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(THE DAWN)

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From the Editor's Desk

Introducing the Review

"*Shalom*" to all the readers of the Review *Vaiharai (the Dawn)*, the harbinger of light and life. With this First Issue in your hands, some of you may be wondering as to the choice of the name for this English Quarterly of Theological Reflection published by St. Paul's Seminary, Tiruchirappalli - 620 001, P. B. 36, India.

The Greek term "*anatole*" is variously rendered in the Bible as the *Dawn* or the Rising Son (Mal. 4:2), *the Star* or the Day-spring (Num. 24:17), or the Branch or *the Shoot* (Jer. 23:5; Zech. 3:8; 6:12). This triple messianic imagery has been a distant pointer to Jesus the *Sun* of Justice, the *Star* of Jacob and the *Shoot* from Jesse (Is. 11:1).

In fact, these titles find their meaning and fulfilment only in Jesus who claimed he is the *Light* of the world (Jo. 8:12; 9:5), the *Way*, the *Truth* and the *Life* (Jo. 11:25; 14:6).

Like John the Baptizer, *Vaiharai* "will go before the Lord to prepare his ways, to give knowledge of salvation" (Lk. 1:77) which consists in peace, love, forgiveness and justice. Like Jesus himself, *Vaiharai* will shed the light of true Joy and dispel the darkness of ignorance, evil and sin (Lk. 1:79).

Thus in the footprints of the Forerunner as well as those of Jesus, *Vaiharai* intends to bear testimony to the Truth in all charity and justice (Lk 3:7-14; 4:17-19) and thus lead to health and prosperity, both political and spiritual, wholeness and completeness, the all-comprehensive blessing intended by God, namely, "*Shalom*". This "*Shalom*" willed by God for all the people (Is. 45:7) and which only Jesus can give (Jo. 14:27) is

the goal of the Review which bears the name of "the Sun of righteousness" (Mal. 4:2) -*Vaiharai*.

The Tamil term *Vaiharai* is selected for the obvious reason that the Review is published from Tamil Nadu and it conjures in the mind of the Tamils something bold, beautiful and bright giving the hope for yet another day of promises filled with the blessings of God, light and life.

It challenges us to be awake and be alive to the problems of death, darkness and despair which envelop a vast majority of our people not only here in Tamil Nadu but also in India, Asia, Africa, Latin America, the so-called third world.

It promises to be a platform for contextual, experience-immersed and soil-based theological reflection by promoting creative and original thinking on topical concerns which deal with people in all their interrelatedness to one another and to the mother earth.

It proposes to present a life-giving theology by a reinterpretation of the Sacred Texts to give voice to the voiceless, to say a firm "No" to forces, systems and structures which diminish life and disintegrate humanity and to say an irrevocable "Yes" to life as well as the groanings of the Spirit (Rom. 8:22-23).

It hopes to be the yeast which will promote God's Reign for a full life as envisioned and inaugurated by Jesus, the new heaven and the new earth (Is. 66:22; 2 Pet. 3:13; Rev. 21:1-14).

Thus *Vaiharai offers* a forum to articulate all that concerns a more human and humane life, all that leads to the creation of a harmonious society, and all that promotes the quest and the search for a meaning in life, namely justice, peace and integrity of creation which is the agenda of God for humankind -"*Shalom*".

Introducing the Issue

This First Issue of Vaiharai opens its pages to the various sectors in the Church — lay, religious and priestly.

Animator of Jagamatha Ashram (Ponmalaipatti; Tiruchi 620 004) Sr. Corona Mary OSM is a well known woman theologian with a number of articles to her credit in Indian Theological Journals. In her article on a "Renewed Commitment to the Gospel Vision on Women" she draws poignant lessons for our times from the attitude, words and deeds of Our Lord and from the words of Pope John Paul II, and challenges us to give the women their rightful place in the Society and the Church today.

The Article on Ecology, "A Christian is a Friend or Foe to Nature" by Dr. A. Pushparajan (H.O.D. of Interreligious Relations; Madurai Kamaraj University), member and consultor of various Diocesan, National and International Commissions and a specialist in Interreligious Dialogue and Gandhian Philosopy, analyzes the historical roots of the problem of Ecology and presents the biblical as well as the theological reflection leading to the resolution of the problem and concludes with the challenge that a Christian is called to be a friend and not a foe of nature.

Fr. M. Amaladoss, S.J. (Vidya Jycthi, 23 Raj Niwas Marg, Delhi 110 054) is a Jesuit theologian internationally recognized for his original contributions in the fields of Mission, Dialogue, Evangelization and Inculturation. Author of various books and a regular contributor to theological journals in India and abroad, he presents the case for a God-centred and eschatology-oriented approach in our dealings with people belonging to groups and religions other than Christianity. He points out that this approach can be realized only in a self-emptying service of the poor after the model of Jesus himself.

In his scholarly article on "A Subaltern Hermeneutics", Fr. Felix Wilfred (Dept. of Christian Studies, University of

Madras, Chepauk, Madras 600 005), also of international fame, a former professor of this seminary and at present holding a Chair in the university, critically evaluates the 5 antinomies in Hermeneutics which exist in various religious traditions and proposes an alternative under the name Subaltern Hermeneutics which while getting away from the text, revolves around the people who are at the fringes of the Society.

Finally, Fr. R. J. Raja, S. J. (St. Paul's Seminary, P. B. 36, Tiruchi 620 001) at present teaching Scripture in the Seminary spells out three reasons from the N. T. Christ, the Gospels, the Church, for discerning and understanding the concept of inculturation and accepting it and living it in all the spheres of the life of the Church in India today.

The editor apologizes for the delay in the publication of this issue since the official release has been timed for the Platinum Jubilee day of the Seminary, 25th Jan. 1996.
Thank you. *"Shalom"*

R. J. Raja S. J.
Editor-Vaiharai