

Church as pneumatic community



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A Pneumatic Community sharing the Divine Wisdom-spirit Reading the Bible from Feminist, Dalit, Tribal and Adivasi Perspectives Introduction The transforming power of the Spirit is evident at the beginning of the history of the Christian church, The church is transformed by Spirit into Pneumatic Community. On the day of Pentecost, the Spirit was received by the apostles as a community but not as individuals. This shows us that the church is bound by the Holy Spirit to transform It to pneumatic community.

Basing on this, the paper tries to explain the church as a pneumatic community sharing the divine wisdom i. e. Spirit of God and also the formation of pneumatic community as well as its catholicity. Pneumatology and Ekklesia " Traditionally. pneumatology has not received a separate locus in Christian systematic theologies". Mostly the pneumatological are incorporated into soteriology. It is also connected at times with Ekklesia. This placement seems natural in view of fact that already in ancient creeds the Holy spirit was connected with church.

Obviously, pneumatology has similarities with Christology. Thomas Aquinas states that our faith is in Holy Spirit who sanctifies the church. Wilfrid Pannenberg, a systematic theologian, identifies ecclesiology imbued with pneumatological foundations. Pneumatology cannot be construed without ecclesiological foundation. Congar identifies the church as a communion of local and particular churches as an ensemble of the gifts of the Spirit, a communion in diversity.

The Holy Spirit and the Social Experience of Men and Women Moltrann places the question of sexism in relation to the Spirit of God in a wider sense

i. e. that of community bound by Holy Spirit. Theologically, it is not enough just to criticize traditional theologies for neglecting feminine terminology and attempt to replace the masculine with exclusive usage. The image of God consists of both men and women in their wholeness, in their full, sexually specific community with one another.

God is not known in the inner chamber of the heart or at a solitary place but in the true community of women and men. As a result, the experience of God and Holy Spirit is "the social experience of the self and the personal experience of sociality". Ecumenical Potential of Pneumatology

Pneumatology provides a fresh ecumenical meeting ground, especially as regards a theologically more agreeable understanding of the church. The Spirit brings to the church hope, vigor, and new insights.

Today's renewed interest in Pneumatology among Christians has positive implications for a more comprehensive pneuma-centric ecclesiology. A growing convergence in the theology of the Holy Spirit promises new breakthroughs, for instance, in the traditional ecclesiological tensions between the charismatic and the institutional between the laity and the clergy, between the historical and the eschatological, and between understanding of the church as an event and an organization.

It brings new hope and new challenges for the church is essentially communion; she is called to be the visible sign and instrument of community between Holy Spirit and humans and of humans among themselves. In this communion all humans are embedded in the creation of the natural communities a life based on exchange of energy with them. Any kind of

community of creation is the fellowship of the Holy Spirit. Communion is the heart of ecclesiastical reality. The Holy Spirit is the bond of this communion. The Holy Spirit creates solidarity and communion between human beings.

The true and real church . e. the ecumenical and transcontinental church that extends beyond particular epochs, concretely present today, was and is built up by the Holy Spirit. The spirit is recognizable not only in the church, but in the communion of the church members, projecting church as a pneumatic community i. e. community having good interpersonal relationships and bounded by Holy Spirit. Formation of Ekklesia as Pneumatic Community Unity is a mysterious reality that comes from God through Jesus in the Holy Spirit. It is the Holy Spirit who makes the church one.

The Spirit is the transcendent principle of unity or communion in the church. This unity in the church is brought about through participation of all the members and of the local churches in the church universal. The participation includes the participation in the life and mission of the church. This unity in the church is brought about by two principles - a personal principle and a principle unity, which are brought into harmony by the Spirit. The unity also is further expressed in the sharing of one's gifts as well as sharing in the suffering of others.

Pneumatic Community sharing the Divine Wisdom-spirit Elizabeth Johnson envisions the female counterpart of the mystery of God as ' Sophia' or Wisdom'. She is convinced that when people speak of God they most often refer to the Spirit. They talk about Sophia's active presence in the world, empowering and drawing us to solidarity. We need to model our

relationships in a community on Sophia, in whose inner relatedness there is no subordination. Sophia herself is unknowable mother of all. On the one hand, woman is the image of Sophia but on the other Sophia herself is the image of woman.

Thus God is feminine Sophia pointing to the mystery of triune Holy Wisdom. The ecclesiological concern for both men and women for the experience of the Spirit is shared by both men and women equally. They experience each other in the fellowship of the Mother Spirit. Walking the path of the Spirit, even though it is a highly personal Journey, is essentially a communal event. We experience the Spirit in relation to God and to fellow people. We receive the Spirit through the church, which represents continuity with others who came before us.

As the bond of love, the Spirit unites us with the rest of the church, and as the eschatological gift, with the purposes of God's coming new creation. Catholicity of Pneumatic Community The catholicity ultimately derives not from the community itself but from the Trinitarian communion which the incarnate Word and Spirit communicate to humankind. The Holy Spirit is the principle of catholicity because it is the Spirit who makes plenitude of the Christ event, given once and for all time, present in the world and history.

In accomplishing this task, the Spirit pours out God's love in human hearts, a love that appreciates and cherishes the others. The Spirit gathers together visibly to the church and directs them to the building up of the whole body; for the Spirit is present and active in the whole world and awakens therein truth and goodness. To realize the catholicity of the pneumatic community,

there is a need for inculturation, which is a Spirit- directed action; under the guidance of the Spirit the community brings the Gospel teaching to its culture and responds to the Spirit present in the reality of that culture.

Conclusion The Holy Spirit binds the church forming it a community. The Sophia or the wisdom is shared by all in the pneumatic community.

Pneumatic community inescapably points to a need for inculturation which is a valid response to the challenge of pluralism in his post-modern world. In the realization of this, lies the catholicity of the pneumatic community i. e. the church. Therefore, the continued existence and relevance of the church depends heavily upon its determined effort towards inculturation and participative communion.

The future shape of the church and its relevance in the pluralistic society will depend greatly upon its readiness to listen to the Spirit speaking through its own peoples, through the poor, through other religions and secular movements, and to discern and follow the promptings of the Spirit. In this post-modern world, the success and the strength of the church lies in the power and mobility of pneumatic community who, empowered by the Spirit, following the incultured way of thinking, praying, living and communicating the message of the gospel.