



FRANCIS VINEETH VADAKETHALA CMI

Footprints of a Philosopher-Theologian Mystic



Emblem of the Congregation of Sisters of Saint Elizabeth (Guna Sisters) and the Interpretation Given by Father Vineeth

wear. *Mandala* is a graphic presentation of one's faith and wish of total reality (*Weltanschauung*), one's own proper place in that complex of reality. Every individual part of this *mandala* further explains this total vision and personal dedication of an Elizabethan Sister.

2. *Damaru* (drum): On the top of the *Mandala* is the drum symbolizing the Word of God that is being uttered from all eternity in stillness and silence, yet really heard by the listening mind of a contemplative sister (*anahatasabda*). The mind of an Elizabethan Sister is given to the silent contemplation of the Word of God which blossoms into action in her life.

3. The lotus mudra of the dancing hands: Just below the drum two dancing hands open up symbolizing the readiness of an Elizabethan Sister to dance her life according to the rhythm of the Divine that is being constantly communicated to her as the 'Will of God'. The bright flame amidst the black hands symbolizes the striking contrast between the Divine and the human and the need of illumination and transformation of the human by the Divine.

4. Flame is a living flame of love. The sound descends into the heart of the contemplative sister and becomes a flame of love (the Holy Spirit). The awakened consciousness, of the sister becomes the true abode of this divine flame in such a way that one gets fused with the other. The living flame of love is a flame of two consciousness divine and human, yet the latter growing in the former, and thus evolving to a more perfect and complete transformation into the Divine. As the hands move in the rhythm of the sound the flame strives to

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reach the drum, the source from which it had its origin.

5. *Pushpakala* (the symbol of flower): The sketch of flower surrounding the flame and dancing hands is a symbol of auspiciousness, openness and hospitality. It is an ancient Indian tradition that the lady of the house draws this *kalam* in front of her house at dawn in order to begin the day with an auspicious omen of welcoming God and his representative into her house. The Elizabethan Sister is ever open to listen to the word of God, to welcome it into her heart. Her hospitality extends also to all whom the word represents, especially the poor and the downtrodden who hardly get welcome anywhere.

6. *Devamanobhava*: Be of the divine mind. That is the motto of an Elizabethan Sister in India. It is the Sanskrit version of the Elizabethan motto: Will of God. When a sister identifies herself with the will of God she becomes of the mind of God. This is said in this motto: *devamanobhava* and reminds us of the great Indian saying *manmanobhava* (*The Gita*): be of my mind!

(Fr. Joy Elamkunnappuzha drew the design and Fr. Vineeth wrote the explanation of the emblem.)