



Fr Kurien Kunnumpuram SJ

Innovative Thinker and Good Formator

Bishop Thomas Dabre

The passing away of Fr Kurien Kunnumpuram on 23rd October 2018 at 10:30 PM was a shocking and saddening news to me. He was 87 years old and most of his priestly ministry was done in the Papal Seminary and in Jnana-Deepa Vidyapeeth (JDV). I am immensely grateful to Fr Kurien, since he encouraged me, he guided and has made an immense contribution to what I am today. I shall remain always immensely grateful to him for his bonds of friendship and generosity with me.

He certainly was one of the best and most eminent theologians of India. He has written scores of books and many theological articles based on research. His thinking and writings were marked by originality and creativity. He was bold in his thinking. Certainly, he remained within the faith of Catholic Church, which was shaped by his study of the documents of Vatican II. His own doctoral thesis on the document of Second Vatican Council. He certainly was one of the best read persons on Second Vatican Council. He would profusely quote and refer to the documents of Second Vatican Council. It is he who helped the student and members of staff here in Papal Seminary and Jnana-Deepa Vidyapeth to get more and more acquitted with Second Vatican Council. He certainly was an epoch in the history of the Indian catholic church. I would say, he has greatly shaped, fashioned and impacted by Second Vatican Council, which opened the doors of the Church to the world.

Gaudium et Spec guided us to take the realities of the world seriously, with its hopes and dreams. This is how Kurien shaped his theology. Courageously, boldly and in the light of Second Vatican Council.

Fr Kurien, apart from being my friend, was an eminent theologian, a skilled writer and a good formator. He and I lived in the Papal Seminary for many long years. I can say even when I was a student and later as a staff that Kurien became a rallying point for the seminarians. The seminarians will turn to him in moments of difficulty. Kurien was always welcome them and make himself available to them. They trusted him, felt supported and encouraged by him. I could see that they loved him and they were very fond of him. So I would say Fr Kurien was a good formator in the seminary for the generations of priests in the modern world, after Second Vatican Council.

I thank and praise God for the person, the theologian and the formator that Fr Kurien was. He was a creative thinker, an innovative thinker and a courageous thinker. He certainly was a gift to the church in India and in his own way to the Universal Church.

May his soul rest in peace!