



Curriculum Theologiae

Theological Formation in India Today

Goals, Beneficiaries and Practical Aspects

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Contextualising and Excellence: Challenges for Theological Formation in Today's India

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**THEOLOGICAL FORMATION IN INDIA TODAY: GOALS,
BENEFICIARIES, AND PRACTICAL ASPECTS****Fr. Saju Chackalackal CMI
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The Indian scene of education is passing through a changing and challenging phase as most of the disciplines try to tune in themselves for a market-driven economy. As the society is mostly motivated and driven by economic benefits, the content and method of education of young minds seem to be taking the same route, the fallout being human and intellectual formation that comes through a longer process of being initiated into the culture and values evolving from the life lived by humanity all through the history.

Theological formation of those who take up leadership roles in Christian communities is expected to be founded in the faith experience of Christians down the centuries. Although the Church leadership has been taking every possible step to make theological formation as effective as possible, many seem to have reservations against various formation programmes, especially with regard to the context, content, and methodology adopted in various institutional settings. In attempting to respond to such reservations, over a period of last three or four decades, theological formation has undergone a lot of experiment, although their results still remain inconclusive. Unfortunately, an overreaction towards the traditional paradigm of theological formation, along with an overemphasis on practical aspects (at the exclusion of theoretical), immediate or short-sighted goals (eclipsing the final and lasting goals of Christian life), and confusion as to the beneficiaries of the entire process, has resulted in constricting the dynamics of the very formation process. Hence, there is a need to dwell deeply into the inner dynamics of theological formation, especially with a special focus on the Indian reality: the context, the people, the goal of Christian life lived out in India.

Given the context of the Year of Faith being celebrated by the Catholic Church, and as all members of the community are invited to rekindle and reaffirm the faith foundations to lead a renewed Christian life, our deliberations about theological formation should primarily focus on the faith content and its effective understanding and experience in order to reinvigorate the concerns of new evangelization, especially in the context of India. Even after long years of theological formation, if we lose the spontaneous abilities to share the Word of God and our personal experiences resulting from an encounter with Jesus, our theological training is in need of serious self-examination and the content and objectives of the theological programme must be revamped.

Hence, in this essay, I propose to dwell on an understanding of basic paradigms of education or intellectual formation in the Indian milieu and initiate a discussion on the need of revamping theological formation in view of addressing the concerns, challenges and prospects of the Indian Church, especially by focusing on the beneficiaries, goals, and some of the practical aspects of theological formation so that a more effective but practically viable

system could be conceived in order to better serve the Church at large and the Indian Church in particular.

2. A Perspective on Education

The Sanskrit word *vinaya* offers us a significant understanding of the process of education that we try to impart in and through our educational institutions. *Vinaya* literally means “to lead out.” That is, a method of education, *vinayasadhana*, is considered to be successful only when it enables a person to become a mature and integrated person by drawing in from the inner powers to their full potential. Although such a process necessarily involves imparting information to the students, all processes must climax in facilitating an internal process of integration within the person, whereby it would, in turn, facilitate a formation and a transformation of the person in view of being a creative contributor in the larger society. The understanding of education based on its Latin root also has the same significance. *Educare*, for example, also means “to lead out.” Hence, education, in its classical sense, is a process that enables the person to blossom from within the core of oneself, all external ingredients being facilitators of or contributing factors to this process. In its ideal form, education should, then, facilitate understanding each one’s inner self, potentialities, and possible horizons of development so that he or she could be properly prepared to face the challenges in life and make the best out of life.

From the perspective of considering education, especially as a process of learning, it becomes most effective when students live and learn in an atmosphere of freedom within which they are facilitated to discover truth for themselves, rather than being indoctrinated by the system, teachers being the last link in that structural chain. This sense is echoed in the words of Richard Shaull, who wrote in his “Foreword” to the much celebrated work of Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*: “Education either functions as an instrument which is used to facilitate integration of the younger generation into the logic of the present system and bring about conformity or it becomes the practice of freedom, the means by which men and women deal critically and creatively with reality and discover how to participate in the transformation of their world.”¹ The necessary element of freedom in the process of education is also conceived in the vision of education inculcated by the Catholic Church as well. “The Declaration on Christian Education,” issued by Vatican Council II, envisages it as follows: “... children and young people must be helped, with the aid of the latest advances in psychology and the arts and science of teaching, to develop harmoniously their physical, moral and intellectual endowments so that they may gradually acquire a mature sense of responsibility in striving endlessly to form their own lives properly and in pursuing true freedom as they surmount the vicissitudes of life with courage and constancy.”² Thus, education basically aims at a formation of the person, who would, in turn, become integrated into the larger society, not in terms of his or her conformity to the existing patterns, but by creatively engaging in the present to bring about a transformation – within oneself and in the larger society – with the support of the critical wisdom from the generations that have been opening up new avenues in exercising their freedom, culturing oneself in an attitude of hope, keeping open to the emerging realities in the future.

¹Richard Shaull, “Foreword” in Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, trans. Myra Bergman Ramos, New York: Continuum, 1990, 15.

²Vatican Council II, “Declaration on Christian Education,” §1.

Looking at the emerging patterns of education from such a perspective invites us to critique the existing education institutions and the new culture of education that seems to invade the portals of all educational endeavours. As most of us function on the fundamental principles of economic capitalism, the principles of the market seem to offer us the basic dynamics of present educational institutions. As the economic benefits accrued from education count the most as far as both the providers of education and all other stakeholders are concerned, there develops a total neglect of the formative character of education, the value inculcation, and the personal transformation that each individual would experience through his or her participation in the process of education. If education has to be reinstated to its glorious position of *the* powerful transforming process, the approach of the society, in particular the present generation of education providers as well as other stakeholders must change. There is a necessity to recognize the value of education not only to develop skills but more importantly also to develop the inner potentials of the persons involved in the process of education.

3. Four Pillars of Education Proposed by UNESCO

Learning: The Treasure Within (Report to UNESCO of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-First Century), published in 1996, conceives of four foundational pillars for effective integrated education in the present times. These four pillars are: (1) learning to know, (2) learning to do, (3) learning to be, and (4) learning to live together. These four pillars are identified to enable both the educators and the subjects of education to ensure that “education ... simultaneously provide[s] maps of a complex world in constant turmoil and the compass that will enable people to find their way in it.”³

3.1. Learning to Know

“Learning to know” conceives of education as providing the cognitive tools required to better comprehend the world and its complexities, and to provide an appropriate and adequate foundation for future learning. We must aim at both broader and deeper knowledge so that educational systems would enable the participants to have greater chances to understand the different aspects of the environment in which we are placed. It proposes a dynamic approach to the whole process of education, where learning is expected to come not merely out of initiating a student into the available lore of information through ‘rote learning’. Although introducing a student to the existing knowledge domains is important as an initial step, learning to know envisages that the development that is brought about would include the development of the faculties of memory, imagination, reasoning, problem-solving skills, and, more importantly, the capacity to think coherently, critically, and creatively. Here the information gathered through the initial steps should invite the student to surge ahead to one’s own discovery of the truth and reality. This not only expects that the student is trained in an ambience of freedom, but he or she is always encouraged and expected to explore the reality in one’s own ways. The ability to judge a thing or an event by oneself is an important talent that each person should aim at. Apart from the discovery that is expected to take place in this process of learning, we need to additionally emphasize the need of education to facilitate a self-discovery and self-development as one of the primary goals of education. While knowledge is capable of transformation, mostly its transformative powers are celebrated in the material domains; however, its transformative

³Delors, Jacques et al, *Learning: The Treasure Within*, Paris: UNESCO, 1996, 85.

powers are far more effectively brought to fruition when the transformation begins from oneself. 'Learning to know', though certainly important as a primary pillar of education, it may not justify itself in creating a sense among the seekers that knowing everything is possible for someone at some point. Instead, it gives us a sense of open search for truth, which will incessantly continue all through the lifetime of every person. Hence, an excellent system of education would be that which enables a student to participate in an unending search for truth, into which each one contributes a part by one's own specialised inquiry and creative involvement.

3.2. Learning to Do

"Learning to do," as it is conceived by the document, provides the skills that would enable individuals to effectively participate in the global economy and society. As learning in the first pillar offers a transformation of consciousness, the second pillar calls for the need of applying the same transformed consciousness into the development of skills that would enable the student as well as the society in which he or she is placed to lead a qualitatively better life. In other words, this invites the learners to transform theoretical learning into practical skills so that life could be better facilitated for all. It also aims at developing better behavioural patterns in the life of individuals who would become, in the course of time, creative persons in the enhancement of a humane culture within the larger human society. This would mean that the aim of education is not merely development of technical skills but competence in different domains of one's life and relationship. Thus, 'learning to do' includes abilities such as communicating effectively and developing interpersonal skills, aptitude for teamwork, adaptability to change in social life and the contexts of one's profession, competency in transforming knowledge into innovations and job-creation, a readiness to take risks and resolve or manage conflicts, etc.⁴

3.3. Learning to Live Together

"Learning to live together," the third pillar, calls for exposing individuals to the values implicit within human rights, democratic principles, intercultural understanding and respect and peace at all levels of society and human relationships to enable individuals and societies to live in peace and harmony. The first two pillars culminate in this third one so that all that is ideally conceived in them would gradually lead us to the establishment of a society in which all members would find their being in peaceful coexistence. This would call for developing abilities for self-analysis and other capacities which would enable one to tune in oneself into the larger society. The focus of 'learning to live together' is more on an existence of oneself emerging from an understanding of one's interdependence. For example, from this perspective, my individual existence must proceed from my being rooted in the family and society, of course, myself being a unique and irreplaceable component of these larger units. Understanding one's 'being' in the context of interdependence opens up the avenues to better understand and appreciate differences that exist in our human societies and communities, where despite differences there are opportunities for better communication, collaboration, and coexistence. In this regard, enhancement of interpersonal relationships, quest for ongoing dialogue, caring for the wellbeing of the other, readiness to work towards the realization of common goals, etc., would become important goals of education.

⁴Zhou Nan-Zhao, "Four 'Pillars of Learning' for the Reorientation and Reorganization of Curriculum: Reflections and Discussions," at <http://www.ibe.unesco.org/cops/Competencies/PillarsLearningZhou.pdf> (accessed on 15 August 2013).

3.4. Learning to Be

“Learning to be,” the fourth and final pillar, provides self-analytical and social skills to enable individuals to develop to their fullest potential psycho-socially, affectively as well as physically, for an all-round ‘complete’ person. This pillar expects to take root from the first three pillars with their emphasis on the development of a consciousness leading to transformative practice, facilitating a living together for the greater good of the whole creation. It is not enough that one amasses a lot of information and gathers a number of skills; both of these must contribute into the making of one’s being, where one has to learn to exist both in one’s personal space and also in one’s social space. This, then, calls for humanizing oneself in the best way possible by taking into account the development of one’s personality with its intellectual, moral, cultural, and physical aspects. It leads us to an understanding of education as an unceasing process – from birth to death – that must contribute to the complete development of the person from physical and intellectual to moral and spiritual dimensions. These, I hope, will enable a person both to get rooted in the given context and also to open up oneself to other communities and cultures so that in being oneself, there would be ample space to branch out in freedom of thought and expression, access to opportunities, and recognition as human beings without the restrictions of any limiting factor contributed by the existing structures or systems.

As it is obvious from the above paragraphs, these four pillars are not to be understood as existing and functioning in isolation; they complement each other in such a way that all of them together offer us an opportunity for conceiving an integral or holistic education. Indeed, they are interdependent pillars, which contribute in the making and enhancement of a better educational system, aiming at the transformation of human persons and the human society at large. If these four pillars are taken seriously into account in the planning of educational institutions and the programme of education (including the curriculum and method), all stakeholders in the context of education would benefit, not only in terms of the enhancement of the economic and social life, but would offer a stronger matrix of education which would take the humanity to greater levels of *humane* existence.

As the very title of the UNESCO’s report indicates, *learning is conceived to be a treasure within*, a treasure that is already present in one’s own self, which would get firmly founded on these four pillars. Taking cue from what was proposed earlier I find that UNESCO does not lay too much emphasis on the imparting of the information but the processing of the same leading to the inner transformation of the person, which would then become the source of personal as well as societal wellbeing. Thus, any process of education has to begin with the acquisition of information – about oneself, others, and the rest of the world – and would climax in an authentic existence through the practical application of what is being learned for the good of oneself and all and, thus, creating a better society to live together.

4. Four Pillars of Theological Formation

Theology is traditionally considered to be “faith seeking understanding.”⁵ Indeed, this basically emphasises the rational dimension of the content of theology and the process of theologizing, although certainly there is, at the same time, a greater emphasis on the divine dimension in the whole enterprise. Along this line, *Theology Today: Perspectives, Principles, and Criteria*, a document issued by the International Theological Commission, in 2011, holds

⁵“*Fides quaerens intellectum*”: Anselm, Prosligion, Proemium (in S. Anselmi Cantuariensis Archiepiscopi Opera omnia, ed. F. S. Schmitt, t.1, p.94).

others to share in the radical discipleship of Jesus Christ by sharing one's own lived experience of the Good News in the community of disciples, i.e., the church.

All the three Popes, Pope Blessed John Paul II, Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, and Pope Francis have repeatedly invited all Christians to participate in a drive for new evangelisation, aiming at reaching out to those Christians who have already received the Good News, but do not live the life of radical discipleship either due to neglect or due to ignorance. In either case, every member of the ecclesial communion has a responsibility to earnestly attempt to bring them back to the Good News not only by verbally announcing to them the Word of God, but by letting them experience the beauty and goodness that result in one's own personal Christian life. In fact, be it evangelisation or new evangelisation, it would be more forceful and effective when the announcement of the Good News is made through the life of those who have already become members of the community of disciples. Although verbal announcement of the Kingdom could be easily made, its effectiveness would be hundredfold when the effect of radical discipleship can be experienced in the life of each person claiming to be committed to the person of Jesus Christ in the ecclesial communion.

8.7. Emphasis on Intellectual Training

As theology is fundamentally an attempt to make a deeper understanding of the Christian faith – to make sense of it both in one's personal life and in the life of the Christian community – it presupposes that those who involve in the process of theological formation are better equipped to employ their intellectual abilities upon the faith content. From this perspective, better theological formation could be offered to (and better theological output can be expected from) those who also invest in developing their intellectual abilities. In order to enhance the intellectual capacity, theological formation itself should put great emphasis on a rigorous intellectual disciplining of the candidates. The time invested for theological formation must be optimally productive. The programmes should include more exercises that would expect bettering of intellectual capabilities. Those candidates who are not of high intellectual calibre should be supported by theological institution so that they could also eventually enhance their abilities and perform better to understand and theologically interpret the faith content in relation to the existential realities.

In general, across India, there is a tendency to downplay the importance of intellectual engagement during theological formation. This is a dangerous tendency, especially against the background of the general public and Christian laity being better equipped in terms of their academic and professional training. If the Church continues the careless attitude towards the intellectual performance of those who undertake theological formation, it would be a sure sign of the downgrading of the future of the Church as a whole.

Hence, not only we must insist on a basic level of intellectual capacity at the time of inducting someone into theological formation, but also should see to it that they are continuously offered opportunities to intellectually empower them better so that they would make more effective and meaningful theological contributions to the ecclesial community. Otherwise, it will not only be the downgrading of their own personal human and Christian lives, but also of the Christian community in India as a whole.

8.8. Need to Reemphasize Philosophy

Another dangerous tendency is to eclipse, eliminate, and distance philosophy from theological formation. The time-tested approach of Catholic theology is to insist on a philosophical component at least as a preparatory step. Accordingly, even *Sapientia Christiana* maintains that at least there must be a two years of full-fledged philosophical formation offered to clerical candidates before they undertake their theological formation. Although this still remains the official position, there seem to have developed a lot of serious reservation on investing a two year period of time for learning philosophy. There are some ecclesiastical and religious superiors who think that philosophy must be restricted as much as possible so that they would have their candidates ordained as full-fledged ministers as soon as possible. While this may be admitted as a universal phenomenon, the tragedy is that many who lack basic philosophical education do not seem to be doing well either in their theological formation or, later, in their teaching and articulation of the Word of God and the Christian doctrine. The situation has worsened after the Congregation for Catholic Education has issued a decree (2001) instructing all institutions offering philosophy programmes to offer a Bachelor of Philosophy degree only after completing a three year full-fledged training programme; with this decree the two year programme could be continued (as a prerequisite for theology), but without having the provision to issue a degree in philosophy. As a lot of reservation has been shown to undertake a three year programme in philosophical formation, many have opted to continue the two year programme, even if it would not be awarded with a degree. Moreover, there are instances in which a total apathy for philosophy formation is seen from among both the candidates and their superiors. While the plan of the Congregation for Catholic Education in insisting on a three year programme for a bachelor degree in philosophy is meaningful and loaded with purpose, it seems to have sent out a wrong signal to many as a result of which those who undertake the basic programme of two year training in philosophy seem to be lacking in the required rigour in philosophical formation. It is hoped that the present attempt of upgrading philosophical studies (after another bachelor's degree from a university) as a two year on-campus programme with its first year culled out from the university degree, would hopefully bring back the required rigour in philosophical formation. The intellectual formation that is insisted upon both by the UNESCO and *Pastores dabo vobis* calls for a serious study of philosophy, which, it is hoped, would directly contribute to an enhanced understanding of theology.

While we see a decreasing interest for philosophy even among the traditional group of seminarians pursuing theology, many candidates who come from among women religious and the laity seem to be intent on equipping themselves with theology but without having readiness on their part to undertake any training in philosophy. Many who have a serious interest in pursuing theology seem to miss the importance of philosophy and consider their investment for philosophy as a waste of time. However, as Catholic theology is very much connected to philosophy, particularly western philosophy, understanding theological concepts presupposes a familiarity with and expertise in philosophy. Apart from the expected familiarity with western philosophical traditions, in India, it would be an excellent but essential addition also to have a better understanding of Indian philosophy, as the candidates who pursue theological formation in India are expected to interact with and reflect upon the Indian reality and also to make sense of the Christian faith content to the people of India for which one will have to meaningfully employ philosophical concepts that are familiar to the Indian people.

8.9. Generation and Sharing of Academic Resources

Offering theological formation in the contemporary society requires a lot of resource mobilization. As the candidates are exposed to a variety of sources and possibilities, especially electronic sources, institutions that offer theological formation are very much in need of equipping themselves with such resources. As such sources are known to be quite expensive and beyond the means of most of such institutions, Catholic institutions, at least in certain specific localities, should develop mechanisms to share the resources that each one is able to procure. This would include the library, e-journals, other electronic resources, etc. Sharing these resources will not only enable the candidates to have access to much more resources than that these institutions could afford, it would also prepare the ground for enhanced understanding and mutual collaboration in many other fields among such institutions. As developing a catholic approach even in sharing the resources is called forth, the candidates pursuing theological formation will have access to more resources, which would have a positive impact upon their learning and formation of theological perspectives.

The formally trained personnel for theological formation within the Catholic Church in India are really impressive. Although no specific study has been made on these personnel and their contributions, a good number of research projects are undertaken by them (despite the fact that many get entangled in administrative works than in academics or formative assignments). They come up with publication of the results of their studies and researches either in the form of books or articles. There is an increasing number of publications, including scientific journals, coming out of ecclesiastical formation centres in India. Making provisions to share these resources among the theological institutes would be a significant step in enhancing the resources and mutual respect for those trained personnel. It is high time that some institutions in India take lead in forming an electronic database or a web portal on the formally trained personnel for theological formation and their research interests and publications.

8.10. Need of Affiliation and Accreditation

Although theological formation is basically an in-house programme of the Catholic Church, recognition of a formalized formation programme in ecclesiastical disciplines is a need of the contemporary times. It is true that quality would be spontaneously recognized; however, when the institutions of theological formation are left to themselves for their curriculum development, training, and evaluation, there are chances to compromise quality, which would naturally be questioned by external agencies. The Congregation for Catholic Education, Rome, calls for proper mechanisms in recognizing different institutions and programmes, especially of theology. They are taking every possible step to assure that the quality intellectual training offered in ecclesiastical institutions is maintained and recognized both by the faithful and by the national and international accreditation agencies. From this point of view, it is necessary that Catholic institutions that impart theological education take every step to assure that they are properly accredited under the umbrella of the Congregation for Catholic Education by affiliation, aggregation, and/or incorporation, and, if possible, also under the civil accreditation agencies such as University Grants Commission (UGC) in India; attempts to join the IGNOU programme in philosophy or the possibility of mutual recognition of the courses by ecclesiastical and civil faculties (Dharmaram Vidya Kshetram-Christ University in Bangalore and Satya Nilayam-Loyola in Chennai), etc., are also praiseworthy. As both these involve a lot of complicated processing, taking collective steps in this regard may be helpful. The recent formation of the Conference

of the Catholic Faculties in India (CCFI), involving all the eight faculties recognized by the Congregation for Catholic Education, is an initial but right step in this regard.

9. Conclusion

As it is stated in the opening paragraphs of the *Pastores dabo vobis*, the ministry of theological “formation is a continuation in time of Christ’s own work, which the evangelist Mark illustrates in these words: ‘And he went up on the mountain, and called to him those whom he desired; and they came to him. And he appointed twelve, to be with him, and to be sent out to preach and have authority to cast out demons’ (Mk. 3:13-15)” (PDV §2). Fundamentally, then, theological formation is a mission of the Church in which the willing faithful are given an opportunity to know the person of Jesus Christ in depth and transform one’s own life in tune with the values that he had cherished in the establishment of the Kingdom of God. Following this fundamental approach, in the contemporary world, which experiences a crisis-ridden postmodern drift in identifying and subscribing to any definite choice, theological formation is considered to offer a proper and lasting grounding to the candidates, who, in turn, would be capable of enlightening and convincing others as to the importance of a commitment to the person and values of Jesus Christ, which is enshrined in the community of faithful, the Church.

Our understanding of education as an ongoing process that continuously transforms a person and inducts himself or herself into a community matrix and enables the blossoming of oneself and all others, along with the four pillars of education endorsed by UNESCO and the four pillars of theological formation proposed by the Catholic Church, gives us a clear direction as to how theological formation should function. It has an inherent mission of deepening of the Christian faith of the person who undergoes theological formation as well as the faith of the ecclesial community. As the ecclesial community provides the matrix for an individual faithful to blossom in one’s faith life, the individual who transforms himself or herself has a basic responsibility to do theology in relation to the community; for, a Christian theology done in isolation from the ecclesial community cannot be qualified as a Christian theology at all. That clearly has a bearing on theological formation offered in India: it is to facilitate the ecclesial life of the people of India, especially for those who have accepted the person and message of Jesus Christ as the anchor and foundational matrix of their lives. Accordingly, theological formation in India must be made more Indian-context-related without losing the perennially valuable aspects of Christian faith as they have been transferred from community to community and from tradition to tradition. Such a theology will be truly Christian and catholic and would not only be related to the context and life of the people of India, but would certainly be instrumental in transforming the lives of the people – both those who have accepted faith in Jesus Christ as their ground of life and, through them, the entire people of India.

It is hoped that those who undergo such a theological formation would not only become agents who would fulfil their institutional roles but would also assume a variety of ministerial roles in the community of faithful with a true pastoral outlook after the model of Jesus Christ. Every person who comes out of theological formation must ideally become more and more attuned to the mind of Jesus, with a readiness to lay his or her life for giving life to many, the life in abundance. This would mean that, in the context of the life of India’s majority, who are the exploited lot, the marginalized, those who are the victims of systemic injustices from which they do not seem to have a way out, a Christian faithful who are given formation in theology should be able to dedicate one’s life to uplift them from their sad but

desperate plight. Theology would be true to its Christian foundations only when a theologian would become an effective and prophetic instrument to transform a society which is loaded with injustice and hopelessness.

This transformation has to begin with the personal life of every individual who undertakes theological formation. The capital of personal integrity in the life of a Christian theologian is of immense value and great potential in being an effective catalyst to bring about a lasting Christian transformation in the society. As there is an increasing outcry about the widely prevalent allegations of corruption in various church-related institutions, even if they pertain to other churches and denominations, everyone who undergoes theological formation, especially to undertake various ministerial roles in the ecclesial community, must consciously establish greatest possible personal integrity in every sphere of life.

The depth of faith that is brought about by theological formation would facilitate all that is needed on the part of a person to make him or her an effective instrument within the ecclesial community. Those institutions of theological formation which, without fail, perform this fundamental task in the Church could be qualified a *porta Fidei* or “the door of faith,” taking cue from the title of the Apostolic Letter of Pope Benedict XVI (2012). Along the same line, those candidates who seriously undertake their pilgrimage in faith through theological formation, when they are truly transformed in Christian faith through their committed study and research in theology, could be allegorically qualified as *lumen fidei* or “the light of faith,” following the sense communicated by the Apostolic Letter of Pope Francis (2013). Even if all do not fully succeed in this ideal, it is important that both theological institutions and those persons who undergo theological formation aspire to become the door of faith and light of faith, respectively, and then the Catholic Church would succeed in being a meaningful existence by assuring that its attempts to offer theological formation ultimately would bear lasting fruits in the lives of the people of the subcontinent of India.