



FRANCIS VINEETH VADAKETHALA CMI

Footprints of a Philosopher-Theologian Mystic

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Vineeth, but Assertive: A Guru Opening the World Beyond Your Horizon



Father Vineeth – the name was familiar from some brief interactions with the senior scholastics. Definitely, it was all about classes and viewpoints, and the picture, though incoherent, did not come about very positively. But on arrival in Dharmaram College, and having ‘encountered’ Father

Vineeth through the various *kosas* – from *annamaya* to *anandamaya* – though initially appearing only as mere sheaths (*kosas*) or just about the circles to be drawn to indicate them, so as to scrape through the tests, in the span of less than a year, he appeared and appealed to me, cutting through those sheaths, in the process he always loved to enunciate – that of *alatheia* – as a *guru* showing the path; having a philosophy and theology of one’s own – as he would introduce the word to us: *Weltenshauung*, with a profound awareness of the world around (modern and western),

but undoubtedly and proudly Indian. That encounter was a sufficient lesson to beware of prejudices against individuals.

He was critical of the systems – religious or political, including the one that the west-dominated Church defended, while being faithful to Jesus in a creative fashion. The worlds he opened to us through Kabir and Fakir – of dogma versus mysticism, of revelation through *avarana* and *vikshepa*, and the fascinating concepts of *maya* and *lila* – have made a profound impression regarding another world of understanding the world, as a possibility – though, unfortunately, which still remains a possibility at the best! Among the few books I carry around is his thin, but helpful volume: *Foundations of World Vision*.

I deem it a great privilege that he had the confidence to share with me his dreams of an ashram, which came to be a reality at a later stage – I consider it a great loss that I was not able to visit him while he was guiding the *ashram*!

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I sensed a thrill in him when he tried to expose the Christian faith in Indian terms – successfully ‘integrating’ and ‘contextualising’ the Gospel. When he was narrating his success in doing the same with platforms beyond the borders, he exhibited a childlike enthusiasm.

Like Eklavya, I have taken him for my *guru*, though I have not really tested my skills in his domain. Past two or three years, it had been at the back of my mind

that I should visit him and meet with him, and I was indeed hoping to do so, when the news came of his departure, even depriving me of the opportunity to pay homage to his mortal remains.

I salute him, quoting from *subhashita ratnani*: “That indeed there is no fear of (from) old age or death in (his) body of fame, for he has found a place eternal in our minds like the great poets.”

Anto Amarnad Chittilappilly CMI

Gentle and Sincere Person



With deep sorrow let me offer my sincere condolences and prayers. He was an exceptional and rare gift to the CMI Congregation and the universal Church. Never we get bored when we listened to him. Fr. Vineeth was one of the greatest souls who understood the true meaning of Vatican II’s invitation for inculturation. From his presence I developed my personality and thoughts.

My music got new divine wings when I composed his lyrics. I composed *Khristu Sahasranama Namam* because of him. The best bhajans I composed were on his profound lyrics. Gentle and sincere were his person and you can depend on him. When he bids farewell, our inner space is empty! Of course, his lovely meditations and hymns will make him alive amidst us. The Lord will rejoice at his presence in heaven. We have a sure intercessor in him. He was a devotee of Saint Teresa of Lisieux and he would, like his patroness, send heavenly petals of blessings! *My deep condolences!*