



PRISON VOICE

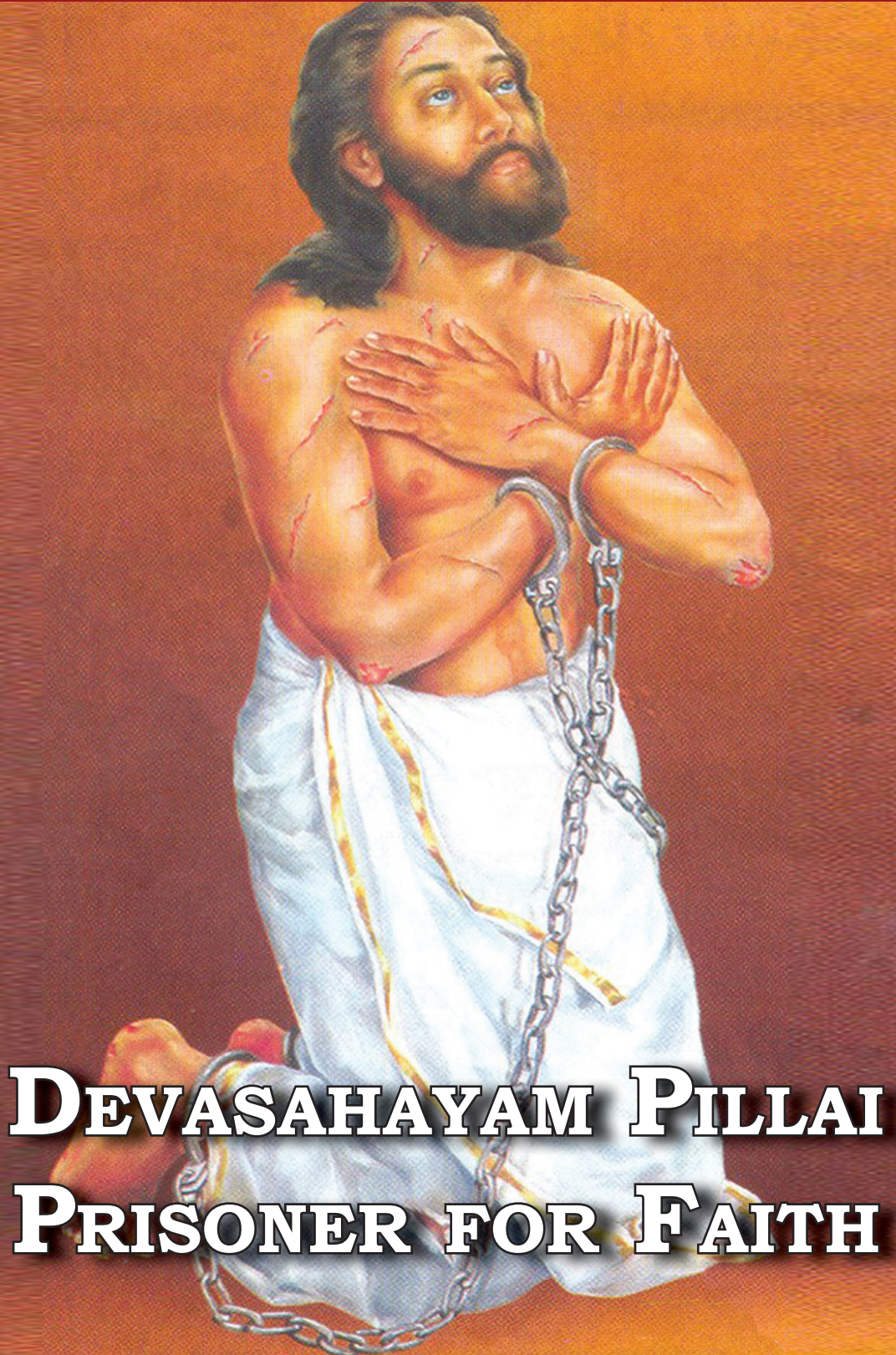
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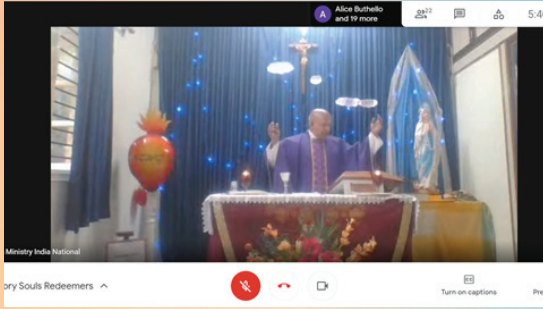
Issue 5

NATIONAL MONTHLY

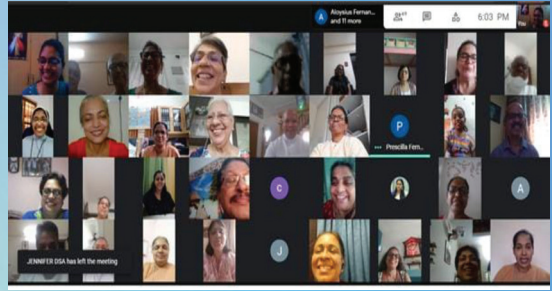
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DEVASAHAYAM PILLAI
PRISONER FOR FAITH



Holy Mass during the Purgatory Souls Redeemers Meeting



Burning Bush Spiritual Banquet May 2021



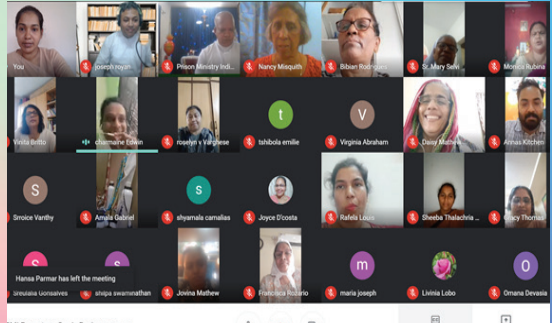
Masks and Handtowel Distribution at Welikada Prison, Sri Lanka



PMI Volunteers Visiting Peerumedu Prison



Kolbe Home Birthday Celebration



Purgatory Souls Redeemers Meeting



Reintegration of Innocent Prisoner



PMI Volunteers Visiting Thiruvananthapuram District Prison

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PRISON VOICE

NATIONAL MONTHLY



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Are You Willing?

“Help a Prisoner’s Child
Prevent a Potential
Criminal”

80% of the children of prisoners are potential criminals unless somebody takes care of them. Prison Ministry India has begun a scheme to educate 1000 children of prisoners:
Kindly contribute
Rs. 5,000/- for the education of a child.

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PRISONERS FOR FAITH



Sr Amala DC
Chief Editor

On 3 May 2021 Vatican's Congregation for the Causes of Saints cleared all the hurdles for the canonisation of Blessed Devasahayam Pillai (1712-1752). Devasahayam Pillai, the would be first lay saint from India, represents millions of Christians who are detained, tortured, persecuted and murdered for their faith all over the world. Millions of Christians, Uyghur Muslims and half a million Tibetan Buddhists are in so-called 're-education camps' of China for their faith. There are thousands of incarcerated Christians in countries like Iran, Kazakhstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and so on. Story of Devasahayam Pillai reminds us that incarceration, torture and martyrdom are not the end but life after death, glorious life with the Triune God is our final destination. Let us "Remember those in prison as if you were together with them in Prison" (Heb 13:3).

If we analyse, many prisoners feel unprepared for release, emotionally, practically and financially. Insufficient human and social capital make it difficult to cope with the challenges of everyday life outside prison. Poor social support is often a major barrier to successful re-entry into society. To support inmates' rehabilitation and preparation for release, to diminish criminal relapse and strengthen the capability of inmates to live law-abiding lives after release, PMI has rehabilitation centres in order to empower them, reform and reintegrate them. They address mental health issues of the released prisoners, providing, monitoring, offering educational opportunities, job training, and improvement of their living situation, treatment and evidence-based interventions to exert a positive influence on them.

PMI volunteers have many ways and means to help prisoners such as praying and fasting for the reformation of prisoners. PMI volunteers, help prisoners for post bail or release, support those coming out of jail and donate to help incarcerated individuals. Many in jail have not yet been convicted, yet they are there simply because they cannot afford to pay bail. Funds help to pay their bail on their behalf so they can be released and await trial at home. In the midst of the covid-19 pandemic, reducing jail populations is one way to fight the spread of the virus. My humblest request is to give hope to the hopeless and have to the have-nots and to share your resources with the incarcerated by donating the blessings of God with others especially the incarcerated.

Month of May is traditionally dedicated in a special way to honouring and seeking the intercession of Mary. She is the woman who rejoiced in the presence of God, who treasured everything in her heart and who let herself be pierced by the sword. Let us ask Jesus to give us the grace to hear our voice and the strength to continue working for His Kingdom in this time of pandemic. Let us remember in our prayers God's healing hand for our brothers and sisters who have contracted and are suffering from Corona virus. "He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High, abides under the shadow of the Almighty shall say to the Lord, you are my refuge and my stronghold, My God in whom I put my trust" (Ps 91).

PRISON MINISTRY INDIA ECONOMICS

Introduction

Prison Ministry India from its very inception followed certain principles regarding its economics, fundraising and distribution. One of the primary duties of PMI volunteers is to understand the basics of PMI economics and to follow the fundamental attitudes and principles of PMI financial management. This article briefly illustrates the PMI economics and its secrets of doing wonders without any bank balance and financial resources.

PMI Community Life

“Awe came upon everyone because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. All those who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts praising God and having the Goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved” (Acts 2, 43-47). This is the basics of PMI community lifestyle. Like in the early Christian community PMI members shall gather together, pray together, break bread together, listen to the teachings of leaders, love one another, witness life and share whatever we have.

PMI Wealth

Peter said, “I have no silver or gold, but what I have I give you; in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, stand up and walk” (Acts 3,6). As St Peter said, the name of Jesus Christ is the sole wealth of PMI. Nothing else. “There is salvation in no one else, for



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

there is no other name under heaven given among mortals by which we must be saved” (Acts 4,12). Repeatedly reciting the mantra “Thank you Jesus” is the wealth, power and resource of PMI. Absolute trust in the Lord Jesus Christ and the Father God is the wealth of PMI. This unconditional trust in the Lord develops a strong conviction that we children of God have the right on His richness.

PMI Funds

PMI has 5 different types of funds which we make use of for the reformation, rehabilitation and reintegration of prisoners: Prayer Fund, Suffering Fund, Penance Fund, Self-Sanctification Fund and Material Fund. These five funds, offered together with the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus, are a great source of divine power to enhance the reformation of prisoners. As PMI members, we shall be experts in developing these funds and in making use of these funds in our attempt to redeem prisoners.

Prayer Fund

Jesus spent 40 days of prayer in the desert before his public ministry. Even during His three years of public ministry, Jesus began His day with solitary conversation with His Heavenly Father and ended his day with a

prayerful night. Let's begin our prison visit with a Holy Hour before the Holy Eucharist, accompanied by Holy Mass and the prayers of the Church and end the day with another sacred hour before the Eucharistic Lord. Covid19 pandemic is the best time to develop Prayer Fund. We deposit our prayer fund in the PMI Bank of Prayer for the sake of prisoners' redemption.

Suffering Fund

It is the passion and death of our Lord Jesus that has redeemed the world from sin and eternal death. Over the centuries, the sufferings of martyrs and saints offered in the name of Jesus have continued to transform humanity. Suffering fund is collected by uniting all our sufferings with the sufferings of Jesus through the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Let's offer our sufferings and sufferings of others to the PMI Bank of Suffering so as to make use of it for the salvation of prisoners.

Penance Fund

Jesus began his public ministry after 40 days of fasting and prayer. All the great Christian mystics, throughout the centuries, liberated human souls by their penances. The Church always encourages her faithful sons and daughters to involve themselves in fasting, abstinence and other such acts of penance for self-sanctification and for the conversion of sinners. Let's do some mortification every day and deposit them in PMI Penance Bank for the sake of prisoners' reformation.

Self-Sanctification Fund

"And for their sake I sanctify myself, so that they may also be sanctified in truth" (Jn 17,19). The grace of self-sanctification flows from the Sacred Heart of Jesus and from the Immaculate Heart of Mary to redeem mankind. Like Jesus and Mary, it is through

our self-sanctification that we reform prisoners, their families, the Catholic Church and the whole world. "To renew the world, renew myself" is the PMI Mantra. Let's sanctify, protect and strengthen ourselves and the whole world by the precious blood of Jesus, by His body and Word and by our spiritual exercises and deposit it into the PMI Self-sanctification fund.

Material Fund

All those who fully trust in the Lord will be taken care of by the Father God. He provides through generous well-wishers, family members, friends, bishops and major superiors of religious congregations. PMI neither promotes FCRA accounts nor welcome foreign income, nor write projects for money. We fully trust in the Lord and our only way of finding money is begging.

Make Friends with Your Wealth

"Make friends for yourselves by means of dishonest wealth so that when it is gone, they may welcome you into the eternal homes" (Lk 16,9). Be generous with our wealth so that in the life to come our new friends will receive us "into eternal dwellings".

PMI Economics

Make friends with our wealth, bless others with our resources and thereby let's be blessed. With our monetary resources we have to reach out to others. The result will be friendship that endures into eternity: the souls we reach out in this world will welcome us into "eternal dwellings" someday. Everything we own should be used to further God's kingdom. We are to use the Master's resources to further the Master's goals. We have been entrusted with material possessions, and we are to use them for the eternal benefit of others. If God is our Master, then our wealth is at His disposal. The faithful steward whose Master is God will employ the wealth entrusted to

him in building up the kingdom of God. Use our worldly resources to benefit others and make friends. Then, when our earthly possessions are gone, they will welcome us to an eternal home.

Be Shrewd Stewards

We are God's stewards. Just as the unjust steward in the parable was "shrewd" in benefitting himself materially, so we should be "shrewd" in benefitting ourselves and others spiritually. When we give to prisoners, when we support a rehabilitation center, then we are using "unrighteous wealth" to build up the kingdom of God and lift up the name of Christ. We are being "shrewd" in our dealings in this world when our eyes are on the "eternal homes" we will one day inhabit with our "friends" in Christ.

Bank of Divine Providence

During the first All Kerala Prison Pilgrimage while the pioneers of PMI were preparing for it with fasting and prayer every day, the postman came with some contributions from some unknown places. "The postman is searching for you; there is a money order for you". The postman gave Bro Francis Kodyan two hundred rupees. There was a message on the money order coupon: "For your prison apostolate, a friend from Oman". Overwhelmed with joy of Divine Providence, Francis ran to his friends and shared this wonderful experience with them. This was not the end of Divine Providence but the beginning, a great beginning. "Do not worry about what we are to eat? (Mt 6, 31-33). When the pilgrimage reached Thrissur, Mr John Thomas Kottukappally visited them and said to Bro Francis Kodyan: "Francis, this is thousand rupees. I came here from Palai to give you this. I know you need money. I will also visit you when you reach Kottayam". BDP – Bank of Divine providence is the bank of PMI.

Have Dreams, Great Dream, Divine Dreams

"For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the LORD, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope" (Jer 29,11). To have wealth, money first of all, we shall have dreams, great dreams, concrete dreams and divine dreams for prisoners' reformation, rehabilitation and reintegration. Let our dreams be approved by the authorities concerned. As a part of discernment, we need to get approval for our dreams from our authorities. It's called the stage of Green Signal.

Be Fully Immersed and Involved

We need to work hard for the realization of the dream. The moment we are fully immersed and involved in the divine dream for prisoners, money begins to flow like anything. The whole universe will conspire together following the universal law of attraction and will begin to work together for the realization of our dreams.

Be Open to the Spirit

Watch out and be alert! The Lord will bring you opportunities and people to realize your dreams. Our prompt positive responses to them are of utmost importance.

Believe in God and Visualize Your Dream

This is the faith dimension. Believe that by the grace of God this dream is going to be materialized. For God nothing is impossible. Daily visualize its minute details and feel its thrill, adventure and joy.

Pray and Thank God

Pray personally, constantly and with absolute trust in the Lord. Ask prayers from as many people as possible. Trust in the Lord and thank the Lord in advance for the abundant blessings he is going to shower upon us.

Blessed Devasahayam Pillai - A Prisoner for Faith



Sr Lini Sheeja MSC

Introduction

Blessed Devasahayam Pillai (23 April 1712 – 14 January 1752) was born at Palliyadi, Nattalam, Kanyakumari District, Kingdom of Travancore. He is known as Lazarus by his baptismal name and is a beatified Indian layman of the Catholic Church. Born into a Hindu family, he converted to Catholicism and was martyred for his Christian faith. Pillai was an official in the court of the King of Travancore, Maharaja Marthanda Varma, when he came under the influence of Dutch naval commander, Captain Eustachius De Lannoy, who initiated him in the Catholic faith. Devasahayam Pillai can be taken as one of the patrons of PMI and let's ask his intercession in our ministry for the incarcerated, tortured and persecuted and for our PMI volunteers.



Arrest

Devasahayam Pillai was marched from Padmanabhapuram Palace to Aralvaimozhy by soldiers, over a period of a few days. Pillai was treated like a criminal and as was customary in those days for criminals, his body was painted with red and black spots, and was intentionally marched through populated areas, sitting backward on top of a water buffalo through the streets of South Travancore. As a method of torture, he was beaten everyday with eighty stripes, pepper rubbed in his wounds and nostrils, exposed

to the sun, and given only stagnant water to drink. While halting at Puliyoorkurichi, not far away from the Padmanabhapuram Palace of the Travancore king, it is believed that God quenched his thirst by letting water gush through a small hole on a rock, the very place where he knelt to pray. The water hole is still found in the compound of a church at Puliyoorkurichi, about 15 km from Nagercoil.

Torture

When in the king's court the Dalava and Singaram Annavi were deriding the Christians, calling them vile, dirty and imbecile people, it was also an affront on the self-respect of Devasahayam Pillai, because he himself was a Christian. Blessed Devasahayam was put to a lot of shame both in words and deeds. The manner in which he was seated on a buffalo, garlanded with erukku flowers and given just a small piece of cloth to tie around his waist was meant to bring shame on him before the large number of people who were accompanying the parade of shame. Secondly, because some Christians fled out of fear or some denied their faith, even though only out of fear, those who wanted to force him to abjure his Christian faith laughed at him on that account. One thing that hurt him most



was that, during the tortures, his own wife abandoned her faith for sometime though she repented and returned to the faith soon. Thirdly, the journey on the buffalo was a prolonged one, first for 16 days and then for several months.

Incarceration

Physical and mental tortures continued to be inflicted on the Blessed Devasahayam Pillai during the three years of his long wait for martyrdom. When he was arrested, he was put in a narrow prison, as small as an oven: just 5 palms high, 1 cubit broad and a little more than 1 cubit long. The prison's door was just 2 palms high. From Puliyoorkurichy, they brought him to a place called Peruvilai where he was put under the custody of the executioner during the seven-month torture there. Bishop Clement writes: For seven months he lay under a tree hugging the tree itself with his legs bound in chains and tied to the tree with fetters, so that he could not move about or stand up or recline on the side, but was forced to sit up or lie down on his back.

The laceration of the skin was done by means of “a certain thorny scourge resembling a file”, to make the application of the chilli powder or paste burn more. They also tormented his face. Devasahayam was locked in a prison cell with a few pots of boiling water kept around him with red hot chilli powder in it hoping he might suffocate and change his mind. But he overcame this trial too. At one of the County headquarters, he was thrown into a prison which was full of biting red ants. Poisonous snakes and scorpions were thrown into his cell.



Blessed Devasahayam Pillai

Miraculously he survived even from these creatures too. He spent three years in prison without bath and did not have any oils to apply to his body.

Thirst was one of the many ways in which Devasahayam Pillai was tortured on many occasions and in many places. Once, near the sea on the buffalo, Devasahayam was “burning with thirst”, but they gave him only salty sea water. The miraculous rock fountain at Puliyoorkurichy is a constant reminder of this kind of torture as well as God's grace of miraculous water from the rock. When he asked for water, they gave him sewage water. Devasahayam Pillai was usually given only a small portion of cooked rice. Then even the small portion of rice usually given him was stopped, to make him die of hunger.

Blessings to Jailor

Blessed Devasahayam Pillai spent long time in prayer and meditation. A lot of people came to meet him and ask for his prayers. One of them was his own jailor, the executioner. The jailor had no issue. He and his wife came to him asking for his blessing and prayers. He spoke to them of trust in God and assured them that God would hear their prayer. Their prayer was eventually granted. This made the executioner very kind and sympathetic towards Pillai.

Kattadimalai

Devasahayam Pillai was carried like an animal to the place of execution. Realising that the chains around his feet constrained him from

keeping up with their fast pace, the soldiers had him lie prostrate, and passing a stout pole through the chains binding his hands and feet, slung him thus on that pole and carried him to their destination. By the time they brought him to Kattadimalai in this fashion, the shackles had pressed into his arms and legs and he suffered from painful wounds because of this inhuman act.

The Last Prayer of the Martyr

O Jesus! Do not abandon me. O beloved Mother Mary, help me. Into your hands Lord, I commend my spirit.

First Indian Lay Catholic to Sainthood

On 28 June 2012, Pope Benedict XVI authorized the Congregation for the Causes of Saints to promulgate a decree regarding the martyrdom of Devasahayam Pillai and he was referred to as Venerable. On 2 December 2012, a ceremony of beatification and declaration of martyrdom was held in Nagercoil, in the Roman Catholic diocese of Kottar in Southern India, presided over by Angelo Cardinal Amato, Prefect of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints, acting as Papal delegate. Devasahayam Pillai is the first lay man to be elevated to the rank of "Blessed" in India (the preceding step before raising a person to Sainthood under the Canon Law of the Catholic Church). On 21 February 2020, Pope Francis recognized a miracle attributed to the intercession of Devasahayam, clearing his way to canonization (sainthood). He will be the first lay Catholic in India to become a saint.

SELF-EMPTINESS

If then there is any encouragement in Christ,
any consolation from love,
any sharing in the Spirit,
any compassion and sympathy,
make my joy complete: be of the same mind,
having the same love,
being in full accord and of one mind.

Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit,
but in humility regard others as better than
yourselves.

Let each of you look not to your own
interests,
but to the interests of others.

Let the same mind be in you that was in
Christ Jesus,
who, though he was in the form of God,
did not regard equality with God as
something to be exploited,
but emptied himself, taking the form of a
slave, being born in human likeness.
And being found in human form, he humbled
himself and became obedient to the point of
death - even death on a cross.

Therefore, God also highly exalted him and
gave him the name
that is above every name, so that at the name
of Jesus
every knee should bend, in heaven and on
earth and under the earth, and every tongue
should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father
(Philippians 2, 1-10).



Charles de Foucauld: Herald of Third Millennium Catholic Spirituality

Dr Francis Kodiyan MCBS

Viscount Charles de Foucauld (1858-1916), born and brought up in an aristocratic Catholic family in Strasbourg, France, was a soldier who lost his faith but regained it, became an explorer, contemplative, priest, missionary, desert hermit, martyr and will soon be canonised by Pope Francis. Charles de Foucauld, the prophet of the twentieth century who spent many years in the Saharan desert, North Africa, is the herald of the third millennium Catholic spirituality. My doctoral thesis was on him at the Pontifical Gregorian University, Rome, and he being my inspirer and motivating personality in launching Jesus Fraternity and Prison Ministry India, I thought of shedding some light on how Charles de Foucauld becomes the archetypal personality to the third millennium Catholic faithful.

Nazareth Spirituality

Knowing the exploring mind of Foucauld, Abbe Huvelin his spiritual Father, asked him to go on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. This visit to the actual towns and countryside where Jesus had walked, made a profound impact on Foucauld. Taken up by the hidden life of Jesus the carpenter, Charles wanted to imitate the simple, humble, and hardworking life and virtues of Jesus, Mary and Joseph in Nazareth. For three years he worked as a servant at a convent of Poor Clares in Nazareth itself, living in the same place where Jesus had spent 30 years of his life. But eventually Charles realized that Nazareth might be any place anywhere in the world.

Contemplative Spirituality


The French soldier-monk spent several years as a Trappist before moving to Beni Abbes, an oasis on the Moroccan border, where he built a small monastery, the Fraternity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Conventional monastic life did not satisfy him. He reinterpreted contemplative and monastic life by launching a new model of contemplative life, not in a cloistered monastery, but in the midst of the world. His followers practice contemplative and monastic spirituality by serving gypsies, prisoners, slum dwellers and the like. He taught us the significant lesson that prior to the launching of any ministry, we should be contemplatives.

Eucharistic Spirituality

Charles de Foucauld practiced the Eucharistic spirituality proclaimed by Pope John Paul II in his document *Mane Nobiscum Domine* and *Ecclesiae de Eucharistia* where he highlights the significance of Eucharistic celebration, Eucharistic contemplation and Eucharistic adoration. He spent most of his time before the Blessed Sacrament adoring and contemplating on the Word of God and writing down his reflections. Prison Ministry India follows the same spirituality because every renewal, repentance, reconciliation, rehabilitation and reintegration sprouts from the authentic spiritual energy emanating from the body and blood of Jesus and the Word of God.

Spirituality of Presence

To be present, to be with the people, to be with the slum dwellers, gypsies, prisoners, aboriginals and street children is one of the basic characteristics of Foucauldian spirituality. In the constitutions he devised Foucauld wrote, "The whole of our existence, the whole of our lives, should cry



the Gospel from the rooftops not by our words but by our lives. In contrast to the triumphalist models of his day, Foucauld exemplified what has come to be known as an evangelism of presence, a willingness to encounter people of other faiths on the basis of equality and mutual respect. He wanted to bear witness to the Gospel by living it, by being a friend and brother to all. Ministry of presence is an evangelisation method which is the opposite of proselytising. Living in a Muslim country he did not seek to preach, or perform great acts of bravado but to live at the foot of the cross. "His vocation was one of being present among people with a presence willed and intended by a witness of the love of Christ," wrote René Voillaume, in *Seeds of the Desert: The Legacy of Charles de Foucauld*.

In 1994 when I visited Hindelbank Prison in Switzerland I was surprised as well as encouraged in meeting with the Little Sisters of Jesus of Charles de Foucauld living inside the prison cell and serving prisoners. Imbibing insights from this, Prison Ministry India commenced the challenging and fruitful prison quarters ministry in Bangalore central prison.

Spirituality of Abandonment

Foucauld had spent many years in conceiving and preparing the rules for his followers who did not arrive during his lifetime. However, after his death, today there are more than 20 religious communities who follow the rules he prepared. In his famous Prayer of Abandonment, he wrote: "Father, I abandon myself in your hands, do with me what you will. For whatever you may do, I thank you. I am ready for all, I accept all, let only your will be done in me, as in all your creatures". Doing the will of God, docility to the will of God, implementing the great plan of God

shall be our utmost task. On 1 December 1916 when Foucauld underwent a violent death in a remote corner of the Sahara, he had published none of his spiritual writings; he had founded no congregation, nor attracted any followers. He could not claim responsibility for a single conversion. And yet his witness endured. Many today regard him as one of the great spiritual figures of the 20th century, a prophet whose message speaks more clearly to the challenges of our time than it did in his own.

Desert Spirituality

Foucauld spent 15 years as a missionary in the Saharan desert. Anchoring on his desert spirituality I was in Thar desert of Rajasthan before coming to the PMI national office. Immediately after his ordination he went to the oasis of Béni-Abbès on the border of Morocco and when it was becoming too congested, he sought greater solitude in Tamanrasset, a small outpost in the rugged Hoggar. As Charles always preferred the most difficult, the farthest, the most challenging missions and tasks, Catholic spirituality invites us to take up the most challenging tasks, the most difficult responsibilities and missions.

Fraternity Spirituality

"I want all the inhabitants, be they Christian, Muslim or Jewish, to look on me as their brother, the universal brother," Charles said. "Above all, always see Jesus in every person, and consequently treat each one not only as an equal and as a brother or sister, but also with great humility, respect and selfless generosity." Human Fraternity – Fratelli Tutti - as Pope Francis would like to illustrate, is one of the significant characteristics of Catholic spirituality. Charles de Foucauld was a great example for this lifestyle.




Interreligious Spirituality

Charles offers to the Church a model for interreligious spirituality through his relationship with and ministry for other religions especially with Islam. His encounter with devout Muslims in North Africa helped rekindle his faith. "Islam shook me profoundly," he wrote, "the sight of their faith, of these people living in God's constant presence, afforded me a glimpse into something greater and truer than earthly preoccupations." At a time when political strategists, and some inside the Church, wish to present a "clash of civilisations" between Islam and Christianity and call for the "Judaeo-Christian" West to be defended, Foucauld offers another way. His life journey shows that it is not "other" religions which need to be battled against but indifference, or lack of faith.

Witnessing Spirituality

Foucauld shows that the Church should not measure itself on the "numbers game" of instant success but in the integrity of witness which bears fruit in the long term. Some years after his death a religious congregation, the Little Brothers of Jesus, was established, taking Foucauld's as their inspiration. Being a witness amid difficulties is an attribute of the North African church epitomised by the Tibhirine monks, the Trappist community in Algeria who served their Muslim neighbours but then saw seven of them assassinated. They, like Foucauld, are now recognised as martyrs. During his trip to Morocco in 2019, Pope Francis met Father Jean-Pierre Schumacher, 96, the last surviving monk of the Tibhirine community. "I believe we should worry whenever we Christians are troubled by the thought, we are only significant if we are the flower and if we occupy all the spaces," Francis told a



gathering at the Cathedral of Saint-Pierre in Rabat. "You know very well that our lives are meant to be 'yeast', wherever and with whomever we find ourselves, even if this appears to bring no tangible or immediate benefits."

Spirituality of Being

Charles de Foucauld who focused on being, rather than doing, offers the Church a way of evangelising, particularly in the light of the Covid-19 pandemic, which has seen the everyday activities of ecclesial life dramatically curtailed. Foucauld offers a vital lesson that God is before God acts. His desire to be present was motivated by a radical humility: he identified with the Christ who was obscure and forgotten. "Jesus descended to them and came to Nazareth," de Foucauld wrote. "Throughout his life, he descended: by becoming flesh, by becoming an obedient little child, by becoming poor, abandoned, exiled, persecuted, tortured, by always putting himself in the last place."

Conclusion

With his beatification on November 13, 2005 and canonization soon to take place the church officially recognizes his significance as one of those seekers who periodically manage to reinvent the imitation of Christ in a manner suited to the needs of our age, and thus invite others to read the Gospel in a new way. The reverberations from Foucauld's solitary witness bear fruit after a century. I invite the Catholic faithful to study in depth the salient features of the spirituality of Charles de Foucauld, the archetypal personality of the third millennium Catholic spirituality. St Charles de Foucauld will be interceding in heaven for a humbler Church, less focussed on the appearances of success and more on becoming a model of dialogue and charity.

From Bondage to Freedom

Introduction

Every human being, every creature on earth desires to be free. "Being free does not mean merely casting off one's chains, but living in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others" states Nelson Mandela. Yes, when a person lives in love, and walks in the way of love, led by the God of love, he chooses the way of truth, the way of loving and respecting one another. If this is our way of life we will not get into a life of crime. Those who go astray from the way of genuine love get caught up in chains and locked up.

Prisoners' Release

All those who are locked up in a prison, desire first and foremost to be set free, to obtain freedom from chains and all control from authority. The greatest longing of every one behind the bars is to be released and go out from the high walls of the prison. As per the statistics of December 2019 there were 4,78,600 inmates in 1350 prisons all over India. About 70% of them were under trial prisoners. As a prisoner under trial, they are taken to the court several times. They have to go through many humiliating experiences of being handcuffed and taken like animals, on their way to the court with a chain held by a constable. It is quite distressing to any person even those who are guilty and much more for those who are innocent. Until the court proves them guilty, they can't be termed as criminals. But in the existing judicial system in our country, especially in Karnataka, in certain cases it takes years for a person to be released on bail. As of 8th September 2020, judgment was pending for more than a year for 1.6 crore criminals. This presents a giant




Sr Adele Korah SCCG

hurdle for those who would wish to release prisoners from prison cells. This being the situation it is quite natural that the inmates of prisons get frustrated. Those who are from poor families suffer the most in all the ways. Obviously a very large number of prisoners in most prisons all through our country are waiting to be released from prison.

Frustration

As a volunteer of Prison Ministry India, in my opinion, release of a prisoner means not only helping them to be released from prison, but also offering them help to free themselves from their inner tensions. A committed volunteer should help the brethren to be released from their inner bondages before they go out of prison. Every incarcerated brother or sister suffers from several factors smothering them from within: feelings of loneliness, guilt, fear, anger, inability to forgive, hatred, sinfulness and so on. I have met prisoners who were planning to take revenge on the families who were the cause of their imprisonment. By sharing God's powerful Word with them I have seen them giving up such evil desires and becoming people of forgiveness. Many are unable to accept their pain of being in prison. The presence of a committed volunteer who can give them acceptance, patient listening and counseling can help them in their moment of frustration. When they are unable accept their situation, sleep evades them. Some of them see their bloodstained hands whenever




they close their eyes. Those who are criminals suffer from their guilty conscience while those who are innocent and were falsely accused, go through inner struggles to accept the situation.

Consolation

Though it is not possible for the volunteers to be available to all the inmates of a prison, the persons who are in distress can be helped from suicidal tendency if they are given the needed attention at the proper time. When a sister companion of mine approached an inmate, on the first day of his entry to prison, she found him in distress. She said to him very kindly, "Please don't feel you are alone, I am here as your sister," He burst out in tears in his pain saying, "I was sitting here and planning how to end my life, because they brought me in for no fault of mine." Our presence is the greatest help to those who are in distress. Sharing of their emotional burden is a great help. An experience of God's unconditional love reflected by the volunteers of Prison Ministry, the assurance of help in contacting their dear ones, counseling and prayer will help them in their initial disturbances. Acceptance of their own failure in overcoming their impulsive nature and sinful tendencies, acceptance of God's forgiving love, and His plan in their life will go a long way in regaining peace. When they are helped to reflect on the word, "For surely, I know the plans I have for you, plan for your welfare and not for harm to give you a future with hope. When you call upon me and come and pray to me, I will hear you. When you search for me, you will find me, if you seek me with all your heart, I will let you find me" (Jeremiah 29,11-13).

Forgiveness

Release from anger and hatred, and the grace to forgive all those who were the cause of their imprisonment will help them to free themselves from hatred and the desire to take revenge. If the inmates of a prison are released when they are filled with hatred and



revengeful feelings, their release from prison may add to the social evil in the society. When we meet a prisoner, who is unable to forgive, we have to help him or her to receive the grace to forgive those who were the cause of their imprisonment. By sharing God's powerful Word with them I have seen them coming out from their struggle. One of the inmates in the prison told me that he was planning to set the houses of those who were the cause of his imprisonment on fire by contacting someone who would do it for him. After a prayer meeting in which I shared God's word on the need of forgiveness in our life, he gave up his evil desire to take revenge. If they nurse hatred within them it turns into poison, causing harm to their body and mind. "Let no one fail to obtain the grace of God; that no bitterness springs up and through it cause many to become defiled. (Hebrews 12:15). Forgiveness restores their lost peace.

Joy of Reformation

During the past seventeen years of my service in the prison, I had the joy of rendering help in getting a large number of brethren released on bail or acquittal. I have experienced the joy of witnessing criminals, specially, murderers & dacoits, getting transformed and redeemed during their period of incarceration, and finally being released from prison. The greatest joy I felt during my ministry in the prison was when the black sheep who lost their way and entered the prison, were touched by God's love during their life in prison and got themselves renewed, reformed, reconciled with God and their enemies before being released from prison. These brethren when they return to their families, will become torch bearers of God's light and thus bring down blessings to their families and society. Persons who were living in the darkness of a crime filled life, become agents of good news. "The Harvest is rich but the laborers are few, so ask the Lord of the harvest to send laborers to his harvest." (Luke 10:2).

My Experiences in Prison Ministry

Sr Joy Panikulam

Personal Vocation

“I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me” (Mt: 25/36). “I have come to call not the righteous but sinners to repentance” (Lk 5:2) and outcasts of the society. These words of Jesus inspired me when I took my first step in Bilaspur Central Jail in 1998. There were more than 1500 prisoners including men and women and children who were deprived of freedom. At that time the situation in the prison was unimaginable and indescribable. They were alienated from society and were getting severe punishment. Many of the convicts were innocent ones. In this situation I started my jail ministry to help the poor ones. Many of them were on trial/custody, as their guilt was not proved yet since years. The majority of prisoners were not well off so they were forced to make the prison as their home for years without any legal assistance to take their cases to court. No one will be there to hear them and they were in jail without help.

Prison Ministry India

Prison Ministry India, a national organization recognized under CBCI, works for the release, reformation and rehabilitation of prisoners. Fr Maximillian Kolbe is our patron, Fr Francis Kodiyan MCBS and Fr Varghese Karipery are the founders. Bishop Allwyn D'Silva is the chairman” Fr Josekutty Kalayil and Fr Sebastian Theckanath and

Fr Sebastian Vadakumpadan were former national coordinators. At present Fr Francis Kodiyan MCBS is our national coordinator. Prayer is our power house, inconvenience is our convenience, God's providence is our bank balance, begging is our lifestyle; our motto is to alleviate the suffering of prisoners, and to foster love among them. Jesus says that they may discover themselves. Jesus came to give hope to the hopeless so we too are called and chosen to be His followers, to bring peace to all those suffering prisoners.

Prison Ministry

Prison ministry, being my passion led me to prisons wherever I was transferred. There were no barriers of any sort that could hamper my ardent desire to work for the prisoners. However, as I was assigned with other responsibilities in the communities it was not easy to give an ear to the inmates. Once I met a lady who was mentally ill. “I killed him” was her mantra. As a repeated rape case victim made the woman kill the man, who raped her, perceiving no escape and surrendered to the police.

Consolation

Another young Lady, Kishori, coming from Delhi, was caught by the police with no record of crime being committed. The police stripped off her clothes and labelled her as a Naxalite. She cried bitterly losing her dignity, with no one beside her to support her. God is good to those who seek Him fervently. My words of consolation and listening heart indeed were a soothing spirit to her for the moment. Thanks to the Almighty Father and God by whom she was released within six months. There are many other terrifying stories: a Hindu girl who wanted

to marry a Christian boy could not manage it and so she killed him and surrendered to the police. She was transformed and was ready for any punishment but instead what happened was she got released within 7 years. She is an unmarried teacher and repented for the crime she committed. Such incidents snatched away my sleep at night, disturbed me to the core and shook me up. Nevertheless, it made me determined to step out decisively for this noble cause.

Celebrations

We perceived and made it possible to visit every week in female section. On special occasions like PMI day, Christmas, Easter, we arranged sacrament of reconciliation and Holy Eucharist for both men and women. On Deepali, Children's day, Women's day too we celebrate with joy, happiness and give them something. In our routine visit to jail we engaged the women inmates in cutting and tailoring, mat making, candle making, mushroom cultivation etc. We also took interest in literacy class, counselling and gave them moral teachings. Always the jail superintendent was good to us. We provided them with all the needed materials for their use.

Medical Camps

Besides this we were arranging eye and dental camps for the inmates in various Jails like Bilaspur, Ambikapur, Jashpur and Raigarh. I was thrilled to work for the juveniles at the same time there was sadness within them to see young faces behind the bars. Some of course face the trial of their karma, still, pretty a good number for no crime done. In places like Ambikapur and Bilaspur I took initiative to beg from religious houses for the personals and contribute some amount

as to meet the expenses of the inmates in jail for our mission. Their contribution was well appreciated. We were able to donate many things for them. Computers, tailoring machine, books for the library, clothes and stitching materials were given to them.

Diocesan, State, National Coordination

The in charges were very happy, so they were allowing us to do whatever we ask them to perform. Whenever I was transferred to Ambikapur or Bilaspur, in Chhattisgarh my prime focus was to bring all five dioceses Ambikapur, Raipur, Raigarh, Jashpur. Raipur and Jagdalpur to work together for the PMI. Certainly, all five dioceses' response was rather pleasing. Time to time the core, members of these dioceses were called, and organized with some input session, like few seminars, workshops, state and national gatherings to boost up the enthusiasm of the volunteers and likeminded priests. Some of us attended the conferences, in state and national level.

Prisoners' Release

In 2015 I was elected as the Executive member for Chhattisgarh region. Within these years I have worked hard to bring up the prison ministry in Chhattisgarh. We managed to release more than 200 prisoners. From Bilaspur, Ambikapur, Jashpur and Raigarh where I tried to function systematically. I have much satisfaction in helping the helpless prisoners to breath in freedom. Thanks be to God who inspired me to carry out the work and to continue to give my best, and to carry out this ministry. from the time I made available for the prison ministry.

My personal experiences instilling in me an awareness of a loving and merciful God has brought different outlook in my life. I think about how blessed it is to be alive in freedom I am grateful to God for inspiring me to carry out this ministry. He continues to support me with His graces and Blessings so that I would do my best in this ministry. Prison Ministry helps me to be grateful to God in every moment of my life for the freedom I enjoy physically, mentally, emotionally. Being free is something I have always taken for granted in the past. We tend to want what we do not have instead of wanting the beautiful gifts we have.

Conclusion

I would conclude with these two quotes. "Let it inspire us to commit ourselves for the cause of the other, to bring a smile in the faces that has lost and forgotten the essence of freedom in all sphere of life." "Live for yourself and you will live in vain, but live for others, and you will live again" states Bob Marley. Forget yourself and live for others, for it is more blessed to give than to receive states AB Simson. In fact, this is what we are called for. In fact, this is what, when the hour comes may able to listen the soft whisper "I was in prison and you came to visit me" the Lord will say 'come blessed of my Father, in to my aboard to enjoy my Bliss'.

PMI SPECIAL TASK FORCES
29 MAY 2021, 10AM TO 12PM
PROGRAM

1000 HOLY MASS	REV FR DION ISSAC, TELANGANA	
1035 OPENING PRAYER	LT COL. JENNIFER JAMES, CHENNAI	
1040 WELCOME	REV FR MICHAEL FRANCIS, AURANGABAD	
1050 INNOCENT PRISONER	MR NOY JOSEPH, BANGALORE	
1120 SERIAL KILLERS	REV SR LINI SHEEJA MSC, BELLARY	
1135 INSIGHTS	REV DR FRANCIS KODIVAN MCBS, BANGALORE	
1145 VOTE OF THANKS	MR ASHOK KUMAR, VIJAYAWADA	
1155 PRAYER FOR PRISONERS	MIR WALTER KAMBLE, NASHIK	

Log on to Google Meet Video Call Link:
<https://meet.google.com/xhx-vbyg-kwn>

Psalm 91

Assurance of God's Protection

Eunice Fernandes

It has been my practice to pray Psalm 91 with the family after the Rosary. We prayed it with great devotion while I pictured every line in my mind as I prayed with moist eyes. It so happened one particular day in 1916, my husband fell ill and we began our visits to the hospital on my two-wheeler, with him as pillion rider, something I never did before. During one of those initial visits, after my husband alighted the bike and as I did not find my choice parking space in the hospital premises at ground level, I was directed to ride up the slope to park. Help was denied and I grew nervous but had to park at a higher level where two wheelers were parked and I did it praying all the time.

Now, it was time for the journey back home after medical tests. It was about 3pm and what I saw gripped my heart, as little children were running around playing and people occupied vacant chairs lined against the wall not very far off. My husband stood at a safe distance. Again no one helped, so hesitatingly and slowly I started the engine and moved and as I turned, the vehicle sort of lost control... The vehicle moved fast and in that split second this line came flashing across my mind at lightning speed. "He will command His angels concerning you to guard you. On their hands they will bear you up so that you will not dash your foot against a stone. And then I was able to halt. but my knees and I trembled. But no damage to construction or premises or to anybody. And I praised and thanked God when I experienced and witnessed His presence so close to me in my life.




Bangalore Christian Writers Trust: Redeemed Prisoner

Francis Antony ITS

As readers may be aware, Bangalore Christian Writers Trust had been encouraging Christian writers of Bangalore in their efforts to come up with works of higher literary quality. The trust familiarises its members with the world of works of social relevance. It also seeks to foster communal harmony. Some readers who happened to come across the book, Redeemed Prisoner of Sr Lini Sheeja MSC, PMI former national secretary, brought it to the notice of the trustees of the organisation. The trust collected extra copies and distributed them to interested members. Eventually, a meeting on the Trust was convened online on Saturday the 10th April 2021 to fete the author and to honour PMI. Mr T A Calistus president of the Trust welcomed the gathering and spoke of the Biblical context of the book and the work of PMI. Mr Francis Antony ITS, BCWT patron inaugurated the meeting and explained his own association with PMI through Vincent de Paul society.

Prof PM Mathew was the main speaker who highlighted each episode of the book with due appreciation of the sensitive analysis of specific cases. Rev Dr Francis Kodiyan MCBS, PMI co-founder spoke about his seminary days at Vadavathur Kottayam as to how he was attracted to the service of star-crossed lives of prisoners. The call to become a love bomb for the reformation, rehabilitation and redemption of the lost was received by the PMI warrior Fr Francis



at St Elijah Ashram, Niravilpuzha, Kerala on 11 March 1983. This experience of God sparked in him the commitment to dedicate his entire life towards the cause of prisoners and prostitutes. His whole life can be summarised as an answer to the question, “Why can’t you dedicate your life for the conversion of sinners?” which the Eucharistic Jesus asked him at Elijah Ashram Chapel. Today PMI has grown with 8000 dedicated volunteers for visiting the 1350 prisons in India and 20 rehabilitation centres for released prisoners and their children.

Dr Mathew Mampra CEO BPCR and himself a writer of some bestselling books and a film producer to boot spoke on how certain chapters of the book moved him. Prof Mathew Manimala, a former member of IIMB, recited his own poem with sarcastic humour on the skewed justice system. Finally, the audience got to hear from Sr Lini Sheeja herself about her association with the PMI. It was God’s special call to her to render her service in humility to the lost ones behind the bars. As God heard the cry of the Israelites and called Moses, she believes firmly, it’s the same God who heard the cry of brethren from the dark cells and called her to serve in this ministry. “What a gun cannot do, a nun can” is the motivating sentence who made her to be ever committed in this ministry. As she wanted to preserve the honour of the families of hundreds of thousands of people who were helped, their stories could be brought on record. She also spoke about the housing projects for the unfortunate homeless families of the prisoners. Mr PL Sunny the BCWT secretary proposed vote of thanks.




Innocent Prisoners' Redeemers

Sr Hansa Parmar

The long-awaited meeting of the Innocent Prisoners' Redeemers of Prison Ministry India was held online on 5th of May 2021 from 10 AM to 12.00 noon. This was possible thanks to the coordination of the dynamic, energetic person, Sr Lini Sheeja MSC. Sr Shanti and Mrs Fatima led us into prayer with an inspiring bhajan and Scripture reading. All the members of this group, 38 altogether, the new and the old, were welcomed by Sr Lini. She spoke at length on Jesus, the Innocent Prisoner, who faced injustice, was crucified and died on the Cross. Jesus indeed is the hero and model of innocent prisoners.

Sr Amala, the National Secretary of Prison Ministry India presented the day's program. Rev D Francis Kодиyan MCBS, the love bomb of Prison Ministry India welcomed and thanked each member of the Innocent Prisoners' Redeemers. He said when we are punished and suffer unjustly, we develop spiritual power. Through this spiritual power, Jesus redeems us. The Innocent Prisoners' Redeemers' members are invited to do the same. Our duty is to pray for them, visit them if possible and work for their release. Every participant of the group introduced themselves.

Mr Noy Joseph an innocent man and his wife Mrs Jovina Noy shared their experiences of bitter suffering which they



underwent unjustly in Kuwait prison. When he was released and when he went to his home town in Kerala he was looked down upon, ridiculed and humiliated. He was not welcomed and accepted by his friends and relatives. The future therefore was bleak and hopeless. It was God alone who sent Fr Sebastian Vechookarottu along Noy's way who invited him to Bangalore, comforted him and gave him courage to live a new life. He, along with his wife a nurse by profession, started cooking for people and helped people out during the pandemic. Gradually they opened a small hotel, Anna's Kitchen, with assistance from PMI. Fr Francis Kодиyan, the PMI national coordinator blessed Anna's Kitchen on 9th April 2021. They started getting orders for food. Yes, believing in Jesus Christ now they hope for a better future.

The following Action Plan was sorted out with the interaction of the participants. Everyday from 02.55 to 0300PM we pray for innocent prisoners followed by Divine Mercy prayer for innocent prisoners. Every Sunday from 12 am to 3 am we shall hold a Night Vigil for the reformation and reintegration of innocent prisoners. Every first Wednesday of the month we come together for a meeting and Biblical sharing. We have a 40 days program to follow, the details of which will be sent on our WhatsApp group.

Sr Heather proposed a vote of thanks. Mrs Marjorie Correa prayed for the innocent prisoners. The meeting was concluded with Regina Coeli led by Mrs Michelle Lopes.



PMI Volunteers Training Program 2021

Sr Lini Sheeja MSC

Introduction

Prison Ministry India held its Volunteers Training Program from 12-24 April 2021 with the theme “Reform to Reintegrate. 72 volunteers from many states participated in it. Most Rev Alwyn D’Silva, the PMI chairman inaugurated the training program.

PMI Biblical Foundations

Most Rev Dr Allwyn D’Silva, PMI Chairman spoke on biblical foundations in which he deepened the faith of volunteers as he helped volunteers understand the ministry at a deeper level through the scriptures. “We need to focus on regeneration of prisoners not just rehabilitation. For that, we need to be regenerated. This is possible only if we are deeply rooted in Christ and Scripture”.

PMI Spirituality

Rev Dr Francis Kodiyan MCBS shed light PMI foundation, motto, source, prime duty, mode of action, entrance and method. He also took the volunteers through the various events, achievements and milestones of PMI since 1986 to 2020. All the participants were deeply touched and moved as Fr Francis shared his God-experience at Elijah Ashram of his call to dedicate his life for the conversion of sinners.

PMI Three R Theory

Fr Varghese Karipery, PMI cofounder enlightened the volunteers with 3 E’s: experiment, experience and enjoy. He explained in detail 3 R Theory: Release, Renewal and Rehabilitation.

PMI Lifestyle and Best Practices

Sr Lini Sheeja MSC spoke that as God called Moses by hearing the cry of the Israelites, call of each PMI volunteer is the response of the cry of our brethren behind the bars. She explained details of the procedures that need to be followed before entering the prison, within the prison, beyond prison walls and in the ministry were explained.

Prison Ministry in Sri Lanka

Fr Anton Sriyan, Sri Lanka national coordinator began with a detailed explanation of the structure of the prisons in Sri Lanka. The 13 dioceses there have prison chaplains. They provide pastoral care to prisoners and attend to their spiritual welfare.

PMI Regions, State and Unit Level Ministries

Fr Wilfred Fernandes, presented the structure, new initiatives and activities PMI Central region and Pune Unit. Fr Shaji Stephen OdeM presented the South region and Kerala state ministries. Fr Dion Issac and Mr Vincent shed light on Telangana state level ministries. Mrs Veera spoke on volunteers on PMI Bangalore unit. Sr Jobina UFS shared on PMI North East region.

PMI Ministries Inside and Outside

Ministries inside the prison were detailed by Sr Adele SCCG, and she gave testimonies sharing her own day-to-day experience serving prisoners. Ministries outside the prison were explained by Fr Benny Pachanal CRSP, PMI assistant national coordinator.

PMI Beginnings in Bangalore

Sr Clara HCM recalled her experience for the last 25 years right from inception. The first national gathering was conducted in August 1994. She shared how the journey was not easy, right from getting a place, starting the office, creating awareness and reaching prisons had many hurdles.

Counseling Skills

Fr Subash CRSP enlightened the volunteers with his counselling skills. "Where there is no guidance, a nation falls, but in an abundance of counselors there is safety" (Prov 11:14) is an inspiration behind counseling in the prisons.

PMI Incessant Intercessory Invocation for the Incarcerated

Mrs Rowena Luis shared the 5 ways to go from Prison to Paradise. Encouraging personal testimonies were shared that motivated all.

PMI Ruby Jubilee Projects

Sr Amala DC, PMI national secretary explained the various PMI projects for

ruby jubilee. 40 Kolbe Home children, 40 houses for released prisoners, 40 Special Task forces, 400 Scholarship to prisoners' children, 400 prisoners to be released and 4000 PMI volunteers.

PMI Burning Bush Spiritual Banquet

Mrs Goretta Martins said our ministry begins with prayer. Many are called but we are chosen to attend the training and serve in the ministry.

Tihar Prison Ministry

Sr Inigo Joachim SSAM moved the hearts of the volunteers as she spoke her heart with her living testimonies to brethren behind the bars in Tihar prisons, Delhi.

PMI Rehabilitation Centers

Snehashramam and Shanti Bhavan, renewal and rehabilitation centres for men located at Thrissur and Kochi in Kerala were shared by Fr Binoy. Snehashramam, a rehabilitation & renewal center for released female prisoners and abandoned girls located at Trivandrum, Kerala was presented by Sr Beena SdP. Premodaya, a home for prisoners' children (girls) was presented by Sr Jerlyn Joyce SSAM. Kolbe Home, a center for prisoners' children (boys) was presented Sr Basil SCS.

Types of Prisons and Prisoners

Mr Jesuraja explained in detail the different types of prisons and prisoners. Currently we have over 1350 prisons across India. Commendable Repatriation work done by PMI was explained in detail with examples.



PMI Special Task Forces

Fr Michael Francis illustrated the PMI Special Task Forces and informed about the Terrorists' Saving Squad (TSS). Lt. Col. Jennifer James explained about Death Row Commandoes (DRC).

PMI Fund Raising

Sr Rosily Jose SCC motivated the participants as she meticulously presented on PMI fund-raising.

Prisoner's Life Testimony: Mr Reny George, an ex-prisoner and founder of Precious Children, Bengaluru shared his life experience being redeemed from the dark cells of prisons. He shared his life experience and his journey from being a notorious prisoner to redeemed prisoner.

Innocent Prisoner's Testimony

Mr Noy Joseph, an innocent prisoner who was falsely accused and imprisoned in Kuwait prison shared his life struggles together with his wife Jovina.

Hired-Killers Reformation

Fr Alexander Kureekattil CMF who tirelessly works for the reformation of hired-killers challenged the participants as he shared his living experience with hired-killers in past decades.

Concluding Remarks

Fr Francis Kodiyan, conveyed the concluding remarks and announced the fruits of this training program. 1) Inauguration of St Anthony's Home for



PMI VTP 2021

Children, Kankavli. 2) Night-vigil once a week, every Friday morning from 12am to 3am. 3) Online Counseling together with Anugraha Counseling Institute, Dindigul. 4) Online Retreat will be arranged for VOTP participants in the month of June or July. 5) A Home for Trafficked Women in Mumbai. 6) Volunteers shall pray for at least 5 prisoners daily. 7) Launching of PMI Special Task Forces such as Antidrug Trafficking Warriors (ATW), Abducted People's Releasers (APR), Anointed Prisoners' Releasers (APR), and Mafia Redeemers (MR)

Valedictory Ceremony: On 24 April 2021, valedictory ceremony was begun with prayer led by Mrs Antoinette Fernandes. Fr Francis Kodiyan MCBS welcomed the participants and Dr Rosily Thomas did the appraisal. Most Rev Dr Allwyn D'Silva, PMI Chairman, in his presidential address, appreciated the organizers and participants. VOTP 2021 collage and souvenir were released by Bp Allwyn which was followed by the awarding of participants' certificates. Sr Amala DC, PMI national secretary proposed vote of thanks and Mrs Nirmala Menezes concluded the valedictory function with a prayer.

“WHEN THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH COMES, HE WILL GUIDE YOU INTO ALL TRUTH; FOR HE WILL NOT SPEAK ON HIS OWN, BUT WILL SPEAK WHATEVER HE HEARS, AND HE WILL DECLARE TO YOU THE THINGS THAT ARE TO COME” (JOHN 16,13).
LORD ANOINT US WITH YOUR SPIRIT OF TRUTH.




Antidrug Trafficking Warriors (ATW)

Vineetha Brito

The first meeting of the PMI Special Task Force Antidrug Trafficking Warriors (ATW) was held on May 2, 2021. Sr Amala Sabbalarajulu read the program. The meeting began with a hymn invoking the Holy Spirit led by Mrs Flavia Barros and a scripture reading on new life in Christ. "I appeal to you, therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be confirmed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God – what is good and acceptable and perfect" (Rom 12:1-2).

Fr Francis Kodiyan MCBS

Fr Francis Kodiyan MCBS, PMI national coordinator welcomed the team and introduced Fr Michael Francis, priest in-charge of Special Task Forces (STF) and Fr Sebastian Vechookarottu, who will be leading the Antidrug Trafficking Warriors (ATW). Fr Kodiyan touched upon various aspects of drug trade and how it destroys lives and families and how it has become a menace to society. A large number of the incarcerated worldwide are drug addicts and drug traffickers. We have to pray for them. As PMI volunteers it becomes our moral duty to incessantly pray for our brothers and sisters behind the bars. Fr



Kodiyan informed that this year's theme for International day for antidrug trafficking is Better Knowledge for Better Care. 26 June is observed as International Day against Drug Abuse. He mentioned that Antidrug Trafficking Warriors (ATW) and Terrorists Saving Squad (TSS) are closely connected as both serve the same purpose.

Fr Michael Francis

Fr Michael Francis spoke of the 41 Special Task Forces of PMI. Its inauguration took place on 22 December 2019. St Therese of Lisieux (1873-1997), patroness of this mission, at the age of 14, became a commando of this mission by offering Holy Mass and mortifications for the repentance of Henri Pranzini, a hardcore triple murderer. This unrepentant convict, thanks to St Theresa's prayer and sacrifices, at the last moment of his death approached the priest who was carrying the crucifix, took hold of the cross and kissed the wounds of Jesus three times, repented, and shed tears while embracing his capital punishment.

40 Days Program

The 40 Days program to be followed by the Anti-drug Trafficking Warriors (ATW) consists of 40 Holy Masses and Communion, 40 Chapters of the Gospel: Luke and Mark, 40 recitations of the Creed, 40 Rosaries, 40 Divine Mercy Rosaries, 4000 thank you Jesus, 4000 Glory be to the Father and 40 Mortifications.

Fr Sebastian Vechookarottu

Fr Sebastian Vechookarottu the commander in Chief of Antidrug Trafficking Warriors



emphasized the 5 aspects of deaddiction process: (1) Physical (2) Mental (3) Emotional (4) Spiritual (5) Social. The strategy he proposed needs powerful prayer and this is to be commenced and intensified especially in the month of May.

Decisions

1. Everyday 2.55 to 3.00PM all members of ATW wherever we are, pray together 5 minutes.
2. Every Monday from 12 midnight to 3AM Eucharistic adoration in association with PMI's Intercessory prayer through Zoom meeting.
3. On the first Sunday of every month at 4PM a meeting of all members to share experiences and developments.
4. Retreats shall be organized for drug traffickers, addicts, alcoholics and smokers.
5. There shall be a list of prayer and fasting among the group members.
6. Names of drug addicts are to be shared for personal prayer and fasting.
7. Visits to de-addiction centers are to be done regularly.
8. ATW shall establish its own de-addiction centers in the course of time.

Kripa Foundation

Rehabilitation and addiction treatment can help individuals overcome the disease, and many believe spirituality is a key component of recovery. To aid the de-addiction process

Antidrug Trafficking Warriors

Kripa Foundation was proposed. Its Reg. Office is: c/o. Mount Carmel Church, 81/A, Chapel Road, Bandra, Location Address: Papy, Taluka Vasai and in Pune H-36, Papal Seminary Villa, Vithalwadi, Pune 411051; Tel:24347080. Fr. Michael Francis added that Kripa Foundation De-Addiction Centre was started by Fr. Joe Periera.

Conclusion

Vote of Thanks was proposed by Mrs. Surekha Ranaware. Mrs Emilie Tshibola led the concluding prayer. Mrs Rafela Louis led Regina Coeli and Prayer for Drug addicts and drug traffickers. "As for you, always be sober minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfil your ministry" (2 Timothy 4:5).



Prison Ministry India
Pentecost with Prisoners
24 Hours Eucharistic Adoration
22 May 1200AM to 23 May 1200AM

PMI volunteers from every state and Special Task Forces spend half an hour each in Eucharistic Adoration interceding for renewal of prisoners and reawakening of PMI volunteers, sanctification and healing of humanity.

Life in Spirit Conference (10 to 12AM)

Message Most Rev Anil Couto, Archbishop of Delhi
 Inaugural Address Most Rev Allwyn D'Silva, PMI Chairman

Kindly make yourself free on 22 May 2021 and be prepared for the anointing of the Holy Spirit. Further details will be informed shortly.



Fr Francis Kodiyon MCBS
 National Coordinator, PMI



Google Meet joining info
 Video call link: <https://meet.google.com/ccf-mhhh-gsu>



Purgatory Souls Redeemers (PSR)

Charmaine Edwin

Purgatory Souls Redeemers (PSR) monthly meeting was held online on 8 May 2021, Saturday from 4pm to 5.30pm and 35 members participated in it. The opening prayer was led by Mrs Charmaine from Kerala invoking the Spirit of the Lord, followed by Scripture reading and prayer led by Mrs Vinita J Britto from Pune. Sr Lini Sheeja MSC, animator of Purgatory Souls Redeemers welcomed Rev Fr Joseph Royan C.Ss.R, speaker of the day, Fr Francis Kodiyan and all the members

40 Days Program

Sr Lini Sheeja MSC presented the set of prayers that we as members and as one family had prayed together for the souls in purgatory. 40 Days program consists of 40 Holy Masses and Communion, 40 chapters of the Gospels: Luke and Mark, 40 Creed, 40 Rosaries, 40 Divine Mercy Rosaries, 40 Mortifications, 4000 Glory be to the Father, and 4000 ejaculatory prayer, 'Thank you Jesus'. 28 days prayers with 28 chapters of the Gospel of Mathew. 21 days prayers with 21 chapters of the Gospel of John. 28 days prayers with reading from Acts of the Apostles. 51 days program with reading from Romans, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, and Galatians. Now, we are in 49 days program with reading from Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians, 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon and Hebrews. Everyday PSR members pray the Rosary, Divine Mercy Chaplet, offer Holy Mass for the holy souls in Purgatory; everyday half an hour Eucharistic Adoration, the prayer, 'eternal rest grant unto them O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon

them', almsgiving, asking the intercession of Saints for them and Prayer of St Gertrude the Great for the Holy Souls in Purgatory.

Spiritual Journey

Rev Fr Joseph Rayan C.Ss.R explained that our life is a journey and it continues even after our death. Souls in Purgatory are in spiritual separation from God. They wait in eager hope to see God face to face and we assist them to encounter God through our prayers. There is no beautiful mission other than prayer for the Souls in Purgatory. He appreciated the noble task the PSR members are doing by offering the Holy Eucharist and many other prayers for the Souls in Purgatory. Our final destination is to meet God face to face. If we are unholy we cannot face God. One needs to be purified to face God and so; Purgatory is a journey where a soul is purified to face God. The Souls in Purgatory are ready to go through any amount of pain and are waiting, for they are assured of hope that they will see God one day. I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us (Romans 8:18).

Future Plans

1. PSR members will conduct night vigil every Saturday from 12am -3am joining in Zoom Meet of Incessant Intercessory Invocation for the Incarcerated.
2. The Monthly meeting will be conducted on the 3rd Saturday of every month from 4pm – 5.30pm and the meeting will be concluded with the Holy Eucharist offered for the Souls in Purgatory.

Vote of thanks was proposed by Mrs Charmaine. Prayer of St Gertrude the Great for the Souls in Purgatory was prayed by Mrs Monica. The day's meeting was concluded with the Holy Eucharist offered by Fr Francis Kodiyan MCBS, PMI national coordinator.



I See Jesus Everywhere

Mrs Lili P Vaz

In these terrible times of anxiety and fear,
We fear for our lives, so precious and dear.
Unable to have a sleep that is sound,
Cause there's dread and panic all around.
Millions are confused, scared and angry,
Not knowing when the end to this pandemic will be.
About this illness, so little we know,
Something the world has never experienced before.
Yet amidst all this helplessness and uncertainty,
We see Jesus in the many faces of humanity.
Yes Lord you are present in the doctors dressed in green,
In the tired nurses in uniforms starched and clean.
So sacrificing and utterly exhausted in the emergency room,
Attending to the ill, bringing hope where there's misery and gloom.
They are away from their families, they are caring for ours,
Treating the sick for many days and long deary hours.
Yes Lord, you are there in that truck painted yellow and green,
Disposing our trash, keeping our town clean.
You are there Lord in that sweeper so laboriously at work,
Cleaning our streets, hard work they don't shirk.
You are there Lord in the folks selling fruits and vegetables,
In the grocery stores selling everything edible.
You are there Lord in our priests who for the world they pray,
And the police patrolling empty streets night and day.
You are there Lord in the people helping the needy,
Distributing ration and food to the poor and hungry.
In this state of panic when the future is uncertain,
Lockdown has caused depression and frustration.
Take each day as it comes, we are in this together,
We'll bounce back slowly and steadily my sister and brother.
So let's focus ourselves on Our Father up above,
And with HIS help, we shall overcome every hurdle with love.

VOICE FROM THE PRISON

A K Jayakumar

Family

I was born in a middleclass family in which my father was a Sub Inspector in the Railway Protection Force, mother a housewife and a younger sister who is presently staying apart from the family with her husband at Chennai. I was born and brought up at Chennai as the only son to my parents and soon after my higher secondary studies I had an opportunity to enter into the Indian navy service. In January 1993 I began the journey of life in the Indian Navy as an aviator. I gained experience in maintaining the chetak helicopter which is used for search and rescue purpose in navy and TU-142M fixed wing aircraft which is used for anti-submarine warfare purpose in navy.

Indian Navy Officer

In my entire service period, I had served air-stations of navy such as INS Garuda, INS Rajali, INS Adyar and several other training centers. I attained the rank of chief petty officer which is equivalent to the rank of a junior commissioned officer in the defense services. During my posting at INS Rajali in Tamil Nadu in the year 2000, I came across a girl named Rajalakshmi, who was undergoing her post-graduation course at Chennai. We fell in love with each other and everything was perfect until the year 2004. Due to some misunderstanding our relationship started becoming sour and the pleasant life drifted away towards the worst. When I came to know that she was moving around with someone else we arrived at the point of separation and even did not meet for a couple of months. In order to avoid


any further complications or problem we mutually ended our relationship and I agreed to my parents wish and got married to my uncle's daughter in Kerala in the month of September 2004.

Marriage

Though it was difficult for me to forget the past relationship, still I managed to lead a good life with my wife. In the year 2005, Rajalakshmi started approaching me under the pretext of returning my gifted articles and thereby our contacts grew and several times she requested me to assist her financially and I too started helping her out of my sentiments for her. As days passed, Rajalakshmi started asking for financial assistance, which was in the form of a request in the beginning, but later got changed to demand. There were some changes in her attitude as days passed, so I opted for a transfer from Tamil Nadu to anywhere else. Fortunately I got transferred to Goa and joined the unit in June 2007. However, the so called girlfriend of mine tried to trace me out in Goa with the help of my subordinates and started demanding money, threatening to destroy my family life if I do not adhere to her demands.

Threat

She demanded one lakh rupees from me in order to do a onetime settlement by which she agreed to give away all the letters, pictures and other articles which she was in possession of. As there was no other way to get rid of the tensions and stress, I agreed to give her the said amount. In the meantime, I shifted my family to Goa and was residing in a rented premise at Chikalim, Vasco and somewhere in the beginning of December 2007 she landed in Goa with her companions to take the demanded amount from me. Unfortunately, my loan was not sanctioned and I was not in a position to




honor my words. The moment she came to know about this, her behavior changed and she turned violent threatening me with dire consequences.

Tragedy

On 4 December 2007 when Rajalakshmi met me at my residence and when I expressed my inability to meet her demands, she became aggressive and started behaving very rudely. As I was residing in rented premises, I could not tolerate her behavior and tried to pacify her, but she was not ready to listen to anything and started screaming at me. I was panic stricken and tried to keep her mouth shut by using her dupatta, during the scuffle her dupatta dropped from mouth to neck, which I really was not aware of and suddenly she fainted and fell down on her back. As I was not aware how to handle the situation and totally unaware that she had fainted, I left my house and went to office. I thought she would wake up and find her way to her place of stay. But, to my surprise when I returned from work I saw her lying on the floor but her body had turned and was now resting on her stomach. Immediately I rushed and picked her up, but was shocked to see her frothing. I tried all means possible to wake her up, but all in vain. All that happened there was out of anger and by coincidence and nothing was pre-planned. I had intended something else to happen but the worst was happening before my eyes.

Incarceration

I immediately called my subordinate for help to reach her to hospital as I was having only a bike with me, but my subordinate listened to my explanation about the incident and reported the matter to the naval authority. Subsequently I got a call from my office asking me to join office immediately. Without hesitation I went to office where




I blurted out everything to my superiors. Ultimately police were intimidated and the arrest formalities were done after obtaining necessary approvals from headquarters. This is how I landed in prison. From here my life took a different turn, I was initially living in shame and disguise and my act was eating my peace and I even had thought of taking my life, but a simple and gentle touch from Mother Mary Jane, a PMI volunteer, ultimately restored all negative thoughts into positive.

PMI Volunteers

Mother Mary Jane heard about me and she insisted on my visiting her. Some inmates took me to her and when I sat beside her, her gentle touch gave me comfort and warmth which I was missing. She prayed for me and for about half an hour she listened to all that I had to say, basically wanting me to pour out all my worries, fear, anger etc. so that I could feel relaxed and then she started counselling, which gave me a ray of hope and above all a sense of being cared for and loved by someone who really cared. From then on I started to interact with fellow inmates around me and I began spreading this sense of care to all around me. I began reading the word of God, attending Holy Mass and joining PMI volunteers in their social cause. I was truly enjoying it. As days passed my hope of getting bail faded and this time it was not a disappointment, rather I felt that I have more time to spend with the boys there. As a literate person, I approached prison authority for permission to conduct basic literacy classes for the inmates on a voluntary basis.

Prison Ministry

The number of inmates started enrolling for classes began from two and within a few days I found more than seven joining my classes.



As days passed, the good work I had engaged myself in for the sake of the inmates was recognized by official visitors and NGO's due to which I was given employment to handle the prison canteen at the sub jail, Sada. I could reach out to many from then onwards with the help of Mother Jane and other PMI volunteers. I could aim to do better for the inmates and as days passed, the superintendent of the prison recognized my work and appreciated it during his rounds and he directed me to assist inmates in writing applications / petitions on their behalf.

Light of Prison

In the year 2009, I was convicted and sentenced to undergo life imprisonment by the session's court. Once again I was tested hard by the law of nature, but this time I had gained some experience of prison so there was less of pain or fear, but my emotions broke out and tears rolled down my eyes when I had to wear the convict uniform in central jail Aguada. I started to live a life of a prisoner from then, but with the clear vision that I wanted to help fellow inmates in one way or another. I patiently waited for the time being and began my journey of serving others where I got a good mentor by name Mr David Fernandes, a PMI volunteer. Mother Jane and Brother David have brought about several reformatory measures for the benefit of inmates. I wish to mention a few they brought NIOS, IGNOU and various other vocational training courses for the sake of the inmates. I was a tool for the PMI and assisted them in all possible ways in motivating inmates to join all reformatory programs organized by Prison Ministry and the jail authority. All the good work I had started doing in prison was brought to the notice of the higher authorities and the then Additional Inspector General of Prisons

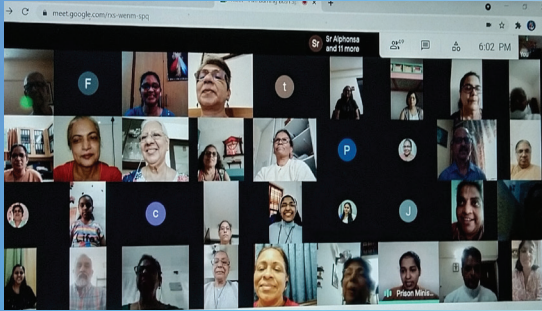
recommended my name to the District & Sessions Judge North to be a Para Legal Volunteer (PLV) in the year 2012.

Good Samaritan

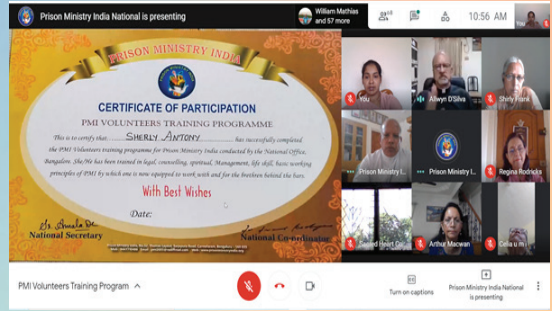
Since then I took keen interest, but now with authority in assisting the inmates in filling Appeals/Writ Petitions/Complaints and also making applications on regular basis. The records of my work were sent to Legal Aid Office on a monthly basis. Many inmates have benefitted with my service in one or other way. Apart from this I also assisted the coordinator of IGNOU during induction of courses and also during the interactive sessions. I had been Master of Ceremony in all the programs organized by the prison authorities and by the Prison Ministry India. I coordinated all the visits in prison, especially all Legal Aid programs organized by the District Legal Services and the State Legal Services Authority. My conduct in jail has always been adjudged as good by prison authorities and I have taken the privilege of Furlough and Parole on 26 occasions till date.

Lessons Learned

All these experiences till date i.e. almost 14 years of Prison life, has not only taught me the value of Life and Liberty, but also how to lead a simple life having concern for others; to live selflessly, spread kindness and love, being humble and above all to walk on the spiritual path. Now I look forward to a second chance to lead a peaceful life after release. I also wish to repay the society with good deeds and for this good cause my family is making all efforts to support me and assist me in the field of setting up a catering service. Now I anticipate my release and wish to lead a dignified life forgetting the past. The lessons learned will be helpful in framing my future. With this belief and the blessings of the Almighty, I march forward.....



**Burning Bush Spiritual Banquet
May 2021**



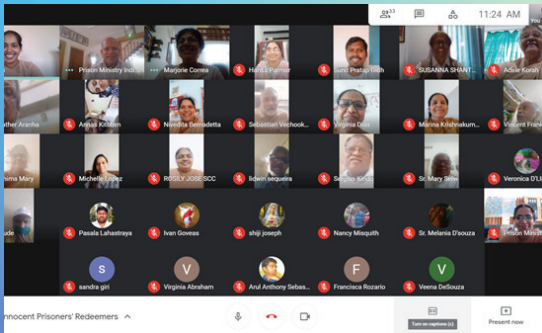
**PMI Volunteers Online Training
Program 2021**



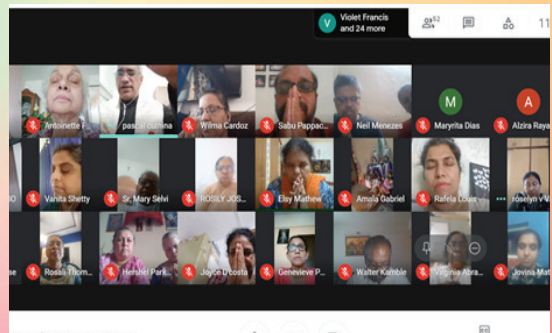
**PMI Volunteers Distributing Masks to
Vaithiri Subjail**



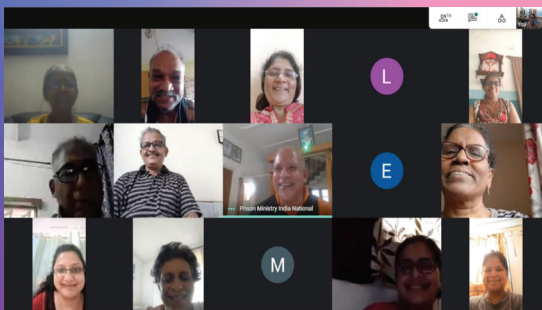
**PMI Volunteers Visiting Observation
Home for Boys, Pune**



**Innocent Prisoners Redeemers
Meeting**



**St Joseph Spiritual Bank Inaugural
Ceremony**



Death Row Commandos Meeting



Farewell to Sr Rosily SCC



*Prison Ministry India
Reform to Reintegrate
Volunteers Online Training Program
12 - 24 April 2021*



*I was in Prison You Visited Me
(Mt 25: 36)*

PMI Volunteers Training Program 2021