CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS OF DATA

4.1. INTRODUCTION

The following chapter provides an analysis of the data from the qualitative interviews with 50 respondents.

4.2. PERCEPTIONS OF CATHOLICS ON CATHOLIC CHARISMATIC MOVEMENT

Among the 1729 respondents of the quantitative survey, 474 (27.4%) respondents said they had affinity with Catholic Charismatic Movement.

Most of the respondents (68%) of the in-depth interview regarded the Catholic Charismatic Movement as a Renewal Movement which was necessary in the Catholic Church. In their perception it offered the adherents an ambience to pray well, involve in worship in a better way and it could dissuade the Catholics from going to Pentecostal prayer meetings. Seventeen (34%) respondents considered Charismatic prayers to be better than the traditional prayer methods, and therefore they wished them to be adopted in all the Catholic churches.
“It is a place of solace for people. People are comforted there. God hears our prayers there, and therefore I go there,” said an interviewee. Deisy, another interviewee agreed on this, as she said,

In the Charismatic movement there is an opportunity to pray well and to involve more in the liturgy. The Word of God is well proclaimed there. People can raise their hands, clap, weep and also pray personally. This should be promoted for the sake of those who want to pray in this way.

There were other views too. One interviewee, by name Stella Joseph, opined, “Charismatic movement is developed like a Pentecostal Church. People desert parishes and sacraments.” Another criticism of the traditional prayer methods was made by a Catholic priest, who said,

The traditional prayer methods in the Catholic Church are western in nature and they are more for priests than people. Therefore there is less participation of people. This leaves the Catholics with fewer opportunities and less satisfaction.

Commenting on the relevance of the Charismatic movement in the Catholic Church, another interviewee said, “Charismatic movement could be viewed as an alternative to Pentecostalism for those who are not willing to attend or affiliate with Pentecostal Churches.”

Bishop Singaroyan, himself a Catholic Charismatic, had been involved in Charismatic prayers since 1978. He felt it was useful, personally. He pointed out that it was a renewal movement in the light of II Vatican Council and that it rejuvenated

\[135\] Mrs. Mary Elizabeth, interviewed by the researcher, Tiruchy, 23.03.2011.

\[136\] Mrs. Deicy, interviewed by the researcher, Tiruchy, 30.03.2011.

\[137\] Mrs. Stella Joseph, Secretary, Vincent De Paul Society, interviewed by the researcher, Sivagangai, 23.03.2011.

\[138\] Fr. Joseph Kennedy, interviewed by the researcher, Palayamkottai, 6.02.2011.

\[139\] Fr. Backia Regis, a Priest of the Diocese of Chengalpattu, interviewed by the researcher, Chennai, 05.03.2011.

\[140\] Bishop Singaroyan, interviewed by the researcher, Salem, 08.03.2011.
the liturgical life of the church; it revived people’s spiritual and prayer life. He also added that it was a gift of the Holy Spirit and it led people to have greater involvement in the liturgy of the Word. He underlined that even though the traditional prayers were rich, content-wise, they easily go away from people’s experience.

Looking at the Catholic Charismatic movement from a different perspective, Emmanuel Dasan, an interviewee, said, “Charismatic movement should be seen with privatisation of religion that came with modernity and as a reaction to privatisation of religion.”

4.3. PERCEPTIONS ON REASONS FOR CATHOLICS ATTENDING PENTECOSTAL PRAYER MEETINGS AMONG THOSE WHO EXPRESSED AFFINITY TO PENTECOSTALISM

Among the 1729 respondents of the quantitative survey, 482 (27.41%) said that they attended Pentecostal prayer meetings, despite the fact they were Catholics.

Fr. Emmanuel Dosan (Priest and Professor of Systemic Theology, Sacred Heart Seminary), interviewed by the researcher, Poonamallee, 04.03.2011.
Among the total respondents of the quantitative survey 66.1% (two thirds) had expressed their approval of their catholic brothers and sisters attending Pentecostal prayer meetings. The data shows that within the lay faithful there is no resentment towards their own brothers and sisters attending Pentecostal prayer meetings.
During the pilot study the respondents cited many reasons for attending Pentecostal prayer meetings. All the reasons were converted into seven variables and their opinions were grouped under five levels viz. ‘not applicable’ to ‘totally agree’

The first reason for attending Pentecostal prayer meetings identified in this study was “For prayers”. Schultze argues, “For Pentecostals, the rigid structure of most traditional Catholic worship services is inhibiting to their communication with the Holy spirit and does not allow for genuine and personal worship”. Furthermore, many feel that an over-emphasis on literacy and the written word have made religion too rationalized and unbending.

According to Covington, A.K., the worship styles of the Pentecostal Church, unlike those of Catholic Church, have functioned to forge new identities and strengthen feelings of self-work in a changing world. He points out one feature of Pentecostal worship style that has been so attractive - its Orality. Whereas many traditional Protestant Churches and the Catholic Church have emphasized the memorization of written creeds and liturgies, the Pentecostal Church has employed a much more spontaneous and less contrived style. Instead of using predetermined prayers, many Pentecostal churches have movements of open prayer, where everyone prays out spontaneously, not reading from paper or repeating prayers that have been used in the past. He claims the idea behind Pentecostal worship is spontaneity, or allowing the Holy Spirit to guide one’s heart and thoughts. According to the present study, 37 percent of the respondents in the quantitative survey agreed that they attended the Pentecostal prayer meetings just for prayers.

The second, third and fourth reasons highlighted by the respondents were that they attended Pentecostal prayer meetings for “healing” (28.2 %), “peace of mind” (33.9%), and “solution to their personal problems” (23%) respectively. Chesnut argues that the fascination of faith healing is largely responsible for attracting


converts to the faith. Closely tied to baptism of the Holy Spirit is the Pentecostal emphasis on healing, and it is believed that a huge number of people are attracted to the church for this very reason.\textsuperscript{144}

While all religions emphasize behaviours that enhance health and well-being, Pentecostalism, in particular, emphasizes its ability to mediate healing through direct communion with god. Medical anthropologist Hans Baer points out that, although “religion often concerns itself with health matters, evangelical faith with a specific focus on healing became most developed during the rise of Pentecostalism at the beginning of the 20\textsuperscript{th} century.”\textsuperscript{145}

Lynn C.D. writes that

\begin{quote}
...people join at low points in their lives when their health or that of family members has reached a critical low. They are instructed to have faith and pray to God for help, and if and when it comes they praise the Holy Spirit for the miracle with which they have been blessed. Stories such as these carry far more weight among those seeking salvation for the crises of their lives than the naysayers who decry faith healing as fraud, and coming from a religion that has failed to alleviate their woes means little.\textsuperscript{146}
\end{quote}

“Freedom from evil spirits” was cited as another reason to attend Pentecostal prayer meetings. Miller\textsuperscript{147} proposes that Pentecostalism ritually assists people in gaining control over themselves and their environments. Known for casting out evil spirits and demons, Pentecostals can use demon possession to explain people’s problems and can subsequently deal with this through their commonly practiced rituals. As per the

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{Cf. R. Andrew Chesnut, Born again in Brazil: The Pentecostal Boom and the Pathogens of Poverty (London: Rutgers University Press, 1977), 51.}
\bibitem{Cf. Hans A. Baer, Biomedicine and Alternative Healing Systems in America: Issues of Class, Race, Ethnicity and Gender (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2001), 121.}
\bibitem{C.D. Lynn, “Pentecostal Charismata and Health: Modelling the Psychoneuroimmunology of an Ethnomedical System,” Term paper (New York: Department of Anthropology, The State University of New York, 2006), 15.}
\end{thebibliography}
outcome of the study 25 percent accepted that they attended Pentecostal prayer meetings “to be freed from the disturbances of evil spirits”, whereas, 55 percent rejected the idea. The remaining 20 percent were neutral.

Another reason was for better understanding of Bible. Pentecostals tend to see their movement as reflecting the same kind of spiritual power, worship style, and teaching that were found in the early Church. For this reason, some Pentecostals also use the term ‘Apostolic’ or ‘Full gospel’ to describe their movements.\textsuperscript{148}

Most traditional protestant denominations would claim the Bible as the final authority, but Pentecostals, emphasizing a living and personalized faith, often give the Holy Spirit precedence, even over the printed word of God. The immediacy of an orally-based religion is powerful and offers instant solutions to struggles.\textsuperscript{149}

For a better understanding of the Bible was the reason for attending Pentecostal prayer meetings to 46 percent of the respondents, whereas, 44 percent did not agree.

“Personal reasons” was the final motivating factor to attend Pentecostal prayer meeting. The structure of Pentecostal services according to Cleary, “are designed to enhance these experiences on a routine basis through expressive, intense, and performance-oriented liturgies”\textsuperscript{150}. “Its greatest theological achievement”, suggests Cleary, “is the freedom of expression and affirmation of self-worth it affords the individual within the community.”\textsuperscript{151} He further substantiates that the success of Pentecostalism is the emphasis on a more spiritual life, beyond just attending the church.

Covington A.K. argues that the Pentecostal faith, by its very nature, is fluid. By emphasizing a personal relationship and even personal contact with the Holy Spirit,


\textsuperscript{149} A. K. Covington, 26.


\textsuperscript{151} Ibid, 7.
Pentecostal claims the ability to gain new insight and new revelation at any moment. The study found that 9 percent strongly agreed and 16 percent of the respondents agreed upon this reason. Whereas, 37 percent strongly disagreed and 20 percent just disagreed.

34 (68%) respondents of the in-depth interview were appreciative of Pentecostalism as they opined that the Word of God was proclaimed well in the Pentecostal churches along with good prayer and singing and people go there to have a new and different experience, where they are assured of psychological relief also. Again, 26 of the respondents of the in-depth interview said that Catholics who attended Pentecostal prayer meetings found something in Pentecostal worship that was missing in the Catholic worship.

52% of the interviewees of in-depth interviews observed Pentecostal prayer meetings have a personalized attention on the followers, whereas Catholic worship is a mere recitation of words.

Bishop Singaroyan another interviewee said,

There is a personalized attention on individuals and people are attracted towards Pentecostalism. This is not there in the Catholic liturgical gatherings. There is also an explicit mention and usage of the Word of God. Bible is often quoted. References and cross-references are given. People are interested in the bible.¹⁵²

Bishop Lawrence Pius added,

In the Catholic Church sermons are non-scriptural and they are too cerebral. Our liturgy is dry, while Pentecostal Churches address the emotional aspect and have space for lot of singing and music. They give importance to the word of God and stress on the importance of healing. Therefore our Catholics also go there seeking emotional fulfilment, healing, fellowship and material benefits.¹⁵³

¹⁵² Bishop Singaroyan, interviewed by the researcher, Salem, 08.03.2011.

¹⁵³ Bishop Lawrence Pius, interviewed by the researcher, Chennai, 01.03.2011.
“There is a personal attention on individuals. Importance is given to the Word of God. In our place even rich people and traditional Catholics have gone there,” agreed Fr. James Victor.154

Another interviewee, Fr. Devasagayaraj added,

I don’t say it is wrong that our Catholics go to Pentecostal churches. We have not given them opportunities. We have not created a thirst for prayer in the Catholic Church. In Pentecostal churches they speak of individual’s salvation. The poor are attracted very much. They go there for a change and it is new and they like the approach of the pastors155.

4.4. Perceptions on the Impact of Attending Pentecostal Prayer Meetings upon Their Personal Lives

52% of the respondents of the in-depth-interview agreed that attending Pentecostal prayer meetings had an impact on individuals’ lives, where they changed their habits and grew in faith. In their opinion Pentecostalism has the power to change personal lives; leading people out of self-destructive patterns of behaviour such as crime,

154 Fr. James Victor, interviewed by the researcher, Tuticorin, 05.02.2011.

155 Fr. Devasagayaraj (Secretary, TNBC Commission for SC/ST), interviewed by the researcher, Puducherry, 07.03.2011.
alcohol and drug addiction, marital infidelity, and laziness. There was a general agreement that many became more fervent Christians after attending Pentecostal Churches as they believed that they have discovered Jesus. “Some of my relatives also have gone to Pentecostal churches,” said Bishop Lawrence Pius, “and have become more fervent Christians. They say, ‘I have discovered Jesus now and realize I am now saved.’”  

Mr. Joe Gnanaparagasam, an interviewee added,

I know a person who underwent a lot of change in himself after beginning to attend Pentecostal prayer meetings. He was indebted and a drunkard. He became alright. Stopped drinking, smoking and going for films. He has stopped all luxurious spending. There is revival in the family. He has become a personal witness in his new church.  

Alternatively there were other views too. Mr. Maria Singam said, “Positively, they get liberated from their personal bad habits. Negatively, their families get divided. Couples keep themselves away from conjugal relationships. Mothers are deserted by their children and relatives are estranged”

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156 Bishop Lawrence Pius, interviewed by the researcher, Chennai, 01.03.2011.

157 Mr. Joe Gnanapragasam (President of Vincent de Paul Society), interviewed by the researcher, Tiruchy, 03.02.2011.

158 Mr. Maria Singam (Diocesan Catechist), interviewed by the researcher, Tuticorin, 05.02.2011.
The general perception among the respondents was that regular attendance in Pentecostal worship services brings prosperity and changes in their living standards. However 36% of the respondents of the in-depth-interview were of the perception that attending Pentecostalism affected family relationships causing division in families and isolating individuals within the family.

Approaching the phenomenon in a sociological point of view, Mr. John Peter said, “Those who are caught up in personal difficulties go to Pentecostal churches seeking solutions. They only become isolated from their families and relatives”.  

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159 Mr. A. John Peter (Asst. Professor, JIM, St. Joseph’s College), interviewed by the researcher, Trichy, 07.03.2011.
4.6. Dual Membership

Kingsley observed, “50% of the listeners in Mohan C. Lazarus’ conventions are Catholics; they go and listen to and participate, but their membership was still with Catholic Church.”\textsuperscript{160}

According to Joe Gnanapragasam, “some people had become addicted to participating in Pentecostal conventions and prayer meetings, while they did not leave the Catholic Church.”\textsuperscript{161}

\textsuperscript{160} Mr. Kingsley Fernando (Charismatic preacher), interviewed by the researcher, Tuticorin, 05.02.2011.

\textsuperscript{161} Mr. Joe Gnanapragasam, interviewed by the researcher, Tiruchy, 28.11.2010.
4.7. Perception on Reasons for Catholics Attending Pentecostal Prayer Meetings (Among the Total Sample)

The reasons for attending Pentecostal prayer meetings are analysed with the level of approval by respondents which are presented in the following table. (fig.9)
During the personal interview, “Jesus-experience” was mentioned as the main pull factor for many Catholics. Fr. Panneer Selvam said,

Priests and the religious in the Catholic Church did not give this Jesus-experience to the Catholics. Pentecostal prayer is emotional whereas the Catholic Church believes there should be no space for emotions. People should experience this emotional involvement which is an essential phase in the human life. 162

Mr. Joe Gnanapragasam explains this factor of emotional involvement in Pentecostal worship, that attracts its followers, as he narrated the following,

There is a widow from neighbouring Sembattu parish. She says, ‘I come to the Catholic Church for Eucharistic celebration. I go to a Pentecostal church also. I go there to pour out myself and weep. Such is the difficult life I am leading. If I don’t go there and weep, my heart will burst.’ This sense of relief and solidarity is there in Pentecostal churches. 163

Emmanual Dosan perceived that people are frustrated with Catholic liturgy and with the leadership and this dissatisfaction and disappointment acts as the push factor. 164

Fr. Francis Xavier had this to say,

I find it difficult to judge the Catholics who attend Pentecostal prayer meetings also. I sympathise with them. People like to have prayer atmosphere which is there. People look for convenience and they are quality oriented. They get there what they want. In the Catholic liturgy everything is priests-centered and it is the priest who is officiating. In Pentecostal churches everybody prays and the pastor is only a preacher. Therefore, instead of condemning we should ask what we could offer. 165

162 Fr. Panneer Selvam (Priest, Regional Director of BCCs in the Catholic Church of Tamilnadu), interviewed by the researcher, Salem, 05.03.2011.

163 Mr. Joe Gnanapragasam, interviewed by the researcher, Tiruchy, 28.11.2010.

164 Fr. Emmanuel Dosan, interviewed by the researcher, Poonamallee, 04.03.2011.

165 Fr. Francis Xavier S.J. (Director, LICET), interviewed by the researcher, Chennai, 02.03.2011.
Fr. James Victor agreed on this, as he said, “The Catholic Church, instead of condemning, should change its attitude and approach.”

There was a general observation that Catholic Church and the worship did not give what people wanted; there was a personal touch in the Pentecostal worship and in the approach of the Pastors, which were missing in Catholic Church; also Pentecostals give more importance to the Word of God. The respondents appreciated the informal and extemporaneous style of worship of the Pentecostals. These aspects were viewed as some of the pull factors for the rich and the poor Catholics towards Pentecostalism.

### 4.8. Perception on Level of Impact

37 (74%) respondents of the in-depth-interview agreed that the growth and spread of Pentecostalism affected the Catholic Church, as the number of Catholics went down. They considered it a challenge, acknowledged that the flaws of the Catholic Church came to the fore and it helped the Catholic Church mend its ways.

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Fr. James Victor, interviewed by the researcher, Tuticorin, 05.02.2011.
Panneer Selvam, an interviewee said, “Growth of Pentecostalism is a threat to the Catholic Church and as an evidence I could say, out of the 70 Catholic families in a village near Keeranur in the district of Pudukottai, 35 had already become Pentecostals”.167

Kingsley, another interviewee said,

Growth of Pentecostalism affects the Catholic Church because ordinary people go there. At Punnakayal near Thiruchendur more than 30% of Catholics attend Pentecostal prayer meetings on Sundays. Traditional village regulations are giving in.168

There were other views as well. According to Rajendran,

Growth of Pentecostalism affects the Catholic Church to some extent; it is not a big loss, but on the contrary Catholic Church benefits. Their growth is not as it was earlier. BCCs, Charismatic ministry and involvement of young priests in the Catholic Church have checked the growth of Pentecostalism.169

Bishop Singaroyan also agreed on this, as he said,

I don’t think the growth of Pentecostalism affects the Catholic Church. Exodus is possible. But it doesn’t affect much. 85%-90% of Catholics who go there come back after a few years. Only a few families get stuck. In a way, it serves both as a warning and a call to renew their Catholic faith. People are becoming serious about their Catholic faith. Though it has brought pain to priests and a sense of loss, they have begun to realize that they have failed to do their duty. It is not an alarming situation, however the phenomenon is there. From the point of view of evangelization, Pentecostals are doing a good work.170

167 Mr. Panneer Selvam, interviewed by the researcher, Tiruchy, 22.12.2010.
168 Mr. Kingsley Fernando, interviewed by the researcher, Tuticorin, 05.02.2011.
169 Mr. Rajendran, interviewed by the researcher, Tiruchy, 23.03.2011.
170 Bishop Singaroyan, interviewed by the researcher, Salem, 08.03.2011.
“We cannot say that Pentecostalism affects the growth of the Catholic Church because the Catholic Church doesn’t grow at all. It is in a stagnated phase. Catholic people are worried about it but the Catholic priests don’t appear to be concerned about it. Pentecostals grow as a popular religion because nothing is imposed from above,” opined Fr. Joseph Kennedy.  

4.9. **Perception on the Growth of Pentecostalism** 

The quantitative survey as shown in the table above indicates that the reasons for the growth of Pentecostalism have been opportunity to pray well in an expressive way, good preaching of the word of God, distribution of handouts/Bible and healing experience of people.

In comparison to the above findings, 35 respondents, who participated in the in-depth-interview, agreed that the growth of Pentecostalism was a reality in Tamilnadu and it

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171 Fr. Joseph Kennedy, interviewed by the researcher, Palayamkottai, 6.02.2011.
was evident by the fact that the number of Pentecostal churches have gone up in their neighbourhood.

30 respondents held that Pentecostalism has not emerged as a popular religion, since Pentecostalism cannot be considered as a single entity but is perceived more as independent and non-hierarchical congregations.

Fr. Francis Xavier, commenting on the growth of Pentecostalism, had this to say,

My impression is it is spreading. Even traditional Catholics are leaving. We have failed somewhere. The need for prayer is increasing. In the Catholic Church liturgy is structured and very little time for personal prayer. We need to study what makes them very generous there to the extent of even paying one tenth of their income, and what makes them change so radically.172

Fr. Panneer Selvam said on this,

Pentecostalism is growing fast. Even non-Christians go there. They evangelize rather seriously, while we have lost missionary zeal. Ordinary people from villages also go there. Pentecostalism is able to attract people at the grass-roots. Their approach is people-centered. In a way it is an advantage to the Catholic Church, because it is a challenge to us. They reflect about it and there is a quality change in the Catholic Church. Formation of BCCs, Charismatic movements and evangelization ministry are give prominence in the Catholic Church now.173

Fr. Backia Regis added,

Pentecostals conduct big meetings and a lot of people go there. Our Catholics go there out of curiosity. We need to look at other side also. Human development is plural in nature. Spiritual celebrations alone are not enough. We need all round development with concern for human rights, social issues and economic

172 Fr. Francis Xavier S.J., interviewed by the researcher, Chennai, 02.03.2011.

173 Fr. Panneer Selvam, interviewed by the researcher, Salem, 05.03.2011.
development. The Catholic Church does it. Through BCCs, creative ministries and availability of priests we do it in our parish and several people are coming back.¹⁷⁴

Agreeing to this Mr. Joe Gnanapragasam said, “Exodus of Christians in Pentecostalism is not very strong these days after the emergence of Charismatic revival in the Catholic Church and formation of BCCs in the parishes. There is now better contact between priests and people.”¹⁷⁵

Mrs. Edward Selvarani, a Catholic lay interviewee from the Diocese of Palayamkottai in the southern part of Tamilnadu, also agreed to this observation, when she said,

Pentecostalism is having good growth in this part of Tamilnadu. People go there looking for wonders. Those who are economically backward and those who want to be liberated from their day-to-day struggles go there. But in the past five or six years number of Catholics going there has come down and I could see that Catholics begin to grow in their faith.¹⁷⁶

Commenting upon the nature of the adherents to Pentecostalism, Fr. Devasahayaram said,

Pentecostalism attracts people of all sorts. Those who cannot be part of the structured Catholic Church, go there. From dissatisfaction and dejection people go there. The most vulnerable sections of the society i.e. socially, economically and educationally backward people, possibly Dalits, and those who are psychologically weak are the target groups of Pentecostalism.¹⁷⁷

Calling the growth of Pentecostalism a passing phenomenon, Mr. Jeyaraj said,

¹⁷⁴ Fr. Backia Regis, interviewed by the researcher, Chennai, 05.03.2011.

¹⁷⁵ Mr. Joe Gnanapragasam, interviewed by the researcher, Tiruchy, 28.11.2010.

¹⁷⁶ Mrs. Edward Selvarani (a lay woman from the Diocese of Palayamkottai) interviewed by the researcher, Palayamkottai, 07.02.2011.

¹⁷⁷ Fr. Devasagayaram, interviewed by the researcher, Puducherry-Cuddalore, 07.03.2011.
I don’t know whether there is any basic difference between the Catholic Church and Pentecostalism. After all we all believe in Jesus. They grow in numbers, yes, but it is a passing phenomenon. It has only increased division among us.  

Sharing his point of view in the same line Mr. Pancras, another interviewee said, “Pentecostalism is growing. After all, they also speak about Jesus. They give importance to the Bible and bear witness to their faith.”

Citing the reason of ‘neighbourhood influence’ (presence of many Pentecostal churches in their locality creates an unavoidable influence) for the growth of Pentecostalism, Ms. Meril Christo said, “Pentecostalism is growing because of its money power. It is not becoming a popular religion as such. Most churches grow because of neighbourhood influence.”

Among the interviewees of the in-depth-interview, 35 opined that Pentecostalism was growing, though they differed on the reasons for the growth.

4.10. Perceptions on Healing

The respondents were of the opinion that the healing ministry played a very significant role in the growth and spread of Pentecostalism. 31 respondents who participated in the in-depth-interview spoke about healing as something we all needed. They believed that it was God who heals and through our prayers we could get healed. However, there were varied opinions on the Healing ministry as practised in Pentecostal churches.

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178 Mr. Jeyaraj, interviewed by the researcher, Madurai, 16.12.2010.

179 Mr. Pancras, interviewed by the researcher, Tiruchy, 10.12.2010.

180 Ms. Meril Christo (a college student), interviewed by the researcher, Palayamkottai, 07.02.2011.
Speaking on ‘Healing’ as an important pull factor of Pentecostalism, Mrs. Deicy said, “Healing is a good ministry and people needed it; people bear witness to their healing and it helped the growth of Pentecostalism.”\(^{181}\)

“The socially disadvantaged people need money and health. They cannot afford to go for paid health care systems. They depend upon God for miraculous healing. Their belief in God heals them,”\(^{182}\) opined Fr. Devasahayaram.

“Pentecostals believe that getting healed is the sign of obtaining God’s grace. In the Catholic Church we don’t insist upon healing. Let our people go there,” commented Fr. James Victor.\(^{183}\)

“Both physical and mental healing is very necessary for people. After all it is God who heals. Catholic Church should spend more time on healing,” added Fr. Backia Regis.\(^{184}\)

Bishop Singaroyan looked at it in another perspective, as he said,

> Healing sessions in Pentecostal churches are fine in the context of people’s need for physical healing. People look up to God and healing is His gift. Problem comes when insisting upon magical aspect of healing. Not everyone does it. There are pastors who do it. Crowd pulling point is there.\(^{185}\)

“Emphasis on healing is very good. Catholic charismatic movement also has rediscovered it. At times Pentecostals go to the extreme. It should not become superstitious,” said Bishop Lawrence Pius.\(^{186}\)

\(^{181}\) Mrs. Deisy (Family counsellor), interviewed by the researcher, Tiruchy, 30.03.2011.

\(^{182}\) Fr. Devasagayam, interviewed by the researcher, Pondicherry, 07.03.2011.

\(^{183}\) Bishop Singaroyan, interviewed by the researcher, Salem, 08.03.2011.

\(^{184}\) Fr. Backia Regis, interviewed by the researcher, Chennai, 05.03.2011.

\(^{185}\) Bishop Singaroyan, interviewed by the researcher, Salem, 08.03.2011.

\(^{186}\) Bishop Lawrence Pius, interviewed by the researcher, Chennai, 01.03.2011.
“It is the theology of prosperity as opposed to the theology of the cross,” opined another interviewee and added, “Catholics believe redemption is possible only through our pains and struggles. But Pentecostals look for miraculous ways to get relieved of sickness, debts and struggles.”

“People need healing. We need to scientifically approach this. We should create systems like marriage encounters, psychological therapy sessions and other spaces where real reconciliations are possible. When we don’t do these, ministry of healing becomes a fraudulent activity,” said Mr. John Peter.

Taking a strong exception to the healing ministry, Fr. Emmanuel Dossan had this to say, “It is possible that there are psychological healings. But I don’t believe it. Though we can understand it, but we cannot promote it. Healing in Pentecostalism is a kind of opiating agency. Therefore, we cannot promote it. It is an evil.”

4.11. ASPECTS CATHOLICS APPRECIATE WITH PENTECOSTALS AND THEIR WORSHIP

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187 Fr. Joseph Kennedy, interviewed by the researcher, Palayamkottai, 6.02.2011.

188 Mr. John Peter, interviewed by the researcher, Tiruchy, 07.03.2011.

189 Fr. Emmanuel Dosan, interviewed by the researcher, Poonamallee, 04.03.2011.
The above table shows that there is a high appreciation of the Pentecostal religious ethos such as good prayer life, importance to and preaching of the Bible, solidarity and fellowship they promote among themselves, community singing, healing prayer and perseverance of the Pentecostal pastors. This positive appreciation is also reflected in the catholic perception of the Pentecostal forms of worship presented in the following table.

37 (74%) of the interviewees of the in-depth-interview said that Catholics are more and more attracted towards Pentecostalism. Lively prayer sessions, assurance of God-experience, sense of relief and solidarity, possibility of belonging to a new community of believers and the possibility of getting financial benefits were perceived to be factors of this attraction.

The way Pentecostals give importance to healing was also appreciated by the interviewees. Fr. Francis Xavier put it this way:

Healing is there from the beginning. You have the power and let it heal people. In our culture touching is important. We go for a funeral and touch the hands just to say we are with you and in moments of joy you hug somebody. But let us not overdo it. Touching and healing is a meaningful gesture.\(^{190}\)

Another interviewee added,

\(^{190}\) Fr. Francis Xavier, S.J., interviewed by the researcher, Chennai, 02.03.2011.
When you touch the emotions of individuals, healing process gains momentum. They shout, pray and feel through the body. The healing experience is there. While the Catholic Church insists that we should carry the crosses of suffering, Pentecostalism says that we should be liberated from pain and suffering.¹⁹¹

Speaking on Glossolalia, Bishop Singaroyan said,

Basing on the Scriptures, I would say, it is useful and it is a very fruitful method of prayer, in both the personal and communication aspects. One is able to express one’s deeply personal and emotional self in Glossolalia.¹⁹²

Sharing about his own experience, Fr. Panneer Selvam said,

Previously, I have mocked at Glossolalia. Later on, I got the gift myself. It is really a great gift. I can relate with the Lord very closely. It was an anointing experience. It is the proof of the Holy Spirit. It helps me to pray always. It can only be experienced and cannot be explained.¹⁹³

Another interviewee, a Catholic lay preacher added, “Speaking in tongues is possible. I speak in tongues and I can explain that.”¹⁹⁴ “In the Catholic charismatic movement also we have people who speak in tongues. It is not against the Catholic Church, though there may be possibilities of pretence and exaggeration.”¹⁹⁵

Commenting on the Pentecostal outlook of life, Mr. John Peter was of the opinion that "Pentecostals held ethically conservative outlook of life. Their rigorist tendencies were both a protest against moral laxity and also efforts of asceticism.”¹⁹⁶

¹⁹¹ Sr. Venantia FSJ., interviewed by the researcher, Tiruchy, 25.02.2001.
¹⁹² Bishop Singaroyan, interviewed by the researcher, Salem, 08.03.2011.
¹⁹³ Fr.Panneer Selvam, interviewed by the researcher, Salem, 05.03.2011.
¹⁹⁴ Mr. Pancras, interviewed by the researcher, Tiruchy, 10.12.2010.
¹⁹⁵ Bishop Lawrence Pius, interviewed by the researcher, Chennai, 01.03.2011.
¹⁹⁶ Mr. A. John Peter, interviewed by the researcher, Tiruchy, 07.03.2011.
4.12. Aspects Catholics Appreciate with Pentecostal Pastors

Respondents of the in-depth-interview perceived the difference between Pentecostal pastors and Catholic priests. Bishop Singaroyan opined, “A Catholic priest asks his parishioner ‘what do you want’? But a Pentecostal pastor asks his church member ‘what shall I do for you?’ It says everything.”\textsuperscript{197}

Fr. Panneer Selvam subtly put it,

> While Pentecostal pastors feel equal to people Catholic Priests relate with them at the administrative level. There is no participatory methodology. They find people as threat. Therefore, people go to a pastor for prayers and go to a priest for school admission.\textsuperscript{198}

\textsuperscript{197} Bishop Singaroyan, interviewed by the researcher, Salem, 08.03.2011.

\textsuperscript{198} Fr. Panneer Selvam, interviewed by the researcher, Salem, 05.03.2011.
Another interviewee sarcastically commented, “In the Pentecostal churches pastors are considered as leaders. In the Catholic Church the presbyteries are like Taluk Offices and Collector’s Offices with archives and files.”

“In the Catholic Church both priests and lay people keep a distance, though they celebrate the sacraments together,” added another interviewee, Mrs. Paul Jancy.

4.13. PERCEPTIONS ON CATHOLIC WORSHIP

“Catholic worship is ritual-oriented and priest-oriented, while Pentecostal worship is not ritual-oriented but people-oriented,” said Fr. Francis Xavier. “Catholic Church’s survival depends upon its worship pattern. Therefore it controls,” added Fr. Emmanuel Dosan. But it was countered by Sr. Venantia, when she said, “We Catholics are kept united by the liturgy. It leads to a unified church. We have liturgy, where Christ-events are given importance. Pentecostalism is only Word-centered. The sense of the sacred is not there”.

4.14. PERCEPTION ON SOCIAL ISSUES AND THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Diversified responses were found during the personal interview on how Catholic Church views the social issues in the community. 44% of the respondents of the qualitative analysis held the view that women got good space and freedom in the Pentecostal churches, which was evident by the fact that there were women leaders and preachers.

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199 Mr. Joe Gnanapragasam, interviewed by the researcher, Tiruchy, 28.11.2010.

200 Mrs. Paul Jancy (PG Asst. Teacher), interviewed by the researcher, Thoothukudi, 29.03.2011.

201 Fr. Francis Xavier S.J., interviewed by the researcher, Chennai, 02.03.2011.

202 Fr. Emmanuel Dosan, interviewed by the researcher, Poonamallee, 04.03.2011.

203 Sr. Venantia (FSJ, Provincial), interviewed by the researcher, Tiruchy, 25.02.2011.

204 Fr. Emmanuel Dosan, interviewed by the researcher, Poonamallee, 04.03.2011.
“In the Catholic Church there is a little role for the lay faithful in the administration of the church affairs. Parish councils are there only to endorse what the parish priest wants. It is dictatorial. All the more in the Catholic Church women are always considered as secondary citizens. There is no leadership role for women - not even for nuns. It is male-dominated and there is gender disparity. In the Pentecostal churches everybody prays together but it doesn’t mean there is gender sensitivity,” commented Mr. John Peter.205

4.15. Perception on the Number of Catholics Attending Pentecostal Prayer Meetings after the Formation of BCCs

Mr. Joe Gnanapragasam viewed that "the exodus to Pentecostalism was not very strong after the emergence of Charismatic revival and formation of BCCs206 in the Catholic Church".207

Ms. Meril Christo was of the view that "Catholics who had attended Pentecostal prayer meetings return to Catholic worship, when they did not get what they had expected".208 In the opinion of Fr. Backia Regis, "activities of the BCCs in parishes and the creative pastoral ministry done by priests act as a motivator for the Catholics to return to Catholic worship methods".209

Fr. Panneer Selvam said, “the exodus of Catholics to Pentecostalism is a challenge and it helps to improve the commitment level of priests and to promote a close

205 Mr. A. John Peter, interviewed by the researcher, Trichy, 07.03.2011.

206 BCCs stand for Basic Christian Communities, an effort of the Catholic Church to take the believers to the roots of their Christian faith – faith of the Early Christian Communities.

207 Mr. Joe Gnanapragasam, interviewed by the researcher, Tiruchy, 28.11.2010.

208 Ms. Meril Christo (UG I year student), interviewed by the researcher, Palayamkottai, 07.02.2011.

209 Fr. Backia Regis, interviewed by the researcher, Chengalpattu, 02.03.2011.
relationship with people. It has also ensured a better participation of lay people in the liturgy.”

4.16. PERCEPTION ON DEVOTION TO MARY AND SAINTS AND SACRAMENTS

76% of the respondents of the qualitative study observed that they did not favour the Pentecostal practice of adult baptism and the other 24% said they were open to the idea of both infant baptism and adult baptism. But there were some difference of opinion among the participants about infant baptism.

“Infant Baptism is very much part of the Catholic tradition though Adult Baptism is meaningful,” opined Bishop Lawrence Pius.211 Another interviewee, a Muslim convert to Catholicism said, “I am fine with Catholic tradition of Infant Baptism.”212

“I won’t agree with Pentecostal understanding of baptism. A child doesn’t ask for food, yet we give. It is better to baptize the children as early as possible,” said Mr. Jeyaraj.213

Agreeing on the point, Fr. Francis Xavier said, “I am happy with the Catholic Church regarding its understanding of baptism. We choose for our children and take responsibility of them. A child grows and it has freedom. Let it choose in its adulthood.”214

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210 Fr. Panneer Selvam, interviewed by the researcher, Salem, 05.03.2011.

211 Bishop Lawrence Pius, interviewed by the researcher, Chennai, 01.03.2011.

212 Mrs. Roseline Sinduja (a member Charismatic Movement), interviewed by the researcher, Tiruchy, 03.12.2010.

213 Mr. Jeyaraj, interviewed by the researcher, Madurai, 16.12.2010.

214 Fr. Francis Xavier S.J., interviewed by the researcher, Chennai, 02.03.2011.
Personal interview respondents’ overall opinion was also that unity of Churches is quite possible and preferred. But there were also those who viewed the gap between Catholic Church and Pentecostalism quite unbridgeable.\textsuperscript{215} One critical argument was that even though the leaders of both the Churches talk about unity, they would never take any meaningful step towards achieving total unity. The reasons are that Pentecostal Churches’ popularity, mostly, is based on the founder individual’s power and charisma and they never would compromise their control over their Church, and may not move towards unity; rather they are actually trying to keep their supremacy and independence by improving and maintaining their individualism. Likewise, in the Catholic Church, which is highly priest-oriented, the hierarchy will never truly commit themselves to achieve unity.\textsuperscript{216}

\begin{figure}[h]
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\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{ecumenism_perception.png}
\caption{Perception of ‘Ecumenism’}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{215} Mr. A. John Peter, interviewed by the researcher, Tiruchy, 07.03.2011.

\textsuperscript{216} Mrs. Rani (Asst. Secretary, Women Commission), interviewed by the researcher, Kumbakonam, 25.03.2011.