



# FRANCIS VINEETH VADAKETHALA CMI

*Footprints of a Philosopher-Theologian Mystic*

once again, come alive in the reflections. Yes, this man was indeed a mystic, who made sense of God's presence in various ways, touched people by his inspiring thoughts and gestures. May his spiritual presence con-

tinue to inspire his privileged students to imitate him in being reflective in their respective ministries! May the Lord continue to see the glory shines forth in the humble men and women like Father Francis Vineeth!

## Paulachan Kochappilly CMI, Dharmaram, Bengaluru

**Joyful Harp of the Spirit: An Awakened and Integrated Consciousness of V. F. Vineeth**



**F**ather Francis Vineeth Vadakethala CMI was a person of joy and spread the fragrance of it in silence and sound. His joy was radiant and crescent. A sweet smile was on his face always, glowingly growing as years passed by.

I consider that Father Francis lived the ideal of Jesus, "I have said these things, so that my joy may be in you and your joy may be complete" (Jn 15:11) throughout his life. Joy was the key to his life.

At the heart of his heart, there was joy, flowing down through his words and gestures, a man singing and dancing for joy. A hallow of the innocent and in-

domitable spirit of joy made him special and genuine. While he was lost in search of the Ineffable, Father Vineeth was found connected with miseries and sufferings of humanity.

Recollecting his sweet and charming presence amidst us while he was alive and active, I would like to quote the first verse from *Madhurashtakam*, which fits his personality so well:

अधरं मधुरं वदनं मधुरं नयनं मधुरं हसितं मधुरम् ।  
हृदयं मधुरं गमनं मधुरं मधुराधिपतेरखिलं मधुरम् ॥१॥

*Adharam Madharam Vadanam Madharam Nayanam  
Madharam Hasitam Madharam  
Hridayam Madharam Gamanam Madharam Madhura-Adhipater-Akhilam Madharam*

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Your lips are sweet and charming, your face is  
sweet and charming,  
Your eyes are sweet and charming and  
your laughter is sweet and charming,  
Your heart is sweet and charming and your walk-  
ing is sweet and charming;  
Everything about you is sweet and charming,  
O Lord of sweetness!

Father Vineeth was indeed a sweet person. He was an artist to the core and had a creative touch to all what he did. He took time to enjoy events and moments in life. So, people were drawn to him, especially artists in different fields of life. And, in turn, by providing insight and inspiration, he encouraged and empowered them to do great works surpassing the times.

The Holy Spirit was his source of strength and he was engaged in a search of the Ineffable. Joy welled up because of his awakened consciousness. Awakened by the Holy Spirit, Father Vineeth seemed to have worked out all his creative and innovative projects as a single continuum, which he named as “call to integration.” As you are awakened, so are you integrated. For him, nothing was alien, everything has a relevance and significance in the larger canvas of life.

Moved by the Holy Spirit, Father Vineeth was

free like a child of God and firm in his conviction. He was bold and solid on matters of truth, goodness, and beauty; there was no compromise on the question of freedom and justice. He spoke truth to the power. His paper on “Justice and Reconciliation: The Sad but Living Story of a Church in Fetters” is in clear relief to his awakened consciousness and fearless stance.

Filled with Holy Spirit, Father Francis showcased a genuine taste for all that is genuinely Christian, Eastern, and Indian. Beyond doubt, in him, there was a genuine confluence of Indian Eastern Christianity, the three tributaries awakening him to be one with the Ineffable. His initiative to get the sketches of the liturgical seasons of the Syro Malabar Church drawn by Joy Elamkunnappuzha CMI and supplying his own English texts highlighting the spirit of each season published in the CMI Diary of the 1980s is a testimony to his filial devotion to his mother Church. Later, when he constructed a chapel in Vidyavanam Ashram, Bhoothanahalli, Bengaluru, he, out of his love for and commitment to the Eastern liturgy, made it a point to get those sketches drawn on colour glasses in it.

Father Vineeth was a man of wonder and he loved mysteries. On more than one occasions, he has shared his great regard and appreciation for the Syro Malabar



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Eucharistic Liturgy, the most ancient liturgy of Mar Addai and Mar Mari. He told me that the anaphora of the Liturgy of our Church is marvellous and outstanding, which should be preserved and celebrated wholeheartedly. It is the celebration of the Mystery of Christ and the mystery of the world, including human beings. And I have seen him enjoying the celebration of the Liturgy thoroughly.

Above all, in Father Vineeth, we encounter a mystic poet, who sees, muses, and takes all things and events as parts of the whole, the Mystical Body of Christ. He leaves a legacy of contemplation of the Lord in everything and all things in the Lord after the example of Mary, our Mother, who contemplated the mysteries of God in her *Magnificat*.

Father Vineeth liked, loved, and lived everything true, good, and beautiful in Indian, Eastern, and Christian heritage to the best of his ability, integrating all things on his journey towards the day of the Lord, on Sunday, 30 May 2021.

To conclude, I quote four lines of his poem in one of his articles, "In Search of the Ineffable" (V. F. Vadakethala, 2009, 33-34):

How long shall I go on searching?  
When shall my search become seeing,  
And thought become touching,  
Reason move to faith,  
And faith become resting in you?

## **Arun Antony Chully CMI**

### **Huge Impact on Generations**

**F**r. Vineeth made a huge impact on generations of Indian Christian religious to discover and embrace the Indianness in their Christian living! May his soul rest in peace!

