



FRANCIS VINEETH VADAKETHALA CMI

Footprints of a Philosopher - Theologian Mystic

Neither did he keep count nor did he want
 To list them as his *sisya* galore to boost.
 Fruitful yet seemed pretty barren
 Begot sons and daughters for Him,
 Their numbers were quite a plenty
 Never did he show to be thus rich.
 Year after year he grew with élan
 Down to be a child at heart;
 Year after year also he grew in grace
 Up to Him through Our Lady.
 Trust ye fellow beings that

Guaranteed a mention he will,
 When upon His Lap he reclines
 Worthy rest that He grants!
 Words can certainly do no justice
 To this man of words so wise
 Live out his ideals 'twould suffice
 The Lady and the Lord sure to please!
shanthi! shanthi! shanthi!

** Francis – a reference to the love of nature of St. Francis of Assisi.
 Though his patron was St. Francis Xavier, he had a special filial affection
 to St. Francis of Assisi.*



Jacob Peenikaparambil CMI, Indore

Intelligence and Simplicity Walking Together

When I was a theology student in Dharmaram College, Bangalore, I was part of the Indian liturgy group. Fr. Vineeth, being a person deeply interested in Indian spirituality, used to take part often in the celebration of the Eucharist. I always

looked forward to his sharing of the Word of God. He had a special skill to present the teachings of Jesus relating them to Indian scriptures and philosophical thoughts, and, at the same time, there were some applications to real life situations. He also made us understand the significance of chanting *bhajans* and how they could be used for meditation.

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Although Fr. Vineeth was an original thinker and had deep knowledge in the subjects he taught, he was humble and ready to answer any question from the students. Simplicity was the hallmark of Fr. Vineeth; his attire, dealings with others, the way he presented his views and ideas, and his method of answering difficult questions reflected his simplicity. He never got irritated or became uncomfortable when students asked him tricky questions. He used to say: "This is my view or understanding and other people may have their own understanding." The so-called intellectual arrogance was alien to him. He never defended his views or opinions with arguments. Of course, he used to present original ideas with convincing reasons. At the same time, he gave the freedom to others to hold their own views. Because of his acquaintance with the Hindu Scriptures and Indian philosophy he might have been influenced by the Upanishadic idea, *Ekam Sat Vipra Bahuda Vadanti* ("That which exists is ONE, sages call it by various names.")



His life and dealings with others always reflected his humility, simplicity, and integrity. When I recollect my memories about Fr. Vineeth, what comes to my mind very prominently is his integrity. The seminarians who undergo formation and the students who study in the schools always look forward to role models and the most important quality expected of a teacher is integrity. What I specially observed in Fr. Vineeth was his childlike innocence. Anyone could easily relate with him. Therefore, the name Vineeth was truly fitting to him.

While reading the book *Letters to His Schools* by J. Krishnamurthi, I came across the difference between 'Intellect' and 'Intelligence'. According to the author, "intelligence is the capacity to perceive the whole. The very nature of intelligence is sensitivity which is love. Without intelligence there cannot be compassion. Compassion and intelligence walk together." All those who knew Fr. Vineeth will agree that he was an intelligent person radiating sensitivity and simplicity along with originality.