

On the Verge of the First Session of the Synod on Synodality

# Reverent and Filial Appeal to our Shepherds

## Save the Church from the Wolves!

*“Be watchful and strengthen the things that remain, which are ready to die.” (Ap. 3: 2)*

8 September 2023

Your Lordship,

*Laudetur Iesus Christus!*

"Save our Faith" is a platform of an Indian lay fellowship movement, whose objective is to fight for the preservation of the Catholic Faith in our country.

As Catholics, obedient to the Hierarchy, we are fully aware that the safeguarding of the Faith belongs first and foremost to Bishops, the successors of the Apostles. In fact, Canon Law, among other attributions, establishes that Bishops "are constituted Pastors in the Church, to be the teachers of doctrine, the priests of sacred worship, and the ministers of governance" (Can. 375 §1). It also establishes that a Bishop "is bound to teach and illustrate to the faithful the truths of faith which are to be believed and applied to behaviour" (Can. 386 §1) and that "by whatever means seem most appropriate, he is firmly to defend the integrity and unity of the faith to be believed. However, he is to acknowledge a just freedom in the further investigation of truths." (Idem §2).

As members of the Catholic laity, we are also fully aware that "All Christ's faithful have the obligation and right to strive so that the divine message of salvation may more and more reach all people of all times and all places" (Can. 211) and that "conscious of their own responsibility, are bound to show Christian obedience to what the sacred Pastors, who represent Christ, declare as teachers of the Faith and prescribe as rulers of the Church" (Can. 212 §1) they are nevertheless "at liberty to make known their needs, especially their spiritual needs, and their wishes to the Pastors of the Church" (Idem §2) and "they have the right, indeed at times the duty, in keeping with their knowledge, competence and position, to manifest to the sacred Pastors their views on matters which concern the good of the Church. They have the right also to make their views known to

others of Christ's faithful, but in doing so they must always respect the integrity of faith and morals, show due reverence to the Pastors and take into account both the common good and the dignity of individuals." (Idem §3.)

## I. The Church of India is contaminated by very serious heresies

The Synod on Synodality is taking place at a time when the Church in India finds herself in a tremendous crisis.

It may not seem so to the superficial observer: He may not even find anything disquieting about the state of the Catholic Faith in our country. How misleading and illusory! In fact, anyone who has been acquainted with Catholic bookshops and libraries over the past decades, or has read theological or informational magazines, or has attended courses on theology for laymen, would certainly be struck by the current state of affairs, which immensely offends his *sensus fidei*. And as such, it is difficult for a careful observer and loving child of the Catholic Church to not see that a cancerous disease of gargantuan proportions is eating into the vitals of our Religion.

In fact, a theological and institutional revolution was officially established and has been underway in India ever since the intense ten-day *All India Seminar – Church in India Today* took place from 15-25 May 1969. This revolution consisted in spreading the Seminar's conclusions on Faith, Ecclesiology and Mission.

Regarding the long-term consequences of the Seminar, after having read the 1688 pages of "cyclostyled and printed literature – Circulars, Orientation Papers, Workshop Handbooks and an Assessment of Preparatory Seminars", Cardinal Valerian Gracias was prophetically eloquent in his "Welcome Speech", when he said:

**If 50 years hence there is to be another Ecumenical Council, it seems to me that the Bishops, the Clergy, the Religious, the laity of that period would be in a privileged position having at hand this abundant material, unless they—which is possible—consider then all this outdated or—which is not improbable—after bitter experiences in experimentation, decide to revert to Vatican I !<sup>1</sup>**

Your Lordship, 54 years have passed since then.

What do the events that have taken place since teach us?

A continual process of re-interpreting the Catholic Faith and adapting the Church to Hindu religion and culture is underway in Catholic seminaries and universities, in the life of Religious Orders and congregations, in dialogue centres and in the so-called "Catholic ashrams" throughout India.

Many of the doctrinal errors repeated at the *All-India Seminar* were brought by foreign theologians and missionaries; those errors, espousing the ideas of the *Nouvelle Théologie* condemned by Pope Pius XII, found fertile ground in India. Those theologians and missionaries — at first foreign and, more recently, Indian — include: Fr. Jules Monchanin, Fr. Henri Le Saux, Fr. Raimon Panikkar, Fr. Bede Griffiths, Fr. James Dupuis S.J., Fr. P. de Letter S.J., Fr. Joseph Neuner S.J., Fr. D.S. Amalorpavadass, Sr. Sara Grant RSCJ., Sr. Vandana Mataji, Fr. Anthony de Mello S.J., Fr. Paul Puthanangady SDB, Fr. Michael Amaladoss S.J., S. Painadath S.J., among others.

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<sup>1</sup> All-India Seminar – Church in India Today, Bangalore, 1969, p. 434.

With the unbridled freedom inaugurated at the *All-India Seminar*, there was no error that did not find a home in the most diverse Catholic environments, influencing the Catholic faithful from then on. Among the most damaging errors, we list the following:

### **1. *The concept of Faith denatured, so as to make it present in all religions***

Driven by their pro-pagan bias, the new theologians try to justify pagan religions by alleging that Faith and Revelation can be found in them.

In the said process, the theologians' first step is to deny the Catholic teaching that Faith is an *intellectual assent* to objective truths revealed by God. They then try to define Faith as either a feeling that springs from the depths of man's subconscious, or a "fundamental option" for *something* that man feels as being the Absolute, however crude or sublime the concept of this Absolute may be; it might well be a Hindu, Buddhist or Christian concept, or even one held by an animist or a sincere professed atheist.

### **2. *Distinction between faith and belief***

According to them, this internal sentiment that they call faith, or the fundamental option that includes faith, manifests itself in many concrete ways, in keeping with the human culture of the respective people. *Faith to them is a nebulous feeling that would manifest itself in different beliefs according to the genius of peoples.*

The enormous variety of beliefs led people to think that religions differ from each other, whereas the reality, according to the new theology, is that all religions have a common denominator and are fundamentally equal because they come from the Faith inherent to all human beings.

### **3. *All religions are revealed and therefore salvific***

These deviant theologians attribute to this *sentiment* and fundamental option not faith alone; they say that, with and in faith, *revelation* abides. And since all religions are concretisations of these sentiments, they are all revealed, willed by God and lead to Salvation.

In other words, since the Church has always taught that faith is necessary for salvation, they reinterpret its meaning so as to be able to fit it into all religions. And thus, they conclude that all religions are salvific.

### **4. *Extra ecclesiam nulla salus reinterpreted***

What about the necessity of the Church for salvation? How can we reinterpret this dogma in order to affirm that other religions are salvific?

For the heterodox theologians, it is simple. Fr. Panikkar states: "**The axiom that faith is absolutely necessary for salvation only points out that this faith is a general gift to man along with the gift of human existence...**"<sup>2</sup>

Therefore, they say, it suffices to be a human to automatically have faith. And since the Church is the community of all those who have faith, the Church coincides with humankind. No man would be out of the Church. Thereby, one can say that *extra ecclesiam nulla salus* is still valid, for it means *extra humanum genus nulla salus* – outside

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<sup>2</sup> R. Panikkar, "Christianity and World Religions", in *Christianity. Guru Nanak Quincentenary Celebration Series*, Punjabi Univ. Patiala (publ. by) Sardar Amrik Singh, 1<sup>st</sup> ed. 1969, pp. 113-114, *apud* Thomas Emprayil V.C., *The Emerging Theology of Religions*, Vincentian Publications, Rewa, 1980, p. 165, note 16.

the human race there is no Salvation. And there is no man or woman that does not belong to the human race.

### **5. Denial of the centrality and uniqueness of Christ**

After destroying the true concept of Faith, after undermining the dogma of the necessity of the Church, identifying the latter with the human race, these theologians pave the way for the negation of the centrality of Jesus Christ in Salvation.

They start from the neo-modernist concept that makes a distinction between the historical Christ, i.e., Jesus of Nazareth, and Christ the Logos, or the Cosmic Christ — to use an expression that evokes the Christological-pantheistic theories of Fr. Teilhard de Chardin. The historical Jesus would merely be one of the many incarnations of the Cosmic Christ, present everywhere and also in all religions, in different ways, operating the salvation of their adherents through them. Thus, in one religion He could manifest Himself as Shiva or Vishnu, in another religion as a Bodhisattva or some other avatar. That is what the theory of *Anonymous Christianity* is all about.

However, let us not be under any illusions. The new theology, stating that Christ is present in everything, makes Him successively vague, vapourish, generic and ahistorical, and finally will cancel Him out totally from the religious panorama of humankind, no longer making any references to Him as the Saviour.

In other words, having begun by stating that He is omnipresent, the destructive theologians end up denying His centrality and uniqueness in the History of Salvation, as indicated by Fr. Jacques Dupuis, S.J.:

The door seems open to an economy of divine self-manifestation which even today would not be related to Him (Christ); the divine mystery of religious experience would then no longer need to be thought in terms of the Christic mystery.<sup>3</sup>

### **6. The dogmas of the Incarnation and Redemption disfigured. Blasphemous concept of Original Sin.**

As a consequence of these errors, a new theory of Incarnation has been propagated. It no longer refers to the hypostatic union of the Word and the human nature in Jesus Christ, but, according to them, to the highest state of evolution of cosmos from matter to mind and from mind to spirit.

To these destructive theologians, the Incarnation is not a process that develops from the outside in, of a transcendent God uniting with a nature different and inferior to His own, in order to redeem us, but a process of internal evolution of matter moved by an immanent force towards its own divinisation. In other words, it is not God who descends to man, but man who ascends to God through the very forces intrinsic to the evolution of matter.

As a consequence, Original Sin is swiftly denied, because Christ would not have been incarnated to redeem us from Adam's fault, but He would have been the manifestation of the evolution of the cosmos at a certain point in time.

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<sup>3</sup> J. Dupuis, "Bulletin - Five years of Theological Reflection in India", in: *Indian Theological Studies*; vol. XIV (March 1977) no. 1, p. 102, in Thomas Emprayil V.C., *The Emerging Theology of Religions*, Vincentian Publications, Rewa, 1980, p. 121, footnote 153.

But how do the destructive theologians reinterpret and refer to the dogma of Original Sin so as to understand it within the pantheistic context that accepts all religions as salvific?

Very simply, as expressed by Fr. Henri Le Saux, one of the main prophets of the hinduisation of the Church:

**The tempter says: if you eat of the fruit, you will be like God. The seer says: You are the very mystery of God. The mistake is to want to become God. When you want to become God, you cease to be him!** (Fr. Henri Le Saux, *Ascent to the Depth of the Heart*, I.S.P.C.K., Delhi, 1998, p. 362).

To him, Original Sin is not the sin of pride and disobedience of our first parents, who wanted to be equal to God. Rather, with a perverse reasoning, Fr. Le Saux says that wanting to be God was indeed a sin, but not because man has no right to be God, but because in wanting to be God he failed to realise that he was already God, and so he terms this ignorance of his divine condition as Original Sin.

Here, we find ourselves at the antipodes of the Catholic Faith.

### ***7. Jesus Christ, a man who realised the Hindu advaitic experience to the highest degree***

By refusing to acknowledge the historical Jesus Christ, who was born at Bethlehem, died on the cross, and resurrected, as the only Saviour and Redeemer, the boldest destructive theologians and inculturationists go a step further. Convinced of the Hindu belief that God and the world are one, they adopt a pantheism that they label “Christian”. According to them, Jesus Christ was the man who made explicit to the highest degree the truth that there is no duality between God and man. By affirming that He and the Father are one — and that He is the way — He wanted to teach us that men, all men, are one with God. And in this sense, these destructive theologians conclude that He was the fulfilment of the *advaitic* experience of the sadhus and Hindu gurus.

### ***8. A cascade of errors and reprehensible practices***

These fundamental errors that deny the very foundations of the Catholic Faith produce a cascade of other errors that deny the Resurrection of Christ and the resurrection of man on the last day, deny the existence of hell, and lead to forms of pantheism that are very much to the liking of the New Age movement, such as the blasphemous claim that Our Lady is the Great Goddess Terra.

In the field of “inter-religious dialogue”, a typical example is the irenicist craze very much in vogue in India. An ever-growing number of people are saying that adherents of different religions should not discuss doctrines or ideas, but should



*The door of the Chapel of Ishvani Kendra, the Institute of Missiology and Communication run by the SVD Congregation in tight collaboration with the Conference of Bishops, reflects the error that all religions lead to God. (Photo 2022)*



meet on the ground of mysticism, because mysticism is the meeting point of all religions. It is in the experience of the divine — however this be conceived — that the union of men and religions will be achieved.

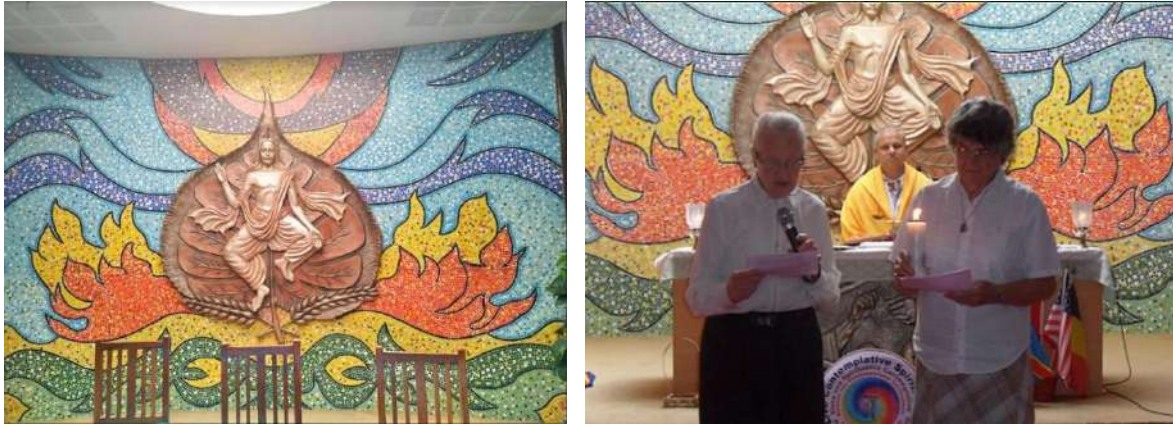
As a corollary to the errors mentioned above, a new concept of Mission has been developed by the new theologians. Evangelising, they say, is not about converting people to the Church, but about making a Hindu, a Buddhist and a Muslim a better Hindu, a better Buddhist and a better Muslim, and thus, more faithful to their own religions.

Alongside these errors, the new theologians promote attitudes that are condemned by the Church, such as participation and *communicatio in sacris* in Hindu rites, irenicist dialogue in which the Catholic religion is considered equal to others, idol worship, the representation of Christ in the form of Shiva Nataraja, Vishnu, etc.

The controversial Rite of the Mass for India has found a home in Religious Houses and Ashrams, despite the steps taken by the Holy See to stop it and the Indian Anaphora. Some limit themselves to the rite without the Anaphora, but containing Hindu mantras, including the OM mantra. The Twelve Points of adaptation, abnormally obtained from the Holy See, containing the Hindu Arati, is widespread. The indifference towards, if not the favouring of, these liturgical abuses on the part of local Ordinaries is largely responsible for the scandal that these practices cause among the faithful.



*The Chapel of Aanmodaya Ashram in Enathur, Tamil Nadu. Symbols of all religions are prominently displayed everywhere. **Shiva Nataraja on the altar, low to the ground;** on it the Hinduised Mass is celebrated regularly.*



*The Chapel of Jnana Deepa, Institute of Philosophy and Theology, at Pune. Here, Jesus is cast in the form of Shiva Nataraja.*

### **9. The ultimate goal: the destruction of the Holy Roman Catholic Church**

Our intention in the above paragraphs was merely to list the most fundamental errors. Proof that these errors are not fictitious, but are in fact disseminated through publications, can be seen from an extensive document prepared by us and which is available on request.

There is no doubt that the goal of these theologians is to completely destroy the institutional Church as it has always existed, as expressed in the following words of Fr. Bede Griffiths:

**This is the challenge to the Church today. The structure of doctrine and ritual and organization which it has inherited are no longer adequate to express the divine Mystery, like those of Israel in the time of Christ. ... There is nothing in this [structure], whether it is its dogmatic formulas, or its sacramental system or its hierarchical organization, which is not subject to change. ... There is nothing which remains unchallenged, no doctrine, no discipline, no law, no custom. What is demanded, as was demanded of Israel, is nothing less than a death and resurrection. “Destroy this temple”. ... It is the Body of Christ which has to undergo this transformation.**<sup>4</sup>

And Fr. Michael Amaladoss articulates it as follows:

**“I no longer dream of a time when the whole world will be Christian.”**<sup>5</sup>

**“I do not believe any longer that a Hindu, unless he professes faith in Christ, will be damned to hell fire ... I believe that he experiences God in and through the symbols and structures of his religion. I believe that these religions are ... means through which God reaches down to man.”**<sup>6</sup>

**“Is proclaiming Christ as the only Name in which all men find salvation and calling for discipleship through baptism into the Church still meaningful?”**<sup>7</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Bede Griffiths, *Return to the Centre*, Collins, Fount Paperbacks, 1981, pp. 110-111.

<sup>5</sup> M. Amaladoss S.J., “Faith meets Faith”, in *Vidyajyoti*, March 1985, p. 110.

<sup>6</sup> Idem, p. 110.

<sup>7</sup> Idem, p. 110.

“I start wondering whether I can really sustain the claim of the Church to be the repository of the fulness of truth.”<sup>8</sup>

**“I am open to the possibility that the Church is called to die too that the world may live – and this is true of all religions.”**<sup>9</sup>

## II. The Devastation in the Church of India, denounced by Cardinal Tomko

By 1991, the situation of the Church in India became so serious that Cardinal Tomko, the then Prefect of the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith, described it at a meeting with cardinals from various parts of the world, held on 5 April that year, a summary of which was published by *The Examiner*, Bombay:

Accordingly, the Cardinal warned that the exaggerated emphasis on dialogue between religions and the adaptation of the Church to local cultures has confused the faith of Catholics and diluted the meaning of evangelisation, opening the way for the proliferation of sects. He stated that there is a gnostic relativism and a **“theological misunderstanding which levels all religions”** and that some theologians **“have developed unacceptable and destructive doctrines”**. This saps missionary activity by **“reducing evangelisation only to development and dialogue, with the abandoning of preaching, of religious education and of the logic of conversions and baptisms”**. According to such doctrines, evangelisation **“would consist solely in dialogue, inculturation and liberation”**, he said. The Cardinal cast the blame on the theologians of India, without stating names, saying that **“although India is the epicentre of this tendency and Asia is the principal camp, these ideas already circulate in Oceania, in some African countries and in Europe.”**

Furthermore, the Cardinal said: **“According to some Indian theologians, in the search for dialogue, Jesus Christ divides rather than unites”**. And in an attempt to level the parties engaging in dialogue, **“either Jesus Christ is downgraded by not mentioning His divinity, or the founders of other religions are exalted, making them quasi-incarnations of God. In conclusion, the universal mystery of salvation is accomplished through all religions”**, said Cardinal Tomko.

Jesus Christ is presented as having a cosmic-divine nature, divorced from the historical Christ and the Church He founded, the Cardinal added. He said that according to the new theologians, the cosmic Christ **“can appear in other religions and be hidden in other historical figures”**. Some theologians see Salvation as a form of **“utopia”** which **“would unite all men in a community of love, justice and peace,”** he said.

The Cardinal commented that the effects of such doctrines **“are simply devastating”** in the field of missionary activity. **“A widespread phenomenon in Asia”** is the abandonment of the preaching of the Gospel and **“the flight toward social work”**. Preaching **“is silenced as propaganda or proselytism. Evangelisation is reduced to a social dialogue or socio-economic promotion”** and conversion is considered **“Western chauvinism”**, he concluded.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Idem, p. 111.

<sup>9</sup> Idem, p. 115.

<sup>10</sup> The quotes are from the *Examiner* of Bombay, April 27, 1991, p. 5.



### III. A CBCI survey reveals the extent of the penetration of errors in the clergy and in male and female Religious Orders

On the occasion of the Silver Jubilee of the closing of the Second Vatican Council, the CBCI Commission for Proclamation and Communication organised an enquiry into the mission realities at the grassroots, in order to evaluate the work of evangelisation on an all-India level.

The preparation and realisation of this survey lasted two years. To help conduct this survey, the Propaganda Fide, Missio, the archdiocese of Cologne (Germany) and the Generalate of the Society of the Divine Word (SVD) sent their financial contributions.

The book *Mission Trends in India: Evaluation of Evangelization in India*, by Fr. Augustine Kanjamala, SVD, Saint Paul's, Bombay, 2016, reports the phases of the survey and summarises its evaluation done by the CBCI.

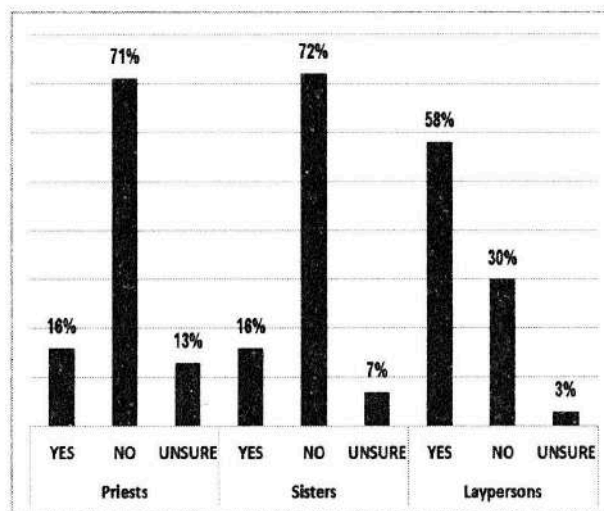
We refer Your Lordship to this book, for a comprehensive view, while we limit ourselves to the main statistics and conclusions.

After putting forth the results of the survey for several chosen Dioceses — representative of the whole of India — Fr. Kanjamala presents the All-India Mission Trends in the form of charts illustrating the answers.

Here, we reproduce the charts with answers of 1520 Priests, 3827 Sisters and 8827 Lay persons, on important questions related to the Missions. (Due to unanswered questions, percentages may not always add up to 100%).

The **first chart** is regarding Salvation outside the Church.

**I believe  
there is no  
salvation  
outside  
the visible  
Church**

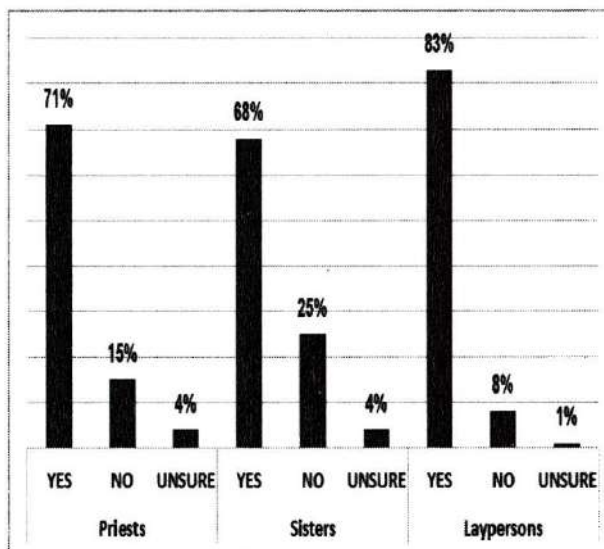


The figures show that 71% of Priests and 72% of Nuns believe that there is Salvation outside the visible Church. As for Lay persons, 58% affirm the opposite, that is, to them there is no salvation outside the visible Church. These statistics show the tremendous gap that exists between what the clergy and sisters think and what the Lay persons think.

Meanwhile, we draw your attention to the word “visible”. And what might the invisible Church be? Would it be the multireligious Kingdom of God professed by the destructive theologians?

The **second chart** is regarding Salvation through Jesus Christ:

**I believe salvation is only through Jesus Christ**



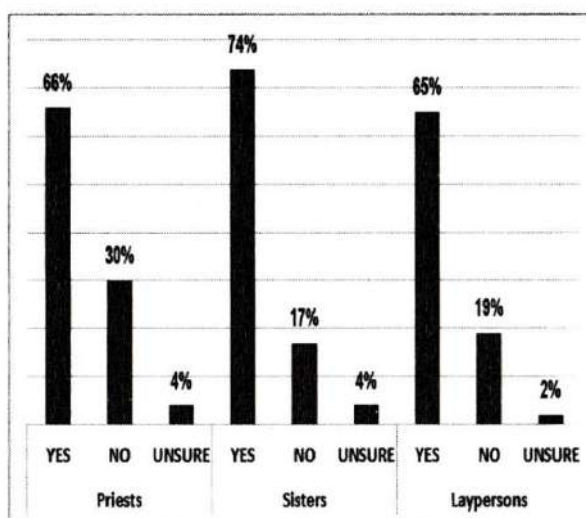
The chart shows that 71% of Priests and 68% of Nuns still believe that Salvation is only through Jesus – but not necessarily through belonging to the visible Church.

However, it is shocking to note that 19% of the Clergy and 29% of Sisters *do not believe* or are *unsure* that Jesus is the only Saviour. In other words, these priests and nuns in India do not profess the Catholic Faith.

Again, we see a ponderable gap between the convictions of clergy/sisters and lay persons. Indeed, to 83% of laypeople, Jesus is the only Saviour, and according to the previous chart, most of them (58%) believe that belonging to the Church is necessary for salvation.

The **third chart** illustrates the answer to the question of whether other religions are means of salvation.

**I believe all religions are means of salvation for its sincere followers.**



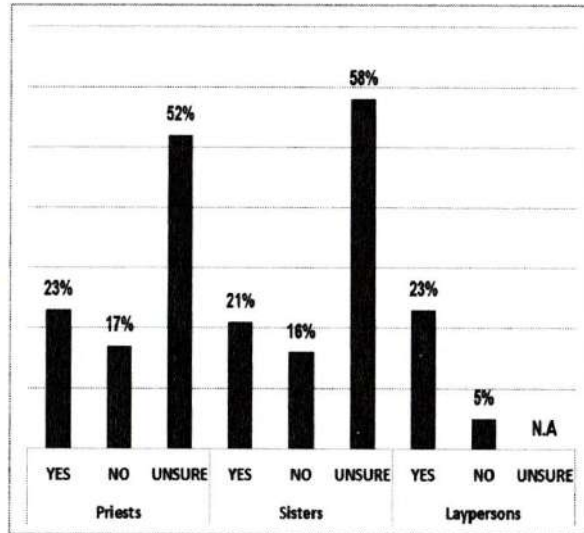
Two-thirds of priests and almost three-fourths of sisters in India believe that all religions are means of salvation. The question is put forth in an astute way, we would say, in a psychologically studied manner, to elicit a positive answer when it adds the qualifier “for its sincere followers”.

In sound doctrine, the fact that a person is a sincere follower of his religion does not make his religion a means of salvation. It can only mean that he is in invincible ignorance, and will possibly be saved by a grace given to him directly by Jesus *in spite of his religion*. The Church has always taught that only the Catholic Religion is a means of salvation, because it is the sole religion established by God.

The next three charts pertain to the priorities of missionary work.

**Priorities:**

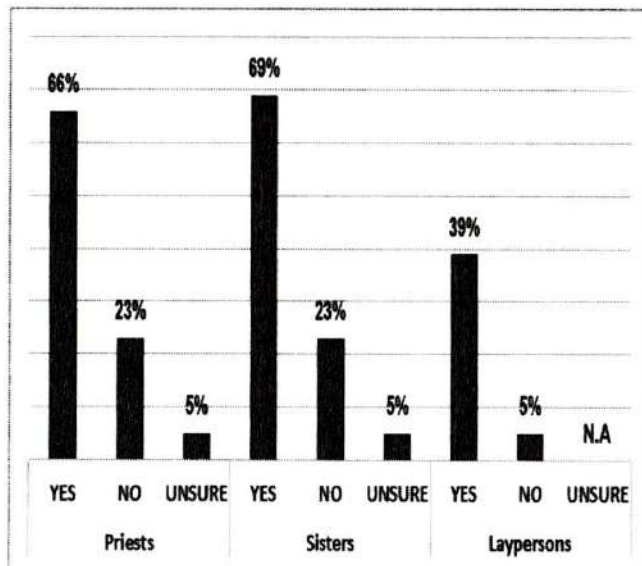
**The main purpose of my missionary activity is to lead non-Christians to the visible Church**



The above chart shows that 52% of priests in India are unsure whether the main purpose of their missionary activity is to win over non-Christians to the institutional Church. Also, 58% of sisters are unsure. That is to say, more than half the number of priests and nuns seem to not value the importance of belonging to the Church. Besides, as seen from the first chart above, more than ¾ (three-fourths, “NO” and “UNSURE” combined) of priests and nuns do not profess that there is salvation only through the visible Church. That is why these priests and nuns find no urgency to lead non-Christians into the Church.

Regarding making Jesus known through missionary activity, here are the answers:

**The main purpose of my missionary activity is to make Christ known**

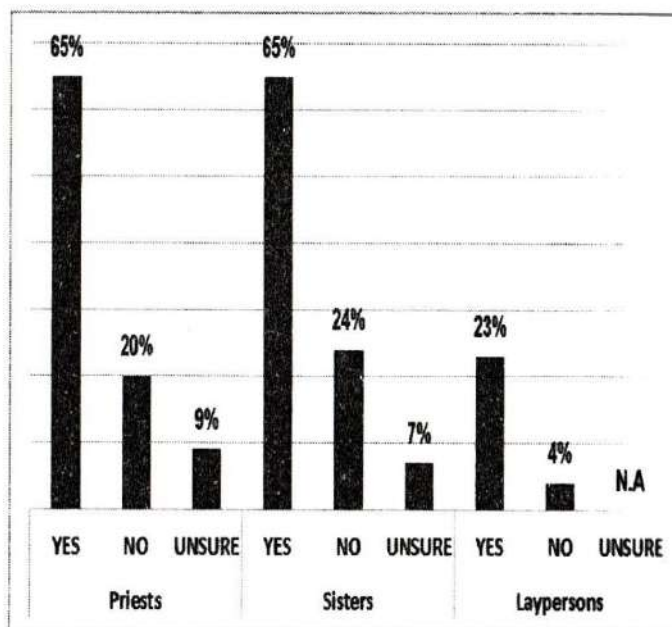


It is distressing to see that 28% of Priests and 28% of Sisters [“NO” and “UNSURE combined] *do not profess* that the main purpose of their mission is to make Jesus Christ known.

As regards the faithful, the lack of proper statistics is suggestive of the confusion they find themselves in on the matter.

The next chart deals with Missionary Activity and the Kingdom of God:

**The main purpose of my missionary activity is to promote the values of the Kingdom of God**



We notice that 65% of priests and 65% of sisters see the promotion of the values of the Kingdom of God as the main purpose of their missionary activity. No doubt, promoting the value of the Kingdom of God may mean preaching Christ, but the real question is: Is making Christ known merely one of the values of the Kingdom of God?

At any rate, there is no doubt that the CBCI survey shows that to a good number of missionaries, leading non-Christians to the visible Church is the least important of their purposes.

- **Fall in the number of conversions due to new missiology and theology; tensions in the Church; priests abandoning the priesthood and sisters abandoning religious life.**

We reproduce below excerpts from the Analysis of the Survey, provided by Fr. Augustine Kanjamala and sent in December 1993 to 160 invitees of the National Mission Seminar that would be held at Ishvani Kendra, Pune, in January 1994. Among other conclusions, it indicates that:

- **All over India numerical conversion was on regular increase for nearly 150 years until 1971.**
- **Conversion and baptisms are on the decline during the 1971-91 periods.**
- **This phenomenon coincides with the liberal missiological spirit of Vatican II, and All India Seminar on Church in India (Bangalore, 1969),**



The International Theological Conference on Evangelization and Dialogue (Nagpur, 1971) and All India Consultation on Evangelization (Patna, 1973) and later Theological developments.

- **The only major exception is the North East area where the traditional trend is continuing**, particularly in Arunachal Pradesh.
- Serious tensions between traditional theology and new theology of mission are observed. This is one of the major sources of **personnel conflicts, e.g., between Bishops and priests**, between senior priests and young priests, between Rome and the local Church.
- Because of the prolonged tensions and conflicts between some bishops and missionaries on account of the serious differences of mission theology and mission methods, **about 10-15% of priests and sisters in a few dioceses left their priesthood and religious life or incardinated into a few European / foreign dioceses** (of course, this might not have been the only reason).
- Good number of missionaries, particularly in the Hindi belt with poor response to the Gospel, feel frustrated. **A close affinity between the prevailing mission theology and the response / non-response of the people is noted.** (*Mission Trends in India*, pp. 319, 325-326)

#### IV. What is the present state?

Alas, neither the words of Cardinal Tomko denouncing the errors of modern theology and missiology in India, nor the documents of the Apostolic See, such as *Redemptoris Missio* (7 December 1990) and the Declaration *Dominus Iesus* (6 August 2000) have been sufficient to debunk these errors.

From the north to the south of India, heterodox ideas, although not proclaimed with the enthusiasm and boldness of the early days, are nevertheless alive, especially in ecclesiastical environments — in Seminaries, Religious Orders and Congregations — and are taking root in many souls.

Like an oil slick, they are spreading slowly but irreversibly, because there is no voice to caution the sheep against the devouring wolves. Worse still, there are pastors who play the role of wolves instead of being guardians of the sheep.

On 28 June 2008, Cardinal Oswald Gracias of Bombay released the New Community Bible containing a presentation of parallel texts from Hindu spiritual books and commentaries using Indian mystical figures, equating Christianity with other religions. It scandalised the faithful, and the said Bible had to be withdrawn from bookshops.

Of late, Catholics all over India have received scandalous news about priests participating in Hindu ceremonies, worshipping Hindu idols, etc. Ashrams continue to spread heresies and reprehensible practices; Hindu mantras are repeated in the liturgy of the Mass and in paraliturgy, and Hindu scriptures are used; idols have been brought into churches; images of Jesus and the Blessed Virgin Mary are represented in the form of Hindu idols; Hindu fire-worship ceremonies are taking place in the temple of God.

Above, we have reproduced a photo of the entrance of the chapel in the SVD Congregation's Missionary Institute, as well as a photo of the chapel of a Catholic ashram run by the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, where symbols, scriptures, and even idols of all religions are displayed. We furnish a few more photos here below by way of example, as it is impossible to replicate our extensive archive in this letter.



*Adoration of fire by nuns, after the Hindu Arati ritual was performed by the priest at St. Joseph's Cathedral, Bijnor (March 2023). The full ritual can be watched here: <https://tinyurl.com/cy5k5t7p>*



*Fr. Francisco Xavier Barreto, assistant parish priest, St. Anthony Church, Siolim, Goa, praying to the idol of Ganesha on Ganesh Chaturthi (31 August 2022)*





*In the chapel of Dharmaram College, the Major Seminary of the Carmelites of Mary Immaculate, Bangalore, a mosaic panel depicts all religions as being under the action of the Holy Spirit. It is a pictorial way of affirming that all religions are good, willed and inspired by God. The photo on the left was taken in March 1991 and the one on the right, on 16 May 2022. For decades, seminarians have been indoctrinated with religious indifferentism.*

## **V. Appeal of the Laity to “the Church that listens”**

In these circumstances, under the harmful action of so many errors, faced with the silence, connivance and even support of pastors towards the aforementioned errors, where will the vast Indian Catholic fold stand in religious matters? Is there any hope for the Indian Catholic?

In his major address on 17 October 2015, commemorating the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the institution of the Synod of Bishops, Pope Francis said that “a synodal Church is a Church of listening,” and “the Synod process begins by listening to the people of God, which shares also in Christ’s prophetic office, according to a principle dear to the Church of the first millennium: *Quod omnes tangit ab omnibus tractari debet.*”

Even as late as on the eve of the First Session of the Synod on Synodality to be held in October 2023, at least the average Catholic in India has not received any official information regarding the conclusions of the first phase of the Synod in India, say, in the form of a National Synthesis. In the Continental Synthesis, based on the National Syntheses of the Asian countries, even very serious theological errors and destructive praxes in vogue in India have failed to be addressed.

By way of objection, someone may point out that, anyway, this is not the specific theme of the Synod. However, it must be noted that if what concerns our Faith, which is so

important for the life of the Church, is not taken into consideration by a Synod of such magnitude, what is the point of the entire exercise? Consider, for instance, an ocean liner which, having suffered a gigantic breach in its hull, is flooded by the waters... Any other problem discussed by the crew would be secondary to such a serious case.

Therefore, as Catholics assembled in a lay fellowship, concerned about the evolution of tendencies, ideas and facts seriously threatening the Catholic Faith here in our country, we wish to appeal to Your Lordship, at this historic moment in the life of the Church, to resolutely take charge of the Barque of Christ which is tossing and turning in this agitated Indian Ocean. We entreat you to amputate the gangrenous organs, and comfort the children who still remain faithful. We earnestly desire that we shall not incur the same censure and the punishment announced by Our Lord to the Church of Sardis:

And to the angel of the church of Sardis, write: These things saith he, that hath the seven spirits of God, and the seven stars: I know thy works, that thou hast the name of being alive: and thou art dead. Be watchful and strengthen the things that remain, which are ready to die. For I find not thy works full before my God. **Have in mind therefore in what manner thou hast received and heard: and observe, and do penance. If then thou shalt not watch, I will come to thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know at what hour I will come to thee.** (Ap. 3: 1-3)

## VI. It is time to speak out! (Eccles. 3:7)

It is true that most pastors have been silent in the face of the rising tide of errors and scandals against the Faith. It is not our purpose here to emphasise how much this silence deviates from their most serious duties. Rather, we prefer to look at the reasons for hope that can still be found amidst this silence. For no one is oblivious of the pressures from ecclesiastical bodies — first and foremost from the Episcopal Conference — in favour of the new ideas; pressures that silence Bishops who are concerned; Bishops who do not accept the errors and who would like to combat them.

In fact, it is important to not see in this silence only the comfortable position of those who are far from the fight, but also the detachment and righteousness obstinately avoiding active connivance with evil.

In no way do we fear that Catholics will revolt against the Church. For it is precisely out of the spirit of hierarchy, out of the love for religious discipline, that this flock discerns how far those pastors who have gone astray, or are complicit with error, are straying from the mission entrusted to them by the Church.

The normal attitude of a faithful flock is to live under the influence and command of their Pastors. And every abnormal situation is subject to risks.

“It is time to speak” (Eccles. 3:7).

Today, the future of the Church in India is in the hands of those who are silent. This comprises a considerable majority of Bishops and Priests who have been silenced by the voices that propagate error.

Your Lordship, do consider this moment as a *"tempus loquendi"*. In the union of the Silent Ones, God has placed all the means that can still remedy the situation: Bishops are numerous, have positions, prestige and offices. We beseech you to act. We implore you! Speak out, teach, fight! The Guardian Angel of our homeland and St. Francis Xavier are waiting to comfort you throughout the battle. And Our Lady of the Assumption, patroness of India, joyously prepares to reward a hundredfold those who abandon everything for



love of the Kingdom of Heaven. Oh, may they finally shudder in the presence of God, at the tragedy that could befall the Church if they do not make their authority and prestige felt in the good fight!

## VII. Need for an Anti-Relativist Creed, for a Syllabus condemning the pan-ecumenist errors, for literature refuting the heresies and for an Oath of Fidelity












Your Lordship, in the face of such doctrinal errors, heresies, religious relativism and the consequent loss of missionary zeal in the clergy, seminaries, religious houses, Catholic ashrams and other institutions that promote the inculturation and Hinduisation of the Church, the only effective remedy seems to lie in a serious and in-depth intervention by the Bishops of India and the Vatican to curb these errors.

We would like to submit four practical measures for your consideration and that of the Holy See:






- Firstly, the need for a list of points of the Catholic Faith most opposed to the modern errors. Something like **an anti-relativist creed to be recited regularly by Catholics of all stations** is the need of the hour.
- Secondly, it seems opportune and urgent to draw out a **syllabus of the modern theological errors**, showing their pernicious tendencies and issuing appropriate censures or reproaches.
- Thirdly, **booklets summarising and refuting the errors are also very necessary**. However, these would be read mostly by priests, seminarians and Religious. The average Indian is less influenced by theological works. What has an impact on laypeople is sermons and articles published in Catholic reviews. These sermons and articles may not give a systematic exposition of the new theology, but laypeople are prone to absorb the jargons, clichés and articulation of heterodox ideas, all of which are sometimes stated very ambiguously, and at other times very explicitly, but always presented very captivatingly. Hence, **we are strongly in favour of a syllabus listing heterodox jargons and clichés, and also giving the interested readers references of booklets in which they would find the complete refutation of those errors**.
- Finally, a wise measure would be the composition and institution of an **oath of fidelity** by which candidates to the priesthood in India would promise to accept the truths of the Faith and condemn the errors listed in the syllabus. For almost two centuries, peace and orthodoxy were preserved in the Indian Church, thanks to the oath of fidelity that obliged foreign missionaries and the local clergy to abstain from reading pagan books and practising other idolatrous customs. The abolition of the oath by Pope Pius XII in 1940 left the field open for heterodox adventurers to spread the errors and practices that are devastating the Catholic Church today.


As an *aide-memoire*, we furnish below a list of the most important doctrinal errors and condemnable attitudes in vogue in India today:

### **RELIGIONS and SALVATION**


-  All religions are willed by God.
-  All religions are revealed or inspired by God.
-  All religions are good, since they are the manifestations of the experience of the divine that all men have in their souls.
-  The external differences among the religions are due to the manner in which people explicitate their internal experience of the divine, according to their genius and culture. But at root, all religions are true and fundamentally say the same thing with different apparatus.
-  All religions are paths of Salvation for their followers in good faith.
-  Christ became incarnate to redeem the religions too.
-  Christianity is the fulfilment of pagan religions.
-  All religions are anonymously Christian and their followers are anonymously Christian.
-  The scriptures of the pagan religions are inspired by God and should be considered the Old Testaments of the peoples who follow them.
-  Salvation as the Church understands it is the same as *moksha* or *samadhi*.
-  To be a human is to be saved.

### **FAITH and REVELATION**


-  Faith is a feeling that springs from the depths of human consciousness, in search for God.
-  Faith is not the act by which the intellect assents to a set of truths that are to be believed.
-  Faith is found in all religions.
-  Faith is already present when man has a fundamental option for something that he considers absolute.
-  One cannot speak objectively of Revelation.


 Revelation does not come from outside, from a transcendent God, distinct from the creature, but comes from inside, from the feeling of the divine immanent in the human soul.


### **GOD, HOLY TRINITY, CREATION**


 It does not matter how people conceive God: immanent, transcendent, personal or impersonal, or as an energy.


 We cannot say anything about God, since He is beyond everything.

 There is no transcendent God. God is immanent to the universe and immanent to the human soul.


 The universe is the body of God.

 There is only one Cosmo-theandric reality: God, the universe and man are one and the same thing.


 Creation is an illusion. It is not distinct from God. It is God's dance.


 The Holy Trinity is the mystery of God and of man.


 The Spirit of God is the spirit of man


 The world evolves from matter to mind and from mind to the divine. So, there is an evolution of the cosmos towards its divinisation.


### **CHRIST**


 The stage of evolution of the world when the mind is transformed into the divine was made manifest in Christ.

 The historical Christ must be distinguished from the cosmic Christ.


 Jesus is not the Only Saviour, but only one of the manifestations of the cosmic Christ, who appears as different saviours in all religions: Shiva, Vishnu, Buddha, etc.


 Christ is a mere man who realised the Hindu *advaitic* experience.


 Jesus Christ was a yogi who taught men that every man is divine.


 Christ revealed to us that we are God.

## ORIGINAL SIN, INCARNATION, RESURRECTION and REDEMPTION

 Original Sin is the ignorance that we are God. And Reason that distinguishes us from God is the Serpent.


 The mystery of the Incarnation is the relationship of identity between God and man, existing from all eternity.


 Incarnation is not a supernatural intervention in a natural world. It is not the fact that the Son of God assumed human nature and became man in order to accomplish our salvation.

 The Incarnation did not occur *in time* with the coming down of the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, but it is a process of ascending evolution of the cosmos towards God and has not yet been completed.


 Redemption is not the atonement for Original Sin. It is the awareness that we are God.

 The Resurrection of Christ is not a historical fact.


 The resurrection of man will not take place with the same body that he now has.


 The moment of death of a man is the moment of Resurrection, Ascension and Pentecost. All these myths were created to signify *moksha* (liberation).


## CHURCH


 The Church is not necessary for Salvation.

 The Church is not the Kingdom of God on earth.

 The Catholic Church coincides with humanity. To be a human is to already belong to the Church.

 *Extra Ecclesiam Nulla Salus* should be understood in the following context: to be a human is to already be a member of the Church, and Salvation is the acceptance of our human condition.

 The role of the Church is to build a socialist model of society.

 The Church will always remain, until the end of centuries, as a small flock, hand-in-hand with other religions on the pilgrimage towards the Kingdom of God.

## SACRAMENTS

 Baptism is not necessary for Salvation.





True Baptism is the enlightenment obtained through Yoga.



To celebrate the Eucharist is to celebrate life.



The Eucharist is the celebration of the divinisation of the world.



The *real presence* of Jesus has many forms. In the priest, in the assembly, in the symbols, in the poor and also in the bread and wine.



Hindu *samskaras* are to be used for the creation of sacramentals.

### PRAYER



In order to pray and meditate, one must suppress one's intellect and thoughts.



Prayer consists of concentrating on something and combating thoughts.



Prayer is an act of the senses and not an act of the intellect and will.



Prayer consists in repeating mantras.



Yoga is the discipline which unites us to God.

### OUR LADY, ANGELS and DEVILS



Angels are not personal spirits, but cosmic forces or energy.



Hell does not exist.



The Blessed Virgin is the great Goddess Terra (Earth).

### EVANGELISATION, MISSION and DIALOGUE - MYSTICISM



The mission primarily consists in seeking the welfare of the people, not in preaching the Gospel and inviting them to be Baptised and join the Church.



Evangelisation consists in helping non-Christian religions make explicit the Christ they already have within themselves rather than bringing Christ to them.











Evangelisation is not to convert to the Church, but making Hindus, Muslims and Buddhists better Hindus, better Muslims and better Buddhists.











Dialogue is the only acceptable mode of relationship between Christians and non-Christians.











Dialogue can neither be ecclesio-centric, nor Christ-centric, but theo-centric, whatever may be the concept of God that the partners in dialogue have.

-  Dialogue is a process of mutual conversion and mutual evangelisation.
-  In interreligious dialogue, people evangelise one another.
-  In dialogue one must seek *communicatio in sacris* with the pagans.
-  Through dialogue, all religions walk together as co-pilgrims in search for the Kingdom of God.
-  In future, dialogue must abandon theo-centrism as well, in order to make man the centre of dialogue.
-  Mysticism is the meeting point of all religions. Religions should agree that dogmas and formulas are not important; what is important is the religious sentiment and the experience of the divine through mysticism.
-  It is in mysticism that all religions find their common denominator.
-  Doctrines and dogmas are not important, because they divide, whereas mystical religious experience unites.

### **ATTITUDES and PRACTICES TO BE BANNED FOR CATHOLICS**

-  It is condemnable to worship fire as being a symbol of God or Christ.
-  It is condemnable to worship the Sun as being a symbol of God or Christ. A Catholic ought not to observe the rite of *Sandhya*, nor to perform the *Surya namaskara*.
-  It is forbidden to use pagan scriptures at Mass, in the Liturgy of the Hours or in any para-liturgical prayer.
-  It is forbidden to read pagan scriptures and meditate on them in para-liturgical meetings or in the private devotions of the faithful.
-  It is false to say that the mantra OM is a symbol of God, or that it is the Logos. Its use in Catholic worship is condemnable.
-  It is forbidden to recite or sing the mantra OM in Catholic prayers or bhajans.
-  The so-called Catholic bhajans with tunes and lyrics evoking Hindu superstition and containing mantras or phrases taken from pagan scriptures are to be proscribed.
-  The representation of the resurrected Christ hovering on the cross is forbidden.

-  It is forbidden to represent the Risen Lord in the form of Shiva Nataraja, or to cast Christ in a way that evokes Shiva Nataraja.
-  It is forbidden to accept or impose the *Pottu Tilak* on the forehead of Catholics – priests and lay people.
-  The use of cow dung ashes on the forehead is forbidden.
-  It is forbidden to celebrate the Indian rite of Mass, in all its forms – with and without the Hinduised Anaphora.
-  The Twelve Points of inculturation, obtained abnormally from the Holy See, must be revised in view of the errors of the so-called Theology of Religions.
-  The participation of Catholics in Hindu festivals is forbidden.
-  Catholics are prohibited from manifesting any form of worship or veneration to pagan idols.
-  Priests and religious should be punished severely if they affirm the aforementioned errors or follow the aforementioned practices.

\* \* \*

After studying the precious little that was available regarding the Indian National Synthesis, in preparation for the First Session of the Synod, we were concerned with the fact that the abovementioned errors and attitudes which go against the Faith in India were not dealt with.

Vague references in the form of questions appear here and there in the *Continental Synthesis* and in the *Instrumentum Laboris*. Unfortunately, they are absolutely insufficient to raise a barrier against and to put an end to the errors which Cardinal Josef Tomko, in his capacity as Prefect of the Propaganda Fide, qualified as “devastating” for the Faith in India and Asia. Hence, we make this reverent and filial appeal to our Shepherds to act in accordance with their powers and duties.

We concluded this letter on the Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, entreating the Mother of the Church to protect her Indian children, while affirming our total fidelity to the Holy Church and our filial and loving submission to her Shepherds.

Earnestly hoping that our Appeal to defend the threatened Catholic Faith in India will find a zealous Pastor in Your Lordship, we seek your blessings and promise our prayers for your ministry in this difficult time in the life of the Church.

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