



PRISON VOICE

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Vol. XVII

Issue 9

NATIONAL MONTHLY

₹20/-

PMI Warriors





Visit to Yerwada Observation Home and Distribution of Masks and Sanitizer, Cup Cakes, Cream Rolls and Bananas on the Occasion of Maharashtra Day, PMI Pune



**Distribution of Groceries to Prisoners' Families
PMI Bhopal Unit**

**Praying Office for the
Departed Soul of Prisoner
Jayanagar Government
Hospital, Bengaluru**



**Sr Adele SCCG, Who Visits
Bangalore Central Prison
Everyday Celebrates Her 80th
Birthday**



**Launching Paper Bag
Production unit
Van Thuan Home, Bengaluru**

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PRISON VOICE

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Are You Willing?

"Help a Prisoner's Child
Prevent a Potential
Criminal"

80% of the children of
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I'M NOT A SURVIVOR, I'M A WARRIOR"



Sr Lini Sheeja MSC
Chief Editor

Be a warrior and not a worrier' is a motto followed by every member of the Prison Ministry India as our trust is placed in God alone who had called us to surrender ourselves in the service of the lost, the last and the least. "I have been fighting since I was a child. I'm not a survivor, I'm a warrior", says our PMI warriors who have dedicated their lives to the brethren behind the bars. We appreciate and acknowledge all the police authorities and jailors who have always been a great support and their accompaniment of our warriors in fulfilling their mission.

I am reminded of my experience with an abandoned woman. In 2007, as part of our novitiate, we were sent to BOSCO Mane, Chamrajpet, Bengaluru (an NGO working with the Young at Risk) for 15 days of exposure programme. One evening after our supper, we received a call from the public about an abandoned lady lying on the street. Fr Edward Thomas SDB, Executive Director of BOSCO and Father of the Poor assigned me the task of rescuing the lady and placing her at the Mother Teresa Sisters' Old Age Home, Yelahanka, Bengaluru for shelter and further care. I left with another novice and a driver, reached the spot at K R Market and found the lady who was looking around for the hands who would save her. She was stinking and no one wanted to go near her. Gazing into her eyes, I was heartbroken and speechless.

I held her hands and she started to weep. I could understand her unshared feelings through her tears. We were told by the public

that she was a beggar, had nobody and her life was spent on the streets. The three of us carried her with gentle love, placed her in our vehicle, and turned the vehicle to the police station. The kind-hearted police attended to us immediately and did all the legal procedures. It was at 11 pm that we reached Mother Teresa Old Age Home, carried the lady inside, gave her a shower, food, thanked the nuns and left the place. On the way back to BOSCO, I was disturbed and I had a sleepless night thinking of the plight of the woman. Next day morning, I went to the police station to thank them. As I was narrating the incident to the Inspector, he got up from his chair and said, "I salute you sister, for your great work".

During the PMI sixth national convention at Hyderabad, Shri Devendra Gaud Home Minister made a public statement by witnessing the works of Sr Leena Kattokaran FMM, a warrior of PMI from Telangana, "A gun cannot change the prisoner, a nun can change the prisoner". Mr Das, Superintendent of the Central Prison, Coimbatore, Tamilnadu remarked about Sr Selvi, the PMI warrior who goes to the central prison every day after spending considerable time in prayer. He said, "When Sr Selvi comes to prison, our prison is no more a prison, rather a place of peace". This latent talent runs through our PMI warriors who responds to the call of God and spend their lives in redeeming the souls for God. A big salute to the warriors of Prison Ministry India!

Traits of PMI Warriors

From National Coordinator's Desk

1. Introduction

A warrior is a very brave, skilled, fearless and experienced combatant like Benaiah one of David's mighty men who killed a lion in a pit on a snowy day (2 Sam 23: 23) or Spartacus, the Thracian gladiator (111-071 BC), or the legendary female warrior and a Roman Catholic Saint Joan of Arc (1412-1431 AD) who approached France's King Charles VII and offered assistance in his efforts to expel the occupying English in the later days of the Hundred Years' War. Every Christian is a warrior. Every Catholic priest, every nun, consecrated religious person is a super dynamic warrior. Prison Ministry India (PMI) volunteers are called to be the most super dynamic warriors like Jesus, the greatest warrior who accomplished his entrusted task by surrendering himself to be crucified on the cross. PMI volunteers are called to be warriors, heroes and heroines to release, reform, rehabilitate, reintegrate and redeem prisoners. This article focuses on the ten salient features of PMI warriors to make use of them in our adventurous ministries for the lost.

2. Know Your Commander-in-Chief

Jesus the righteous, the holy, the true, and the mighty warrior is the commander-in-chief of PMI warriors. St John, in his Revelations, insightfully illustrates the features of Jesus, the Holy warrior: He rides on a white horse; with justice, he judges and wages war. His eyes are like blazing fire, and on his head are many crowns. He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God (Rev 19: 11-16). The PMI commander-in-chief is Jesus the Good Shepherd who searches the lost, heals the wounded and commits his life so that they may have life in abundance (Jn 10: 1-18; Ezk 34; Ps 23). The PMI commander-in-chief is Jesus Christ



Rev Dr Francis Kodiyan MCBS
National Coordinator & Secretary to CBCI
for Prison Ministry India

crucified who offered paradise to the good thief on the cross (Lk 23: 32-43).

3. Know Your Enemy

Our enemy is always Satan and his different manifestations. He was a murderer from the beginning, and has nothing to do with the truth because there is no truth in him. He is a liar and the father of lies (Jn 8: 44). St Paul illustrates it better in his letter to the Ephesians: "We do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places (Eph 6: 12).

4. Know Your Target

The target group of PMI is clear – the lost such as prisoners, prostitutes, human trafficking victims, drug addicts, beggars, alcoholics and so on. Jesus' purpose on earth was to inaugurate a system of redemption for Adam's fallen family. "God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved" (Jn 3: 17). "I have not come to call the righteous but sinners" (Mk 2: 17).

5. Know Your Armor

Prayer and fasting are the most powerful weapons of PMI warriors. St Paul elucidates well about the spiritual armour in his letter to the Ephesians:



From National Coordinator's Desk

Take up the whole armour of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints (Eph 6: 13-17).

6. Know Your Task

Jesus' entrusted task was to redeem humanity from the clutches of sin and death. He accomplished this task by obeying unto the cross, through his passion, death and resurrection. PMI warriors shall remain steadfast in their faith and imitate the humility of Christ, who "emptied himself" and obedience of Christ who "became obedient unto death, even death on a cross" (Phil 2: 7-8). As a warrior for Christ, we train ourselves daily under the direction of the Holy Commander and become ready to immolate ourselves.

7. Know Your Style

Like Jesus and his Apostles who were led by the Spirit, PMI warriors are called to be led by the Holy Spirit. To be led by the spirit means to have high spiritual intelligence. To grow in spiritual intelligence, we need to take care of our daily spiritual exercises, especially the Eucharistic celebration, Eucharistic contemplation, Eucharistic adoration and relentless prayer (Eph 6: 18).

8. Know Your Battleground

Like how battlegrounds are often very tough terrain such as deserts, rocky mountains,

snowy peaks, marshy valleys, and violent oceans, PMI warriors are called to heal hardcore criminals in different notorious prisons. Hence their maxim itself is maximum inconvenience. Inconvenience is PMI's convenience.

9. Know Your Battalion

One of the tactics of the Spartan army was to fight shoulder-to-shoulder or back-to-back. Fighting alongside is better than fighting alone. PMI is a prayer group under the patronage of CBCI and we do our ministry representing the Church, keeping her norms and teachings. Make sure that the whole Church intercedes for us when we fight.

10. Know Your Mantra

"Thank You, Jesus" is the mantra of PMI warriors. "Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved" (Acts 4: 12).

11. Know Your Bank

Bank of Divine Providence - BDP is the bank of PMI. Complete trust in the Lord is the PMI style. "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you" (Mt 7: 7). PMI follows the style of St Peter, "Silver or gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk."

12. Conclusion

The ten traits of PMI warriors are 1) know your commander-in-chief, 2) know your enemy, 3) know your target, 4) know your armour, 5) know your task, 6) know your style, 7) know your battleground, 8) know your battalion, 9) know your mantra, 10) and know your bank. PMI warriors should aspire for these traits and make use of them in their day-to-day adventurous ministries for the lost, the least and the last.

A Warrior Who Hoped Dared and Served

**Most Rev Dr Peter Remigius
First Chairman of Prison Ministry
India**

Sr Lini Sheeja MSC
National Secretary, PMI

Introduction

A warrior is a protector of those in need. A warrior is the guardian of the ways of honour and courage. A warrior will not put his own desires above what is right. Above all, a warrior is always motivated by his duty. This courageous warrior is none other than our former chairman, Most Rev Dr Peter Remigius, who tirelessly worked for the growth and well-being of Prison Ministry India. He was a man of hope, daring, serving and living his episcopal motto. He served for 25 years as the chairman of Prison Ministry India. Bishop Peter Remigius was the first chairman of Prison Ministry India, who guided the ministry to the greater glory of God and represented PMI in CBCI.



Alter Christus

Bishop Peter Remigius, the eldest son of Mr Peter, an accountant of St Andrew's Church Manakudy and Mrs Clara Peter, was born on 20 May 1939 at Melmanakudi in Kanyakumari district, Tamilnadu, Kottar diocese. After completing his school education, he joined St Aloysius Minor Seminary, Nagercoil. He did his priestly

studies at Sacred Heart Major Seminary, Poonamalli and was ordained a priest for the diocese of Kottar on 18 April 1966 at Madras by Most Rev Dr Arulappa, the then archbishop of Madras-Mylapore.

Shepherd

After ordination, Fr Peter was appointed as the assistant priest of Saral (1966-1969), Palliady (1969-1970) and Parakunnu (1970-1973). At Parakunnu he had the rich experience of assisting the Belgian missionary, Rev Fr James Themper, who started the Kottar Social Service Society. In 1973, at the age of 33, he was appointed

Director of Kottar Social Service Society. He served as the director of the Social Service Sector for nine years and then served as the parish priest of St Francis Xavier Cathedral Kottar (1980-1990). In his capacity as Forane Vicar, he became a shepherd of 29 parishes and 35 churches. He was the director of Caritas, a Christian Social welfare organization from

1973 to 1975 and was the chairman of the Famine Commission of the Diocese of Kottar from 1974 to 1976. He also served as the secretary of the Christian Continental Development Forum (CCDF), Asian Partner of Human Development (APHD), the executive member of the International Migration Commission (IMC) and the projects' director and coordinator of the diocese.

Episcopacy

Fr Peter Remigius was consecrated and installed as Bishop of Kumbakonam on 3 January 1990 by His Eminence Lourdasamy. His motto is Hope, Dare, Serve. As the good shepherd, he served the diocese of Kumbakonam for 18 years. He was appointed Bishop of Kottar on 30 June 2007 and took canonical possession of the Diocese of Kottar on 24 August 2007.

PMI Chairman for CBCI

The CBCI standing committee meeting held at St John's Medical College Hospital, Bengaluru on 13-15 September 1999 recognized PMI on an experimental basis. CBCI asked PMI to amend its bylaws according to the terms and conditions of CBCI and Bishop Peter Remigius took interest to get it approved on a permanent footing from CBCI. Finally, on 24 August 2000, Prison Ministry India was officially recognized by the CBCI and Most Rev Dr Peter Remigius was appointed as its first chairman. On 17 August 2003, CBCI formally recognized St Maximilian Kolbe as the Patron of Prison Ministry India. On 1 October 2014, PMI was allocated a separate desk under the Justice, Peace and Development Commission of CBCI.

Prison Ministry Sunday

After gaining recognition from the CBCI, Bishop Peter Remigius approached the council again and requested a Sunday to be allotted for the ministry. It was agreed that Prison ministry Sunday could be celebrated

in connection with the feast of St Maximilian Kolbe (14 August), the patron saint of the Prison Ministry India, and permission was granted to have a second collection from the faithful. During every Prison Ministry Sunday, Bishop Remigius used to forward a pastoral letter to all the bishops in the country. He not only forwarded the letters but used to offer Holy Masses and collect money for the ministry in person.

PMI Spokesperson to CBCI

In CBCI meetings, Bishop Remigius used to speak about PMI and encourage the bishops to begin the ministry in their dioceses. He literally cried and appealed to the bishops insisting that Jesus came to the world for the sinners. Invoking the gesture of the Holy Father John Paul II who forgave Mehmet Ali Agha, the one who attempted to assassinate him, he requested that the ministry be continued in all the prisons in their dioceses.

Conclusion

No one can love this ministry without a profound spiritual foundation. We have seen him reciting his daily prayers without break, even amidst busy travel schedules. Really, he is a warrior of prison ministry and will continue to be the warrior! We cannot write of the Indian freedom movement without mentioning the name of Mahatma Gandhi. In the same way, Prison Ministry India cannot write its history without the name of the Most Rev Dr Peter Remigius. We remain indebted to him for his tireless service for the brethren behind the bars.

Fr Varghese Karippery A PMI Warrior of Insight, Innovation and Inspiration

- Rev Dr Francis Kodiyan MCBS
National Coordinator, PMI

Introduction

Fr Varghese Karippery, a great prophet of the 21st century, is a PMI warrior of insight, innovation and inspiration. Like Steve Jobs, the great innovator, Varghese gave birth to many movements for the emancipation of those who live in the peripheries. Together with Fr Francis Kodiyan, he founded Jesus Fraternity and Prison Ministry India, a Catholic movement working under the CBCI for the release, reformation, rehabilitation and reintegration of prisoners. He proved himself to be a mighty PMI warrior by his commitment to prisoners' reformation, and by his selfless service as director of Snehashramam and national coordinator. His greatest contribution lies in his 3R theory for prisoners' reformation and rehabilitation which has become a roadmap to thousands to liberate themselves from the clutches of sin and crime. This article briefly highlights his contributions to humanity.



Love Bomb Exploder

Born on 10 April 1959 at Nellikunnu, Thrissur, Kerala, India as the 9th son of Mr Karippery Pyloth and Kunjila Adampukulam, Varghese joined the Minor Seminary of Thrissur Archdiocese. For his priestly studies, he came to St Thomas Apostolic Seminary, Vadavathoor. On 8 December 1981, both Varghese and Francis were appointed to attend phone calls. During their friendly

conversation in the phone cabin, Varghese told Francis "Be a love bomb. Let it be exploded. Not to kill but to heal the broken-hearted". They became friends and decided to pray daily before the Blessed Sacrament. This fraternity and friendship with the Most Holy Eucharist led them to go to the peripheries of Kottayam which over time guided them to the Kottayam Sub-jail.

Jesus Fraternity Cofounder

The attempt to visit the Kottayam prison with the assistance of Prison Fellowship inspired Varghese and Francis to form a prayer group in their batch to pray for the people in the peripheries. Their visit to the neighbouring prisons led them to the All Kerala Prison Pilgrimage in 1986 and the formation of Jesus Fraternity, a prayer group for the welfare of prisoners, their families and victims and was recognised by the KCBC in 1989.

Snehashramam Director

When Jesus Fraternity launched its first rehabilitation centre for released men prisoners called Snehashramam, the KCBC appointed none other than Fr Varghese as its first director. He successfully served as its director from 1991 to 1994 and again from 2003 to 2009. As its director, he tirelessly toiled to release, reform, reconcile, rehabilitate, reintegrate and redeem more than 500 prisoners.

3 R Theory

Fr Varghese' prolonged experience with the release and rehabilitation of prisoners gave him the insight to form a theory for their reformation. It is known as the 3R Theory which consists of Release, Renewal and

Rehabilitation. Release involves providing hope in life, leading them to forgiving love, strengthening their willpower, and thereby bringing about self-transformation. Renewal comprises of mental resetting, reconciliation with those whom he/she hates, visualising good in others and self, work therapy, prayer, and living in the present. Rehabilitation consists of initiation to a normal family and social life with job facilities done with the assistance of local police and local Catholic parish.

National Coordinator

In 1994, Fr Karipperiy was appointed to extend the Jesus Fraternity ministry to the national level. Like an explorer, he travelled all over India and convened a national convention in Bengaluru on 13-15 August 1994. During this convention, the new name Prison Ministry India was taken and Fr Varghese was elected as its first national coordinator. In 1995, he launched the national office in a cowshed at St Jacob's Farm, Huskur, Bengaluru which was later shifted to the leprosy rehabilitation centre at Sumanahalli. In 1996, the PMI office was shifted to the Teacher's colony at Koramangala and finally to Thomas Layout, Carmelaram, Bengaluru.

Author

Fr Varghese Karipperiy wrote the following books which shed light on the founding charism, spirituality and lifestyle of Prison Ministry India: 1) co-authored with Latika, Prisoners our Own Brethren (1998), 2) Star of Hope in Dark Cells (2000), 3) Mochanayatra (Malayalam) (2000), 4) Fube Therapy (1995), and 5) Aantharika Saukyathinte Suvarnna Thakkol (Malayalam) (2000).

Innovator

Fr Varghese is a man of great creative intelligence, innovation and insight. Besides

Jesus Fraternity and Prison Ministry India, he launched many relevant and timely ministries.

1) Sarathi – a movement for the welfare and coordination of taxi and autorickshaw drivers recognised by the Kerala Catholic Bishops' Conference (KCBC). This is an implementation of the labour actualisation theory by transforming the employees to become productive at maximum capacity. 2) ChrisGold – a movement for the retirees so that they spend the evening of their life in joy, peace and serenity glorifying the Lord. 3) Ladyglobal – meant for the education of nursing students by the cooperation of women themselves. 4) Global Children – an association for the welfare of children by the assistance of children themselves. 5) Shanti Samaj – meant for the welfare of wandering beggars, mental patients and street children in Thrissur city.

Archpriest

Fr Varghese, like the good shepherd, served as assistant parish priest at St Thomas Forane Church, Palayur (1989), and St Antony's Forane Church, Ollur (1990). He was parish priest at the Little Flower Church Poomala (1991), St Joseph's Church, Vettukad (1992-1994), St Antony's Church Chuvannamannu (2003), St Joseph's Church Kuriachira (2016-2019), and at present, he is the Archpriest of St Thomas Archiepiscopal Church, Palayur.

Conclusion

With his motto, "Think globally, act locally and reform personally" and with his practice of the "maximum utility theory of commitment", Fr Varghese Karipperiy has become an embodiment of empowerment of prisoners, drivers, retirees, women, children, beggars, headload workers, mental patients and street children. With his creative intelligence and unfathomable thirst to serve the lost, the least and the last, wherever he is appointed he makes an enduring difference.

Sr Leena Kattookaran FMM The Legend

- M D Vincent

First General Secretary, Telangana

1. Introduction

Having heard the knock at the door, Sri B.P. Acharya IAS, Collector of Warangal stood up to warmly welcome a short, smiling, elderly sister. After serving her a cup of hot tea, the collector enquired what he could do for her. She introduced herself as Sr Leena Kattookaren FMM, a retired nun. She said, "Sir, I request you to permit me to visit prisoners behind the bars." "What!" the collector was shocked and said, "Why on earth do you want to visit prisoners for?" Sr Leena presented her point very politely. "Well, they are lonely, discouraged and have no one to talk to them affectionately. Hence, I wish to see them and console them. Kindly grant me the necessary permission, Sir." The collector scratched his head and said, "But it is risky for you to visit these unpredictable criminals, sister." Sr Leena smiled and said, "Let it be Sir, I have no one. I gave up everything. I have no family bindings. Being all alone I can afford the risk to make them feel that there's someone to care for them and to convince them that every saint had a past and every sinner a future." Comprehending the nun's sincerity, Mr B.P. Acharya said, "Okay sister, give me a couple of weeks and I will get back to you." A few days after the above incident in 1988, Sr Leena and her community were surprised to receive a letter, rather an order, from the Direct General of Correctional Wing of the Police Department of the then united Andhra Pradesh that Sr Leena Kattukaran FMM was granted permission to visit not just the jail in



Self - Sacrificed Warrior

Warangal, but also all the jails and sub-jails in the state of Andhra Pradesh!!!

2. Nuns are better than Guns

In the 6th National Conference hosted at Hyderabad, a few minutes before the function began, the Home Minister Devendra Gaud enquired of Sri Krishnarao, "IG sab, you always tell me that it's extremely difficult to deal with prisoners. Then what on earth is this little Sister and team doing in prison? Do the prisoners care for them?" IG Krishna Rao was more than delighted to answer, "Sir, it is astonishing that the prisoners listen to this sister and team better than to us." "Is it so!" The stunned HM probed, "What is the magic behind their ability to get that much attention from prisoners?" "Well, Sir," IG Krishnarao explained, "We, the official staff, approach the prisoners with the law in one hand and the lathistick in the other, whereas these sisters and volunteers meet the prisoners with the Holy Scriptures in one hand and love in the other. No wonder the prisoners sit quietly, listening to them for hours together like small kids." Others present at the venue prompted the Home Minister Sri Devender Gaud to make a public statement, "Nuns are better than Guns". The next day, all the newspapers printed those words in their headlines.

3. The Legend

Mr Narasimha Rao IPS, Mr Ahmad IPS, Mr Sidaiah DG, Mrs Basheera (the retired superintendent of the Women's Central Prison), Mrs Mini Mathew IAS, Mr B.P. Acharya IAS, and several others attended the last rites and offered floral tributes to Sr Leena. As he was about to leave the premises, the DG said, "Whenever we meet the Home Minister, Vincentgaru, he tells us only one thing, 'You please take care of Sister Leena. Don't trouble that elderly

sister.” Mr B.P. Acharya also called and asked about fulfilling her last desire. “We shall definitely attend to her last wish. See! Even non-Christian officials recognised and respected her ambition for Prison Ministry. The Home Minister admonished the prison authorities keeping in mind the new restrictions that they had imposed on PMI volunteers in Telangana stating that they will take in only professionals who have done MA in Psychology and Sociology.”

In this context, Sr Leena along with Fr Dion Isaac and I had gone to meet the Principal Secretary Home, and the Home Minister himself requested them to relax the latest rules for PMI visits, as several IAS officers like Daana Kishore IAS, Mini Mathew IAS, B.P. Acharya IAS, Rajeev Acharya IAS, Raymond Peter IAS were convinced that the very visit of PMI volunteers brought lots of joy to prisoners by bringing down their stress levels. In fact, in countries like Canada their team of doctors, psychologists and social workers work for the reformation of prisoners. Sr Leena, the Legend who worked for prisoners in pain and suffering till she breathed her last, may she rest in peace. May the doors of prisons open soon for the PMI unit of Telangana.

4. Retired but not Tired

Because of her extraordinary contributions to PMI, Fr Sebastian Vadakumpaden invited her to the Assam conference and offered her air tickets when she expressed her inability to travel due to her health and advanced age. She had been unable to climb even a single step without the assistance of other people for the past few years. She gently refused the offer but prepared 20 volunteers to attend the meeting by motivating the diocesan coordinators on behalf of Fr Dion. About 2 weeks before she breathed her last, she visited the DG V.K. Sing along with 5 priests and 5 nuns as her last effort to request the DG to ease the rules for PMI volunteers. I received the last phone call from her towards

the end of September. Her last words were, “Vincent, visited the DG. His new office is on the second floor. Imagine the hard task I had to climb so many stairs. The DG said he would allow those who did BA and MA in psychology to council and teachers to teach languages and subjects. Where can we get psychologists?” I said, “Let us request all our religious heads to train a few of their candidates in psychology. Let us also propose to our national office to create an educational wing to cater to this special requisition which may slowly spread to other states also.” Sister Leena said, “Let’s prepare a new list and approach the DG once again.” These were the last words I heard from her. Alas, within two days we had to see her in a coma in Apollo Hospital! As Fr Dian said, the strain she underwent in climbing so many stairs brought her health to ruins. Further, she got wet on the way to the DGs office that led to pneumonia making it necessary to admit her in ICU till she closed her eyes permanently. It is amazing that the FMM superiors and community encouraged and supported Sr Leena’s every effort for PMI unconditionally. Sr Leena herself often used to say, “But for the extraordinary support and encouragement of my superiors and community, my services for PMI would not have been what you have witnessed.”

5. Conclusion

Thanks to FMM sisters for giving us a legend! So much so, when she left office, she left the bank accounts of Vimochana with impressive savings made up of her award money and gifts from friends and relatives. All her resources were pooled into the PMI account. Thus, she lived and gave her last breath for the PMI. All of us are sure that she is in heaven praying for everyone in PMI. If this world could see her noble services and reward her time and again, “Don’t the Heavenly Father know how much more to bestow upon (Mt 7: 11) her beloved daughter!” Eternal rest grant to her Lord! Let perpetual light shine upon her. May her soul rest in peace. Amen.

**SR NOELLA - A UNIQUE
WARRIOR**

**Who fought for the welfare of
the suffering brethren.**

Sr Adele Korah SCCG
National Executive Member

Sr Noella was the backbone of the Prison Ministry during the period of her service as a volunteer. She served the suffering brethren without counting the cost. Though she was the headmistress of a school, she travelled to Parappana Agrahara Central Prison from her Cluny convent in Malleshwaram, Bengaluru, rather than taking rest at the convent. She used to spend all her free time on Saturday afternoons and Sundays in the prison, meeting the needs of the prisoners in whatever way she could. She was a hardworking person who served with a smile and shed sunshine in the lives of every brethren whom she served; gave comfort and consolation to everyone irrespective of caste and creed.



Sr Noella was very sensitive and inferred the needs, pains of the brethren even before they expressed it to her. There were persons in pain who said, "I would have died of sorrow if not for her compassionate love bestowed on my aching heart". Another inmate said, "She made me a new person by sharing with me God's unconditional love. She was the first to talk with me, when no one else cared or was

concerned about me, that too during my life's most difficult and worst time spent here in prison". "The Almighty God who saw my pain sent Sr Noella to me in the year 2002 so that I could receive motherly love and care from her." Several brethren would wait for her arrival, because she loved all of them, not differentiating among the brethren who were in need.

When Sr Noella met a prisoner, who was a habitual offender, she was moved to tears and begged him to keep away from crime, revealing to him that our God is a forgiving God who accepts every sinner if one turns to Him in repentance. She shared with him God's word and helped him to turn to the Lord who accepts him as he is. She was a mother to the prisoners who missed their mothers. She was ever ready to visit the houses of the inmates to reconcile parents with their sons and daughters who were in prison, so that they may accept them back home after their release. When the officials refused the entry of volunteers to prison once, Sr Noella managed to get the needed permission and continued her visits. Her zeal for the ministry helped her to surmount problems and continue her services.

I entered the Prison Ministry as a full-timer in the year 2004. I was staying in the government quarters allotted by the Inspector General of Police, Sri Revanna Siddhiah for the stay of Religious sisters.



Loving Warrior

But Sr Noella was taking two buses and an auto to reach the prison after her teaching hours in the school. I found Sr Noella bursting with zeal and generosity. She was a person filled with a sacrificing spirit and she counted no obstacle too difficult to overcome. She never came empty-handed to the prison. With the permission of the prison authorities, she would provide the brethren with toiletries, clothes and so on. She was known as “Chocolate Sister” and even the D.I.G of the prison used to enquire “Where is the Chocolate, Sister?” From the year 2004 onwards, I used to meet her while coming into prison, and I found that she was a person who counted no sacrifice as too much.

Whenever we had to organise cultural programmes for the celebrations in prison, she would get the programme ready, practising dances, skits and so on, providing the inmates with the needed costumes, dancing bells, etc. I wondered often whether she had flying wheels under her feet, when I would see her moving between the men’s section and women’s section of the prison at lightning speed. The love of God and people in need urged her to move ever forward. She was a very good companion to me in my ministry and I always received her companionship and cooperation. When I served as a unit coordinator in the Central Prison, Bengaluru, she was my right hand helping fulfil all my responsibilities. I could entrust her with any service because I knew she was ever reliable. We travelled together to Delhi for the National Conference of Prison Ministry India. I recall the beautiful

experience we had in Delhi in her company. Sr Noella was a shining figure in the cultural programme we organised in the evening at the National Convention. I cherish even now the video of her dances, which I saved on my laptop.

The unfortunate, most unexpected, accidental demise of Sr Noella, shocked us all and we questioned, “Why O Lord, have you plucked away this beautiful flower, from the garden of the Congregation of Cluny and the family of Prison Ministry?” She was the beloved of her bridegroom Jesus who wanted her to be at his side, close to him amidst the angels to sing his praises along with the heavenly choir. I see her as a person who emptied herself in generous, selfless service for the welfare of the suffering brethren behind the bars and consumed herself, burning out like candlelight to bring comfort to the lives of others, who required help. May she enjoy the eternal reward in her heavenly home and pour down blessings on all of us. May we ever strive to emulate her in our life of service.

A warrior takes responsibility for his acts, for the most trivial of acts. An average man acts out his thoughts, and never takes responsibility for what he does.

- Carlos Castaneda

My Journey with Late Sr Mary Jane A Committed Warrior

Mrs Goretti Martins
Volunteer, PMI Goa

Our life becomes beautiful when we live with beautiful people around us. In our life's journey, we meet or encounter various people, but we remember and cherish just a few, who touch our lives in some unforgettable way. I was blessed and privileged to have met late Sr Mary Jane in the year 2003 when I first joined Prison Ministry India. Since then, we developed a very close bond with each other. We shared all our joys and sorrows, our challenges and success stories. Late Sr Mary Jane was like a spiritual mother to me; from whom I learnt umpteen good things. Now, I would like to pen down a few memories that I cherish.

Before joining Prison Ministry, she was the Superior General of the Congregation of the Sisters of Holy Family Goa. After her retirement, she was inspired to work for prisoners. This thought came to her mind after she attended a seminar at Goregaon Seminary Maharashtra in 1985 where she was touched by the humane approach and concern for humanity displayed by Kiran Bedi. Since she wanted to start the Goa unit of Prison Ministry, she invited the then National Director Fr Varghese Karipperry to Goa for the general body meeting of CRI.



It was at this meeting that the Prison Ministry was formed and the late Sr Jane was unanimously voted as the coordinator of PMI Goa on 17 October 1997 till her departure from this world in 2017. The challenging mission was given a boost during the first Christmas programme organised at Fort Aguada Jail. Here one of the inmates expressed his deep gratitude and pleaded her to visit them more often. For this, she got an overwhelmingly positive response from prison officials.

She started working for prisoners not only in Aguada but also in Sada Jail, Vasco, and at the judicial lockups in Mapusa, Panjim and Margao. She started various educational courses. Literacy classes were conducted in English and Hindi. Computer education in the central jail Aguada was started to equip inmates with basic skills and training for employment. Activities like making paper bags, handicrafts, painting, flower making, tailoring, bakery, candle making and formal certificate courses were also introduced in practical jobs like plumbing, electrical trade and music.

Besides these, numerous sports activities, tournaments and games were introduced. Medical camps and value-based programmes were organised by inviting doctors from GMC and IPHB. Art of Living personnel was invited to speak on drugs, alcoholism and other personality development issues. To create an atmosphere and mindset of



Kind Warrior

peace and tranquillity, she introduced Yoga and Vipassana classes. In 1992, she founded Asha Sadan at Baina for the betterment of prisoners and their children. Here, they were given training in papad and pickle making, tailoring classes, needlework and handicrafts to make a living after release. A multifunctional school for protecting and promoting children's interests at Kiran Niketan Zuarinagar was also set up. The late Sr Mary Jane was also appointed to the Child Welfare Committee of Apna Ghar from 1999 for three years. In March 2008, she started a quarterly News Letter on prisoners. She was also appointed on the Board of Commissioners along with a judge, senior advocates and government servants to visit jails and Apna Ghar.

Enormous efforts were made to help the inmates realise that he or she was born to live a happy life. Birthday parties with a prayer service, cultural programmes, and celebration of different religious festivals were organised to create communal harmony. She also encouraged several school teachers to motivate students to prepare greeting cards for the inmates every year. She encouraged people to contribute to set up a fund for unfortunate children. Her work for the poor and needy for more than four decades paid rich dividends. Most students passed the elementary school and some went up to graduation; some entered professional courses. She also helped organise a workshop for public awareness on the topic "Prisoners' Rights and Human Rights". As a member of the Diocesan Women's Desk, late Sr Jane organised and conducted counselling sessions for women.

I would like to end this write up on the late Sr Jane with one of my favourite quotes: "Whatever we do for ourselves alone dies with us, but whatever we do for others remains forever, for it is immortal". Today, I can say these words are very true in the life of late Sr Mary Jane, as she always lived for the well being of others; and although she is no more with us, she is still remembered for her good work that she left behind for the least, the last, and the lost.

Free Distribution of Groceries to Prisoners' Families

The maxim, "Helping hands are better than praying hands" has been realized during the outbreak of Covid-19 in Kurnool as far as the families of prisoners and released prisoners are concerned with the free distribution of provisions on 29 April 2020. With the help of the Prison Department and Rtd. DSP's in Kurnool we could trace prisoners' families and released prisoners' families in Kurnool to lend them assistance for survival during the lockdown. Before distribution, tokens were distributed to avoid scuffles.

Around 110 of prisoners' and released prisoners' families were identified. Rev Fr Pasala Lahastraya, the AP state coordinator, along with Rtd. DSPs in Kurnool collected contributions in cash and kind. Provisions were distributed with the blessings of Most Rev Dr Anthony Poola, TCBC, Chairman of Prison Ministry India and Fr Francis Kodiyan the national director of PMI.

Prisoners' and released prisoners' families were appreciative of Most Rev Dr Anthony Poola, Fr Francis Kodiyan, and the benefactors for their kind gesture.

A Genuine Warrior MARLENE LALHMINGSANGI

- Elizabeth Gualnam
and Marlon Dixon Mason

1. Introduction

“Let us do good deeds as much as we can without delay as we shall be passing through this life only once”, said Marlene Lalhmingsangi. In the early months of 2006, I met Marlene for the first time. She was very friendly, humble and small in stature. One day, Zoram Entu Pawl (ZEP) introduced to her the concept of Prison Ministry India. I will not forget her words, “In all of my life I have seldom served God, limited as I may be, I would like to devote the remaining years of my life to the service of God”. With the approval of the Bishop of Aizawl, Most Rev Stephen Rotluanga CSC, she was appointed Coordinator of Prison Ministry India, Mizoram unit in July 2006 and continued in that capacity until she departed from this world on 7 June 2011.

2. Prison Ministry India, Mizoram Unit

With a dream and passionate zeal for starting PMI Mizoram unit, she went to Bengaluru to be trained in the Prison Ministry of India. After completing her training for 15 days in Bengaluru she returned to Aizawl with the passion to start Prison Ministry India in Mizoram. Thus, the Prison Ministry India, Mizoram unit was officially inaugurated on 27 July 2006 by the Most Rev Bishop Stephen Rotluanga CSC, Bishop of Mizoram, Aizawl diocese. Mrs Marlene Lalhmingsangi was appointed the coordinator of PMI, Mizoram unit.

She worked tirelessly to officially start a unit of the Prison Ministry India in Aizawl. She initiated the effort and took care of the ministry that started from nothing and graduated to a state-level unit. Its work now covers the central jail and district jail, Aizawl; and eventually extended to the district jails of Lungle, Champhai, Saiha and Kolasib.

3. Founders Visit to Mizoram

In March 2014, Fr Francis Kodiyan and Fr Varghese Karippery, the two founders of PMI were invited by Mrs Marlene to promote Prison ministry in Mizoram. They both visited the prisons in Mizoram and promoted prison ministry in many Catholic religious institutions.

4. Challenges

As PMI had neither funds nor sponsors, it depended solely on begging for help. She went around, begging and requesting people to contribute and join the Prison Ministry. She invited them to visit jails and help convert prisoners through their kindness and love for God. At the outset, it was difficult for her to get help or financial support from the Church. The Church already had several evangelical and developmental works going on at the time. Nobody seemed to care about prisoners and people considered them really bad human beings. Nevertheless, she did not stop seeking help; she was persistent and determined in her efforts. She fought like a mother, who fights for her children's subsistence. She humbled herself and bowed down, knocking on door-after-door, and stood up for the rights of the prisoners and advocated for their rehabilitation. She never stopped seeking help and mercy for the welfare of prisoners.



5. Combatting Cancer

In 2011, she developed thyroid cancer and by May 2011 her condition had become critical and she became very weak and could not take chemotherapy. She never complained of pain nor did she show any signs of much suffering, God was with her. Fr Arullappan, the parish priest of St Mary's parish was by her side to give her the last sacraments. He mentioned that when he was giving her the last sacrament, he said to her, "This is food for your journey to heaven, are you ready to go", to this she answered, "Yes I am". Eventually, she passed away peacefully at 7 am on 7 June 2011.

6. Conclusion

Her dedication was tremendous. Prisoners simply adored her and called her mother. Religious conviction, cast and faith were no barrier; she loved her work and her love was rooted in Jesus Christ. Br Devassy, Principal of St Paul's Higher Secondary School, Aizawl, Mizoram said, "Prisoners will miss her, she is a role model for everyone, even the priests and the nuns. Her dedication is truly noble. She prioritised her ministry above her family." Most Rev Stephen Rotluanga, Bishop of Aizawl said, "She is a woman of great humility, who advocated the thought, 'They shall increase and I must decrease'."

Beyond Lockdown

Sr Sophya Thomas, Bhopal Unit

The Lord says through the Prophet Isaiah (15: 14), "The Oppressed shall speedily be released, they shall not die and go to the pit nor they lack bread". In this unexpected time of the lockdown, empathising with our brethren who are behind the bars, we are trying our best to extend our helping hands to them and their family members. When the lockdown began, we contacted the superintendent and the legal aid officer to express our willingness to help. Acting on the information from the prison that they were making masks, we purchased more than 3000 masks from the Central Jail, Bhopal to distribute in villages and slums.

Through the jail officials, we could contact the family members of prisoners to give them details regarding special parole available during this pandemic. The process was to give the name and details of two surety and the proper address of residence so that they could reach the proper place safely. We also contacted our advocate to provide legal help. Through our constant effort and drive many could go on parole. We also distributed grocery items to prisoners' families. We are still in touch with the jail officials to help poor prisoners, who are out on parole. Many prisoners who are out on parole or bail were seeking help over the phone. We directed them to the nearby mission stations of Bhopal Archdiocese. Thus, we could become a ray of hope to many helpless people. "Taste and see how good is the Lord." Being in this lockdown he has allowed us to remain within the four walls of our houses to become more sensitive, humble, approachable, kind and truly human. For Jesus says, "Be merciful just as your heavenly Father is merciful" (Lk 6: 36). Let us pray during this time "Search me O'God and know my heart, test me and know my thoughts, see if there is any wicked way in me and lead me in the way everlasting (Ps 139: 23-24). May we listen to the cry of the poor and oppressed and become good Samaritans.

ZEALOUS SR ZAVERIA

Fr Dion Issac
State Coordinator, Telangana PMI

Alas! Prison Ministry loses one more star warrior in Sr Zaveria Alphonso. God gifted 3 star warriors to take Prison Ministry India [PMI] to its peak in both Telangana and the Andhra Pradesh. Sr Leena Kattookaren FMM, Sr Alice Crasta SCCG, Sr Zaveria Alphonso, St Ann's Providence are the three main pillars on which the PMI is built in both the Telugu-speaking states. It is a great loss that while we lost Sr Leena and Sr Alice much before, Sr Zaveria also breathed her last on 13 May 2020, it being the feast of our Lady of Fathima. We trust that all the three went to their heavenly abode telling us loud and clear, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith, now there is in store for me the crown of glory which the Lord will award" (2 Tim 4:7). Sr Zaveria, with her simplicity and commitment won the hearts of prisoners and volunteers. She deserves a great tribute from all of us. Recollecting some milestones from her life:

1. Sr Zaveria, A Missionary

True to her name, our dearest Sr Zaveria too was a missionary within the four walls of the convent. She preached the Gospel through her exemplary life. She was prayerful and self-sacrificing, zealous and generous, kind and compassionate, faithful and dedicated,

honest and sincere, hard-working day and night, rendering valuable services to the poor and needy and to the congregation at large.

2. Her Early Days

Sr Zaveria Alphonso was born in Suratkal, Mangalore, on 29 May 1932 to Mr Marian Alphonso and Mrs Seraphine D'Silva. She spent most of her life in Secunderabad community, doing various services like taking care of the building construction, maintenance and supervision of the campus and also as a Community Bursar, except for five years, when she worked in Eluru, as a warden of St Theresa's College hostel. From 1968 to 1973, she was appointed as Provincial Bursar during Mother Margaret's tenure. She was also actively involved in the Prison Ministry and in the formation and development of small basic Christian communities.



3. Her Vocation

Sr Zaveria came in contact with our Sisters at Angelore, Mangalore, when she assisted in serving the elderly in the Home for the Aged, run by our nuns. She stayed with them for 14 months, helping them. Seeing the situation there, the life of poverty followed by the nuns, she was determined to join the Congregation of the Sisters of St Ann. She entered the novitiate on 03 January 1952, received the religious habit on 01 January 1953, accepted the holy profession on 01 January 1955, and took her perpetual vows on 01 January 1961.

4. Prison Ministry

While rendering multiple services to her community, she spared quality time for the Prison Ministry at Hyderabad. At the request of Sr Leena Kattookaren, she rendered her services as PMI's [A.P. Branch] first treasurer. Sr Leena Kattookaren always praised her accounting work saying it was extremely neat, ordered and clear. As a volunteer, she always took the first step in supporting our visits and all the programmes in all four prisons in Hyderabad. We celebrated important feasts like Christmas, Easter, Holy, Rakhi, Independence Day, Republic Day and International Women's Day. During the unit meeting, whenever the state coordinator would ask the volunteers how they would manage the celebrations in jails, Sr Zaveria was always the first one to say that she would take up A to Z activities in the open-air jail that she visited regularly. She would arrange for cultural programmes including transport and snacks for all the inmates, guests and volunteers on her own. Inmates and prison officials had tremendous respect for her simplicity and heart-warming activities. She was a great strength and companion to Sr Leena Kattookaren and Sr Alice Crasta. In addition, she was a great inspiration to all the volunteers.

With respect and gratitude to the departed soul, I would like to convey my condolences to the Sisters of the Congregation of St Ann, to the family members of Sr Zaveria, Mgr. Swarna Bernard, the spiritual director and all the volunteers of PMI.

Reaching Out to Desperate Migrants

Anthony Jacob, Pune

In the current lockdown, millions of poor Indians who migrated from villages to cities in search of livelihood were left stranded far away from home. They are suddenly without the means to earn a livelihood and take care of their families. They are willing to work but there is no work available as a result of which these migrants are short of money. They are trying to return to their villages. Several have resorted to walking hundreds of miles to reach back home. All this has led to a feeling of desperation and frustration among these migrant workers.

Intending to prevent them from coming into conflict with the law and committing crime(s) to survive, the PMI Pune has been identifying clusters of migrant workers with the help of local authorities and have been providing them with food and daily necessities. Again, on 8 May 2020, we provided food grains to 100 plus migrant families with the help of the local police. We ensured that the norms of social distancing were not compromised.

Additionally, there was a request from the Yerwada Open Prison for various items such as temperature detector gun, pulse oximeter, sanitizer, floor cleaners, hand gloves, etc. We have provided them with the same.

You Take Care of My People and I Will Take Care of Your People

A female prisoner received the bail order from the High Court and on 9 March 2020, she was supposed to be bailed out. The district judge ruled the guarantor as fake and the order was rejected. Then again on 11 March, we tried and that too was rejected. Finally, on 13 March, it was a busy day for me. I went to the bank and made an FD for ₹50000. I had to go out for some work when a priest called and inquired about my dad's health. Since he was not well, the priest asked who was there to take care of my dad; to forget my work and to be with my father or that I would regret it later. At 4:00 pm, I went to the court and submitted the FD to the judge. The bail order was passed without any problem. I came home at 6:00 pm. It was Friday and I had attended mass in the morning. I booked a car to go to prison to get the woman by 7:00 pm. I was getting ready for a bath when I got a call from home that my dad was admitted to the ICU and may need a ventilator. My heart skipped a beat. The words of the priest haunted me. I thought of asking one of the nuns to go to the jail to pick up the woman, but all the nuns had gone to church for mass. Meanwhile, the car driver arrived and he called me saying that he was waiting at the gate. I felt so helpless and with tears in my eyes left for prison. I was crying and hoping that nothing would happen to my dad. By the time I reached the prison, I was ok and I completed the formalities. By 9:00 pm she was out. I took the woman to the market, bought all the provisions required for a home and dropped her at her house. On the way, I told her about my dad. I



Sr Olive D'Souza PSOL
Bhopal Unit Coordinator, PMI MP

booked a flight ticket for the morning of 14th. At 6 am, as I was leaving for the airport, she came to see me. I was very emotional, wanting to reach home and crying bitterly. She wished me goodbye. I reached Mumbai by 10 am and headed straight to the hospital. Dad was better. On 18th he was operated for PEG (feeding tube through the stomach) and was discharged on 24 March. I got stuck in the lockdown in Mumbai. Maybe it was God's will. Today my dad is still bedridden, but so much better that I am grateful to God for his abundant goodness and blessings. Yes, my dear volunteers, our God is good. He gives us even before we could ask for help. A nun from Bhopal had asked me about my dad's health. I told her that it was a miracle. She said, "You go out of your way to do good for others. Therefore, God has done this for you." The woman who was released on bail called me on Mother's Day saying, "I have no mother and I have not seen her but for me, you are my mother. I am so grateful to you. The freedom that I am enjoying today is only because of you. You are not only my mother but god to so many whom you help. I pray that you always enjoy God's blessings and be happy always." Even now, during the lockdown, I could provide for her needs. Do good and good will be done to you.

COVID 19 CHRONICLE PMI NATIONAL OFFICE



Fr George Kalassery VC
RRDC Director

1. Introduction

On 24 March 2020, Prime Minister Narendra Modi ordered a nationwide lockdown for 21 days, limiting movement of the entire 1.3 billion population of India as a preventive measure against the Covid-19 pandemic in India. On 14 April, the lockdown was extended until 3 May and on 1 May, it was extended further by two weeks until 17 May. I am pleased to share with the readers of Prison Voice how the members of PMI national office, the Kolbe Home, RRDC and Van Thuan Home spent the lockdown days.

2. PMI National Office

PMI National Office had hectic days during the Covid 19 pandemic. Following are some of the major activities done during the lockdown days.

2.1 Doubling Spiritual Exercises

To eradicate and prevent the rapid spread of Covid 19 virus and to strengthen those who dedicate themselves in taking care of the Corona infected people the first thing we did was to double the spiritual exercises. We began to celebrate one more holy Mass for the reparation of the sins of mankind and extended the Eucharistic Adoration from 9am to 1pm. We doubled all our spiritual exercises such as recitation of rosary, divine mercy chaplet, thank you Jesus mantra, etc.

2.2 Outreach to Prisons

During the corona pandemic lockdown, we intensified our outreach to prisons by

obtaining special permission from the police department. Reaching out to prisons we distributed masks, sanitizers, Bermuda, T-shirts, shirts, and pants to various prisons such as Central Prison Bengaluru, Open Air Prison Devanahalli, Sub Jail KGF, Kolar District Prison, Tumkur District Prison, and Chikkaballapur District Prison.

2.3 Go to the Periphery

As Pope Francis instructed us Covid19 pandemic provided for us a golden opportunity to go to the peripheries of Bengaluru. Fr Francis together with the regency brothers John and Alphonse distributed provisions and groceries to the different slums in Bengaluru and migrant communities nearby Carmelaram.

2.4 AID to PMI Volunteers

As announced in the letter of Most Rev Allwyn D'Silva, the PMI Chairman, national office financially assisted many PMI volunteers in different parts of India to distribute mask and sanitizers to prisoners and provisions to prisoners' families.

2.5 Prison Voice

Lockdown did not lock down the publication of *Prison Voice* and thanks to Sr Lini Sheeja for her hard work. We published in right time the April and May Issues of Prison Voice but due to the lockdown you would be able to receive it as soft copy format only.

2.6 Farewell and Departures

Lockdown days were also days of farewell and departures. PMI staff members Fr Stanly, the assistance national coordinator, Sr Jane, Bro John, and Bro Alphonse bid goodbye and joined their religious communities. We gratefully remember them and continue to pray for the success of their future ministry.

2.7 Celebrations

Covid 19 lockdown also was a time of celebrations and festivities. On 20 April was the birthday of Most Rev Allwyn D'Silva, the PMI Chairman which we celebrated by offering for him our holy Mass and prayers. We celebrated the 80th birthday of Sr Adele who has been dedicating herself to the cause of prisoners since decades. All national office staff went to her convent and wished and prayed for her. On 23rd April we celebrated the feast of St George, the patron saint of Fr George. On 7th May we celebrated the foundation day of Fr Francis' religious congregation – the Missionary Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament.

3. Van Thuan Home

Van Thuan Home was busy with reforming, rehabilitating and reintegrating released prisoners during the lockdown days.

3.1 Reception to Twains

On 29 April 2020 van Thuan Home welcomed Mr Twains who was released from central prison Bengaluru. The best gift brought by Covid19 was the release of so many thousands of prisoners to decongest the prisons. Before the Holy Mass Fr Francis and Fr George washed and kissed his feet and giving a flower welcomed him to Van Thuan Home.

3.2 Reintegration of Arogyam

3 May 2020 Mr Arogyam, an inmate of Van Thuan Home, was reintegrated to the main stream of the society. He obtained a good job and shifted his residence to a PG. Fr George and Fr Francis blessed the newly rented room, prayed for him in a special way and wished him every success in his future life. Thus, he became the first rehabilitated and reintegrated person from Van Thuan Home.

3.3 Paper Bag Production Unit

On first May 2020, on World Labor's day, Van Thuan Home launched the paper-bag production unit. After an initial training given to Mr Twains we began to produce paper-bags.

3.4 Pritam Tamang

Pritam Tamang (33) son of L B Tamang (Shyangbo) from Darjeeling who was in central prison Bengaluru died at 0630am on 29 April 2020 at Jayanagar government hospital. On 30th morning Fr Francis, Sr Lini, Sr Gertrude, Br Alphonse, and Br John went to the Jayanagar Government Hospital mortuary and prayed for the repose of his soul. What we remember most is that the previous week Fr Francis brought Pritam to his prison the best fruits he liked and some money and thereby fulfilled his last wish.

3.5 Reception to Marshal

On 14th March Van Thuan Home welcomed Mr Marshal a released prisoner who lost his job due to Covid 19 Lockdown. Fr Francis and Fr George welcomed him by washing and kissing his feet before the Holy Mass offered for him.

4. Kolbe Home

4.1 Outreaching Kolbehome Children

On 17th March 2020 as soon as Corona virus began to widely spread in Bengaluru, we sent back Kolbe home children to their relatives in consultation with CWC. But we did not abandon them instead many a time Fr Francis and Sr Gertrude brought them provisions such as rice, wheat powder, oil, and groceries provided by the Archdiocese of Bengaluru, Smile foundation and Dream India Network.

4.2 Kolbe Garden

Covid 19 lockdown blessed Kolbe Home with a fruitful vegetable garden. With the initiative of Fr Francis and brothers John and Alphonse we launched a vegetable garden nearby Kolbe home. You are most welcome to taste tapioca, papaya, guava fruit, pomegranate and so on.

5. RRDC

5.1 Resuming RRDC Construction

On 4th May the RRDC construction resumed which was stopped due to corona lockdown. The flooring, wiring, plumbing, and painting of the fourth and fifth floors are going on and we humbly invite your prayerful support for its successful completion.

5.2 PMI Documentation Centre

On 5th May 2020 Fr Francis and Fr George purchased five book shelves for the PMI documentation center at RRDC. Fr George with the assistance of Mr Twains launched the works of documentation center by arranging books and other documents.

5.3 Reformative Explorations

During the Covid 19 lockdown Fr Francis Kodiyan the chief editor of *Reformative Explorations* published the second issue of its 6th volume. Due to the lockdown you would be able to receive it as soft copy format only.

6. Pray with Pope Francis

Lockdown diary ends with a note on the prayer for peace during corona distress invoked by Pope Francis on 14th May. We spent this day in Eucharistic Adoration and fasting and prayed in a special way for the corona infected people all over the world. Let Jesus who came to seek, serve and save the lost bless all of us abundantly to continue our prayerful support and service to prisoners and their families.

A warrior does not give up what he loves, he finds the love in what he does.

- Dan Millman

Courage, above all things, is the first quality of a warrior.

- Karl von Clausewitz

Dachau Concentration Camp Munich

April 29, 2020, was the 75th anniversary of the emancipation of the Dachau concentration camp. On this day, when we commemorate the anniversary of the liberation of the prisoners at the Dachau Concentration Camp, I thought of writing a note on this great event. In 1933, as soon as Adolf Hitler became the Chancellor of Germany, he opened the first Nazi Concentration Camp at Dachau aimed to incarcerate political prisoners. This camp is located sixteen kilometers northwest of Munich, the capital of the state of Bavaria in West Germany.

Work Sets You Free

The notorious phrase Arbeit Macht Frei – “Work sets you free” was engraved on the main entrance of this first detention centre. This Nazi slogan was then used in all detention centres. Theodore Eicke, the first leader of the Dachau camp was the author of this phrase. Auschwitz commanders Rudolf Hoes and Richard Beer were also disciples of Eicke’s “Dachau School.”

The Largest Monastery

The Dachau detention camp was once well known as the world’s largest monastery in the world. There were more than three thousand incarcerated priests, of which 95 per cent were Roman Catholics. The majority of priests at Dachau were from Poland. One of the survivors of Dachau Concentration Camp, Dr Johannes Neuhäusler, who later became the auxiliary bishop of Munich Archdiocese wrote in his book entitled What Was It Like in the Concentration Camp at Dachau?, “There were 1,780 Polish priests and 447 German priests at Dachau. Of the 1,034 priests who died in the camp, 868 were Polish and 94 were German. Other clergymen



Fr Jaison Kunnel MCBS
Germany

at Dachau included 109 Protestant ministers, 22 Greek Orthodox, 2 Muslims and 8 men who were classified as Old Catholic and Marianists”. Another Polish Bishop Franciszek Korczynski who had survived Dachau published a book Bright Beams in Dachau in 1957 in which he claimed that the Nazis planned the extermination of the Polish clergy as part of the liquidation of the Polish intelligentsia; the priests at Dachau were starved and tortured and that the Nazis used the priests for medical experiments.

Death March

On 14 April 1945, Nazi military leader Henrik Himmler ordered the detention centre to be evacuated immediately. The troops forced 7,000 prisoners to march to the southside of the camp. The majority of those who participated in it were brutally killed by Nazi troops. This is known as the notorious death march in history.

Emancipation

On 29 April 1945, the 45th infantry division of the American army liberated prisoners from this camp. On the same day, the 42nd Rainbow Division of the American Army liberated another subcamp in Dachau.

Gate of Hell

Martha Gelhorn was a renowned war crime journalist to major American newspapers since the Spanish Civil War in 1936-38. She



Concentration Camp

was also the wife of world-renowned novelist Ernst Hemingway. As a journalist, she had gone to many places along with the US Army. On 26 April 1945, she accompanied the American army to Algo, in Bavaria. In the early days of May, Martha arrived at the Dachau Detention Centre to report about its liberation from the clutches of Nazi soldiers. After initial conversations with the prisoners who survived the brutality of the detention camp, she reported, "It was starvation that killed a majority of them. Murdering people by forced starvation was a routine here. People had to work hours for meagre food. They were kept in crowded barracks. They woke up with fatigue every morning, hearing the death-siren". Since 1933, about two lakh prisoners had been kept in this detention camp. According to Martha's report, it was difficult to tell exactly how many people died in the camp for over twelve years; during the last three years (1942-1945), 45,000 people lost their lives.

There was a garden in front of the crematorium. Beyond that, there was a long line of beautiful houses that had been built for the families of the Nazi officers. Although the human ashes flew from the chimneys of the crematorium to the end, their wives and children were very happy... So much paradox... In February and March, two thousand people were brutally murdered in the gas chamber. Because they could not work. They had been denied the right to die naturally...

Miserable Sights

When the American troops entered the detention camp, they saw tragic sights of dying people. The Nazi guards had fled the camp a few days before they entered. US soldiers found a train carrying prisoners into the detention centre. The majority

of the passengers had died of thirst or breathlessness in locked barracks. Others were shot dead by the soldiers. US soldiers found 2,300 bodies in the train. After a brief battle, the US military was able to take control of the camp. In the meantime, tragic events also took place. Some prisoners who had cheered and greeted the American soldiers for liberating them were accidentally knocked down by the electric power supply from the fence. About 32,000 prisoners were found alive by the US military, most of whom needed medical attention. On the occasion of the rescue, the sanitation situation in Dachau was tragic. Many prisoners had been affected by typhoid. Their lined detention outfits later became a symbol of the Nazi camp misery.

Never Again

There is a reminder written in Hebrew, French, English, German and Russian on the Holocaust Memorial Wall at Dachau, "Never Again". The wall also exists in respect to the millions of people who had suffered torture in the various concentration camps of Adolf Hitler and the tens of thousands of people who died in Dachau.

75th Anniversary

Because of the Corona season, many people could not attend the 75th commemoration of the Dachau Liberation Day on 29 April 2020. Bavarian Prime Minister Dr Markus Soder came to the Concentration Camp in Dachau and expressed his admiration. "I am reminded today of the Dachau Detention Centre Liberation Day, which took place in Bavaria 75 years ago. We renew the promise that such crimes against humanity should no longer ever happen. We will never forget these atrocities and the hardships that can never be explained. Dachau is a monument to all kinds of hatred, religious madness and anti-Semitism!" Dr Markus wrote on his Facebook account.



**Distribution of Groceries to
Kolbe Home Children's Families
Bengaluru**



**Distribution of Groceries to
Prisoners' Families
PMI Chennai**



**Distribution of Masks,
Soap and Dress
Open Air Prison, Bengaluru**



**Distribution of Masks, Soap
and Sanitizer
Yerwada Central Prison
PMI Pune**



**Distribution of Food
to the Migrants
PMI Pune**



**Financial Assistance to
Prisoners' Families
Bon Secours Sisters
Kanchipuram**



Distribution of Masks, Soap and Dress at Central Prison, Bengaluru



Distribution of Masks, Soap and Dress at KGF Sub-Jail



Distribution of Masks, Soap and Dress at Kolar District Prison



Distribution of Masks, Soap and Dress at Tumkur District Prison



Distribution of Masks, Soap and Dress at Chikkbalapur District Prison



Distribution of Masks for Villages and Slums PMI Bhopal Unit