1. **Introduction**

British viceroy, Lord Irwin, during the famous Round Table Conference held at London in 1931, asked Mahatma Gandhi about what he had to propose to solve the longstanding problems between England and India. Mahatmaji replied: “*the sermon on the Mount has in it the solution for all the problems in the world. Let us practice it and then there will be peace in the world*”. Likewise, human history proves that many people have been influenced by the teaching of the Sermon on the Mount whether they are Christians or not. That is why it has been refered to as the ‘*world’s greatest sermon*’. Gandhiji, later in his autobiography, ‘*my experiments with truth*’, wrote that ‘*the sermon on the mount is the greatest thing ever written in the world*’.

This exposition is an attempt to find out how the ‘*world’s greatest sermon*’ The Sermon on the mount delivered by Jesus gets practiced, lived and implemented by the Catholic Church in Kerala, through its myriad forms of communication techniques which are practiced by the ministries, activities, apostolate and departments. It also makes inquiries into how those communication techniques of Christ helps the Church to serve the people and solve the problems of the society.

The beatitudes that Jesus delivered is one that of more than an ethical principle. It is an integral communication towards human liberation, justice, righteousness, meekness and peaceful coexistence with the sacred. In other words, the decoded messages of peace, justice, liberty, tolerance, thirst for righteousness and mercy are most significant in this era of globalization, digitalization and economic depression. They are the solution “mantras” for humanity as Mahatmaji commended. The Church, which is the continuation of Jesus is supposed to carry out and live these principles; and naturally, its members too.

Thus, the researcher critically enquires in to the communication techniques’ effectiveness of Church and its members in Kerala Society and tries to analyze the precise role of Beatitudes in carrying out these techniques. Critical assessment through the micro level questionnaire survey gives us proper feedback. In addition, the noise factors of different techniques are sorted out meticulously. Thus, the study may also serve as an eye opener for the Church to change its future techniques not only in a micro level but also in a macro level.
2. Scope and Significance of the study

As Richard Dawkins, the well-known English writer criticized in his “the God Delusion”, a supernatural creator almost certainly does not exist and that belief in a personal God qualifies as a fantasy. Dawkins pose the question whether religion fills a "much needed gap", giving consolation and inspiration to people who need it. According to him, these needs are much better filled by non-religious means such as philosophy and science. From the perspectives of Dawkins, this particular study gains much relevance with special reference to Kerala society where there were precise evidence of interference by the religion and religious leaders and consequent social changes and betterment. Or in simple terms, religion played a great role of social transformation in Kerala.

Contradicting Dawkins hypothesis of God Delusion and materialism, Pope Benedict XV1, head of the Catholic Church, declared in his Encyclical letter, Caritas in Veritate that, “without God man neither knows which way to go nor even understands who he is”. Man cannot bring about his own progress unaided, because by himself he cannot establish an authentic humanism. God gives us the strength to fight and to suffer for the common good, because He is our greatest hope. Thus, a Christian humanism that ignite values such as charity, peace, meekness, justice, truth, righteousness and so on is important than mere temporal and mundane values. The Catholic Church is supposed to build these values and life styles through its communication techniques which find its expression through different pastoral ministries and activities in our society.

It is said that religion supplied men something that ‘transcends experience’ or it is a ‘transcendental reference’. It is a ‘breaking point’ or ‘breaking beyond’ our experience as the reputed sociologist Max Weber points out. The beatitudinal principles of Sermon on the Mount helps to attain this ‘transcendental’ or ‘beyond’ life style through practicing meekness, tolerance, mercy, purity of heart etc.

The significance of this study lies in the verification of these general transcendental principles in a micro level. The research enquires in to the critical analysis to sort out whether the Catholic Church of Kerala as a spiritual entity could lead the believers to the path of transcendence and lead a life of humanism and goodness through its communication techniques. Scandalous areas and disgraceful activities from the part of nuns, priests and laity
too would be sorted out through this assessment. Thus, it would definitely be an eye opening or helps for an introspective analysis for the Church.

The scope of the research consists of numerous solutions, noise tackling measures, innovative ministries of utmost importance, change in the mode of communication strategies, systematic planning with short term and long term basis etc. The feedback of the research sheds light upon the leadership and intervention of Church authorities, behaviors and qualities of the priests and nuns, role of Church in the personal life of faithful, department’s communication techniques, critical analysis of the activities etc.

3. Limitations of the study

3.1. Since the proper subject under discussion is very wide it is closely observed and evaluated in a micro level with the help of a questionnaire survey within the particular context of the local Church of Kanjirapally, consisting three districts of Kottayam, Idukki and Pathanamthitta and from it we reach at a general conclusion.

3.2. Only certain feedback of the communication techniques of the Church can be evaluated in its perfect sense since most of them are interior in nature. It is very personal and often the gospel centered living of the believer may not be measured by any outward criteria or human devices. Even if such an endeavor is perpetrated it will be misleading. Thus, only those techniques which are expressed and exposed publically are evaluated here.

3.3. Though certain communication techniques are enlisted and put forward as questionnaire for evaluation, they themselves are incalculable and countless. For example, the minutest non verbal communication through the dress code of the priests and nuns are not discussed here whereby they are important messages from a semiotic perspective. It is needless to tell that the dress code of Saint Mother Teresa of Calcutta would awaken the tender thoughts of mercy and compassion even in an ordinary citizen. Such semiotic aspects of communication techniques are not included in our study.

3.4. Though we deal with the Catholic Church’s Communication techniques of Kerala society, they are confined mainly to the Syro Malabar Church of Kerala for more clarity and precision and again it is narrowed down to the local Church of Kanjirapally. But it is to be said that since all most all the ministries of the Church are somewhat same in general the
communication techniques of the local Church are applicable to the whole Church. Thus from a micro level study we move to a macro analysis.

4. Research design

4.1. The problem

The problems which led to the study of the particular research can be categorized in to two namely: 1) general problems 2) particular problems.

4.1.1. General problems

The beatitudes or the Sermon on the Mount contains great elements of socio cultural realities. It explains and interprets the social nomenclature of the people. The perennial values of beatitudes act as a problem solver in men’s different life realities. The communication technique of the Catholic Church through myriad ministries too aims at this problem solving and soothing efforts. The researcher tries to analyze how far the Church of Kerala assisted the society through its ministries and what was the real role played by the beatitudes in this effort.

4.1.2. Particular problems

It is a fact that the developments and polarization in the socio-political realms in the history of Kerala had led to serious debates and discussions in the Church circle.

Tensions reached at its dominant stages during days of parliamentary elections of 2009 and other numerous instances of self financing college issues in Kerala. This led the Church to unite together irrespective of the regional differences and form a consensus on different issues on the one hand. On the other hand, it led to the difference of opinion among the faithful with regard to the policies of the Catholic Church which in turn resulted in an introspective analysis of her strategies. This particular problem perhaps helped her to replenish herself with more rejuvenation and revamping.

The constant confrontations between the Catholic Church and the former communist regime of Kerala and further confrontations in the field of education and related sectors, tug of war between the political leaders and spiritual leaders, allegations and criticisms against the spiritual figures of the Church from the political sector, controversial issues of Ababa case, tensions emerged from Amen, the autobiography of a catholic ex-nun Dr. Sr. Jesme, issues related with the adoption of a girl by Dr. John Tatumkal, the Bishop of Cochin etc
had revealed that a critical assessment in the communication technique in the Church of Kerala is essential from a biblical background.

5. Specific objectives

5.1. To make an in-depth analysis and critical evaluation of the Catholic Church in Kerala Society and its communication techniques.
5.2. To analyze the impacts of the communications techniques of the Church in Kerala in different strata’s of society with special emphasis on the local Church of Kanjirapally.
5.3. To examine the drawbacks, failures and misdeeds of the communication activities of the Church in Kerala, it’s after effects and tackling steps.
5.4. To inspect the practical application of the values of beatitudes by the Church in Kerala to find out what contributions and substantial changes it had made in the socio economic regions as well as the intellectual and cultural life of Kerala Society.
5.5. To find out whether there are any Biblical principles based upon the spirit of beatitude which played prominent role in moulding and shaping the society of Kerala especially the believers of the eparchy of Kanjirapally.

6. The hypothesis

There should be a paradigm shift in the leadership and the management techniques of the Catholic Church in Kerala society and a new mode of communication strategy is needed.

6.1. Catholic Church should be audacious enough to fight prophetically against the issues of violations of constitutional rights, wearing down of the traditional values and morals and must upheld its rights and duties of pastoral exhortations through pastoral letters and encyclicals.
6.2. Unless and until the Catholic Church in Kerala adopts new communication techniques and management style other than the routine mode decoding and encoding, it will be outdated and irrelevant.
6.3. Even if the deep rooted role of Holy Bible and beatitude in the communication techniques of the Church is immeasurable with definite norms and standard, they are highly influential and are reflected in the activities and expressions of the faithful in different ways.
6.4. Though there are communication styles and techniques in the Church through social media, its management is very poor and incapable of tackling the crucial issues which Catholic Church face today. Thus, modern tactics and plans for empowering the Church’s communication and media sector media is a must.

6.5. There should be new communication techniques in the Church’s myriad ministerial activities.

7. The Methodology

7.1. Field of study and pilot survey

The study is confined to the Kerala society in general. But particular attention is given to the local Church of Kanjirapally, which encompasses three districts of Pathanamthitta, Kottayam and Idukki. The proper questionnaire survey is conducted among the faithful of this area only.

The pilot study, which we term as the eparchial survey and the lineamenta discussion and assembly, from where we have been inspired for this research, was also conducted in the local Church of Kanjirapally, consisting three districts of Pathanamthitta, Kottayam and Idukki.

7.2. Tools of data collection

7.2.1. Primary data

Several tools are used for data collection. They are:

7.2.1.1. Revisited lineamenta survey
7.2.1.2. Revisited eparchial survey
7.2.1.3. Proper questionnaire survey conducted in the Church of Kanjirapally as a case study.
7.2.1.4. The interview schedule among the public relation officers and communication strategists of the Church of Kanjirapally.
7.2.1.5. The documentary schedule from the archives of the Church of Kanjirapally.
7.2.1.6. The observation schedule by closely monitoring the different activities and ministries of the Catholic Church of Kerala.
7.2.2. Secondary Data

One of the important secondary sources the researcher depends on is the international laity conference conducted during August 12-15, 2009, at Mount St. Thomas where in 350 delegates of the Syro Malabar Catholic Church from all over the world had attended. The central theme of the assembly was ‘Church 2030’, in which a lot of concrete suggestions and brainstorming concepts have evolved about the communication techniques of the future Church. All those suggestions from the group discussions and paper presentations have turned to be splendid future communication techniques so as the Church may shine forth as a true witness to the principles of the beatitude.

Further more, the international conferences, discussions, reports, seminars, paper presentations about the activities of the Church by important theologians, Church documents, Holy Bible etc have served as good secondary sources.

8. Conclusion

From the surveys and studies the researcher concludes that there should be certain radical changes in the communication strategies and techniques of the Catholic Church. Innovative techniques and tactics are essential in her pastoral and mission activities so as the Church will be an effective communication agent. It is her duty and mission to respond to the timely needs. There are myriads pastures of at most importance that the Catholic Church should take care of. It is a challenge and responsibility and is possible only through radical and bold steps. The researcher put forward certain innovative suggestions and recommendations which the Church should take notice of, in order that she may be more relevant and effective instrument of service for the better humanity.

Notwithstanding the fact that there are certain drawbacks and failures in the communication techniques, they are the icons and flagship of the Church. In other words, from a corporate communication parlance, the Church is branded through these decoded communication techniques. But more than a worldly and materialistic entity, Church is a spiritual entity or ‘a beyond’ and must work with an attitude of service and charity than business and profit. It should be a guiding principle throughout her activities in the society.

This study illustrates that by practicing the doctrines of beatitudes and employing the communication means and modes, the Church can work wonderfully for a better future and
build up a community where justice, peace, meekness, true brotherliness etc would prevail. One must try to follow the true human life by putting into practice the virtues such as *mercy, purity of heart, peacemaking, suffering for the sake of righteousness* etc.

In other words, the role of the Church is to *comfort those who mourn* with distress and anxiety through inculcating inner confidence, reassurance and mental strength. Sorting out the reasons of distress and anxiety in the society is an integral part of this strategy. Other words, the Church or religion will be irrelevant as Arun Shorie remarks in his famous work ‘does he know a mothers heart’. This is very relevant in today’s’ global economic meltdown, unemployment, farmers suicide and so on. In addition to this, the communication technique of the Church must always express Christian meekness during times of provocation, anger, malice, communal violence, religious fanaticism, riots and vengeance. Even if we can’t create a Sri Buddha, we can at least erect persons like Irom Sharmila, who lead a sort of non-violent communication for a decade. As the famous Buddha tale enlightens us, create a ‘Daruma toy’ (This is a toy of Sri Buddha’s meditative posture; wherever or however we throw this, it would always sit in the meditative posture with cool and calm mindedness) in our society.

Nevertheless, the Church must not forget her prophetic role also. *Dharma, justice, honesty* etc are important qualities to be upheld by her. A society led by greed, bribery, corruption, business mentality etc can’t exist for a long. The demonstrations which took place worldwide such as the ‘occupy wall street protest’, the ‘jasmine revolution’, and democratic movement towards ‘lokpall bill’ and so on are a sign that citizens are thirsting for a change. For this change, unconditional *mercy and peaceful attitude* may be an underlining principle. There are incalculable areas and people who deserve mercy. The poor, prisoners, homeless, handicapped, sick… the list goes on. They may be victims of a particular social set up.

More than that, individuals must be rich with pure heart. As divine masters and religious books states, heart is the base of all good and evil things. If it is pure, goodness will burst out. That is why the mantra, ‘*be a love bomb, not to explode, but to heal the world*’, becomes meaningful in this society. This living flame of the Gospel that resides in the heart must not remain under the mountain. The main concern of Church is not conversion or