

DNC TIMES

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Church

YESTERDAY > TODAY > TOMORROW



For a Synodal Church

COMMUNION | PARTICIPATION | MISSION

Sch. Shawn D'Silva SJ

*The artist is a 2nd year B.Th. student
at Jnana Deepa, Pune.*



Editor's Desk

These days when we enter a church, we first admire the structure of the church. Some of us even make a critical appraisal of the interior, be it the altar, the glass panes, the interior décor, painting, pews and the like. Some of us may busy ourselves, making a note of those not present. The young may question the worth of these old traditions while senior folk could shake their heads and wonder what purpose these modern structures would serve. Have you ever heard such constructive or destructive critiques? The Church of today needs to see the footprints of the marginalized, the poor, and the downtrodden on the floor. Everyone should feel that the Church is not only the Temple of God but a welcoming home for those who are lonely, depressed, orphans, and souls, sad unto death. We need soul winners, not supporters. As a young Jesuit, I don't want to see the Church as a mere building but the Body of Christ, where Christ is present in the form of the least of our brothers and sisters. In each corner of the Church, I need to feel that it's my home. Let us build up people rather than churches/church structures. We need to journey with them in their struggle and pain.

The Church needs leaders who can accompany the young and old, by feeling and understanding their challenges and not merely living as administrators or offering academic solutions. Pope John Paul II in the past and now Pope Francis is leading by example. They acknowledged and accepted the hurt which the Church has caused to others for centuries. Let us not forget to see Christ in every person; we need courageous people who live and walk in the footsteps of the forgiving Christ.

Today when we see the Church, we need to join our hands in prayer and remember the Catechists. They are the ones who showed keen interest to live and proclaiming Christ's values. The missionaries who came to our land were accompanied by the local Catechists. If they didn't journey with the missionaries, it would have been very difficult to the Church to grow.

Jesus is not meant only for Christians but for all. So, the Church needs to seek to be present in all people irrespective of their religion. We have one Christ but various Christologies, we have one Church but various liturgies. In the same way, we have different complexions, gender, races, castes, and so on but one Mother, that is, the Church. Thanks to the Second Vatican Council, which brought major changes in the Church, the Church today is more approachable, sensitive, and attentive to the needs of all the people.

Today, the faith has spread through various people in different ways. The media is today playing an important role in spreading the faith. The Church today has great respect for other religions and communities. What, therefore, can stop us from proclaiming the faith? Through the online platform, the Church has reached right into the living rooms, offices, communities, and hearts of people. No matter where we are in the world, it has brought us together like a family of God.

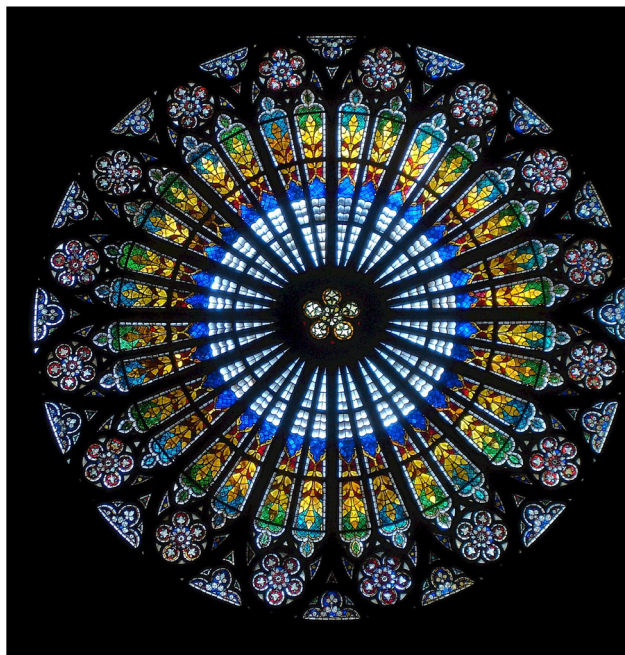
At this juncture, there is a need for consecrations more than celebrations, Gossiping rather than gossiping, the need to believe in creed and not greed, we need missionaries, not armchair theologians, we need people of goodwill, we need holy priests, nuns and lay people who are generous and committed. All in all we need a Church that shows compassion to others. Let us touch the hearts of the people rather than statues, let us light a candle to give light to the people who are in darkness.

I am hopeful that this edition of DNC TIMES will transport you to the Church of Tomorrow.

HAPPY READING,
Sch. Royal Saldanha SJ
Editor, DNC Times



In this issue



CHURCH: YESTERDAY, TODAY & TOMORROW

KRISTBHAKTAS	<i>by Suhail</i>	5
JOURNEY TOGETHER	<i>by Abhay</i>	7
THE CHURCH OF TODAY	<i>by Shanth Raj</i>	10
OUR DEAR FR. TED	<i>by Vicky</i>	11
TO BE CHURCH	<i>by Sumit</i>	13
YOUTH'S ROLE IN TOMORROW'S CHURCH	<i>by Fr. Cyril</i>	15
CHURCH: A PLACE WE ABIDE	<i>by Ms. Jesvita</i>	17
JOURNEYING TOGETHER	<i>by Fr. Francis</i>	19
CHURCH: TOWARDS A BETTER WORLD	<i>by Dr. Nandini</i>	21
MEMORY OF HAPPINESS; VISION OF HOPE	<i>by Arun</i>	23
LET'S BUILD THE CHURCH	<i>by Seby</i>	24
KHRISTBHAKTAS IN VIJAYAPUR	<i>by Rayan</i>	27
COBUILDER OF OUR CHURCH	<i>by Mr. Gasbar</i>	30
CHURCH: YESTERDAY, TODAY & TOMORROW	<i>by Prince</i>	32
AT CHURCH FOOTSTEPS	<i>by Sr. Shushma</i>	33
UNTESHWARI MATA MANDIR	<i>by Raman</i>	36
CHAPEL STUDY	<i>by DNC Scholastics</i>	39



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Kristbhaktas

a theology from below



Khristbhaktas are seekers and followers of Christ, who accept Yesu bhagawan (Jesus Lord) as their Satguru (Teacher and master). They draw spiritual nourishment from Christian centres based in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh. They are devotees of Christ, but not all of them are baptized Christians. There are thousands of such devout Khristbhaktas, following a distinct way of life. During the last few decades, their number has increased considerably and it is known as Khristbhaktas Movement.

This social composition of the Khristbhakta Movement is an expression of the Indian social reality in transition. It has originated itself as a religio-cultural response of the poor and weaker sections of people, who are in search of a new identity. Their struggle against caste and class can be well understood in the background of other heterodox movements and anti-systemic movements. Khristbhaktas negotiate the borders of faith and culture for empowerment against social exclusion and marginalisation from their liminal position of Hinduism and Christianity. This fluidity distinguishes the Khristbhaktas from baptized Christians.

*“Kristbhaktas
are devotees
of Christ,
but not all
of them are
baptized
Christians”*

BHAKTI TO THE CROSS

They are very sincere in fasting and prayer during Lent. They participate in the way of the Cross every Friday to feel one with

the suffering Christ. While interacting with one of them, I realised that they carry their sufferings, of being unaccepted by the society, relating it to the sufferings of the Crucified Christ. It is precisely this experience that gives them strength to face the challenges and helps them to immerse in the feeling of acceptance by Yesubhagwan.

BIBLE AND KRISTBHAKTAS

There is great openness among the subaltern people to hear the Word of God. Some have even learned to use the Bible well. Biblical verses are taught and used in Satsang during village prayer sessions. The Bible and Christian teachings have become the Gospel of the Khristbhaktas in a specific way. It has led to a subaltern discovery of their agent for personal transformation and of social change.

THEOLOGY OF THE KHRISTBHAKTAS

The explanation they give for their lives depends on their personal search. Those who find meaning in this way of interpreting, based on Christ experience do give a theological expression to it. These simple narrations are foundations to understand their society, their aspirations and their experience in Christ. Their sagas are filled with simple narrative theology. Their experience is based on God-talk. Their oral traditions are found in folklore and have been used by the Khristbhaktas, to enrich their religious experience with the use of Bible. Today these interpretations have entered the world of letters, though it remains still as part of the oral genre and a profound theology emerges from below.

Pope Francis in *Evangelii Gaudium* speaking of confession of faith and commitment to society says, “God, in Christ, redeems not only the individual persons, but also the social relations existing between peoples” (No. 78). To believe that the Holy Spirit is at work in everyone means realizing that he seeks to penetrate every human situation and all social bonds. Finally, to be sons and daughters of our Father in heaven urges the whole humanity to live in peace with one another (Rom 12:18) and that is the way to be true children of our Satguru.

“God, in Christ, redeems not only the individual persons, but also the social relations existing between peoples”



Suhail Joseph

(Diocese of Jammu-Srinagar)

The author is a 3rd year B.Th. student at Vidyajyoti, Delhi.



CHURCH HERALDS TO JOURNEY TOGETHER

From the genesis of the Church, community living has been an integral part of life. 'Church' means, an Assembly of God's people. The scripture narrates the communion story of early Christians (Acts 2: 44). But as time passed the Church became authoritative and rigid. It resulted in decline of participation of the laity in the Church. Only after Vatican II, the Catholic Church opened its windows to the modern world, updated its liturgy, extended the role of the laity, acknowledged religious pluralism, initiated ecumenical movement and inter-religious dialogue.

Recently, the Church has started 'Synod – 2023'. Pope Francis wishes to make the Church more compassionate, lively and participatory. 'Synodal Church' means 'journeying together'. Communion, participation and mission are the three keywords for this Synod. They aim at fostering active participation of the laity in God's mission.

*“Communion,
Participation
&
Mission”*

The process of Synod stresses the aspect of listening to each member of the community irrespective of their status in the Church. By listening to each other one understands the varied promptings of the Holy Spirit. Openness is a disposition that helps one to be available for the purpose and improvement in the following ways:

OPENNESS TO SELF

Listening to oneself will help to understand his/her positive and negative feelings towards the Church. It will make one free and will



add clarity to his/her views. Thus, sharing would become more profound and concrete.

OPENNESS TO OTHERS

Listening to others includes words of appreciation, love and also critique. Therefore, the process can be both pleasant as well as challenging. However, prayerfulness and humility of Christ would make it smooth.

OPEN TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

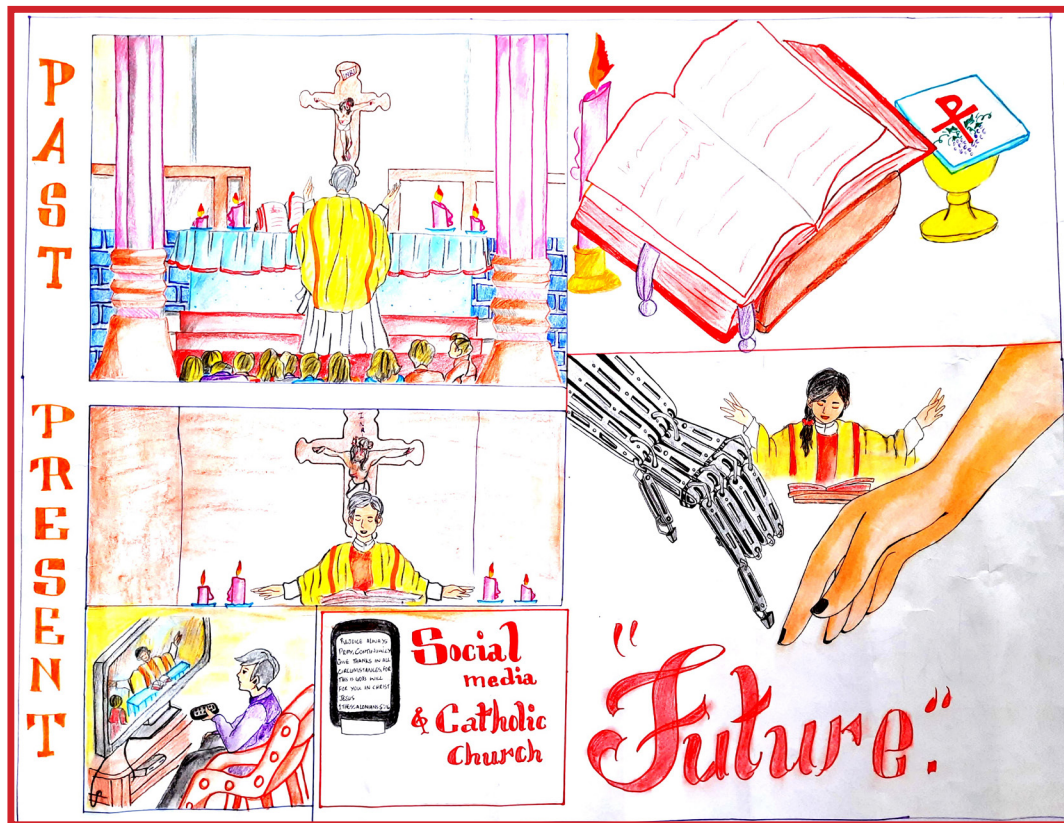
Process of listening to self and others should culminate in discerning the promptings of the Holy Spirit. It is the Spirit that tells us whether we are marching in the right direction. It affirms our right actions and eliminates all vices.

Openness is a grace to know God more profoundly. We wish and pray that this process of Synod-2023 be more effective and fruitful.



Sch. Abhay Kispotta SJ

The author is a 2nd year B.Ph. student at Jnana Deepa, Pune.



Art Competition



Mariansilangchi G Momin

The artist is a class 9 student at Loyola School, Dawagre.

"The Church should be a platform to encourage inter-religious dialogue in order to establish peace in the world."
Francis SJ

"It is the time for the Church to think with ordinary faithful. The Church needs a human face."
Royster SJ

"Church should treat everyone equal, free from caste discriminations and clericalism."
Jones SJ

"I wish that the Church joins other denominations and work for the Kingdom of God."
Rexman SJ

Thoughts from
SATYA NILAYAM
for
TOMORROW'S CHURCH

"Let it be simple. The Church should be people's Church."
Ravikant SJ

"We are the Church. It is the communion of all. This very communion should always unite all to participate in the mystery of the Lord and his Divine plan."
Suhel SJ

"Tomorrow's Church should be of the people, by the people and for the people."
Joshua SJ

The Church of Today

Do not wait until tomorrow,
If you'd make your life worthwhile.
Bring joy to the sorrow,
By empowering the life with smile.
Time is swiftly passing,
Without any demanding.
Today's procrastination, Tomorrow's frustration.

Do not wait until tomorrow,
To be a prophet of the nation.
Opportunities never live in shadow,
If we do not yield to temptation.
Siding with the powerful,
Path to destruction of the vulnerable.
Today's procrastination, Tomorrow's frustration.

Do not wait until tomorrow,
If you could spread love Now.
Be gentle and humble,
Then life becomes wonderful and beautiful.
If we realize this union,
Church becomes place of communion.
Today's procrastination, Tomorrow's frustration.

Do not wait until tomorrow,
To put on the Christ armour.
God's desire is not after power,
However, He is the comforter of sorrow.
Reading the signs of the times, task of His followers,
Never forgetting, we are called to be His mediators.
Today's procrastination, Tomorrow's frustration.

Do not wait until tomorrow,
Future cannot be borrowed.
Praise God while you pray,
God will protect you from evil way.
Try harder with never giving in to failure,
God will make you stronger.
Thus, Today's inspiration, Tomorrow's salvation.



Poetry
Competition



Sch. Shanth Raj A SJ

*The poet is a 3rd year B.Th.
student at Jnana Deepa, Pune.*

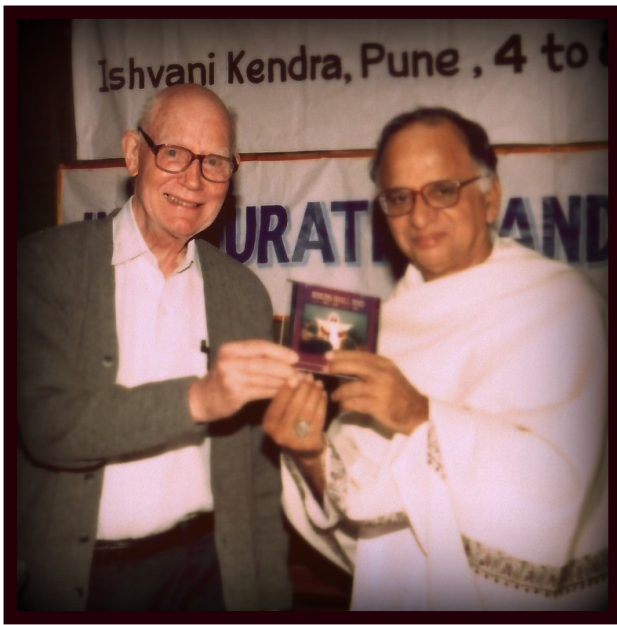
Our Dear Fr. Ted



The last American Jesuit and the oldest member of Patna Province Fr. Theodore B. Bowling, SJ (97/80) entered the heavenly abode at 11.30 am on 22nd November 2021. Fr. Ted was born in Louisville, USA on 4th May 1924 as the fifth child with two sisters and three brothers in a pious Catholic family. After graduating from High school in 1941, he joined the Chicago Province. His goal for evangelization brought him to Patna (India), in 1951 with an M.Sc. in Chemistry. On completion of his theological studies, he was ordained priest on 24 March 1955 at De Nobili College, Pune. Fr. Ted came to India precisely to serve as a missionary, but he could only spend a few months as a missionary in the traditional sense, with innate youthful vigour at Chuhari in North India in 1958 and 1959. Living there in a predominantly Hindi speaking locality, immensely helped him to master the local Hindi language quite well.

Being knowledgeable in science, Fr. Ted was appointed to teach natural sciences at JD, Pune in 1957. He taught the subject for a record number of 44 years until the day of his retirement in 2003. From the very beginning of his stay at De Nobili, Fr. Ted had been associated with the direct proclamation ministry of Fr. Peter Sontag SJ, who started the correspondence course on Jesus Christ and the Bible in 1948 in Patna and later transferred the Institute for Home Study (IHS) to Pune in 1952. The correspondence courses were run from 1952 onwards on the premises of De Nobili College till 2013.

In the early 1960's, Fr. Ted had to take over the direction of the correspondence courses from Fr. Sontag who suffered a heart attack.



The entire responsibility for IHS, Pune and the correspondence course ministry fell on Fr. Ted's shoulders after Fr. Sontag's demise in 1963. Fr. Ted's zeal for evangelization and love for the correspondence course ministry led him to organize the first National Meeting of Correspondence Course Ministry during the Eucharistic Congress at Mumbai in 1964.

A mild heart attack in 1976 and surgery in 1986 had slightly slowed down Fr. Ted's spirit. But he continued most of his engagements as before like monitoring IHS Pune, editing 'Prem Marg' monthly, etc. He continued as the President of ACECI till his voluntary resignation in 2004. But the Association, appreciating his zeal and dedicated years of service for correspondence course in India, made him a life-time Patron of ACECI.



Truly, Fr. Ted was a person of conviction, commitment and hard work. He was a great source of inspiration for all the scholastics and the students of JD as he was very punctual and spiritual in every aspect of life. He will be remembered for being an active member of Shristi Mitra and making the campus go green. He had an innate love for nature. His delight was to write letters to his folks and pray for the people all around the world. On his last visit to Sahyadri Hospital, he was well contented with his ministries and priestly life. Fr. Ted having accepted the parameters of his health and age was ready and willing to go to the Father's home at any time. He will be physically missed by many scholastics and students but his memories will remain etched in our hearts.



Sch. Vicky Lal SJ

The author is the assistant director at Patna Pre-Novitiate.

TO BE CHURCH



Reena woke up with a start. Her mom Jessy's voice could be heard by the entire colony. It was Sunday, 8 am – time for attending the Holy Eucharist. Reena quickly got ready and went to her wardrobe to choose her favourite dress. Jessy's voice kept growing louder every second. Reena quickly got out of her room and avoiding the angry look of her mother went quietly and occupied the empty chair. Jessy pressed the play button and the mass began.

As was the routine, they forwarded the hymns and the sermon and focussed on the 'main part' of the mass. The mass was over within half an hour and in no time Jessy and Reena rushed to the kitchen. While they were gorging on the chicken rolls they heard the doorbell. "I hope it's not a guest, I wanted to have that extra roll", said Reena as she got up reluctantly to open the door. She was a little taken aback. She had least expected to see the new parish priest Fr. Richard. "Good morning", said Fr. Richard, "I hope you remember me." Shaken out of her stupor on hearing the voice of her mother, Reena smiled and welcomed him inside.

"What a pleasant surprise", said Jessy on seeing him and gladly ushered him into the kitchen for breakfast. Midway through the chicken roll, Fr. Richard mentioned, "Jessy, I don't see you coming to Church these days. You used to be so active earlier. Even Reena is not to be seen." Both Jessy and Reena knew that this conversation was inevitable. What had begun as a safety precaution had over time become an excuse. "We do attend mass online father, so it's not that we do not participate in the Church at all", said Reena with a slight grin, knowing that she had outwitted the priest. Fr. Richard smiled and said to Reena, "I want you to come not to the church building but the Church." Reena and Jessy gave the priest a puzzled look. He continued, "The Church yesterday, today and tomorrow is the same – the people of God. I am not asking you to only attend mass in the Church, but more than that, I'm asking you to be the Church."



Story Writing Competition

Reena and Jessy were both baffled by this encounter. When Fr. Richard left there was an uneasy air in the house. A few days later, Reena received a WhatsApp message - The Church was organising a blood donation drive. Instinctually she closed the message and began to scroll Reels on Instagram. However, something was amiss. That WhatsApp message was consistently flashing in front of her eyes. Unable to ignore it any further, Reena got off her bed and decided to go and see what the blood donation drive was all about. As she got out of her room, she saw her mother also dressed up and ready to leave. Both mother and daughter looked at each other in surprise and said almost together "I'm just going to the Church". They both smiled at each other. They knew then the meaning of what Fr. Richard had said. They were not going to church. They were going to be the Church.



Sch. Sumit Dsouza SJ

The narrator is a 2nd year B.Th. student at Jnana Deepa, Pune.

"The Church should be open to the promptings of the Spirit."
Joel SJ

"Church should be rooted and grounded in its own culture but with a universal outlook."
Pravin SJ

"The church should be universal; neither be partial nor be carried by the world."
Rex SJ

"The church should be inclusive irrespective of religion, caste, gender, status, and race."
Siddhu SJ

**Thoughts from
DNC PHILOSOPHERS
for
TOMORROW'S
CHURCH**

"We need a progressive church that can act according to the signs of the times; a church of compassion and inclusiveness that could tackle the problems of inequality, fundamentalism, intolerance, and hatred."
Prithivi SJ

"The Catholic church should keep flowing and should never get stagnant with prejudices."
Jobin SJ

"A Church that has the smell, taste, and preferences of the sheep."
Sooraj SJ

"The church in the future should be flexible, liberal, dynamic and called people's Church."
Elson SJ

YOUTH'S ROLE IN CREATING TOMORROW'S CHURCH



**Fr. Cyril
Desbruslais SJ**



The role of the youth in creating the Church of Tomorrow I see symbolised by John, the youngest apostle. He was loyal to Jesus to the last, even though the other “adults” had found it too much to be numbered among those who were standing at the foot of the Cross.

I once heard an eighteen-year old say, “They say I ought to behave as an adult, while they treat me as a child!” I base my first plea on that: treat youth like adults and they will grow to be like adults. If they happen to lapse into child’s behaviour (as they sometimes will) talk it over with them, listen to them (you might learn something), reprimand them if necessary (not corporeally: a day’s “gating” will be successful). None of us is exempt from occasional lapses into immature conduct. This is part of the family’s job.

The school and the parents share in the responsibility of the growing teen-ager’s “Sex Talks”. They should be given non-judgmentally, with a stress on the facts and how it affects one’s emotional life. They should be given with a lot of sympathy and understanding, such that they will confide in a responsible loving adult (priest, religious or lay) and not merely to mixed-up youth like themselves!

The Church commonly treats those who attend the Mass or devotions as if they all were adult males: children, teen-agers (with the general run of women) must manage as best as they can. There must be the readings, read in a language the child can understand, and

“Youth leaders should be elected by the youth, not appointed”

explained to little kids apart in the sacristy, say. They can join the congregation after their own prayers of the faithful. Children’s Masses should be held with lots of processions and meaningful activities, which would be more meaningful for them. Youth Masses with their style of singing and a dialogue homily should be encouraged.

In keeping with Pope Francis’ theme of Synodality, youth leaders should be elected by the youth, not appointed. What they say should be listened to and debated seriously. We could be learning from them something of value. Parish priests should be appointed by the Bishop from out of a terna (three possible names), elected by the Parish Council, which should include two or three youngsters, chosen by the youth. And they should have a say in all parish meetings, even those who decide on how funds are to be distributed and, if necessary, people have to be pulled up for their administration or conduct.

A place like JD, Pune could join the seminaries who organise in theology, Scripture courses, and in philosophy, courses on the Philosophy of God/Religion and Ethics by correspondence or weekend lectures for youth and others so that they may contribute more deeply to the synodically evolving Church!

The author is a famous playwright and an emeritus philosophy professor at Jnana Deepa, Pune.



Art Competition



Sohani Cutinha

The artist is a class 8 student at Bethany School, Darbe Puttur.

Church: a place we abide



Ms. Jesvita Princy

The Church is the largest community in the world. For many years of my life the concept of Church was extremely big and formal. I thought it to be a setting where there is a hierarchy and the common people and then there is the bible and that everyone must follow it and abide by it. If not, well you go to hell. I mean this in all my sincerity.

In 2018, Pope Francis called out for a synod on Youth. This synod had three phases. The pre synod, the synod and the post synod. I had the privilege to participate in the post synodal meet in Rome. This changed my outlook of the entire Church.

For a long time, we have been saying that the Church needs to change, it needs to move with time. Guess what? You and I - we are the Church. If we are to say that the Church needs to change, it would mean that you and I need to change. You and I must evolve with time. But, is this change taking place?

I would like to start with the positives. Has the Church changed? Yes, it has. Prayers and Eucharist in lingua franca for better understanding by Vatican II and recently, adapting technology to gather people virtually to celebrate Christ, are some of the positive changes.

Does it need more change? Yes, it does. Now more than ever, we are in need of priests and bishops to be there for us, and we for them. When I say that the religious and laity need to be there for each other, it clearly shows that there is a huge gap between the two. This gap is filled with power, rigidity, resentment and abuse of various kinds.

Pope Francis today, emphasise on the role of the Holy Spirit. But I never really understood it until my participation in the opening ceremony of the synod. A major part of the ceremony included prayer. The warmth I felt inside made me realise that I was filled with the grace of the Holy Spirit. I learnt that the Holy Spirit is an experience that one feels inside.

“Earlier, decisions were taken only by the authorities of the Church. But now, there is a sense of togetherness”

It influenced my sharing in group discussions. Everyone spoke a lot about how the Church today is filled with dark spots and sin. However, we realised that still there is hope. How do we know this? Simple! A few years ago, decisions were taken only by the so called ‘powerful people’ of the Church. But now, there is a sense of togetherness. That is why we have been having synods on family, on those who were tagged as backward, on the young people.

A large amount of unheard voices have now come out of the peripheries. But this is not enough. We need everyone to be heard. It will happen only if we accept the dark spots and individually commit to changing this darkness into light. The Church transformation into an actual Kingdom of God depends on how I change myself. You and I need to be humble, need to accept the realities, need to show love, mercy and forgiveness and destroy the power that blinds us all.

The author is a member of the International Youth Advisory Body, Vatican.

JOURNEYING TOGETHER

AS SERVANTS, MOTHERS & PILGRIMS



**Fr. Francis
Gonsalves SJ**

Church has become a topic of widespread discussion lately, largely due to the convoking of the Synod 2021-2023 entitled, ‘For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation, Mission’. For the first time in church history not only are the baptized being consulted, but even those outside the Catholic Church—those on the peripheries, migrants, refugees, lapsed Christians and those of other churches and religions—are invited to share their experiences of Church to promote a process of ecclesial self-reflection. Questions like “Synod? Synodality? What’s that?” have often been asked earlier. But, now, many Christians know that ‘synod’ and ‘synodality’ refer to the Christian community ‘journeying together’ in the power of God’s Spirit. Pope Francis, in particular, has been instrumental in promoting a synodal church. Commemorating the 50th anniversary of the institution of the synod of Bishops on October 17, 2015, he said, “From the beginning of my ministry as Bishop of Rome, I sought to enhance the Synod, which is one of the most precious legacies of the Second Vatican Council.”

The Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) was a trailblazer in its ‘aggiornamento’ or updating of the Church in the light of the ‘signs of the times and places’. St Pope John XXIII said “We are in the Church not to guard a museum but to tend to a garden of life,” and St Pope Paul VI instituted the ‘synod of bishops’ in 1965 to ensure that shepherds worldwide would listen to their flock, learn from them and lead them in the ways of the Spirit in the footsteps of the Good Shepherd, Jesus.

Jesus was an itinerant preacher who revealed the face of a God of love. He began his ministry in Galilee among simple people and soon attracted many followers not merely by his words but also by his works and the witness of his life. This can be called the ‘Jesus movement’ whose aim he said was to promote “life in abundance”.



From being a Spirit-filled 'Way' turning the world upside down, the Church is now weighed down with big buildings and wielding influence in matters going far beyond the confines of the Church. While no one doubts that much ministry is being done all over the world, we must ask: Are we truly 'journeying with' others in a way that Jesus would want us to?

Indian Church and Christianity is a 'religious minority' providing mainly educational, medical and social developmental services in a land dominated by other ancient religions and spiritualities. It is also increasingly being persecuted in many parts of India and will have to reform and renew itself in order to be salt, leaven and light. What direction should we take?

Pope Francis provides three 'personal images'-servant, mother, pilgrim-that can give us direction to reform our Church. First, he says that the Church must be a kind of 'inverted pyramid': "in this Church, as in an inverted pyramid, the top is located beneath the base. Consequently, those who exercise authority are called 'ministers', because, in the original meaning of the word, they are the least of all. It is in serving the people of God that each bishop becomes, for that portion of the flock entrusted to him the vicar of that Jesus who at the Last Supper bent down to wash the feet of the Apostles. Similarly, the Successor of Peter is nothing else if not the *servus servorum Dei*."

Second, seeking to cure the cancers of patriarchy, clericalism and careerism affecting the church-body, Pope Francis says: "The Church is Mother and talks to the people as a mother talks to her child, with that confidence that the child already knows that everything is being taught for its good, because the child knows that it is loved." He adds, "Without this dimension, it sadly becomes a church of old bachelors, who live in this isolation, incapable of love, incapable of fecundity. Without the woman, the church does not advance-because she is a woman. This attitude of woman comes from Mary, because Jesus willed it so."

"Journeying together by listening to the Spirit, the early Church was accused of turning the world upside down"

Third, Pope Francis dreams of us as a "Pilgrim Church, by praying and opening our eyes to everything around us; by practicing a life of fidelity to the Gospel; by seeking answers in God's revelation through a pilgrim hermeneutic capable of persevering in the journey begun in the Acts of the Apostles." He adds, "This is important: the way to understand and interpret is through a pilgrim hermeneutic, one that is always journeying."

Today, we are at crossroads. The Church, can impact India only if it seeks to empty itself of the power, property and privileges it has burdened itself with, thus far. Unless the Indian Church of tomorrow truly becomes servant, mother and pilgrim, no one in India will be attracted by it. So, let's go forth as pilgrims following Him who will journey with us till the end of times. Even more, let's be servants and mothers to the 'least' of His sisters and brothers. Only then shall we be turning the world upside down.

*The author is the President of Jnana Deepa, Pune.
He is also the CCBI coordinator for the Synod.*



Church

towards a better world



**Dr. Nandini
Vithalrao**

God has ordained the Church to be in the world and to serve it. She emulates the values and the sacrificial aspect of Jesus Christ. It is through her that we feel closer to God and achieve a perfect means to worship the Almighty. From my experience, I believe that the Church has played a vital role and has left an indelible impact in the field of education, healthcare and social well-being.

EDUCATION

I am happy and I deem it to be my privilege to be working in a Jesuit Institution- St Xavier's PU College, Kalaburagi. One of the important values I have imbibed from this Institution is that of patience and perseverance. I admire these qualities in the Jesuits I have been working. Another important quality which I admire in them is their forgiving nature. It shows that they care for the individual and value them.

I also admire the out-reach and awareness programs which have filled me with contentment and joy. The memory of my visit to Don Bosco, Bablad is etched deep in my memory. What touched me during this visit is the care given to the Orphans through a home and a school. I have not found such a concern for the society in other secular institutions. Working here feels like working in a family through mutual care and support.

Unlike other institutions, Catholic institutions are catering to the overall and holistic development of the students. There are students

from different economic background and social strata, who are treated equally and are given equal opportunities to bloom and shine. The Church is not money-minded but people-oriented. This is shown by the various charitable works done especially in COVID-relief, scholarship for the poor, the under-privileged, girl-children, prodigies etc.

HEALTHCARE

The Church continues to carry forward Jesus' healing ministry in the form of the hospitals and health-care centers. I admire the service rendered at Mother Theresa Hospital here at Kalaburagi. They strive to carry forward the legacy of Mother Theresa. Some of the reputed and charitable hospitals in the country are run by Church Institutions.

“The Church is not money-minded but people-oriented”

SOCIAL WELLBEING

Jesus Christ in his life was a person who was selfless in his service. He tried to bring happiness to the people he met. He desired to build a society based on God's love and justice. Likewise, I see the Church trying to carry forward what Jesus began i.e. to serve the society and uplift the downtrodden and the marginalized.

I was touched by the recent events that took place with respect to Fr. Stan, the 84 year old Jesuit priest who worked in Jharkhand for rights of Adivasis, forest and land rights. He was the leader, a champion of tribal rights, a humanist to the core, and a voice for the voiceless. He raised his voice against the non-implementation of the Fifth Schedule of the Constitution, which stipulated setting up of a Tribes Advisory Council with members solely of the Adivasi community. Fr Stan was happy to be part of a process which questioned the injustice in the society and raised his voice for the tribal people.

Thus, many priest, religious as well as social activists of the Church try to build an equal society through her education, healthcare, social and charitable works. This is exactly what Jesus envisioned.

*The author is the Vice-Principal of
St Xavier's PU College, Kalaburagi(Gulbarga)*

Memory of Happiness Vision of Hope

Yesterday has passed forever,
That's now history.
But tomorrow hasn't happened yet,
It still remains a mystery.
So, what's in our hands is today,
Let's make better of it...



Poetry
Competition

Church yesterday would remind us
Of its glorious past and missionary quest,
Its aches and pains,
Its mistaken and cares,
YESTERDAY has passed forever beyond our control...

Church tomorrow would help us think
Of its mission and vision,
To do something better and greater,
To toil for abandoned and needy, But;
TOMORROW is also beyond our immediate control...

Church today would make us aware
Of our responsibility and identity,
To serve the poor with Love and Care,
To work for each other selflessly,
And to help the neighboring church than to compete with it...

For yesterday is but a memory,
And tomorrow is only a vision,
But if today well lived
Makes every yesterday, a memory of happiness,
And every tomorrow, a vision of hope...



Sch. Arun Lobo SJ

The poet is a 3rd year B.Ph. student at
Jnana Deepa, Pune.



Story Writing
Competition

LET'S BUILD THE CHURCH

After the heavy Christmas lunch that I had devoured at the Convent, I needed a walk to help deflate my bloated stomach. As I got down from my room, I stared with pain at my incomplete dream. With a lot of hope, I had dreamt to build the new church before my transfer. But the pandemic ruined all my plans.

“When will God’s house be complete?” I sighed in dismay.

As I walked down the street, I was greeted with smiling faces and festivities that had adorned the whole town. Each house had its own display of Christmas delights. I wondered at the stinginess of the people who couldn’t spare those expensive decorations to complete the Church. But I let go of this bitterness and quickly walked away. There was this street that I usually avoided. Obviously, it was the filthiest corner where no one could ever differentiate the humans who lived there from the trash that seemed to be overwhelming each day, giving away the stench and foul so peculiar to this God-forsaken place. But today, there seemed to be some life. And being Christmas I thought to have a peep, just to make my priestly presence felt.

Though the stench started churning my stomach up into my throat, I held on and walked carefully towards the group that seemed to be admiring some newly discovered treasure.

“Merry Christmas!”, I greeted with a reluctant smile while guarding my nose with the handkerchief.

One familiar looking lad turned and shouted, “Oh you the devil in white robe...”

While an elderly man tried to silence him, I was greeted with another round of abuses “...#@\$##..... have you come to prey on these kids? You breed of paedophiles....”

My veins were surging with blood and just when I was about to set my tongue loose, two little eyes caught my eyes. Beams of joy were radiating from that tiny face and I could see the same glow on all the faces that beheld the same sight. But before I could retract myself, I spat out, "Go to hell ...you good for nothing."

I quickly walked away before my anger could ruin the rest of the night. As I let my temper cool, those eyes came up once again. And I remembered

That noon, I was getting ready for lunch..... As I was walking down the stairs, I was thinking of the mouth-watering delicacies that were waiting to tickle my taste buds. And a screeching noise had disrupted my savoury dream.

"Fa.....therrrr....., we found this child in the garbage bin Can you... "

"Get away, you filthy creeps. I have no time for your Christmas pranks." "Wahhh", I heard the baby cry that burst my mind.

"You sons of get away before I get the stick."

Those lads quickly got on their feet, for they have had known the taste of my stick.

And then it dawned to me that those people were rightfully angry at me. I had denied a helping hand on Christmas. As I entered the church compound and saw the incomplete pillars with iron rods protruding into the sky, I remembered the man who had abused me. He was the same one who had asked for money to meet the expenses of his ailing wife. She passed away with the baby in her womb. I was saving every penny to build this church yet it stares at a bleak future.

Then I saw the banner that hung across the crib that read – The Synodal Church. And when I stared at the logo of the synod, I realized how I had failed to walk with the poor and the marginalized in my own neighbourhood. I couldn't even bear their stench forget about listening to them. With tears about to roll down my cold cheeks, I stared at the baby Jesus in the manger and once again I was reminded of the joy-filled eyes of the little baby and the people I had seen in that corner. And I said to myself,

"The first church was amidst hay and the stench of animal dung and urine in a dark, forlorn manger and here I am trying to build a church of brick and cement in the finest architecture. I remembered God telling David, 'Are you going to build a house for me?'.....How foolish of me!..... The church is alive where there is love and I had seen that love this Christmas in that corner of the street. And now I am going to build a church of love by bringing in all whom I had despised. This is the church of tomorrow."

Let us build together

Sch. Seby Varghese SJ

The narrator is a 3rd year B.Ph. student at Jnana Deepa, Pune.



“A Church that listens
to the cry of the
marginalized as voice
coming from God”
Akhilesh SJ

“A Church that journeys with and
fulfills the mission of the Lord
without caste, creed and gender
biases”
Sandeep SJ

“A Church that
becomes a living
Gospel and helps
everyone to
have the Abba
experience”
Ruben SJ

“A Church that takes
care of the people and
addresses the lost sheep in
a special way in making
all, the people of God”
Arockia SJ

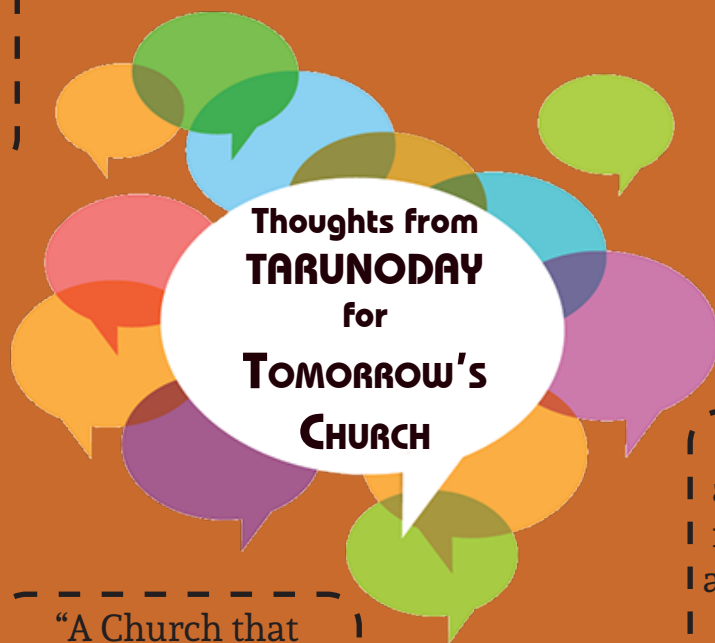
“A Church that
takes Christ
to people and
helps them in
participation for
a meaningful
life”
Wilson SJ

“A Church that talks
and walks with the
people”
Pranay SJ

“A Church that grows
in spiritual, social
and communitarian
dimensions”
Nelson SJ

“A Church that
remains united as
a community and
a church that does
not discriminate the
poor”
Anuranjan SJ

“A Church that
walks together
with the people of
other faiths– that all
humans are created
in the image and
likeness of God”
Simon SJ



“A Church that is
active and dynamic
in all spheres of life
and lives a prophetic
life”
Alok SJ

“A Church
that
becomes the
bearer of
peace and
justice for
the people of
God”
Celestine SJ

“A Church that
lives in mutual
collaboration (clergy,
religious and the
laity) in mission”
Sasi SJ

“A Church
that walks
with the
poor”
Suresh SJ

“A Church
that lives the
Gospel in the
changing
world”
Sanjay SJ

“A Church that
stays committed
to Christ”
Ignatius SJ

“A Church that remains
genuinely transparent
and follows the Gospel
radically”
Ajay SJ

“A Church that is
more pragmatic
than theoretical and
dogmatic”
Amit SJ



Khristbhaktas Movement Vijayapur

We all have an identity of our own, be it religious, linguistic or geographical. In search of the true identity, the people who are neither Hindus nor Christians and are at the liminal position can be called as Khristbhaktas. Culturally, they celebrate the Hindu practices whereas when it comes to faith, they have deep faith in Jesus Christ. When we say 'Khristbhakta Movement', our attention naturally turns to the Movement in Varanasi spearheaded by the IMS congregation. But I would like to rather focus on Khristbhakta Movement which is active in St Anne Church, Vijayapur, Karnataka. Varanasi's Khristbhakta Movement is well-known as around five to six thousand Khristbhaktas attend the prayer meet in Matridham Ashram, whereas the number of attendees in Vijayapur is merely 30 to 40.

The Khristbhaktas of Vijayapur are not members of the Church officially. But they participate actively in the Holy Mass and other activities of the Church. The Church in Vijayapur is like any other Churches in India. The symbolism, rituals and practices in worship are not altered to accommodate the non-Christians. Normally, we think that the evangelization can be easily done by adapting or translating the Christian deposition of faith in Indian culture. The Church of Vijayapur tells us otherwise.

St Anne Church, Vijayapur

The Jesuits of Karnataka Province oversee the administration of St Anne Church as part of their 'Bijapur Mission' started about 30 years ago. The mission also includes schools, college

and social action centres. Presently the parish consists of 43 catholic families. Fr Claude D'Souza SJ and Fr Paulose SJ paved a strong foundation for the Mission by their commitment and love for the poor.

Origin and Growth of Khristbhakta movement in Vijayapur

Fr Paulose SJ who catered to the spiritual needs of Catholics as well as others is responsible for the Movement to pick up in Vijayapur. Fr Paulose visited their houses with a great sense of pastoral care. The successive Parish Priests also gave importance to the Movement. Fr Vincent Crasta SJ who assumed the office as Parish Priest in 2003 recalls that he was amazed by looking at the huge gathering for the Christmas Vigil Mass. He says, "the non-Catholics were in the Church premise day and night praying to and worshipping Baby Jesus. Their devotion had natural and genuine expression. They expressed their devotion by lighting candles, offering flowers and by seeking blessings from the priests present." To aid their spiritual thirst, Fr Vincent established a small shop of religious articles called 'Susandesha Kendra'. Also, he introduced distributing sugar granules as prasada for the non-Catholics during the Communion service. The Khristbhaktas were cared for just like any other member of the Church. By 2010, Khristbhakta Movement was institutionalized and thus became part of the Church's works. Now, the Khristbhakta Movement is active under the spiritual guidance of Fr James Gonsalves SJ whereas Mr. Bhaskar Babu, the Catechist and Sr Sharol Saldanha serve as the coordinators. The Movement which began with only 2 families has 14(+6) families as of today. The members attend the Holy Mass followed by prayer service organized by the Church. The members of other 6 families attend the prayer meet occasionally. So, roughly around 30 to 40 Khristbhaktas attend the Mass and the prayer service on Sundays.

From Bhakta to Khristbhakta – a Process

Fr John D'Souza SJ, former Parish Priest of the Church cites some of the reasons for the initial visit of the Khristbhaktas to the Church. He says: "St Anne Church is in the city. Therefore, believing that Jesus is like any other gods the non-Christians visit the Church as visiting the temple. On such visits, having inspired by the Christian worship, they decide to participate in the Holy Mass and the prayer service. Then there are Protestant groups who are very active in Vijayapur. The pastors visit the villages and proclaim the Gospel and request the people to visit their churches on Sundays. Since the people are naïve about Christianity and its various sects. They visit the Catholic Church and some among them decide to continue as Khristbhaktas."

Priests, religious, catechist and all those involved in Khristbhakta Movement visit the houses of Khristbhaktas and conduct prayer service and there are instances when neighbours who attended the prayer-service also opted to be Khristbhaktas. And, there are some who chose to be Khristbhaktas as beneficiaries of the social service done by the Jesuits. The other reason would be the proclamation about Christ during Christmas. Christmas is celebrated in the Church with pomp and festivities. Some of the people who participate in the cultural celebrations organized by the Church come to know more about Christ and Christianity and thus decide to be Khristbhaktas.

The Role and Status of Khristbhaktas in St Anne Parish, Vijayapur

Khristbhaktas participate in the Sunday Eucharist with devotion like any other faithful. Once the Catholics receive Communion, Khristbhaktas along with the Catholic children who

have not received the Sacrament of Communion line up to receive the prasada and blessings from the celebrants. So, we can see that the distinction is not made between the Catholics and non-Catholics but between baptized and non-baptized. Also, since the importance and requirements for Sacraments is explained to the Khristbhaktas during the prayer-meet after the Mass, they don't feel discriminated. In recent years, Khristbhaktas are also made members of the Parish Pastoral Council. The Khristbhaktas animate the liturgy once a month on Sundays. By reading mass readings and conducting hymns they participate actively in the Holy Mass. Therefore, other than receiving of Holy Communion and membership into the Church, there is no much distinction between a Catholic and a Khristbhakta.

The Response of Catholic Faithful to Khristbhakta Movement

The priests in-charge have been trying to bring the Catholic faithful and the Khristbhaktas closer over the years. "Some parishioners had a feeling that the priests should only cater to the Catholics and they didn't like the priests giving equal importance to the Khristbhaktas. The priest concerned explained them about Jesus' ministry and the Khristbhakta Movement with patience and great care. The faithful had no objection then on" recalls Bhaskar Babu, the Catechist. Fr Vijayaraju SJ, the former Parish Priest when asked about this said that when he requested the faithful to be broad-minded as Jesus came to the world for all and when Jesus accepts all, the community should follow the Master, they gradually became welcoming. Recently when the Parish Priest told the Parish Pastoral Council members that as the congregation attending the Holy Mass consists of both Catholics and Khristbhaktas, the Catholic faithful also should interact with the Khristbhaktas after the Mass - building the bond, making the Eucharistic celebration more meaningful, the unanimous agreement shows the change in mindset of the Catholic faithful. So, though there are one or two ordeals, overall, the Catholic faithful of St Anne Church have been welcoming and helping the coordinators in fostering the Khristbhakta Movement.

Pastoral Care to the Khristbhaktas

Every Sunday a prayer meet is organized exclusively for the Khristbhaktas. The new members of the Movement do not easily follow the Holy Mass, as the ritual involves a lot of symbolism. Therefore, the prayer meet is organized as an aid to their spiritual quest. The prayer meet involves praise and worship, Scripture reading and reflection, testimonies by the Khristbhaktas themselves – to inspire and get inspired, if need be, counselling the Khristbhaktas, and especially helping them in their search for God and meaning in life. Also, Holy Eucharist, Sacraments and other related topics are dealt and explained in simple terms so that they understand them clearly. The organizers of the meet keep up the respect for other religions and their beliefs and practices. In the process of praising Jesus, they never disregard or insult other gods or religious beliefs.

There are other activities and programmes conducted for the Khristbhaktas. Twice a year they are taken on a pilgrimage to the nearby shrines, viz., Bhalki and Harihar. A retreat is organized for them during the Lenten season. Khristbhaktas also are taken for a visit to different places of Bijapur district where religious men and women are engaged in various ministries. A summer camp is organized for the children of the Khristbhaktas. During the Christmas season a small get-together is organized for the Khristbhaktas and their friends. In 2019, around 120 people attended the gathering. Study scholarship is awarded to the children of the Khristbhaktas. Some may claim it to be a kind of allurements. But the coordinators do not feel so. Jesuits in Vijayapur are working for the upliftment of the downtrodden and

the marginalized and since all the deserving students irrespective of caste and creed are awarded scholarship, the children of the Khristbhaktas, most of who are poor, also receive the benefit.

Khristbhaktas and Baptism

There are a few instances of Khristbhaktas receiving the Sacrament of Baptism, but they are very few. In ten years around 20 Khristbhaktas belonging to 6 families are baptized. But the priests incharge don't baptize the Khristbhaktas in a hurry. If the desire is genuine, then the process takes around two to four years, wherein enough time is given to the Khristbhaktas to grow in faith. The aim of the Movement is not the change of religion but change of heart, so conversion is not stressed in the Movement.

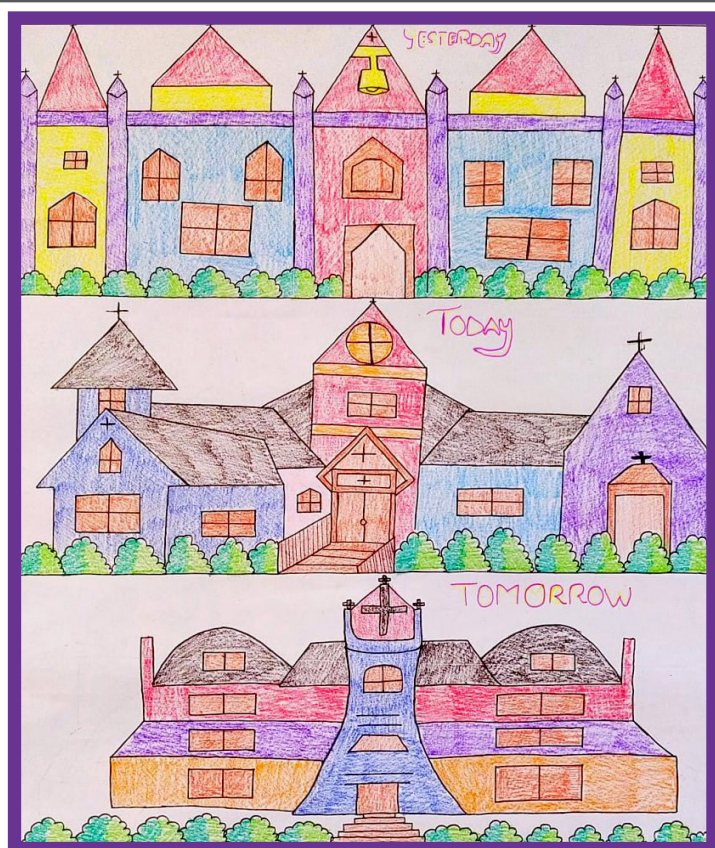
Conclusion

Khristbhakta Movement in Vijayapur is an apt example of Church's positive response towards the people of other faith. The Christ experience of Khristbhaktas goes beyond Christian community. Christ is experienced beyond institutional guidelines and passes into the social realm. So, the Movement in a way is a challenge to the Institutional Model of the Church. This Movement can be called as a Spiritual and Social Movement. The Khristbhaktas who receive spiritual nourishment from the Movement strive towards individual, social and communitarian change. Therefore, the movements like the Khristbhaktas could be considered one of the apt and relevant models to the multireligious situation of India.



Sch. Rayan Pereira SJ

The author is a 3rd year B.Th. student at Jnana Deepa, Pune.




Art Competition



Ichha Pandey

The artist is a class 9 student at St. Xavier's School, Arunachal Pradesh.



Cobuilders of Our Church

*“Our Church
not only
comprises of
the cardinals,
bishops
and priests
but more
importantly
the laity”*

In the nascent church the Apostles and the followers of Christ were living in great love and unity. Their lives were God-centered. They were brave enough to sacrifice their lives for Christ. During the reign of Emperor Nero, they were kept as prey for lions and even burnt alive. Yet they never renounced their faith. We could consider the Birthing of the Catholic Church as an incarnational experience. To build our Church, He selected some and wished them to be under Him. By this hierarchy, which was created by Christ, Christ becomes the ultimate head of our Church (1 Cor 12:12). Vatican II stressed that whoever is related with the Church are members of the Church. Our Church not only comprises of the cardinals, bishops and priests but more importantly the laity.

LAITY IN THE PAST

During the evangelical journey of St. Thomas to Tamil Nadu and Kerala, he totally needed the help of the laity to spread Christianity in our country. Similarly, it was indeed a necessary element in the mission of Sts. Francis Xavier, John de Britto and Mother Teresa of Calcutta to carry out their ministries.

Blessed Devasahayam Pillai and Mrs. Lourdammal Simon of Kottar,

Servant of God Peter Paradesi of Palayamkottai, are some of the examples among the huge faction of laity who have offered themselves for Christ and even to give up their lives for the greater glory of God.

Great works done by the eminent Jesuit Fathers like Robert de Nobili, Constantine Beschi, Louis Leveil and Adrian Caussanel were successfully accompanied, supported and carried forward by the laity.

LAITY IN TODAY'S CHURCH

Through Basic Christian Communities the laity is working selflessly for the upliftment of the local Churches. Their leadership qualities in the parish councils are highly commendable. With proper training made available to them, the laity serves as co-ministers and through this fulfills the mission of sanctifying the world in and through Christ. In Palayamkottai diocese, 73 lay people having completed their diploma in theology through correspondence. They play an important role in diocese related works and programs. They involve themselves voluntarily in evangelizing and spreading the gospel values as they zealously strive to be light to those in darkness.

FUTURE CONTRIBUTION

In a scientific and techno driven world, the future church will have to face umpteen challenges and the laity will have to strive more than ever. Their involvement and witness has become the need of the hour during these times of innovation as spirituality seems to be declining among the youth. Today the laity need to focus a lot on their spiritual and human formation. Young children, the pillars of the future Church, need more care and love. Daily religious practices like the devotion to our Lady, veneration of Saints and a proper understanding of Holy Sacraments are declining. The Church leaders, on their part, need to give greater importance to reflection and prayer and try to take all the possible measures to promote their role to make a stark difference in the Church. Only when we realize this, we can hope to echo the very words of St. John the Baptist for our times, "He must increase and I must decrease".

*"Through
Basic
Christian
Communities
the laity is
working
selflessly
for the
upliftment
of the local
Churches"*

Mr. G. Gasbar

*The author is the PMI Secretary of
Palayamkottai Diocese.*



Church

Yesterday, Today & Tomorrow

The Church of Christ on the Cross held fast;
Gory persecutions paint her glorious past.
Millions of martyrs nurtured her day and night;
All pomp and pride fell flat at her merciful sight.

The crafty deceiver coveted the Church profound
From the Father's Beloved, the heaven's hound.
Wealth and vanity vandalized her virtuous face;
Forgiven again, she continues her beatific race.

Body and soul one interred with Christ, the rock,
The Church bears all the brunt against the clock.
As the groom's true love, she heeds His eternal call
Thus, saving souls from the sinful serpent of the Fall.

Lo! The Holy Dove kissed her sanctified sanity
Behold! The bride dialogues with sacred secularity
Oh! Scandals and schisms at times tear her apart;
Ah! Yet she rejoices in the Gospel of her Sweetheart.

She anchors in Christ to sail future's toss
To sow seeds of love is her soul's sole cause;
"Walk with the weak" is her salvific mantra
To lift up the least from the abyss of tantra.

None are homeless in her common home;
An earth green and clean is the wish of Rome.
For tomorrow to dawn, till dusk does she pray,
Awaiting her Beloved's return, with eternal lay.



Poetry
Competition

Sch. Prince Wilfred SJ

*The poet is a Junior at Vidyaniketan,
Thiruvananthapuram.*



At Church Footsteps

by Sr. Shushma MSI



Story Writing
Competition



“How can a Christian widow sit on the Church steps and beg?” I thought while stepping out of the cemetery. Oh! She had an old torn bag, but where is it? Muttering to myself I took bigger steps like the CBI to find the bag.

Instead, I found a book. After glancing at a few pages, my eyes zeroed in on the words - I am Lucy. I got married to a Non-Christian. It was unacceptable to my family for long until he became a Catholic and got baptized into this Church.

“We promise to be true to each other in good times and in bad, in sickness and in health...”, was the promise made together in the midst of my Catholics as well as non-Christian friends in this thatched Church.

Of course, now the Church has taken a new shape and structure. But in those days the Church meant the faithful, not the structure. My then parish priest was just like a shepherd, who administered sacraments without thinking of his schedule. He gave frequent visits to sick people more than today's doctors. He was a walking Church, preaching and blessing people wherever they gathered. There was neither winter nor summer, neither rain nor pain to stop him. He just kept walking. Thrice a day the Church bell would ring for the Angelus. If it rang more than usual it clearly meant something unusual, joyful or sorrowful.

Today when I rang the Church bells, they didn't synchronize with each other producing different sounds, echoing the simultaneous presence of both the earth and heaven, saints and sinners.

I had lost my husband in the forest; I did not even get the privilege of paying my last respects. Some eyewitnesses said, "Your husband was eaten by a wild animal".

Out of pain, I touched my abdomen as my little one leapt in my womb, my heart palpitating. By the time I tried to make sense of the situation, I had delivered a baby in my mother-in-law's house.

"If you want to bring up your child in Catholic faith then don't live in this house," came the stern command from beside me. Those words stabbed my heart deeply.

Evening set in. Without retaliation, I left the place. While I was thinking to myself what was next, I was in front of the Priest who heard my cry and offered me a job on the Church premises. Unfortunately, the priest was transferred within a few months.

"I can't celebrate mass in this thatched hut. Every house should give Rs 1000 to build a new Church and Presbytery," came the command at the first parish council meeting. All were wonder-struck with the words of the newly arrived young Parish priest who seemed to begin with a complaint. The order was strong. Though the Church structure stood strong on flat ground, its living pillars, the faithfuls slowly left the Church. Our dear Parish Priest had become a priest of his office not for the people. With this things drastically changed. The faithful began to prefer tight jeans with small T-Shirts, skipped mass when no vehicle was available and so on.

As several priests came and left, the church structure slowly changed. Many statues of saints became money-minting boxes. People lit candles instead of lighting them in needy houses. Now along with the Parish Priest, the parish council began to be busy counting the Sunday collection. "We need a vehicle for this parish" a close aid of the priest put forward the tender.

"Till today if everything has gone on well in this parish it is because of Lucy, our Kitchen Aunty. She has worked tirelessly day and night, taking care of each priest like her own brother," The Parish Priest slipped a cover into my hands as he said these farewell words.

The village headman kept me in his house for work.

I kept up the tradition of visiting the Church every Sunday. Now I see the church has turned out to look like a basilica but the number of faithful has enormously decreased. The tradition of wearing a veil, removing sandals, bowing down in front of saints, prostrating before the tabernacle have all vanished. The younger generation just sway around indicating their weird spirit of "inculturation."

Now I am old and the headman's son doesn't want me in his house anymore. So I am sitting on the Church steps recalling my baptism, marriage, and my child's baptism. I want to leave my last breath on these steps of the Church.

No one could recognize me, even my daughter.

As I closed the book, My eyes were filled with tears gasping for breath, my lips were pregnant with words. The testament of testimony proved that I am her daughter.

“The future Church need to treat laity, religious and clergy equally, giving equal importance to their participation in the Church”

Bosco SJ

“The Church could be more inclusive in terms of the rights of sexual minorities in its administration and proceedings”

Vimal SJ

“The Church is called to imitate Christ by walking together with all”

Amal SJ

“The future Church should be open to have a continuous dialogue with its people to understand the challenges of the times and be ready to renew itself to be relevant and be a source of prophetic voice and hope leading the humanity to Christ. It should be active partaker in the lives of the people in ensuring the justice and peace in the world”

Ronald SJ

“The synodal Church needs to be collaborative and cooperative with the laity”

Richard SJ

“The Church needs to open up to the realities of the world – multi-religion, culture and society, according to the 21st century”

Benitto SJ

**Thoughts from
ARUL KADAL
for
TOMORROW'S
CHURCH**

“The Church needs to be ‘more’- with the people, of the people and for the people in exercising its compassionate service”

Velankanni SJ

“The Church should stand with and work for the upliftment of the poor and the marginalized of the Society”

Udaya SJ

“The Church should be like a mystic in the market place, addressing the problems and needs of the deprived class of the society”

Nelson SJ

“Following the model of early Christian Community, the future of the Church should follow the Christ more closely and courageously by upholding the Kingdom values, by confronting the powerful, the rich and the oppressors and by standing with the oppressed people”

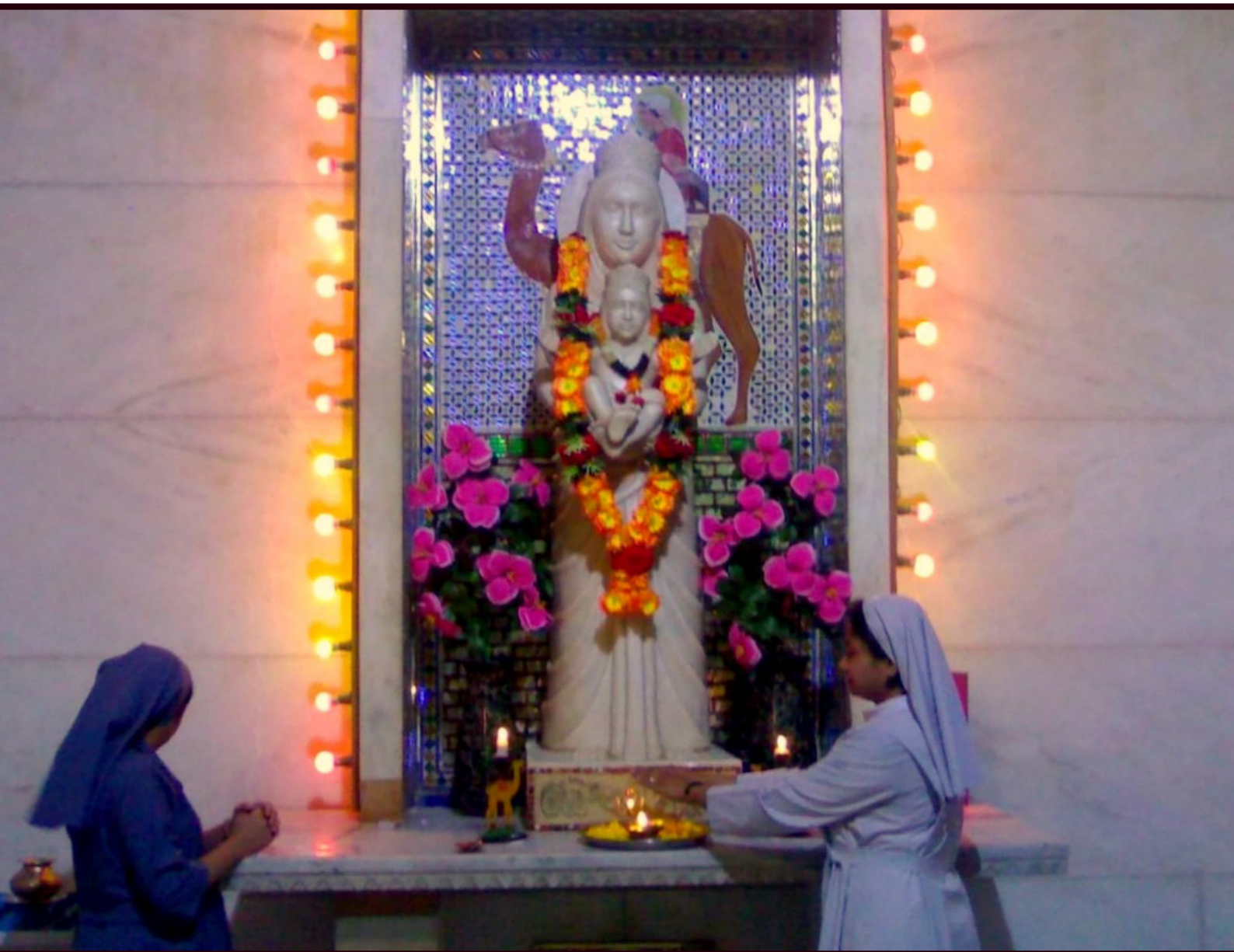
Albin SJ

“In the context of fast development of artificial intelligence, the Church needs to concentrate more on ethical values and to make sure human freedom and security in the future”

Raja SJ

UNTESHWARI MATA MANDIR

OUR LADY OF CAMEL



Inculturation is one of the essential tools in spreading the message of Christ to the world. The contextual theology emphasizes on inculturation. A lot of apostolic and missionary ventures have been successful due to inculturation. It respects the local culture and the way of living, and enhances life vice versa at its core.

In the context of Gujarat, the pastoral and apostolic approach of the missionaries is inculturation. One could very well see this witness of inculturation in the shrines which are built by the missionaries in various parts of Gujarat. Among many shrines, Unteshwari Mata Mandir stands as a great model of inculturation.

One of the distinctive features of popular religions in India has always been the practice of pilgrimages. Unteshwari (Our Lady of Camel) is a pilgrimage center dedicated to our beloved Mother Mary. A small deri was built in the honour of Mother Mary and it



was named after Her as the Unteshwari Mata deri in 1969. Later in 1982 it took its complete form. The key person behind this noble cause was Rev. M.D. Garriz, S.J. The name Unteshwari was chosen chiefly for two reasons: One is that the North Gujarat is a land of camels and the second is that there are a substantial number of the first converts belonging to the raval caste, who were camel-drivers by trade.

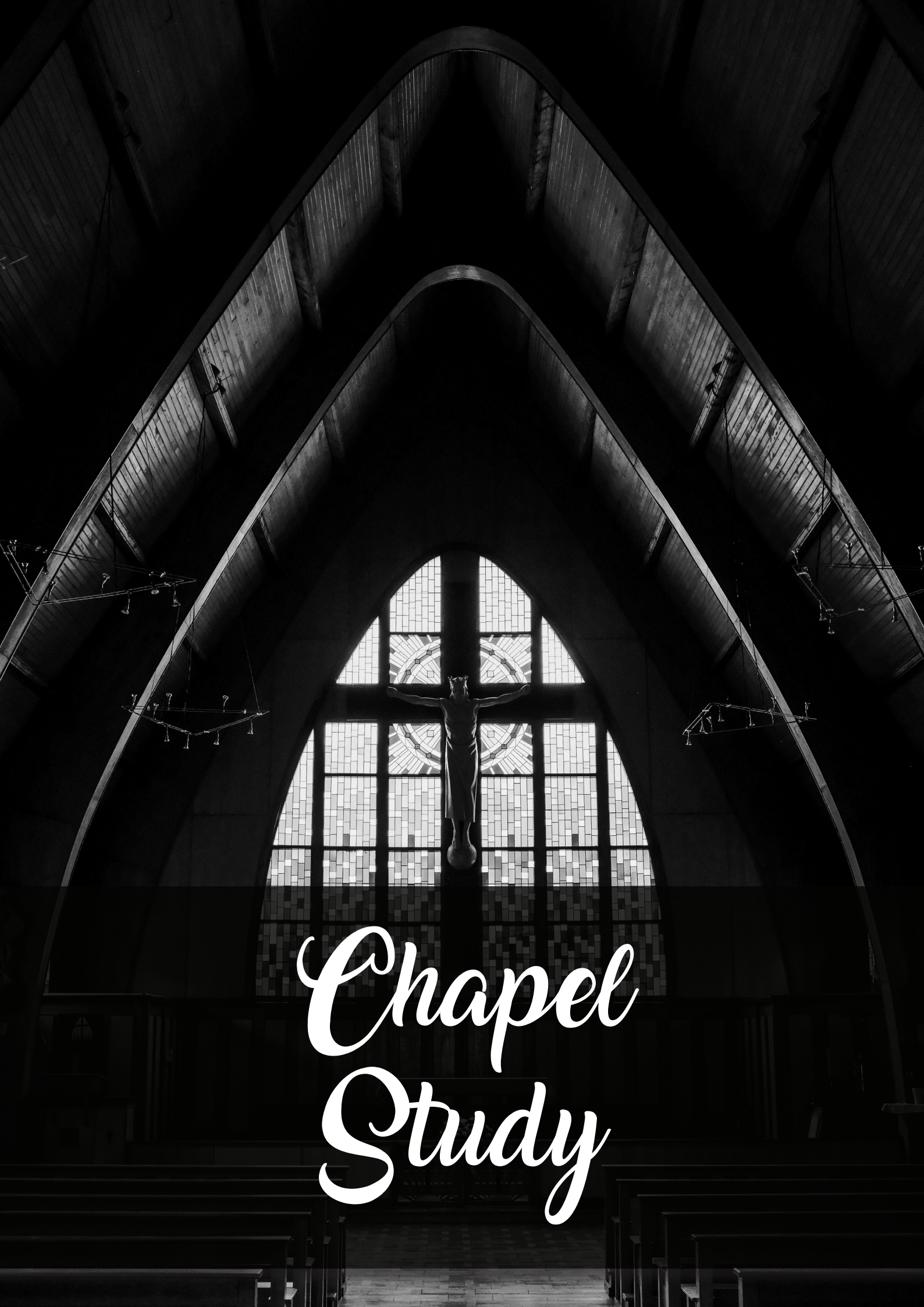
The most significant part of this pilgrimage center is the style and the structure of the shrine. It has a classical Solanki style design, which we witness in many Hindu and Jain temples in Gujarat. Most part of the structure of Unteshwari Mandir is made of bricks, including the shikhar, the three side domes and the larger central dome. There are five doors: three main doors facing the East and two side doors facing North and South respectively. Each door has ten circular pendants of brass with engravings of religious symbols from evangelical and Indian tradition motifs like the Cross, OM, the Holy Spirit, the Swastik, Surya as symbol of God the Father. On the South wall of the inner mandap there is mosaic mural of about 400 square feet depicting the 15 mysteries of the Rosery. The ceiling and the inner domes have been decorated with 'mirror work'. The Magnificat runs along the 78 odd feet of the inner circumference of the dome. There is a representation of a joyous ras folk dance in coloured mirror work. We can also observe a series of female figures playing the different musical instruments. In the 'Garbhgruh', a statue of Mother Mary with the Child Jesus in her lap, carved in a pure marble stone is evident.

Every year thousands of people flock to this pilgrimage center and feel blessed by it. The followers believe that Mother Mary is their Kuldevi who protects, cares and fulfills their prayers.



Sch. Raman Dalvi SJ

The author is doing his regency at Radhanpur, Gujarat



Chapel Study

An Inculturated Chapel



Jnana Deepa institute, attracts everyone for its inculturated features in the chapel. Fr. Noel Sheth SJ, was a Sanskrit scholar as well as an Indologist, who was well-versed in several Indian religions. He and his team wanted to combine the elements of Christianity and Hinduism along with other religions of India, so that God can be better understood through one's culture.

The explanation of the image that is seen in this article can be explained in the following manner. There is a large mural behind the altar. The backdrop of the sanctuary refers to the five elements in the Indian Tradition which we call as the 'Mahabhutas'. As shown in the image the green vegetation indicates the Prithvi (Earth); above it is waves of the Jala (Water); the red and yellow flames are the Agni (Fire); the light blue currents still higher up refer to the invisible Vayu (Air); and the circular patch of yellow above the tip of the leaf points to the Akash (Ether), which cannot be seen or touched or felt. The same five elements are found in the traditional Christian cosmology.

Subrata Ganguly, the one who made the mural is a Kolkata-based Hindu. He runs a firm called 'Church Art'. According to him, art has no religion. Subrata's idea has enabled him to work inside churches for the past 25 years. The initial designs of the mural were drawn by Gita Ganguly (Subrata's mother). She is well-versed in all religions. The mural, which is eight feet high and 16 feet wide, was made of coloured ceramic chips. It was originally made in the firm's workshop in Kolkata and then transported in smaller parts to Pune by train.

The background of the central figure of Jesus is the leaf of the Ashvattha (Sacred fig tree). With its rich symbolism and medicinal importance, it is related to God, humans and nature. Usually, people sit under this tree to receive enlightenment, but here we have Jesus as the enlightened central figure and shown leaning against a leaf.

The figure on the sanctuary's central wall depicts Incarnate Jesus Christ. All things are created through the Word of God (John 1:3). Jesus the Word is also shown in the traditional Indian Lasya dance. The resurrected Jesus with his glorious wounds is depicted as ascending into heaven. Jesus's right hand is in the Vyakhyana mudra, the gesture of teaching, and the left hand in the Dana mudra, the gesture of giving graces, miracles, healing, wisdom, and so on.

The bearded face of Jesus reveals the spiritual depth within him: his compassion, serenity and peace. The two ears of wheat at the bottom of the leaf represents the Bread of Life and the Word of God, showing the breaking of the Bread and sharing in communion.



The ceiling of the chapel has a Lotus design. The Lotus is India's national flower and also a symbol of tranquility and enlightenment. The Lotus is associated with several Hindu deities, including Lakshmi, Brahma, and Vishnu. The Lotus arises from unclean water to blossom as pure, uncontaminated flower which is a symbol of purity and resurrection. Among many other meanings, Lotus is also a symbol of divine birth and creation itself which is attributed to Jesus in this chapel.



The Tabernacle is the inner most sanctuary where the Blessed Sacrament is kept. It is a place where the Lord awaits any visitor who seeks to commune with the Lord. The Tabernacle at Jnana Deepa is designed in the form of a Hindu Temple. Another important inculturated depiction in the chapel is the statue of Mother Mary with child Jesus standing on an open Lotus flower. She is wearing a Bengali-style pastel sari. Mother Mary draped in a Sari depicts the closeness for us Indians to our own mothers.



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Carmel Parish Church, Vadagaonsheri



The fathers of Second Vatican Council said; “All members of the Eastern Rite should know and be convinced that they can and should always preserve their legitimate liturgical rite and their established way of life, and that these may not be altered except to obtain for themselves an organic improvement. All these, then, must be observed by the members of the Eastern rites themselves. Besides, they should attain to an ever-greater knowledge and a more exact use of them, and, if in their regard they have fallen short owing to contingencies of times and persons, they should take steps to return to their ancestral traditions.” (Decree on the catholic churches of the eastern rite *Orientalium Ecclesiarum* solemnly promulgated by his holiness pope Paul VI on November 21, 1964 – Article 5).

The Council fathers asked the Oriental churches to go back to the original sources. Syro Malabar church was almost a latinized oriental church, following the Latin Liturgy and devotions for at least four centuries. Even Latin Mass was celebrated by oriental priests as the missionaries had translated it into Syriac. With Vatican II came a new awakening and Eucharist was celebrated in vernacular languages and as we saw each individual churches especially oriental churches were asked to return to their original way of worship and functioning. Syro Malabar church has its own Holy Qurbana of East Syrian tradition and other prayers of its own. This sui urius church has got the typical way of constructing a church or space for worshiping. But we can't find many churches built according to the typical structure of the Syro Malabar church. In this article we see some structural elements and their theological implications of Carmel Syro Malabar Church in Vadagaonsheri, Pune.

The Carmel Parish in Wadagaonsheri is a Syro Malabar Parish belonging to the Syro Malabar Eparchy of Kalyan. The history of the present Parish church begins with the establishment of the Carmel Vidhya Sadhan, the CMI study house and chapel, in 1964. The Syro Malabar faithful, living around Wadagaonsheri used to come for their spiritual needs to the priests of Carmel Vidhya Sadhan and its chapel was used for various spiritual needs. In the year 1981 this Syro Malabar community of faithful was elevated to the status of a parish in the Eparchy of Kalyan and the Rector of the Carmel Vidhya Sadhan was made the parish priest of the parish. The present parish church dedicated to St. Kuriakose Elias Chavara was built in 1992. The feast of St.Chavara (January 3) is celebrated as the main parish feast of the parish.

The construction of the parish church is done according to the structure of Syro Malabar Churches. Syro Malabar Church being an Oriental (Eastern) Catholic Church, belonging to East Syrian (Chaldean/East Assyrian) tradition, has its own structure and theology of the church (building). In the context of churches in India, especially in Kerala we can find the Indian adaptations with Jewish and East Syrian elements. A typical Syro Malabar church is built in the East-west direction and it has three main parts inside the church that is Madbaha (sanctuary, resembles heaven, the heavenly Jerusalem etc.), Kestroma (place for Choir resembling angels singing before the throne of the Divine), and Haikkala (nave, resembles the world). Normally sanctuary is on the eastern side and the altar is set touching the eastern wall and no rooms or even sacristy (“Beth Diakon/Sankeerthi”, where sacred vessels, cloths, books etc. are kept and celebrants and servers of divine liturgy change vestments etc.) after this eastern wall is not allowed. It is to symbolize that there is nothing beyond heaven and that is the end of our journey. And the Holy Qurbana (the East Syriac expression for Holy Eucharist) is offered facing to the East like many other apostolic churches. In the East Syriac tradition, the Sanctuary is considered as the symbol of heaven. It is also considered as the garden of Eden, Garden of Gethsemane, and Garden of Joseph Arimathea etc. The traditional belief that the Garden of Eden was in the East where man experienced God walking in company with the human beings and the eschatological expectation that Christ will come from East etc. are some the reasons for facing the East (Gen 2:8, Eze 43:2,4, Zach 14:4, Mal 4:2, Mt 24:27). The pilgrim church journeying together towards heaven is evidently seen in this structure. The priest who represents Christ and at the same time his people, offers the sacrifice along with them to God. All these symbols are very much seen in Carmel Parish Church.

The “Marthoma Sleeva” (St. Thomas Cross) fixed on the eastern wall of sanctuary is very much particular of a Syro Malabar church.

It is the symbol of Syro Malabar church. The Sleeve without the dead body of Christ proclaims the Lord who is Risen. Thus, the Sleeve resembles Christ Himself. The blossomed edges of cross show the hope and the dove coming down resembles the Holy Spirit, the three steps under the Cross are the symbol of Calvary, and the leaves (lotus) under the cross is the adaptation of the Indian cultural heritage and symbolization of Christianity planted in India. Under the Marthoma Sleeve on the middle of eastern wall we see the “Sakrari” (Tabernacle) fixed in Carmel Church. Tabernacle is a comparatively new structure in Syro Malabar/East Syrian church, as it had no tradition of keeping the consecrated hosts. East Syrian churches had instead “Giyutha/Sacrari” to keep Holy “Myron” (Chrism oil) and “Malkha” (holy leaven) to bake the bread (Bukh’ra) for Holy Qurbana on the southern wall of the Madbaha. The system was to bake the bread for each day and they had to finish consuming it. On the right side of the Eastern wall, we find a crucifix which resembles the passion and death of our lord and on the left side of the wall we also see the Bible kept opened. So, in short, on the eastern wall of the Carmel parish church we find symbols of Christ the incarnated Word, Christ who is with us in the form of Eucharist, Christ who suffered and died for us on the cross and Christ who is Risen from the dead.

In the Syro Malabar tradition the Altar is also called “Thronos” that is the throne of Trinitarian God. On the right side of the Thronos, the Evangelion (Gospel) is kept, which resembles Christ who is seated in the right side of the Father and on the left side is kept the Sleeve again. For any sacraments, East Syrian churches need these two witnesses (Sakshi) that are Gospel and Cross. For any procession in the Divine Liturgy both Gospel and Cross are carried together solemnly. (For example, the solemn procession of Gospel and Cross before breaking of the Word symbolizes Christ who is fully divine and human (spirit and body) comes down to the world. Here we remember Christ’s triumphant entry into Jerusalem. After the reading of the Gospel, both Gospel and Cross are carried back to sanctuary without any solemnity by priest and a deacon, symbolizing the night he was abandoned by his disciples except John following him, and kept once again separately which means the death, separation of body and soul). In East Syrian tradition bread and wine are prepared in and carried from two tables called “Beth Gazza” (house of treasure) situated on the northern (bread and for practical reasons now water and towel for lavabo) and southern sides (wine and water) of the altar. In the sanctuary, in front of the altar there is to be a step on which only the priest celebrating Qurbana stands during Anaphora called, “Masthabsa”, symbolizing the upper chamber of Mark where Jesus instituted the Holy Qurbana. In between Madbaha and Kestroma situates the curtain that is torn from top to bottom in the center. In liturgy it is not used to hide the sacred mysteries celebrated, but

to reveal the glory of God. It also symbolizes the High Priest who stand in between the presence of God and the congregation. There is also another second curtain right in front of the altar called “kathethrain”, which symbolizes the church the bride waiting for the bride and thus, the relationship with Christ and church. Madbaha, and two curtains are not there in Carmel parish church. And there is to be a perpetually lit hanging lamb in the “Qunke” (place between Kestroma and Madbaha), indicating the presence of the Triune God in the altar. In place of that we find an Indian oil lamp with a cross lit during the liturgical service. Another specialty of Syro Malabar church is the significance of “Bema”, the space for the table for breaking of the Word, pulpits for the three readings from Pentateuch, Prophets and Epistles, chairs for Bishop and priests and table for Lavabo. This platform is set little elevated (two step higher) in the nave. This is similar to Jewish ‘Bima’, a platform situated in the middle of the nave of a synagogue. While the sanctuary is considered as the heavenly Jeruslaem, the Bema is considered the as earthly Jerusalem which was once believed to be center of the world thus, situated in the middle of the nave. The table in the Bema is called “Gagultha” (Golgotha). The way connecting Sanctuary to Bema is called “Sqaqona” (one step higher than nave and one step lower than Bema) through which are all the processions taking place. The souls of departed faithful are believed to be participating in the heavenly liturgy standing here. So, this space is normally separated with some wooden barricades. The bringing of the Gospel wrapped in the silk cloth, covering the face of the celebrant with the Cross to Bema symbolizes Jesus coming to His people and breaks Word for them sitting among them. Though Bema is not in the middle of the nave, in the Carmel church too, we have this table for breaking of the Word set little elevated near the Kestroma for practical reasons.

The ideal place/room for baptismal font (Beth Mamodisa) in the Syro Malabar church is on the left side of the sanctuary in the southern side. In the Carmel parish Church, though it's not on the left side of the sanctuary it is in the southern wall's side near the main entrance. Another specialty of Syro Malabar church structure is “Beth Sahade” (place for relics of martyrs) in the northern wall of the nave. In the Carmel church, we can find relics of five saints kept for veneration namely of St. Kuriakose Elias Chavara, St.Alphonsa, St.Euphresia, St.Theressa of Culcutta and St.Antony of Padua. So, these structures have theological implications that is a faithful (child) who is born to the church in the baptismal font is to be nourished by the sacraments very specially by Holy Qurbana from the altar and be ready even to die for Christ (martyrdom). In short, Christian life is a journey from baptismal font to holiness even at the cost of death. A special arrangement that is seen in Carmel parish church is that on the nave's top ceiling, nine seasons in the liturgical cycle of Syro Malabar church, are inscribed very beautifully in a wooden wheel. Another part of Syro Malabar church is the “Mondalam/ Mughamandalam” a Verandah, porch near the main entrance called “Anavathil” of the church where non baptized would stand, as before the Anaphora of East Syrian church, there was the custom of sending non baptized people away and they were to remain in this porch watching the celebration of divine mysteries. We also find Indian lamps, “nilavilakk”, Cross carved out of stone, “kalkkurishu”, post for flag hoisting, “kodimaram”, bell, “pallimani” etc. Though we can't affirm that Carmel parish church is a typical Syro Malabar church, we find lot many rich elements of the structure of Syro Malabar churches. Being a parish church in a context of faithful living in diaspora, Carmel church has limitations too. Still, it remains, though not completely, a structured Syro Malabar church. This very example of Carmel church in our vicinity is clear evidence that the dream and vision of Fathers of Vatican II for all Oriental Churches which is not to give up their rich heritage and revive it by all means, have been, in a way realized to an extent.



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“The Church that brings smile
amidst sadness, hope amidst despair,
faith amidst faithlessness and health
amidst sickness is the true mission
of God in which we partake to bring
solace of hope to the humanity.”
Shanth Raj SJ

“The Church should be a Resilient
Church of 5 ‘Cs’: Competent,
Courageous, Committed, Creative
and Caring.”
Sanjiban SJ

“I do agree with the mind
of Pope Francis about the
church where all people
of God travel together in
love, peace and joy. The
church should open its
heart towards everyone
despite various identities
and become universal for
everyone.”
Manu RCJ

“The church in the midst
of Covid should provide
renewal-programs, so
that a renewed faith may
be born in the post-covid
world.”
Treilang MCBS

**Thoughts from
DNC THEOLOGIANS
for
TOMORROW'S
CHURCH**

“You are the future Church,
live now how you want it to
be”
Nobert SJ

“The Church’s teach-
ing on scripture and
offering mass should
be deeper and people
oriented.”
Anup SJ

“I dream of a
compassionate and
listening Church, an all-
inclusive Church which
preaches and practices
Faith and Justice.”
Jaison SJ

PAPAL SEMINARY CHAPEL



Papal Seminary (Papal Athenaeum), Pune, is a place for the education and formation of young people to the priesthood in the Catholic Church in India. This seminary is 128 years old mostly caters to the diocesan brothers. The inmates call this place as a “Home of Love.” The magnificent and glorious history of this seminary began in Kandy, Sri Lanka. It was shifted to Pune, India in 1955.

By an estimation, so far, Papal Seminary has contributed more than 5000 priests and more than 50 Bishops or Arch Bishops to the Church of India. In the very words of Pope Leo XIII, “Fili tui India, administri tibi salutis” (Your own sons, O India, will be the heralds of your salvation) and for more 125 years this is what the Papal Seminary have accomplished in fulfilling the mission entrusted by Pope to the Church in India.

The Papal Seminary Chapel and its entire building is splendidly

built with the beautiful and picturesque architecture designed by and Italian Jesuit Brother Silvio Galizio in 1953. The Chapel is minutely designed in a circular shape. The ceiling of this Chapel is designed in the form of Lotus with its petals spread out. This can be clearly and lucidly be seen from the aerial view of the roof.

The inside of the Chapel epitomizes and symbolizes a forest with many trees around it that gives comfort, consolation, soothe and solace to those who come to take shelter in it. In the middle of the Chapel, there is a dip or a hollow representing a pond which symbolizes the need for purifying oneself before climbing the altar of God. The place where the crucifix and tabernacle are kept is where the water flows out to the pond and gives living water to the people who come to immerse or take a holy dip or refresh themselves in the presence of the Lord. Moreover, this chapel has its own natural balancing of its temperature. It does not need fan or heating to regulate its temperature. Its structure is constructed such that it does not require external sound system to amplify the sound but is naturally audible to all.

The altar and the sanctuary of this Chapel were changed after Vatican Council II. The altar, earlier was underneath the tabernacle and curtains were placed on both sides of the altar till the rails. The present altar is made after the Vatican Council II and parts of the marble from the old altar was used in the new altar.

This Chapel was visited by the Servant of the Servants St Pope John Paul II on the 10th February 1986. There is a marble in front of the altar that is scripted about his maiden visitation.

St Theresa of Kolkata visited and prayed in this chapel twice, on 24th February 1961 and on 26th December 1983.



Sch. Ebanezar SJ

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OUR LADY'S CHAPEL



Finding God in all things is the hallmark of Jesuit Spirituality. Every Jesuit believes that its roots lie in the Eucharist. Thus, the Society of Jesus ensures that every formation house has its own Chapel.

We the DNC philosophers are privileged to have a spacious chapel at the DNC. The chapel is devoted to Our Lady. The statue of Our Lady was brought from Spain in 1960. This Chapel was built in the year of 1955, when philosophers' arrived from different parts of India.

We fondly remember the hard labour of our forefathers. Still, we smell their sweat and blood. Specially the credit goes to Bro. Joseph Piffner. He was a good builder. His buildings stand as a monumental witness to his genius. This Chapel is blessed with sufficient doors and windows. At a time, many can enter and move out from Chapel.

In the 1960s there used to be twelve sacristies. They were used for celebrating masses. In pre-Vatican times, a priest was not allowed to concelebrate and therefore each priest required their own altars to celebrate the mass. These spaces were later used by scholastics when their numbers increased.

Presently, so many changes have been made. Seat arrangements are for 150 Scholastics. Pews add more colour to it. We find Jesus in

meditation Posture. This picture is embedded along with the Tabernacle. It talks about nature and inculturation. Even after the service, the altar lights are kept on for the spiritual elevation. It makes all genuflect the altar while our friends pass through the Chapel.

We feel so grateful to God through early Jesuit missionaries for this beautiful Chapel. The ambiance helps us philosophize the philosophical concepts. We feel the unfailing presence of God and quietness. The moment we enter, we feel that we are united in God's presence. Finally, the message this Chapel conveys is to be ready to do anything for God and His mission.



Sch. Kiran Joseph SJ

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"An inclusive church with
an attitude of familial
ambience wherein every
person is a child of God"

Praveen SJ

"A Church that follows Jesus
closely in proclaiming and
living the message of God's Love
to the whole of creation"

Dony AGR

"A church that
accommodates
differences, actively
seeks to heal itself and
mends its mistakes
than hide them,
opens itself more to
embrace the broken
and wayward, utilises
power for service
alone, listens and
welcomes all"

Nikhil SJ

"The Church of Tomorrow
- the Church with her
loving arms wide-open,
to embrace everyone,
ensuring an active
participation of all in
living out God's mission
today"

Pramod SJ

**Thoughts from
VIDYA JYOTI
for
TOMORROW'S
CHURCH**

"The Church of Tomorrow will be, as
always, our Mother who nurtures, cares
for, and welcomes and includes all in
her family irrespective of caste, creed,
and such barriers."

Cajetan SJ

"The Church of the Future
will be a Church that
listens to the voices of its
believers and stands for
justice and righteousness"

Eugene ADL

"Church must be like the Sun giving light to
all whether its children are good or bad."

Oscar SJ

THEO'S CHAPEL



Theological studies are not merely an academic, rather it should help one to have a personal experience of God. Therefore, it is said that theology ought to be studied on one's knees. The Chapel is one place where we regularly encounter God. Therefore, in religious houses, especially in houses of formation, we build chapels that invite people to pray and to experience God in an intense way. The theology chapel in DNC is right at the center of the DNC building. This construction intends to communicate the message that God is the center of our life here in DNC. Hebrews 3:4 says, "For every house is built by someone, but the builder of all things is God." The chapel also easily accessible to even those who come from outside as it is close to the entrance of the building.

The theology Chapel of DNC was built according to the Arcade architecture. Etymologically arcade comes from a Latin root 'arcus' which means bow. Biblically it symbolizes the covenant relation between God and every living being. In Genesis God said; "This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: I have set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth." (Gen 9:12-13) The arcade structures can be seen in front of the sanctuary, behind the cross, on both sides of the chapel, and in shape above the doors and windows. The Chapel appears to the viewers as the arcade structure, as it symbolizes

giving Glory to God and the whole structure is worshipping God with folded hands

Initially the size of the chapel was small, but a renovation after the II Vatican Council made it larger. This renovation included other modifications: Altar was changed to face the audience. A number of wall paintings portraying Jesus' life and mission, Saints, and the scene of Annunciation were added (these images were painted by Fr Frenseco). Statues of Mother Mary and St Ignatius were installed. A balcony was added to accommodate more numbers. Entrance door of the chapel is a sign of inculturation as it is in the shape of Square, which is typically the local structure of the houses. To specify some unique features of this chapel, there is a big crucifixion on the wall of the sanctuary. Unlike many other crucifixes, here Jesus is depicted as rising from the cross with hands outstretched upward. It symbolizes that crucifix is not a sign of defeat or foolishness but it stands for victory, glory, and happiness.

The beautiful tabernacle is just below the crucifix flanked by lights. The tabernacle along with the lights reminds us that Christ is ever present to us. On one side of the tabernacle, there is a beautiful statue of Mother Mary ready to give us her Son and on the other side, a statue of our father St. Ignatius holding constitutions reminding us that we need to do everything 'for the greater glory of God.'

The other most important feature of the Chapel is the altar. There are two altars: a big altar, which is used for special occasions and a small altar which is used for daily masses. On the left side of the altar, there is a lectern to proclaim the word of God. The floor of the sanctuary is covered with a red carpet symbolizing the sacrificial blood of Christ.

Theo's chapel is spacious. The chapel has 13 doors; three big ones and ten of normal size. The chapel doors are kept open throughout the day, thus enabling access to anyone who desires to spend time in the chapel. God always welcomes us: "Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens and I will give you rest" (Mt 11: 28). The chapel floor is covered with a grey color carpet. For the faithful to sit comfortably and pray, cushions, stools, and pews are provided. The beautiful chandelier lights give the feeling of a heavenly court. With all its grandeur fills the spiritual ambience and benefits the faithful to pray well. Hence, there is no better place than a chapel to encounter God.

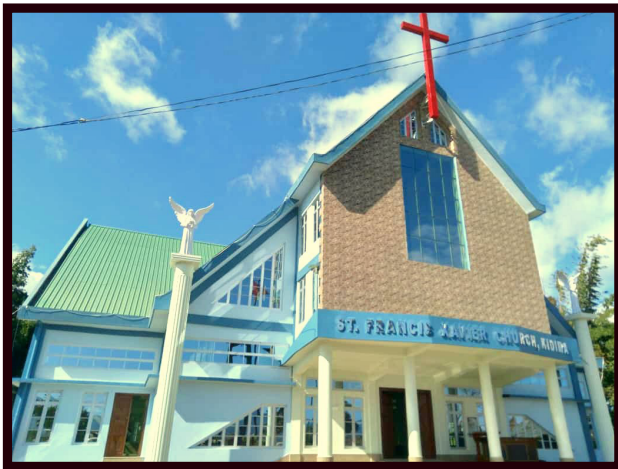
Sch. Mariyanus SJ

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Church Gallery

NORTHEAST INDIA



BARDIPADA, GUJARAT



SAGAR MATHA, ANDHRA



DESHNUR, KARNATAKA



DHANDHUKA, GUJARAT



MANDAL, GUJARAT





HOUSE EVENTS

Monthly recollection was held on December 10 and 11. Fr. Dinesh Braganza led the community to reflect on the theme of Synodality. He focused on the dimension of listening to others as an important element of Synodality. The findings of a survey and opinions expressed by the participants (mainly lay persons) helped all to better understand the sentiments of the laity about issues facing the church and world today.

News about the demise of our beloved Fr. Ted Bowling SJ on November 22, 2021 saddened the community. The DNC community will miss Fr. Ted. His affection, community spirit and his love for nature will ever remain etched in our hearts. The funeral mass was held on 23rd November at 3.00 pm and presided over by Rt. Rev. Thomas Dabre, the Bishop of Pune. Fr. Donald Miranda SJ, the provincial of Patna spoke about his service during the homily and Fr. Jose Thayil SJ, offered his eulogy about his long, committed and inspiring life. He was laid to rest at Papal Cemetery.



Theologians and philosophers had their change of offices on the December 3. The ceremony for the change of the offices was done during the Holy Eucharistic Celebration. Schs. Sumit and Anupam were appointed the Beadles of the Theologians and Philosophers respectively.

Christmas celebration at DNC was a memorable one. Scholastics from different provinces brought out the best of talents and culturally specific themes in decoration, carol singing and Eucharistic celebrations.





On December 27 we had an outing to the MCBS house, where they serve the intellectually disabled children, Satara. All of us were zapped by the dedication of the staff in serving the least of the society. To take the experience of the trip and the conclusion of the year 2021 further, we had a Triduum under the guidance of Fr. Peter Ignatius. His deep insights had us all in rapt attention.



As this will be the last issue from the current editorial team, we would like to thank you all for your support and encouragement. Sch. Sean will be coordinating the new team.

WARM WELCOME AND LOTS OF GOOD WISHES TO THE NEW EDITORIAL TEAM



Community Days - 2021



Community Days – 2021, was officially inaugurated on Dec 19. The theme was 'EKATVAM' meaning Oneness. Fr. Bhausahab SJ, Rector of Papal Seminary was the chief guest. In his message he said, "The activities of Community Days will pass but the process that takes place will drive us forward in future." The members were divided into four groups and competitions were divided into five segments: Art Events consisting creative march-past, belly painting, best out of waste, rangoli, photo collage; Cultural Events consisting bad singing, fashion show, dance on the spot; Literary Events consisting quiz; Sports Events consisting basketball, volleyball, badminton, table tennis, carom and Fun Events consisting blind volleyball, box cricket etc. All the four groups gave their best. The Closing ceremony was on Dec 20. Kudos to the winners as well as all the participants! A special thanks to the organizing team for their hard work and meticulous planning!

IS SECULARISM SECURE?



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