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**BOOK REVIEW**

**Antony Edanad**, *God-World-Man. Towards an Integral View of Divine Revelation*, Bangalore: Dharmaram Publications, 2010. Pages: xvi+175. ISBN: 978-81-89958-38-1

This book is the printed version of the lectures given for the Bishop Jonas Thaliath Endowment Lectures 2009-2010 at Dharmaram Vidya Kshetram. Dr. Edanad is a *Professor Emeritus* of Dharmaram Vidya Keshetram and the content of this book reflects the maturity and insightfulness of a seasoned teacher and scholar. As the author himself clarifies, "The intention of [this book] was to present an integral view of the process of divine revelation as comprehensively, coherently, succinctly and lucidly as possible. This has been done from a Christian point of view and within the Catholic theological parameters" (p.ix).

In the introduction, the author explains the nuances of the notion "revelation" and gives the rationale behind the hyphenated title *God-WorldMan* and the subtitle *Towards an Integral View of Divine Revelation*. God, world and humans are inseparably linked together in the process of divine revelation. Hence, the hyphenated title of the theme of discussion: *GodWorld-Man* (p.5). Since revelation is a notion that can have a multiplicity of aspects, attempt is made to present an integral vision of divine revelation taking into account various aspects of it, which explains the subtitle, *Towards an Integral View of Divine Revelation*.

The first chapter discusses the world as a revelatory symbol. It seems that by "world" the author intends the whole creation. After reviewing the major world religions' views on the revelatory role of creation, he delves in the biblical, patristic and magisterial understanding of the world's revelatory nature. Creation is "a total and imperfect self-expression of God" through the medium of His word, and He "can be encountered and experienced in and through the world" (p.30).

The second chapter is on "History as Revelatory Medium and Symbol." The author explicates the view that history offers a qualitatively more developed

experience of the divine reality than nature and the world. After a brief remark on scientific and other religions' perspectives on history the major portion of the chapter deals with the Israelites' experience of God in their history. The Old Testament presentation of God as directly intervening in their history through His saving deeds, exemplified by the Exodus Event, is well explicated here. The response to God's revelation in history is to know Yahweh as the One who intervenes in history to save them.

The third chapter is a logical sequence from the second, because, "Christian faith [is] that God's revelation has taken place in and through history, which began with creation, continued in a special way through the history of the people of Israel as God's chosen people, and culminated in the Christ event" (p.63). In this chapter, Dr. Edanad analyses the New Testament understanding of revelation as culminated in the Christ event. Within the New Testament itself, the various traditions such as the Synoptic, Pauline and Johannine vary in their perception of the revelatory role of Jesus Christ and the response to it. The author tries to explain them accordingly. Though Jesus Christ is the most perfect and definitive self-communication of God, because of limitations due to finite humans "the significance of the ineffable mystery of the Christ event" cannot be attained and appropriated exhaustively. Hence, though revelation is culminated in Jesus Christ, it needs to be appropriated progressively with the help of the Holy Spirit. In the fourth chapter Dr. Edanad discusses the progressive nature of the reflective experience of the Christ event. He highlights the role of early Christian communities in the reflective process, through which the meaning of the Christ event is progressively understood. It is this reflective experience of the Christ event in the various communities that gave rise to the various accounts of the Christ event reflected in the New Testament. He identifies believers, theologians and the magisterium as having specific roles in the cumulative and progressive reflection on Christ event. In this context Dr. Edanad clarifies the notion "Tradition," an important pillar of Catholic understanding of revelation. "Tradition is the cumulative reflective experience on the Christ event and its expressions that a community has at a particular point in its life" (p.126) and it is constantly progressing. Based on the progressing and continuing character of the reflection on the Christ event, the author suggests that though "Dogmas" are normative for subsequent generations, they can be reviewed for refining. In the last chapter Dr. Edanad undertakes a discussion on the "Christian Understanding of Revelation and Religious Pluralism." While affirming "In Jesus Christ, the

Word incarnate, we have the fullness of the Word and he is the unsurpassable culmination of God's revealing and saving self-communication to humans" (p.149), the author proposes how to understand and appreciate the divine revelation present in other religions. In this perspective he stresses the meaning of and need for dialogue and evangelization as a process of mutual religious enrichment motivated by genuine love.

This book is a commendable work on an important facet of Christian as well as Catholic faith. The presentation is systematic and clear with logical precision in developing the theme. Hence, I wish this book may find a place in all theological faculties and libraries.

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