

BOOK REVIEWS

Kuncheria Pathil

Models in Ecumenical Dialogue (A study of the methodological development in the Commission on 'Faith and Order' of the World Council of Churches).

Bangalore: Dharmaram Publications, 1981, xxii + 515 pp. Rs. 50.00 (Limp cover), Rs. 60-00 (Hard cover).

Dr. Kuncheria Pathil CMI has succeeded in writing a most interesting and valuable doctoral dissertation. It is divided into two parts. In part I he treats the Historical Background and Development in the Faith and Order Movements and makes an extensive study of the use of the comparative method in three vital concerns of Faith and Order: ecclesiology, the sacraments and ministry at the conference of Lausanne, Edinburgh and Lund. In part II the author first offers a critique on the comparative method, pointing out its basic merits and demerits. As the latter were also experienced by the members of Faith and Order, they shifted—mainly under the influence of Karl Barth—to the dialectical scholarship, under the impact of the developments in biblical scholarship to the Christological method and when the World Council of Churches rose above intra-ecclesial concerns, to the inter-contextual method. Dr. Pathil modestly but critically evaluates the achievements as well as the shortcomings of all these methods, concluding his study by pointing out that each of them should continue to play its role, complementing and correcting the others; in other words, we cannot really speak of the ecumenical methodology. The comprehensive bibliography, covering about 50 pages, list of leaders of Faith and Order Movement with brief biographical details, and index of names and subjects greatly enhance the value of the book.

Ecumenists will read this work as they would a novel so well has Dr. Pathil succeeded in describing the history of the Faith and Order Movement as an inspiring *movement*; they and other theologians and students of theology will find a wealth of material on ecclesiology, the sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist and the theology of ministry in ecumenical perspectives. The systematic organization of the book and the subject-index make it also valuable as a reference work.