoti School of Theology, New Delhi, deals with the human, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral dimensions of priestly formation.

Dr VM Jose SJ, Moral and Pastoral Theology, Jnana-Deepa Vidyapeeth, Pune, pleads for a genuine encounter with God which is both liberative and social. Based on such life-transforming experience, the Church should create spaces for critical reflection, spaces where poor people can meet and reflect about God's presence in their concrete situations. Also these spaces should be places of communion among equals, where real participation is lived out. These spaces should be witness of God's presence among the people, a presence of communion, equality and "new creation".

Love of the neighbour is the core Christian experience. So for them authentic human existence following the axiom of St. Irenaeus "*Gloria enim Dei vivens homo, vita autem hominis visio Dei*," Dr Mariapushpam Paulraj, Jnana-Deepa Vidyapeeth, Pune, affirms that Christian freedom and the consequent life in the Spirit needs to be expressed through love of neighbour which replaces law and fulfils it at the same time.

For Kunnumpuram, the Church is the home for all people and religions. As he acknowledges the salvific meaning of other religions, he encourages Christians to appreciate the positive values in those religions. Therefore, Anoop Anto MSMI, Jnana-Deepa Vidyapeeth, Pune, attempts to respond to Kunnumpuram's understanding of salvation in post-Council documents, knowing well that the Second Vatican Council articulated a paradigm shift in the church's self-understanding and her relationship with the people of other faiths.

The next article by Dr Nishant Irudayadason, Systematic Philosophy, Jnana-Deepa Vidyapeeth, Pune, analysis of collective praxis both in terms of conflict and co-operation is done so as to invite the readers to the constant need to be open to

new possibilities of appropriating the praxis of Jesus in changing times and contexts.

The proceeding article talks of the essentially relational nature of Christian life, including our understanding of the life and message of Christ. It asks the question: How does Jesus help the Christians in India in healing their own brokenness and guide the Church to respond to the existential brokenness in India? The first part deals the brokenness in the Indian Christian community in terms of her identity, her social existence and in the life of the Church leaders. The second part provides theological foundations for interrelatedness in the world. In the third part, Ghattamaneni Malleswararao, Systematic Theology, JDV, Pune, deals with Relational Jesus of the Gospels. Finally, he derives some social and ecclesial implications of the relational paradigm of Jesus for Christians in India.

The final article elaborates on Kurien's commitment to the Church and the country. As we all know Kunnumpuram was a person passionately devoted to the Church and the Nation. He was rooted in the rich heritage of India and that of the Church. He embraced the values, vision and ethos of India and the Church. He felt fully at home in the Indian culture and Christian fellowship. His was truly a life of devotion to the country and commitment to the Church. So the challenge to the Indian Christians to be both good citizens and committed Christians! They have to live lives of creative tensions and concrete fidelity!

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Editor