

FRANCIS VINEETH VADAKETHALA CMI

Footprints of a Philosopher-Theologian Mystic



Stella Baltazar FMM, Provincial

A Person of Spiritual Energy and Fulfilment



With deep sorrow we heard about the peaceful rest of Father Francis Vineeth CMI. He was a man of integrity, commitment, and deep spiritual experience. He was rooted in the wellsprings of the Indian spiritual treasures, and gave expression to his convictions by his *ashram* way of life. His memory will live

on in the minds of scholars, theologians, students and consecrated religious who have experienced his fine personality and the elegance of his spirituality.

It was in 1980 that I had the opportunity to meet Father Francis Vineeth CMI, a great scholar and a man who deeply lived his commitment as a genuine Indian spiritual seeker. Words can never fully express how much someone means to us, and how their presence impacts our lives. It was in 1980: at Yercaud, we FMM

Junior Sisters were in preparation for our final vows, that Father Vineeth came to speak to us as arranged by Sr. Flavia FMM, our Directress. His sessions were profound, rooted in the wellsprings of Indian ethos. What was so admirable in him was his humble approach to people. He could never dominate someone, he always maintained simplicity as his characteristic mark.

His personality communicated much more than words. I still remember his sharing about the understanding of discipleship: at the feet of the Master in humble submission and silently absorbing and experiencing the depth of the *Guru* in deep communion. Inwardly purified by love, which emanates from interior detachment, and totally being attached to the master. This grounding in Indian spirituality and the taste of the culture from the soil of India attracted me and I desired to know more. This was my first exposure to the depth of the spiritual treasure within Hinduism. It helped me to overcome the fear within and gave me courage to embrace all that is good in other religions.



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I recall with joy the convictions he imparted and the new perspectives he infused in us.

Today we remember this great personality whose footprints could never be erased. He is alive in us who shared his convictions and vision. The loss of him is an irreplaceable one. His memory remains with us and is growing in the perspectives we share in Interfaith Dialogue as well as Intercultural Communion. The depth of recognition, acceptance, cordiality and respect we have developed for other cultures is a great gift and India needs this dimension of Indian Christian spirituality today more than ever.

The best tribute we can give to Father Vineeth is to take forward his convictions and make it real in our lives. Let a million minds in this land catch up with his treasured thoughts and spread the Good News that our life is in connectedness and continuity in the web of humanity and his spirit will continue to inspire us all as we work for cosmic integration, community fellowship, and personnel wholeness.

Let there be compassion and grace in the midst of conflict! Let there be healing and handholding in the midst of tensions! Let his remembrance promote in us the cherished values of Indian Spiritual Ethos!

Tomy Chirapurath CMI, Darsana, Wardha

Vishwa Manav Father Francis Vineeth



I have always wanted to cherish my acquaintance with Father Vineeth, though it was minimum. It dates back to the late 1980s when I was a philosophy student at Dharmaram Vidya Kshetram. He taught us Metaphysics at the BPh level at

Darsana, Wardha. During our Licentiate Programme, our batch moved with him more closely. He was the director of my licentiate thesis, which was on the philosophy of Gabriel Marcel.

His explanation of the 'Reality' in metaphysical and existentialist terms had its deep impact on my studies, so much so that I titled my work as the "Recovery