

Inculturation Perspective of Second Vatican Council

Restoration, Reform and Adaptation Revisited.

Dr. Francis Kanichikattil CMI.

(Francis Kanichikattil was, for long time, Professor of Sacraments and Liturgy at Dharmaram Vidyakshetram, Bangalore. He did his Doctorate in Liturgy at Heythrop College, University of London, his ongoing research is in the area of Liturgy and Inculturation. The article is originally a paper presented in a Seminar at 'Liturgical Research Centre' of the Syro-Malabar Church, at Mount St. Thomas Kakkanad, Kerala. It deals with Second Vatican Council Perspective of the Inculturation in the Context of Global Mission. From Second Vatican Council till the recent Amazon Synod at Vatican (57 years), the Church spoke vehemently on Inculturation in the new Cultures.)

Reform is a life process, a part of the human development. Individuals as well as Communities need to undergo reform in order to cope with the changing situation. In a rapidly changing world, reform seems to be an inevitable phenomenon irrespective of persons and communities. Christian worship being an essential part of Christian life, reform in this particular area is unavoidable. Christian liturgy, being a splendid manifestation of the Christian Faith, changes and new forms always needs to be encouraged, not simply for the sake of variety but in order to remain faithful to the essential purpose of the liturgy. Similar are the cases with other disciplines of the Church such as, the Propagation of the Faith (Missionary Mandate), relation with other Christian Churches, relation with people of other Faith (Interreligious Dialogue), Church's involvement in the present day Social and Political evils etc.

1. Pope John XXIII opened Windows for the Church:

In 1958, Italian cardinal, Angelo Roncalli, took the title Pope John XXIII, when he was elected to papal office. The other cardinals who supported him thought that they had elected a 'caretaker pope' who would look after the Church for a year or two. Instead he set up a special council of the Church to look at its worship and witness its entry into the second half of the 20th century. Pope John thought that the council could "**open the windows of the Church and let in some fresh air**". The word "Aggiornamento" began to emerge as the keynote of the council. It simply meant "bringing the Church up-to-date". In terms of the Church

it meant a call for the Church to return to its sources; to discover its **faith and tradition** and work out what they meant in relation to the modern world.

During the period 1962-1965, about 2500 bishops, abbots and cardinals met together in St. Peter's Basilica in the Vatican City. These sessions are known as the Second Vatican Council, since the first session of the Council of the Church had been held during 1869-1870. Although Pope John XXIII died in 1963, his successor Pope Paul VI, continued with the Council until its discussions were complete in 1965. At the end of the Council, there came out sixteen major Documents. These documents changed so much the Roman Catholic Church that the Council has been described as a 'watershed' (turning point) in the Church's history. The Roman Catholic Church could never be quite the same again. In particular

(a) The way in which Church understood itself was changed. Through baptism all people clergy and the laity (people of God) shared the faith responsibility to share that faith with others. The laity was encouraged to play a full part in the Church life for the first time by forming a partnership with clergy. The whole Catholic community is understood a pilgrim People of God.

(b) Changes were introduced in the worship life of the people. For centuries the worship was in Latin, Greek, Syriac in Roman and Oriental Churches. Liturgy began to be celebrated in the local language and that was a major change in the field of Liturgy especially in Asian and African Churches. Catholics were encouraged to spend more time in studying the Bible and place it at the centre of their worship.

(c) Catholics were encouraged to think differently on other Christian Churches, also followers of other Faith (Religions). Christians from different Churches should treat each other with tolerance and trust. And the same should be true of all contacts between Catholics and followers of other faith.

(d) The Church pledged itself to be fully involved in the problems of the society and nation. The Council called for: nuclear weapons to be abolished, the arms trade to be halted; a fairer distribution of the world's resources; racism in any form (in India caste difference) is to be oppressed; a bridge should be built between consumer society and the Church so that the poor may be benefited.

2. “Ressourcemet,” “Aggiornamento,” and the Vatican Council II

Ressourcement, Aggiornamento are the two words more frequently used in the by the Council to define the question regarding the nature and extent of the Church’s aim of the renewal. Ressourcement is a French word, meaning “**back to the sources**”, and more elaborately, “return to the authoritative sources of Christian Faith for the purpose of rediscovering their truth and meaning in order to meet the critical challenges of time”. Far from being a sterile archeological interest in the past, going to the sources was the spring board of meaningful renewal. Then Aggiornamento is an Italian word, meaning “**bringing things up to the present day**”. In the wider context, it means providing a new and wider contextualization, with the aim of finding new ways to rethink and reformulate the fundamental affirmations of the Christian Faith in order to more effectively communicate the Gospel. Pope John called the Church to update the presentation of its message to the new world. His call was motivated by pastoral concerns. He did not want the Church to lose touch with the contemporary concerns and struggles of the people.

Unfortunately some interpreters of the Council took renewal to be merely a matter of the Church’s adaptation or accommodation of the standards of the modern world. Swiss biblical theologian, Oscar Cullman, rightly noted, that the modernist took *aggiornamento* as an isolated motive for renewal. When taken as such, it simply means ‘adapting to the culture of modernity’. But Pope John XXIII, in the words of Cullman, never intended simply the modernists’ interpretation of the word. The Council wanted to invoke¹ :

(a) Deposit of Christian Truth should be safeguarded: In the inaugural address the Pope said, the greatest concern of the ecumenical council is this: “that the sacred deposit of Christian doctrine should be guarded and taught more efficaciously”. The doctrine embraces the whole person, composed as the body and the soul. And since he is a pilgrim on the earth, it commands him to tend always towards heaven. The Lord said, “Seek first the Kingdom of God and His Justice” (Mt.6:53). We must not however, neglect the other word of the Lord’s exhortation, namely, “And all these things shall be given you besides.” In reality, there always have been in the Church, every time, people, while seeking the practice of evangelical perfection, do not fail to make them useful to the society. It is

¹ B.C. Butler (bishop); *On Pope John’s opening speech to the Second Vat. Council*, Voice of the Church.

necessary that the Church should never depart from the sacred patrimony of truth received from the Church Fathers. But at the same time she must ever look to the present, to the new conditions and the new forms of life introduced into the modern world.

(b) Transmitting the Truth fearlessly: The Second Vatican Council wishes to transmit the doctrine of Faith, pure and integral, without any distortion. The substance of the ancient doctrine of the deposit of faith, and the way in which it is presented is another. It is the latter that must be taken into great consideration and patience. And the ways and means should be found out in order to transmit this Truth to the people by the teaching authority of the Church, which is predominantly pastoral in character.

(c) Promoting Unity of Christians and Human Family: For such is God's plan. He "wishes that everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth"(I.Tim.2:4). The entire Christian family has not yet fully and perfectly attained to this visible unity in the truth. And this unity, for which Christ prayed before his Sacrifice, seems to shine with a threefold ray of supernatural saving light. First of all there is the unity of Catholics which must always be kept exemplary and firm. Secondly there is the ardent desire and unity of prayer for the Christians separated from the Catholic community. And finally there is unity which consists in respect and esteem, to be extended to the followers of other Faith (Religions). Recalling the words of the African Father St. Cyprian, "The Church surrounded by the divine light, spreads her rays over the entire earth. The light, however, is one and unique, and shines everywhere without causing any separation in the unity of the body. She extends her branches over the whole Earth".

3. Liturgical Reform in the Western Church: The French liturgist, Pierre Marie Gy who was very much involved in the Post-Vatican liturgical renewal, has well brought out the concept of 'ressourcement' (tradition) and 'aggiornamento' (renewal) in his research on liturgy. According to him, "All Christian liturgies of the present day have discovered in their relationship with the ancient tradition, the source both of their renewal and of their presence in a world which has changed a great deal. Everywhere, liturgists have become, directly or indirectly, and often without even having tried, the artisans of liturgical reform, not because they wanted

to change the liturgy or to depart from the tradition, but because **deepening that tradition was by its very nature a force of renewal²**”.

If we go to the history of liturgical movement in the Western Church, which itself was the forerunner of the liturgical Constitution S.C, we become more aware of this concept. A 19th century French liturgist, Dom Prosper Geranger, a Benedictine monk, who is known as the Father of the Liturgical renewal in the Western Church, refounded the Abbey of **Solesmes** in 1832. By conviction and temperament he had been a traditionalist. But the return to tradition, Geranger and his fellow monks set in motion was so deep and authentic, that with the passage of time it led to a renewal which was so real that **to refuse liturgical reform actually meant departure from the Tradition³**. The monks of the Abbey found out the old manuscripts of liturgy, translated it to modern languages and made a systematic study on it. As the second phase, when the reform reached *Mont Cesar* Abbey in Belgium, it took a pastoral look. Dom Lambert Beaudin, the genial of liturgical reform, in a conference addressed the people, “Liturgy is prayer. The people must take part in it, not merely assist at it. We are part of the Church and we give glory to God together with our whole being”. Above all Dom Odo Casel of *Maria Laach* Abbey in Germany forwarded a theological input for the liturgical movement. His contribution of the liturgy is the *cult mystery*; the celebration of the *mystery of Christ* provided a theological basis for the whole renewal. As the last phase of the liturgical movement Rome acknowledged the renewal in the liturgy, and Pope Pius XXII promulgated the encyclical on liturgy “*Mediator Dei*” in 1947. Really it was the forerunner of the of the Constitution of the Sacred Liturgy (1963) Sacrosanctum Concilium.

Thus Benedictine Abbeys of the West, namely *Solesmes* in France, and *Mont Cesar* in Belgium and *Maria Laach* in Germany were the wellspring for the liturgical renewal in the Western Church. Their research and leadership in the field of liturgical renewal invigorated the sacramental life of the clergy and people, which paved the way for a liturgical renewal in the Western Church.

4. Liturgical Renewal in Syro-Malabar Church:

² Kenneth.Stevenson (ed), *Liturgy Reshaped* , SPCK 1982, p.2 .

³ Kanichikattil F; “Liturgical Renewal in the Syro-Malabar Church” , *Vidyajyoti Journal of Theological Reflection* 64 (2000) pp.259-68.

When we observe the liturgical renewal undertaken by the Syro-Malabar Church, one can find that no such combined effort or team work of the people engaged in various Church activities has taken place. There were meetings and discussions before and after the Second Vatican Council. A partly Malayalan-Syriac Eucharistic Text came into use in 1962, that was a success. But that text needed reform in the light of Vatican Council constitution on liturgy. Different Texts on Holy Kurbana appeared in the following years, a renewed Text in 1968, Raza Text in 1986, then Kurbana Text in Solemn and Simple Forms in 1989 and other Liturgical Texts. Not yet the final Text of the Solemn and Simple Forms came out. Instead of mutual sharing and team work, the liturgical renewal in the Syr-Malabar Church often brought confusion and conflict. Instead of a convergence of different thoughts, liturgical discussions often led to a sort of polarization of different ideas.

Under the Title of “Reform of Sacred Liturgy” the Vatican Council Constitution gives a clear idea of liturgical renewal. The document says, “in order to achieve Restoration, Reform and Adaptation of the Sacred Liturgy, it is essential to promote warm and living love for Sacred Scripture (art. 24) It is unambiguous that **Restoration, Reform and Adaptation should go together** according to circumstances. After study and research the liturgical Text must be formed which should satisfy the tradition (restoration), modernization (reform) and adaptation. In order to complement it, the same idea is expressed, “That sound tradition may be retained, and yet the way remain open to legitimate progress” (art. 23). Again, the document says, “For the liturgy is made of immutable elements divinely instituted and of elements subject to change. These latter not only may be changed, but ought to be changed with the passage of timehave become less suitable. (art. 21). That means there are mutable elements and immutable elements in the liturgy. And mutable elements are subject to change if they have become less suitable. Regarding the pastoral character of the liturgy, the document says, “the rites should be distinguished by noble simplicity; they should be short, clear, and free from useless repetitions and they should be within people’s power of comprehension” (art. 34.), this leads to pastoral adaptation in liturgical matters.

The Syro-Malabar Bishops’ Conferences and Synods gave similar directives for the renewal of the liturgy. In the Syro-Malabar Bishops’ Conference in 1974, there was a serious discussion on the reform of the Liturgy, and finally it

concluded; “Regarding the reform of the liturgy, the Conference last decided that Restoration, Reform and Adaptation of the liturgy should go together, keeping the identity of the Rite and having in view its organic growth in the light of the Vatican Council.”⁴ In the final statement of the SMBC in the year 1986, we read the decision as “Erect a centre under the auspices of the Syro-Malabar Bishop’s Synod to make research into the Syro-Malabar liturgy and its relationship to the contemporary Indian culture, and its pastoral needs, giving particular attention to local languages wherever the Syro-Malabar liturgy is used”.⁵ There was discussion on liturgical renewal and making the liturgical texts more experiential for the priest and people in the syro-Malabar Synod of Sept. 2013. It is true that the Syro-Malabar Church is related to the liturgical and spiritual tradition of the Chaldean Church. But this does not mean that the Church should follow the entire East Syrian pattern for its worship. This Church must be Indian in all respects, without losing its oriental identity.⁶For this, a combined effort of theologians, liturgists and Church historians is needed.

5. The Question of “Ancestral Traditions” in Syro-Malabar Church:There is a strong tradition in Kerala that St. Thomas baptized Brahmins at Palayur, one of the seven Christian communities in 52 A.D. In South India, the *Sangam* Period, the period of early Tamil literature spreads 1 BCE till 5 AD. There were three well identified Kingdoms in the south during *Sangam* period, namely *Chera*, *Chola* and *Pandya* Kingdoms. The Western Kingdom *Chera* is today’s Keralam (*Ceralam*) and *Muchiris*, a port city, once the legendary Sea Port that joined the East and the West of the Globe. The *Muchiris* had sea route with foreign world even before the Christian era. The Egyptian navigator Hyppalas in the first century found out the Monsoon Wind in the Indian Ocean, and that made the trade between India and Western world far easier. Hence there is possibility that St. Thomas had chosen this way to reach Kodungalloor (*Muchiris*) in the first century. There he confronted the Brahmins, who were very literate, in the *Cera* Kingdom. By the preaching of the Gospel, certainly a number of Brahmins had been converted and received baptism from St. Thomas.

⁴ Puthoor Bosco (Ed.); *Inculturation and Syro-Malabar Church* ;LRC publication, 2005, p. 83.

⁵ *Synodal News*. Kochi, April 1996, p.83.

⁶ Kanichikattil, Francis, *Search for Liturgy in India*; Dharmaram Publication, Bangalore 2018, pp. 94-95

St. Jerome in 5th century wrote that Pantenus, the head of the Catechetical School of Alexandria visited South India around A.D. 190, “to preach Christ to the Brahmins (literate) and philosophers there”. Both Eusebius and Jerome reported that Pantenus found the Hebrew Gospel in India. Pantenus was a Stoic philosopher teaching in Alexandrian School. He was converted to Christian faith and sought to reconcile his new faith with Greek philosophy. Alexandrian school was the earliest catechetical school, and became influential in the development of Christian theology. The Brahmins/*Anthanas* and philosophers mentioned in the writings of Jerome and Eusebius refer to the literary men and poets of the *Sangam* Period in South India (ie.*Chera* Kingdom), not pointing to the Brahmins of the Caste Hindu Religion. *Pathittupath*(ten poems containing ten each) is an illustrious poem of Sangam Period. In the poem there is a mentioning of a Chera king, *Chelkazhu Kittuvan* who conducted ten Yagas for the pleasure of the Brahmin/*Anthanas* poet *Gauthamanar* who wrote poems admiring him.⁷ Thus the early Christian community who received Christ by the preaching of St. Thomas might be the natives from the above mentioned Dravidian stock of Chera Kingdom, also the converts from the believers of Jainism and Buddhism and the Aryans (small number) who came from the North and joined the natives. The Jews who were good traders got settled at Malabar Coast in the Christian era had accepted Christian faith in the first century. Thus the early Thomas Christian community of Kerala (the ancestors) in the first century was a mixed community of Dravidians, Jainists and Buddhists, and Jews. Rev. Dr. Pius Malekandathil (JNU) and others recommend this position in their research.⁸The terms like *marga* (way) *Palli* (church) might be the contribution from other Religions. Later when *Namboori* Brahmins (Caste Hindus) came from the North in crowd around 6 and 7 centuries, the early Christians probably received their customs and manners such as *Poonool*, *Kuduma*, religious art etc... It was the early Christian tradition that wherever the apostles preached the Gospel and baptized the faithful, there they celebrated the ‘breaking of the bread’ (Eucharist) in the language and culture of the people. This paved the way for the emergence of different traditions and liturgical families, which in turn became the basis for the formation of different Rites in the Church.

⁷ K.K .Kochu; *Kerala Charitram Samoohikaroopikaranavum*, Keralabhasha Institute Tvm. 2012. pp. 5-79.

⁸ *Satydeepam articles*. May 3, 2018; July 3, 2019.

6. Inculturation: Inculturation is a new concept that got access in Theology especially Theology of Mission after Second Vatican Council. The word Inculturation was first used in the final Statement of the Asian Bishops' Conference in 1970. Since then it has been frequently used in the theological formulation especially in relation to Mission Theology. The terminology is derived from European languages for a particular way of interpreting the reality. Aylward Shorter defines Inculturation as “an ongoing dialogue between faith and culture or cultures.”⁹ . More precisely, Inculturation is “the creative dynamic relationship between the Christian message and a culture or cultures”. From Shorter's view “Christian faith cannot exist except in a cultural form”. Christianity is a distinct way of life that can only operate culturally.

According to Arch-Bishop Thomas Menamparambil, Inculturation is not merely about introducing a local cultural element into the liturgy. It is a **perspective** we take, which influences our whole way of understanding, thinking, behaving; it is a **deep insight** about community's ways of living, relating, organizing and celebrating. It is a way of responding to the Spirit of God who is alive and active in the cultures. He explains, Inculturation begins when the Gospel discovers itself in a culture, accepting the face of God already present and rejecting faces that do not reflect the God of our faith. It is a way of discovering God in a community, in a culture and in a human family¹⁰.

7. Respect for Human Cultures: Respect for Human cultures and Religions was one of the major contributions of the Vat.II. Before the council, in Roman Church, everywhere Uniformity was stressed. The Church never accepted other human cultures or other Religions except the European Culture and Religion. In the Catholic Church, everywhere Liturgy was celebrated in the Latin language, and liturgical vestments were uniform everywhere. The Roman Church never accepted the principle of “unity in diversity” but it is the masterpiece of the Indian Culture. Syro-Malabar Church, though an Oriental Church had no excuse from the Roman concept of Uniformity, because the Church was under Latin Jurisdiction for long time.

⁹ Aylward Shorter: *Towards a Theology of Inculturation*, London, Geoffrey Chapman, 1988, p.11

¹⁰ Menamparampil Thomas (Archbishop Emeritus); *Inculturation of Sacred Liturgy in Asia: Possibilities and problems*, VJTR Vol. 73/2, 2009. pp.9-10.

The council document on liturgy (arts.37-40) entitled “Norms for adapting the liturgy to the Culture and Traditions of the People”, is important in this respect. The document does not use the terminology ‘inculturation’(it was not existing then), but was using ‘adapting the liturgy to the culture and traditions of the people’. It reads “Even in Liturgy, the Church has no wish to impose a rigid uniformity in matters which do not implicate the Faith or good of the Faithful; rather dose she respect and foster the genius and talents of the various races and peoples. Anything in these peoples, which are not indissolubly bound up with superstition and error, she studies with sympathy and if possible, preserves intact. Sometimes in fact she admits such things into the liturgy itself¹¹”.

Church’s approach is very positive in this regard. In place of Imposing uniformity, which was the tradition of the Roman Church from long period, the document says, **the Church has no wish to impose uniformity**. She respects the talents and genius of different races and peoples, namely different cultures. Certain rites which are not bound up with superstitions and error, the Church accepts in the liturgy itself. The Constitution also says, keeping the substantial unity of the Roman Rite,(in the case of Latin Church) provisions shall be made for revising the liturgical texts, for legitimate variations and adaptations, especially in the mission lands. This is the background of the formation of an Indian way of worship, in the Latin and Syro-Malabar Churches in India after the Council.

8. Incarnating the Gospel in People’s Culture: The Church encounters new cultures in the present time and is engaged in the process of Inculturation. The encyclical” *“Redemptoris Missio* (Dece.1990) which was promulgated as the preparation for “Christujayanti 2000” celebration gives a comprehensive idea of Inculturation based on Incarnation of Gospel in people’s culture. The process of the Church’s insertion into people’s culture is a lengthy one. It is not a matter of purely external adaptation, for Inculturation “means the intimate transformation of the authentic cultural values through their integration in Christianity and insertion of Christianity in the various human cultures.”¹² The process is thus a profound and all embracing one, which involves the Christian message and also Church’s reflection and practice. But at the same time it is a difficult process, for it must in no way compromise the distinctiveness and integrity of the Christian faith.

¹¹ *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 37. 1963.

¹² *Redemptoris Missio*. 52, 53. 1990.

Through inculturation the Church makes the Gospel incarnate in different cultures and at the same time introduces peoples, together with their cultures into her own community. She transmits to them her own values, at the same time taking the good elements that already exist in them. Through inculturation the Church, for her part, becomes a more intelligible sign of what she is and a more effective instrument of Mission. Missionaries, who come from other Churches and countries, must immerse themselves in the cultural milieu of those to whom they are sent, moving beyond their own cultural limitations. Hence they must learn the language of the place in which they work, become familiar with the most important expressions of the local culture, and discover its values through direct experience. If the missionaries have this kind of awareness, will they be able to bring to the people the knowledge of the hidden mystery in a credible and fruitful way. Thus the encyclical provides a clear idea of inculturation based on the principle of incarnation of the Gospel in the particular culture or cultures, by which the particular culture is authentically evangelized and new Christian communities are born.

9. Asian/Indian Cultural Values: Asia is the birth place of Jesus Christ and of His Church. As a part of the Chritujayanthi 2000 celebration in Asia, the Holy Father John Paul II came to India in Nov.1999, and gave to the Church in Asia the ‘Apostolic Exhortation’ *Ecclesia in Asia* which was the fruit of the Asian Bishops Synod, in connection with *Chritujayanthi* celebration. The Document speaks of the Asian values and world view of the Asian people in particular:

“The people of Asia take pride in their religious and cultural values, such as love of silence and contemplation (*dyana*), simplicity, harmony (*Rta*), detachment, non-violence (*ahimsa*), the spirit of hard work, discipline, the thirst for learning (*Vijana*) and philosophical enquiry (*darsana*). They hold dear the values of respect for life, compassion for all beings (*Samasrsti Samahavana*), closeness to nature, filial piety towards parents elders and ancestors (*pitrbhakthi*), and a highly developed sense of community. In particular they hold the family to be a vital source of strength. Asian peoples are known for their spirit of religious tolerance and peaceful co-existence (*madedaratum*). Without denying the existence of bitter tensions and violent conflicts, it can still be said that Asia has often demonstrated a remarkable capacity for accommodation and a natural openness to the mutual enrichment of

peoples in the midst of plurality of religions and cultures. (*Ekan Sat Vipraha bahuda vdanti*) Moreover despite the influence modernization and secularization, Asian religions are showing signs of great vitality and a capacity for renewal, as seen in reform movements within the various religious groups¹³”.

Whatever it is said about Asian Culture, to a great is the same for India. The Asian Culture and civilization is very much influenced by Indian Culture. Buddhism, one of the major Religious Traditions in Asia, has its origin in India. And it is the major Religion in East Asia. The Gospel must enter into the culture of India and transform it more authentic. Thus the Indian culture and heritage will be more meaningful by the interaction with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. An authentic Liturgy, Theology, Art and Architecture in the Indian pattern would be its natural consequence and thus a Church fully Indian and authentically Christian would be born. Inter-Religious Dialogue is another area related to Inculturation. Here more Interculturation is needed, an exchange of religious values between people of different Faith. Second Vatican Council encourages Inter-Religious dialogue by its decree '*Nostra Aetate*'. Recently in the CBCI plenary meeting at Bangalore Feb. 2020, the president Cardinal Oswald Gracias said, “dialogue is the only way forward for harmony in India” especially in today’s socio-political scenario. Dialogue of the Church with socio-political leaders, dialogue with Religious leaders, dialogue with Government Officials and Ordinary people are extremely needed for harmony in today’s complex situation of India.

10. Inculturation attempts in India: “The Church in India Today”, a seminar taken place in Bangalore in 1969, as a follow up of the Second Vatican Council, is considered to be an important event in the history of the Catholic Church in India. The three individual Catholic Churches in India actively took part in the seminar. The participants, besides bishops, clergy and religious, a good number of lay persons began to think of the Indian Church as a single entity and consider the problems in the field of evangelization in a collective spirit. The members spent the time fruitfully and tried to chalk out new ways and means to put into practice the ideals of the Vatican council. New movements such as, dialogue with followers of other Faith, Indian Christian Ashram movement, Inculturation in the field of

¹³ *Ecclesia In Asia* 6. 1999.

Bible and Liturgy, study of the Sacred Books of Indian Heritage are some of the outcomes of the seminar. Three personalities namely, Cardinal Parecattil, Fr. Jonas Thaliath (later bishop of Rajkot) and Dr. Amalorpavadass are to be greatly remembered as the key persons of the seminar. The immediate reason for such a 'movement' from the Syro-Malabar Church was the formation of new Syro-Malabar mission dioceses carved from the Latin dioceses in North India. And the new bishops (exarches) appointed, Mgr. Januaris, Clemens, Jonas and Gratian Mundadan (Bishop Emeritus) were Church leaders filled with the spirit of Indian heritage and philosophy. Professors of Dharmaram College, Frs. Sylvester Pudusserry, Louis Maliekal and Vineeth Vadakethala and others took leadership for the formation of the Indian Anaphora.

Thus under the direction of Cardinal Parecattil, Dharmaram College of Bangalore (central study house of CMI congregation) composed an Indian Anaphora, more precisely an Indian Eucharistic Liturgy¹⁴ (adapted to Syro-Malabar Eucharistic Liturgy) and celebrated with the participants during the seminar days in English and Malayalam. It was very appreciated by the members as a new step in the field of inculturation. Gestures such as *arati*, lighting the Indian lamp, sitting on the ground were some of the gestures adapted from Indian Heritage. Also there were criticisms against the Worship.

In 1973, the National Biblical Catechetical Liturgical Centre (N.B.C.L.C), under the direction of Acharya Amalorpavadas, composed a new anaphora in the Indian pattern for the Latin Church. It gained great appreciation from the clergy and the faithful. In the same year liturgical centre of the Arch-Diocese of Ernakulam composed a new liturgy, adapted to Indian mind under the leadership of Cardinal Parecattil, and began to practice. In the following years, National centre took active steps in the process of inculturation of Liturgy, Bible and Catechetics. Through various seminars, consultations and discourses Amalorpavadas and the centre did uncontestable services to make the Church in India authentically Indian, in view of evangelization. Dharmaram College also whole heartedly co-operated with it. The starting of new Indian Ashrams, such as *Kurisumala Ashram*, dialogue centres, liturgical centers, theological magazines in different parts of the country are some of the results of the new approach in the field. The new movement was

¹⁴ Kanichikattil F; *To Restore Or To Reform?* Dharmaram pub. 1991. pp. 139-227.

entirely in view of evangelization of India in the perspective of Inculturation. Unfortunately, the new wave of renewal did not last long. Clouds of suspicion loomed the horizon. Many complaints from Kerala and elsewhere reached Rome, saying it is a Hindu model of worship, not commendable for the Church. Later Rome also began to observe the new movements with suspicion, especially the activities of the new liturgical centers. In place of the renewal wave of the Vatican Council, a whirlwind of ‘conservatism’ engulfed the Indian Ecclesiastical scenario in 80s, and as a result most of the liturgical centres were closed in the following years. Liturgy formed in Dharnaram college is celebrated in the Kurisumala Ashram with slight difference on ferial days. The Church in Zaire (Africa) formed a new anaphora adapting Zairian Culture and celebrated the liturgy in the Zairian pattern in the same period.

11. The Amazon Synod: The recent Latin American Amazon synod (Oct.2019) gives newness and strong views on Inculturation in a global perspective. The purpose of the Synod was *to find new paths for the Evangelization of that portion of the People of God*. Pope Francis appointed Cardinal Claudio Hummes, Archbishop Emeritus of San Paulo Brazil, as the Relater General of the Synod. In one of his interviews, Cardinal said, “Initially, Christianity found a place for inculturation in European culture, and this good process has remained valid up until today. But that one act of inculturation does not suffice. The pope says that one culture alone cannot exhaust the richness of the Gospel. The Church does not wish to dominate other cultures, but respects that initial European inculturation”.

On diversity of Cultures he says, “We have to appreciate the diversity of cultures, the Church will be enriched by this, not undermined. Diversity does not attack the unity of the Church; it strengthens it. It is important not to be afraid of these things. So, if we speak among ourselves and manage to find new paths for the Church in Amazonia, this will be for the benefit of the whole Church, but always starting from a specific reflection on Amazonia.¹⁵”

The Apostolic Exhortation “*Querida Amazonia*” of the Holy Father strongly speaks of the diversity of Cultures and necessity of Inculturation in the new Mission field. Articles, 66, 67, and 68 speak on Inculturation. Pope Francis reminds the proposals of his predecessor. Saint John Paul II taught that in proposing the Gospel message, “the Church does not intend to deny the autonomy of culture. On the contrary, she has the greatest respect for it”. Since culture is not only an object of redemption and elevation but can also play a role of mediation

¹⁵ *Sinodoamazonico.va*

and cooperation. Again, addressing indigenous peoples of America, he reminded them that “a faith that does not become culture is a faith not fully accepted, not fully reflected upon, not faithfully lived”. Cultural challenges invite the Church to maintain “a watchful and critical attitude”, while at the same time showing “confident attention” (art.67).

12. Conclusion: Second Vatican Council was indeed a new venture in the forward movement of the Church. Pope John XXIII opened the windows of the Church to let the fresh air enter. The words “Ressourcement” and “Aggiornamento” became the catch words of the Vat. Council. “Ressourcement”, that is, the deposit of Faith cannot be changed in any circumstance. “Aggiornamento” means, make things (the Church) up-to-date in all possible ways. In the Council document (Liturgy Constitution) it is worded as, “Restoration, Reform and Adaptation”, that means Tradition, Modernization and Adaptation. Adaptation can be in many ways: for example, pastoral adaptation, cultural adaptation etc. Adaptation from the cultural perspective is termed as Inculturation, and it is mainly concerned with Inculturation in Liturgy, Catechetics, Liturgical art, music etc. Culture is an important phenomenon of the human history. Culture changes according to places, circumstances, anthropology of the people etc. Inculturation is very important in the forward movement of the Church, especially in the Evangelization of the new cultures. In the modern age from Second Vatican Council (1962) till the recent Amazon Synod (2019), the Church spoke vehemently on Inculturation, which is very essential for an authentic mission. Faith can be transmitted only through the culture, then only it would be authentic.