



Christian Bhajans

by
Joseph J. Palackal

The first Gramophone record of Christian bhajans in Malayalam
Long Playing (33 1/31 RPM) Record, Deccan Records Private Ltd., Bangalore, India
LDEC 102 (1979).

Liner notes

by
Rev. Dr. Thomas Aykkara, CMI,
Prior General, Carmelites of Mary Immaculate, India

Here is a new venture in the arduous path of indigenizing Christian worship in India as envisaged by the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965). The history of this record may be traced back to the liturgical experimentations starting with a small, but significant event that took place in 1966, at Dharmaram College, Bangalore. The occasion was Dharmaram Rector's Day (Dr. Jonas Thaliath who later became the Bishop of Rajkot was the Rector). A short prayer service was thought out and conducted in the Indian style, singing Sanskrit slokas and bhajans, by a small group of Dharmaram inmates headed by Dr. Mathias Mundadan and assisted closely by Frs. Louis Malieckal and Jacob Kapiarmala (also known as Prasannabhai). It was very well appreciated by all who participated in the service as a break-through in the Indian Christian worship patterns.

This small but timely venture steadily grew after it caught the attention of the Catholic Bishops Conference of India (C. B. C. I), when the same prayer service was conducted at its meeting at Dharmaram College in 1967. Encouraged by the Conference Fathers, notably the Late Cardinal Valerian Gracias and Cardinal Joseph Parecattil, the movement gathered momentum. At this time, Fr. Francis Vineeth Vadakkethala and Fr. Sylvester Puthussery also joined with the pioneering group. After many years of study, reflection and experimentation in small groups led by Fathers Louis Malieckal, Thomas Kochumuttam, and Thomas Manickam, the first printed text of an Indian Liturgy, as it was called, was published "Pro Manuscripto" in 1974 by Dharmaram Liturgical Centre.

Five years later, now the movement enters into its second phase of growth with the release of this L. P. Record under the leadership of Rev. Joseph Palackal. I wish the movement all the success and hope that this record will meet a much felt need of the time, and will be warmly welcomed by all Christians who thirst for enriching their experience of faith by singing and listening to bhajans.

Dr. Thomas Aykkara, CMI.