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Introductory Information and Editor's Preface

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The Hindu-Christian Studies Bulletin is an annual scholarly journal published jointly at the Centre for Studies in Religion and Society at the University of Victoria, Canada, and at the Institute of Philosophy and Culture, Madras, India. The *Bulletin* is the official publication of the Society for Hindu-Christian Studies.

The aim of the *Bulletin* is to create a worldwide forum for the presentation of Hindu-Christian scholarly studies, book reviews, and news of past and upcoming events. Materials selected for publication will be balanced between historical research and contemporary practice and, where possible, will employ analytical and theoretical analysis set within the context of our shared contemporary experience. Contributions are invited and may be addressed to either the Editor or the Co-Editor. Articles of 3000-3500 words are preferred. Send manuscript in paper form as well as on diskette. A stylesheet is available on request. The *Bulletin* adopts a policy of non-gender specific language where applicable. All articles are subject to review before acceptance and may receive editorial modification in the course of publication.

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For subscription information within India, please write to the Co-Editor, Anand Amaladass, at the address above.

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EDITOR'S PREFACE

DURING THE LAST one hundred and fifty years the relationship between science and religion has been a major issue to be dealt with by each religious tradition. Academic journals and learned societies have been established dedicated to the science and religion dialogue. The John Templeton Foundation has directed its resources toward a fostering of the science-religion interchange, offering the equivalent of a Nobel Prize for excellence in the area – won recently by the Australian physicist Paul Davies. Pope John Paul II has made some of his best pronouncements in this regard. In a letter to George Coyne of the Vatican Observatory, the Pope said, “Science can purify religion from error and superstition; religion can purify science from idolatry and false absolutes. Each can draw the other into a wider world, a world in which both can flourish.”¹ It is fitting then that our *Bulletin* devote a special issue to this theme, and that Klaus Klostermaier, himself a Templeton Foundation Prize winner for his course on science and religion, serve as guest editor. Klostermaier has put together four articles on the theme, two from Hindu and two from Christian scholars.

Before turning to Klostermaier's own introduction to the theme, let me briefly preview each of the articles. Varadaraja V. Raman, a Hindu and a physicist, carefully

delineates the lines of demarcation between Vedānta and modern science. He also suggests meeting points and areas of fruitful interaction. Subhash Kak, a Hindu and a computer scientist, is one of India's most innovative researchers. He offers an exciting new way of reading the Vedas as a code for a comprehensive ancient science that served as background for the development of Vedānta. Robert John Russell offers a Christian perspective on the relation between science and religion. He not only rehearses its history but makes valuable suggestions for a positive, creative interaction between science and Christian theology. C. Gordon Winder, a geologist with a positive interest in Christianity, refers to numerous quotes in the Bible that a scientist might find supportive, and pleads for an end to the conflict between science and religion. Through these articles and in his introduction to them, Klaus Klostermaier lays the groundwork for what he calls a “Hindu-Christian-Science trialogue”. By using complementarity as its theoretical model, such a trialogue, says Klostermaier, accepts a plurality of religions and sciences as given and understands their relationship in an ecology of the spirit.

I trust that you will find this thematic issue on science and religion timely and thoughtful. For the 1998 issue our focus will be on the Hindu diaspora communities that

Society for Hindu-Christian Studies: Annual Meeting
Friday, 21 November 1997 – 7:00-10:00 p.m.
Saturday, 22 November 1997 – 9:00-11:30 a.m.
at the American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting, San Francisco

Discussions of presentations by John B. Carman and Francis X. Clooney
as well as Annual Business Meeting.

Both parts are open to all who are interested.

Contact: Kay Jordan. For further details, see p.44.

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have established themselves around the world, and their interaction with Christian host or majority communities and cultures. Anyone wishing to submit an article on this theme should contact me as soon as possible and no later than 1 November 1997.

This issue marks 10 years from the publication of the first *Hindu-Christian Studies Bulletin*. During the past decade the *Bulletin* has become the international journal promoting comparative study and dialogue between the Hindu and Christian traditions. It also played the key role in fostering the establishment of the Society for Hindu-Christian Studies, which meets each year in conjunction with the American Academy of Religion annual meetings.

I look forward to seeing many of our

readers at the Society for Hindu-Christian Studies at the Annual Meeting to be held in San Francisco, 21 and 22 November 1997. Our program there will feature the winner of our first book award, Francis X. Clooney's *Seeing Through Texts: Doing Theology Among the Srivaishnavas of South India*.

Harold Coward
Editor

Note

1. John Paul II, "Letter to Father Coyne, 'A Dynamic Relationship of Theology and Science'."