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## Editorial:

# Towards a Vibrant Indian Church

We are happy to dedicate this volume of *Jnanadeepa Journal* is to Prof Dr Kurien Kunnumpuram, SJ, Professor (Emeritus), Systematic Theology, Jnana-Deepa Vidyapeeth, Pune. and founder of this journal. After having specialised in Vatican II, he has been teaching various subjects like Theological Anthropology, Ecclesiology and Priesthood for more than thirty years. He has contributed significantly towards an Indian Church.

Dr Kunnumpuram is a versatile personality: a committed professor of theology, creative thinker, prolific writer, gentle mentor and compassionate guide to many people. As a professor of theology, he has been the pioneer to introduce and enable the vision of Vatican II to the Indian Church. As a thinker, he has contributed significantly to an Indian theology that is both contextual and relevant. As a writer, he has founded *Jnanadeepa: Pune Journal of Religious Studies* and edited *Asian Journal for Religious Studies*, besides his own numerous books. As a mentor, he has been inspiring countless number of students in their academic and affective progress. As a guide, he has been accompanying numerous persons in their intellectual and spiritual journey. In short, he has been a critical, creative and gentle personality who has touched the lives of many people respectfully and reverentially! He cherished freedom, affirmed the dignity and accepted others as they are and rejoiced in the happiness of others!

Coming to the academic part: as a theologian and teacher, he has been pleading for a Church that is more human and promoting human persons who are more liberated and liberating. He has been consistently pleading for a spirituality that is rooted in a personal encounter with God and in the deepest human values! One of his last contributions to theology has been single-handedly editing the collected works of Samuel Rayan, a six-volume work. A remarkable contribution to the Indian Church!

All the articles in this volume are directly connected with the vision and theology of Kurien. Call for a deeper spirituality of care and compassion, ways of salvation in Christ, life according to Vatican II are dear themes of Kurien's daily life. Dialogue with others, including science and technology, call to return to the original Church, affirming the dignity of human beings and sharing the religious spaces with others have been his focus. Joy and freedom have been his key Christian principles. So, the article in this issue, written by his close collaborators and friends are challenge to a vibrant, joyful and hopeful Indian Church.

It may be worthwhile to recall that Kurien is a theologian, a religious and a human being. As a theologian, he is critical, analytic, creative. As a religious, he is caring, compassionate and concerned of others. As a human being, he is fully open to others, truly humane and deeply devoted to others. So he has been an creative thinker, guiding inspiration and close friend to many of us. He has contributed much to the Church in India, to make it vibrant, joyful and free!

May this volume be a modest contribution, inspired by the life of Prof Kurien Kunnupuram SJ, to foster a common and collective life of love, joy, peace and freedom for every individual in our vast human family! May this further the vision of Kurien Kunnupuram, SJ who accepts, affirms and respects every individual!

Kuruvilla Pandikattu SJ