

## Book Review

**Jacob Srampickal SJ, *Communications Can Renew the Church*, Delhi: Media House Publication, 2010. Pages: 328. ISBN: 978-81-7495-267-7.**

Dr. Jacob Srampickal's new book: *Communications Can Renew the Church* is a classy analysis of Church in relation to Communication and Media. Teaching at the Gregorian, Rome heading the department of Communications and other related communications programmes Dr. Srampickal proves how his perspectives on communications have gradually turned Catholic and Universal or Global, in its fullest sense in this book. The challenging areas, dominant issues, disturbing elements, inspiring thoughts, evolving theology, wanting attitudes, possible reformations of the Church especially relating to present-day world of Media and Communications have been comprehensively analyzed with precision and clarity here. The basic vision and frame of references of this book are the official documents of Universal Church and deeper understanding about Jesus of Gospels.

The author's heart seems to be throbbing for the Church in India and he appears to be fully aware and alert about the styles and struggles of the Indian Church. His extensive travels and periodic teaching assignments in different Indian institutions seem to keep him well informed about the concrete Indian Church situations wherein he tries to target his observations, evaluations and creative suggestions. This book is not necessarily an effort at a highly theoretical exploration but a deeply practical application of the power of communication for updating and renewal of the universal church, more particularly that of India.

The phenomenon of Church becoming irrelevant and abandoned in the modern world is the backdrop of the whole study as Srampickal has chosen. So in the first part he makes a self-reflection and critical observation of the present day Church ministry styles and explores more into the background of mental attitudes and value systems sustained by the church leadership and zealous missionary workers.

The defective strategy and style of Church's communication is found as the root reason for this. The challenge and chances of developing a Communication Theology is the first part of his positive exposition. When the Church becomes a real communicating community the envisioned spiritual ideologies of Christ, will be accepted and appreciated by the global society. He observes that the Church has produced excellent documents regarding communications in the world. Only problem

he identifies is that they are practiced neither in the higher official levels nor in the ordinary practical levels. How can this be corrected through the smart and balanced utilization of modern media technology is elaborated in the second part. His thesis that 'Communications Can Renew the Church' is convincingly proved with ease and excellence in this book. For him communication is all about more participation of all in managing the church which can surely create a sense of belonging and intimate relations within the church.

Relying on Church documents and theological interpretations of renowned scholars, the author has made this study appear very authentic and convincing. The practical application of the various theories expounded is the main attraction to read this elaborate work in a short period.

A pastor or anyone who is seriously interested in updating the Church life based on the approved teachings and enlightened understanding of the scriptures will find this book really helpful. For priestly candidates and already pastors this is a guiding handbook in their planning and developing of meaningful engagement with the modern generation effectively.

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