

FRANCIS VINEETH VADAKETHALA CMI

Footprints of a Philosopher-Theologian Mystic



maram Vidya Kshetram, which he qualified as the best periodical among the interreligious publications.

Fr. Francis touched the heart of everyone with whom he came into contact. Today, therefore, many

mourn his death. I too express my love and appreciation for Vineethachan through this note and convey my condolences to the members of the province of Coimbatore and Dharmaram collage. May his noble soul rest in God!

Benny Nalkara CMI, Provincial, SH Province, Kochi

An Unforgettable Good Friday Sermon



My Association with Fr. Vineeth started with my first BPh classes at DVK which were held in the present JBC auditorium of DVK. We were 138 students in number and he taught us metaphysics. Later, I had many opportunities to interact with him, especially when I came back to the campus as a lecturer at DVK.

But a memory still I cherish is about a Good Friday sermon at Vidyavanam. It was in 2009. I was invited by Fr. Vineeth to give a sermon on Good Friday evening. The audience consisted of hardly 25 people!

There were a group of people from Trichur who used to come over there every year in the Holy Week to make their annual Lenten retreat. But I was really disappointed. I used to give Good Friday sermons with a very passionate rhetoric style to comparatively larger crowds. Here, I had no other way but to switch over to a conversational style of speech. The people were listening to me very keenly. I noticed that Fr. Vineeth was gazing at me like a curious student.

At the end of my sermon, I narrated the story of a European missionary who worked in African missions. He was a married person with two children. It was a long time since he visited them. One day, he got a message that his wife was sick. He was shocked and sad. He was in an interior place close to the forest. It



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was not easy for him to reach the city and to fly home. He sat on a rock and began to cry. After sometime he saw a group of women fetching water from a nearby pond in their pots. He also noticed that after filling the pots they were putting small branches with leaves into the water. It helped them keep the water from spilling over the pots. He suddenly got an insight. The missionary thought like this: "My sorrows of life spill over, but I will put the Cross of Christ into it and it will prevent from spilling over."

When I concluded the speech, Fr. Vineeth came forward and said: "What an inspiring sermon! Fr. Benny, you have touched our hearts." Then, he re-narrated the story of the missionary and said: "Let's put that branch – the Cross of Christ – into the pots of our lives that brim." My great disappointment was turned into tears of joy. That was the best Good Friday sermon I have ever made. To my surprise, later, many a time Fr. Vineeth recalled it whenever we met.

Namaste, Great Teacher!



My first encounter with Fr. Vineeth was during my Philosophical Studies (1963-1966) at Dharmaram Vidya Kshetram, Bengaluru. During this time, he was my teacher. As far as I can recollect, he taught me Metaphysics and Existentialism. His lectures were really good and interesting and his reflections

were thought-provoking and deep. He was not merely lecturing on philosophical topics, but he used to inter-

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My Teacher, Friend and Guide

perse his lectures with beautiful personal reflections. The atmosphere of his classes was relaxed and pleasant. He really paid attention to each and every student of his class.

In 1985, after my higher studies, when I joined the Faculty of Philosophy as a member of the staff, Fr. Vineeth also was there. Very soon we became good