



PRISON VOICE

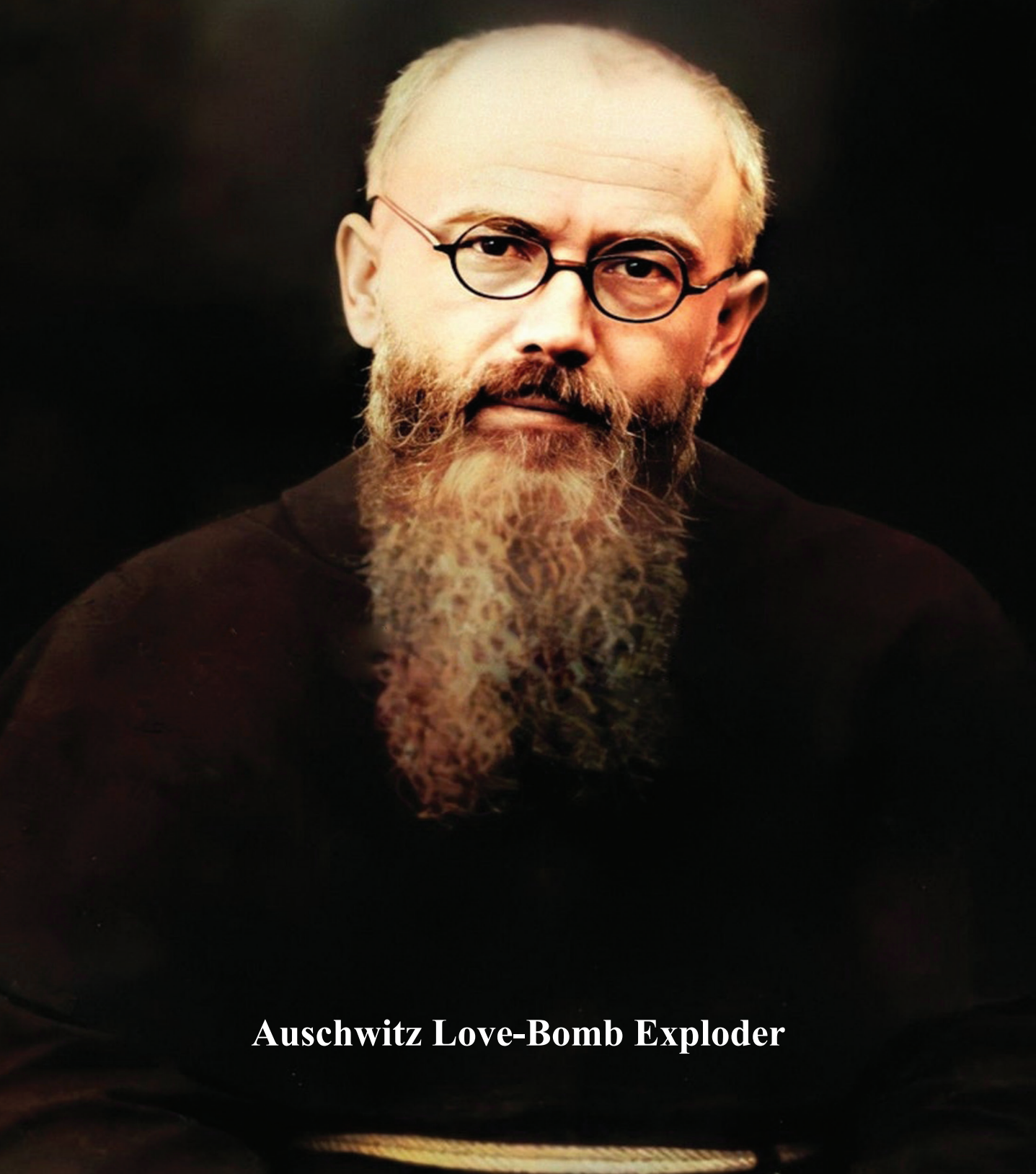
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NATIONAL MONTHLY

₹40/-



Auschwitz Love-Bomb Exploder



Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav by PMI Volunteers at Shimoga Prison



Fr Andrew from Texas, USA Visiting PMI National Office



Jackfruit Mahotsav by PMI Volunteers at Jharsuguda Prison



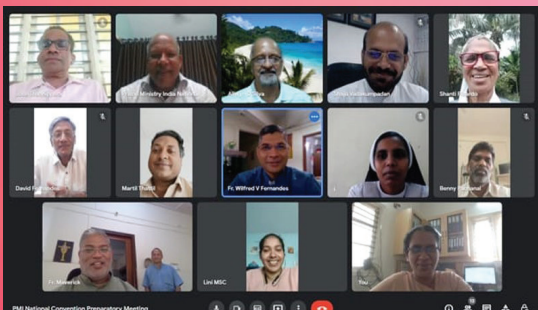
Jesus Fraternity Members Visiting Priests' Home, Kerala



Kolbe Home, Chennai



Ooty Diocesan PMI Team



PMI National Convention Preparatory Online Meeting



PMI National Office Celebrates The Feast of Sacred Heart

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NATIONAL MONTHLY



TRUE FRIENDSHIP John 15:13

*“Greater love has
no man than this,
that a man lay
down his life for
his friends”
(Jn 15,13)*

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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.

BANK DETAILS:

A/c Name : Prison Ministry India
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**PRISON MINISTRY SUNDAY
ASSUMPTION OF MOTHER MARY
INDIAN INDEPENDENCE DAY
FEAST OF ST MAXIMILLIAN KOLBE**



Sr Amala DC
Chief Editor

“Never be afraid of loving the Blessed Virgin too much. You can never love her more than Jesus did.” St Maximilian Kolbe. At the outset, I wish you, dear PMI family, God’s abundant blessings on the solemnity of the Assumption of our Blessed Mother, the auspicious 75th Independence Day, an enriching celebration of Prison Ministry Sunday, and the memorable feast of our Patron St Maximilian Kolbe. May these triple celebrations inspire and motivate us to work divinely for the incarcerated.

Assumption of Mother Mary

On 15th August, we celebrate the twin feasts of the Assumption of Our Blessed Mother and India’s Independence Day. It was by a happy coincidence that India achieved independence on the very day that was declared later in 1950 as the day of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary. The significance of it lies in the fact that Mary was liberated forever in body and soul from the realm of sin and death by the power of the Spirit of the Risen Lord. Mary stands as a sign and sure hope in our struggles towards freedom and liberation. Her complete independence from the enslaving forces reminds us that true independence is attainable by the power of the Spirit.

Prisoners’ Rehabilitation and Reintegration

You may know that PMI has many homes to rehabilitate the released prisoners, both for men, women, children and juveniles. If you know some released prisoners who

need special attention you can approach the directors of PMI rehabilitation centers. PMI also has many homes for prisoners’ children both for boys and girls in different states and are always ready to welcome more children in need. Your recommendations in this regard will highly be appreciated. I take this opportunity to extend my most warm thanks and highest appreciation to those priests, brothers and religious who serve at these homes and all those who collaborate with them spiritually and financially. PMI also assist the released prisoners with their reintegration. We facilitate them with job, marriage, family settlements, and even assisting them in constructing their houses. Thousands of released prisoners have been reintegrated into the main stream of society and I earnestly ask you to continue your prayer and support so that this challenging mission may continue to liberate and reintegrate many more.

Our preaching about the Gospel of freedom and liberation will sound empty if we do not manifest signs of sacrifice in our lives, more especially in our service to the brethren behind the bars. PMI Volunteers are identified with the oppressed and the lowly in the country and raise our voices to expose the dark forces of the powerful without fear; we shall serve as catalysts in bringing about true independence for our brethren behind the bars. Let us witness to Christ who has liberated us for love and service to the brethren behind the bars, their families, and their children.



ST TARCISIUS

Eucharist to prisoners. Prior to the Holy Mass, the celebrant asked the people present to pray that he might choose the best person to carry Eucharistic Jesus to prisoners. As it was too dangerous for priests to do so, it was important that some other good person be selected who would not arouse suspicion. As soon as Mass was over, the celebrant asked who would be willing to carry out this brave task. The young boy Tarcisius - an altar server- stood up and said, "send me." The celebrant thought the boy was too young and could be endangered, but Tarcisius convinced him that nobody would suspect him simply because he was so young. All the Christians knew well Tarcisius' deep love for Eucharistic Jesus. Hence his offer was eventually accepted. Tarcisius was given some consecrated hosts carefully wrapped in a linen cloth and placed in a small case which he wrapped in his tunic over his heart. He was asked to remember the heavenly treasures that were being entrusted to his care. Tarcisius replied that he would rather die than let go of them. Clasp his Sacred Treasure, he set off for the prison.

Martyr for Prisoners

Tarcisius was out of the catacombs and was on the high road. There he passed a group of his school comrades just about to start a game, but needing one more to complete the number to make up the team. Catching sight of Tarcisius they called him to stop and join them. "I am sorry," he said, "but I am on an important message." He hurried on, but the lads caught hold of him and would not let him go. "What have you there?" said one, seeing how tightly Tarcisius held his hands to his breast. "Let me see." "No, no," cried Tarcisius, struggling to free himself. His

anxiety made them all curious, and together they tried to pull away his hands. "My Jesus, strengthen me," whispered Tarcisius almost under his breath. But one boy heard his words and cried out to the others: "He is a Christian. He is hiding some Christian mystery there." This made the boys still more curious. They determined to see for themselves, so they struck him, stoned him and kicked him and did their best to pull away his hands, but they could not make him loosen his grip. A man passing by asked what was the matter. "He's a Christian, carrying some Christian mystery, and we're trying to get it from him," cried one of the boys. "A Christian, did you say?" said the man, and giving Tarcisius one cruel blow, threw him to the ground.

Carry Jesus to Prison

At this very moment, a soldier, hastening towards the group, scattered them to right and left, and stooping down, lifted Tarcisius in his arms. "You cowards!" he said; "all setting on one little lad," and he strode quickly down the street and hurried off into a quiet lane. "Tarcisius, lad," he said, smoothing back the curls from his pale face. Tarcisius opened his eyes and recognised the soldier as a Christian whom he had often met in the catacombs. "I am dying," he said, "but I have kept my God safe from them." And he handed his precious treasure to the soldier, who placed it reverently inside his tunic. "Carry Him to the prison for me," said Tarcisius, and with a gentle sigh he fell back into the soldier's arms. His little soul was already with God, for whom he so willingly had given his life, for Jesus himself once said, "Greater love than this no man has, than that a man lay down his life for his friend." Tarcisius died in 275, at Rome and was buried at the Basilica di San Silvestro in Capite, Rome.



ST MAXIMILIAN KOLBE'S LIFE - AN EXEMPLARILY EXAMINED LIFE


Br Pradeep Anthony L OFM

A Role Model for an Examined Life

The philosopher Socrates says, “an unexamined life is not worth living.” The life of Maximilian Kolbe stands as a clear examined life for all since his young age. When I was reflecting upon Kolbe’s life, one thing that struck me was this: “The mind that learns and the heart that loves for the sake of Christ will never be forgotten.” The book *Who will Cry When You Die*, written by Robin Sharma, is the book that speaks on the values of basic human beings; it gives about 101 tips to live a better examined life. When people like Mother Theresa and Karamchand Gandhi died, the whole world cried, because their life was linked to other people’s lives, affected and impacted them. Even St Kolbe was such a personally; not only for the fact that he sacrificed his life at the Concentration camp, even before that itself his life was linked, affected, and impacted many people’s lives. It is always good time and again to meditate upon the greatest deeds that Kolbe has done for human kind. This will eventually turn out to be not only an inspiration but also a help to our life in becoming an imitation of the love of God and Neighbor that he possessed.

Early Life and a Call to Priesthood

St. Maximilian Kolbe was born in Poland on January 8, 1894 of Julius Kolbe and Maria Dabrowska who were his parents.



His mother Maria nurtured in him a pious devotion to Our Lady. Besides the recitation of the rosary, Angelus, litany to Our Lady with his mother, an ardent devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary too was added.

Knights of the Immaculate

When he was 13 years old, the life of St. Francis of Assisi, attracted him to join the Order of Friars Minor Conventuals. During his formation time he used to sit for long time before the Blessed Sacrament. He later advocated a devotion to consecrate to the Sacred Heart of Jesus through the Immaculate Heart of Our Lady. He found that primacy of Jesus could be reached through the Immaculate and this movement of his gained lots of momentum at that time. The name of this movement was called the “Knights of the Immaculate” or “*Militia Immaculatae*.” It was founded on the eve of October 16, 1917, a year before Friar Maximilian’s ordination along with six Friars. Later in 1927, he established the city of the Immaculate in Warsaw. It was called city because this movement had grown among 800 Friars. His establishments came to be widespread in various places like Japan and other places. But the Nazis invasion of Poland totally hindered their growth. However, he fostered the value of forgiveness among people. His apostolic work encouraged love and his message to us is simply this: hatred is destructive and love alone is creative.

Pastoral Care for Prisoners

This year the theme for the Prison Ministry Sunday is ‘Integral Human Development and Pastoral Care for Prisoners.’ The problems that prisoners face now such as:



ST MAXIMILIAN KOLBE

rejection, indifference, and social rejection was faced then by St. Maximilian Kolbe's fellow prisoners. He encountered this reality when he was imprisoned. St Maximilian was arrested by the Nazis and put in the concentration camp on February 17, 1941, prison cell in block 11 and was imprisoned in Pawiak prison. As a prisoner his number was 16670. During his time in prison, his profound theological understanding and spiritual insights changed to practical words and actions for his fellow inmates. In a tangible way he showed that there is God, and therefore, love and hope existed even in the midst of horrific genocide in the camps of Auschwitz.

Understanding on Integral Human Development

In July of 1941, it was reported to the deputy camp commander that a prisoner from St. Maximilian's barracks had escaped. In order to prevent further escapes, the standard procedure was to have the commander of the barracks single out ten men for the starvation bunker. St. Maximilian, although not among the ten first selected, volunteered, in a heroic act of charity, to be the victim in place of the prisoner Franciszek Gajowniczek, who cried out: "My poor wife; my poor children!" The result of this self-offering was that St. Maximilian would be assigned to the infamous starvation bunker where he would slowly but surely die. At this precise moment, the victim Saint attained full conformity to the Victim of the Cross. On 14th of August 1941, Father Maximilian's ordeal of two-weeks was brought to an end

by an injection of carbolic acid. He was the last one to die among ten of his co-prisoners. His death on 14th August, just before the feast of Assumption of Our Lady, reveals his close connection with Mother Mary. Pope John Paul II canonized him on 10 October 1982, declaring him as the 'Patron Saint of Our Difficult Age.' For this canonization event Gajowniczek, who was saved by St. Maximilian was also present as a guest.

All the Christians who are called by Christ should become just like Christ and this will become the apex understanding of Integral Human Development. If our acts, talks, walks, and lives become like that of Christ then we are growing integrally as Humans. As we know, Christ was fully human with a clear understanding of himself. The thirty years of his own private life bore three years of immense fruits for the redemption of humanity. For this is what we are called to live for. How many years we live is not important but how well we live for Christ is important. Therefore, I wish all the readers to grow in their life in Christ. May God bless you! Festal greetings of St. Maximilian Kolbe to all!

The deadliest poison of our times is indifference. And this happens, although the praise of God should know no limits. Let us strive, therefore, to praise Him to the greatest extent of our powers.

- Maximilian Kolbe




Assumption of Blessed Virgin Mary

Fr Allam Sagar Manoj Kumar

Munificentissimus Deus, the defining document for the Assumption, is an *ex cathedra* declaration by Pope Pius XII about two truths that are to be believed by all the faithful as part of our revealed faith. Firstly, the dogma is divinely revealed, that is, it has always been at least implicitly contained in revelation. Secondly, Mary is exempt from the general law that the human body must wait until the end of time to rejoin its already glorious soul. The apostolic constitution defines only three points to be believed as matters of divine faith. These refer to Mary's body as well as to her soul at the end of her time on earth, and to her being taken into glory. Our Lady received immediate glorification when she anticipated the Last Day, the day of the resurrection of all the redeemed, their day of entry into glory.

In fact, Pope Pius XI strongly held that Our Lady did die before she entered into glory. He believed that she had been blessed with the redemption of her son, but he did not hold that she had been blessed with the grace of original creation. The grace of redemption does not confer immortality truly and properly and the faithful simply assumed that she did die. We need to understand that a great person like Mary could have been brought into glory without any implication of divinization. Such a person can take on a new existential dimension and remain completely human. There are mainly two distinguishing characteristics in this new glorified existence; the person transcends human imperfections and fulfills a previously limited potential in complete freedom. Our Lady exists freely now in the fullness of her son's redemption in her unified body and soul without any possibility of human decay. Since she joined Christ in heaven, there is evidenced a growth in the intensity of her humanness. The Assumption is a theological event, for Mary was transferred into a new dimension of existence. In other words, God's action was a transformative rather than a destructive one. It



is not a matter of faith that heaven, in addition to being a condition, involves some place that is inhabited by the blessed.

Humankind has become preoccupied today with itself. It is bogged down by its humanness as its sole source of progress. Some divinize, idolize and others detest the flesh. The Church does not simply preach abstract truths. In addition, it teaches that generous mercy of God, as it is seen in the redemptive action of our Redeemer. This mercy is not only realized in Jesus Christ, but also realized in those who are in need of salvation. Jesus the Christ rose in our humanness and was glorified in it. Heavenly glory is then a possibility for us, since it has already been realized in the humanity of Christ. Mary is seen through faith as the perfect achievement of the work of redemption. Our Lady, in her life on this earth, was the highest unmatched realization of redemption, in a human being endowed with grace, as Mother of God and consequently as the perfect type or representative of redemption.

Our Lady completed her earthly destiny. She was no longer challenged in her freedom. She had been rewarded with heaven for her abiding, earthly conformity to God's will. The faith of the Church intuited that, in view of the bodily resurrection and glorification of Jesus the Christ, this same outcome had been bestowed upon Mary. The significance of the Assumption for us is that we can gain that same glorified resurrection of the flesh and everlasting life in imitation of Our Lady. Such a hope acknowledges her perfect beatitude. Mary, the new and perfect creation, was assumed body and soul into glory at the end of her earthly sojourn.

The Assumption of Mary is a confirmation given to us by the Father to sustain, and strengthen our faith especially when our faith, and trust in God is shaking, when we are overpowered by our own sins and weaknesses, when we seem to be lacking the faith to go ahead in life in those moments of darkness, the mystery of Mary's Assumption should remind us that we have a home and a Father waiting for us to save in His astounding watchful providence.




Saint Raymond Nonnatus: Prison Preacher

Fr Antony O de M

Saint Raymond Nonnatus was born in 1204 at Catalonia, Spain. He was delivered through caesarean as his mother died even before he could be born. He was raised by his father who initially did not like the idea that his son would join religious life. Although Raymond lost his earthly mother, he found a loving and true mother in Mother Mary. He found pleasure in his devotions and serious duties.

As Raymond grew up his father sent him to take care of a farm which he owned in his country thinking that it would divert the mind of his son from becoming a religious. But God's tender voice kept calling him. While taking care of the sheep he would go to a mountain and find solace in solitude, meditation and prayer. He found there an ancient portrait of the Blessed Virgin Mary and made this his asylum. Now, the cunning devil seeing the devotion of Raymond started to tempt him in the disguise of another shepherd boy. But Raymond turned a deaf ear and kept clinging on to Mother Mary and his daily devotions. Mary under the title of the Mother of God made the devil to disappear. Raymond was so glad that he conquered the devil with Mary's assistance that he prostrated and blessed her for her assistance.

Raymond joined the congregation of Our Lady of Mercy for the redemption of captives. Within two or three years of his



profession he was sent into Barbary with a considerable sum of money to be spent for purchasing the liberty of slaves in Algiers. So great was his love for others that when all his money and treasures got over, he gave himself up as a hostage for the ransom of others. This generous act of his irritated and angered the Muslims who treated him with great cruelty until they feared that if he died in their hands, they would lose all the ransom asked for his release. An announcement was made in the street that whoever mistreated him would have to answer for it if he died. Due to this he was given the liberty to go on the streets and he made use of this freedom to go and comfort all the Christians as well as to baptize new converts. This angered his enemies again and he underwent serious cruel beating but the torture, pain and suffering did not discourage him. Whenever he saw souls in danger of perishing eternally, he thought he had not done anything yet.

Raymond had no more money to set captives and slaves free. However, he enjoyed liberty for the same endeavors hoping either for success or martyrdom. The governor was enraged and furious and ordered the saint's lips to be pierced and padlocked. He then imprisoned him till the ransom was paid by his religious order. Like a meek lamb he remained 8 months in jail till the ransom was paid by his order. He was appointed Cardinal in 1239 by Pope Gregory IX. He was canonized in 1657. His feast is celebrated on 31st August. He is the patron of expectant mothers and midwives because of the nature of his own birth.



Pakistan Church Welcomes Remission for Minority Inmates¹

Kamran Chaudhry, Lahore

The Church in Pakistan has welcomed remission for non-Muslim inmates upon completing the study of their religious books in Punjab prisons. The response came after the Punjab government announced cutting the sentences of Christian and Hindu prisoners memorizing the Bible and Gita, respectively. A summary has been sent to the Chief Minister to reduce the sentences of such prisoners by between three and six months. An official notification will be issued following approval by the cabinet. According to the official website of Punjab's prison service, Muslim convicts who memorize the Holy Quran can gain sentence remissions of between six months and two years.

Prison ministry officials including Father John Joseph have been demanding a realistic equivalent for non-Muslim inmates. "We demand equal remission. Minority prisoners deserve the same constitutional rights. To make matters worse, they have limited prison visits by Church ministries citing security concerns. Presently we are only allowed visits on Christian feasts. I take this opportunity to bring them food," he told. The parish priest of St. Francis' Church in Lahore has been visiting prisons in Punjab since 1997, praying with and counselling the



inmates. He visited Lahore's central jail this Easter.

"Sindh province has already given education remission. Other provinces should do the same. I want to reach out to them and have been engaged in meeting with the Home Secretary of Punjab and prison officials. Many prisons even lack common prayer rooms," he said. In 2009, the Central Jail in Rawalpindi became the country's first prison to have a church on its premises. This January, Angel Welfare Trust, an NGO working for prisoners, inaugurated a church in Malir prison in the southern port city of Karachi. "Churches are being built in Sindh prisons to facilitate Christian prisoners studying the Bible. Prayers rooms are designated where there is not enough capacity. Sindh province has already given education remission. Other provinces should do the same," said Samina Nawab, chairperson of the trust.

In March, Lahore High Court sought a report from the Punjab government about education remissions given to minority prisoners after a local Christian filed a petition seeking remissions for inmates of other religions as are granted to Muslims under rule 215 of the Pakistan Prisons Rules 1978. Presently 1,188 minority prisoners including Christians, Hindus and Sikhs are in 34 jails in the province. These include 829 prisoners awaiting trial, 320 convicts and 39 condemned prisoners who include a Christian woman. None of them have been granted education remissions in their sentences.

1. Courtesy to UCA News 04/08/2022



A SAINT FROM THE NAZI CAMP: SAINT TITUS BRANDSMA


Fr Martin Pulickal, O Carm

Introduction

History books have war heroes always scripted in gold after their glorious victories. The Church has war heroes who fought relentlessly for preserving their faith in Christ and the sanctity of their life. They stood firm during temptations, fearlessly embracing death. Heaps of mangled bodies and desecrated corpses were a usual sight during persecutions of Christianity even from the first century, and the diabolical hatred repeats to this day, giving the Church thousands of martyr saints like St. Sebastian. Christians call these war heroes as martyrs. Among these heroes are also many who opposed anti-human fundamentalist regimes and human right violations. There, Fr. Titus Brandsma, a Dutch Carmelite friar, who gloriously offered his life as a martyr in the Nazi concentration camp, requires a special mention.

The Early Life


Anno Brandsma was born on 23rd February 1881 at Wonsradeel in Netherlands. He joined the Carmelite Order in 1898 and took the name as Titus, and was ordained a priest in 1905. Though he had a frail physique which was further weakened by rigorous abstinences and fasting, Fr. Titus had a strong mind, burning and radiating the divine light. Physical weakness



never stopped or slowed down his zeal. Fr. Titus secured a doctorate in philosophy (Carmelite mysticism) in 1909. He helped found the Catholic University of Nijmegen (Radboud University at present) in 1923 and worked as a professor, and even as the *Rector Magnificus* for one academic year. With unparalleled dynamic enthusiasm he managed his ministry. His friends recall it as a life of constant rush between oratory, lecture halls and press. He was also a journalist and was against the spread of Nazi ideology and stood for educational and press freedom. This brought him to the attention of the Nazis. After the Nazi invasion of the Netherlands in May 1940, newspapers were asked to print official Nazi documents. The Conference of Dutch Bishops wrote letters to the editors of Catholic newspapers not to print them. At that time Fr. Titus was serving as an advisor to the Archbishop of Utrecht. He agreed to distribute these letters by hand to the editors, and in this process was arrested by the Nazis on 19th January.

Life in the Concentration Camp

Fr. Titus was imprisoned and kept in a lonely cell in Scheveningen, by the Gestapo. He saw this as the opportunity to be closer to God; and as the Carmelite rule prescribed ‘pondering the Lord’s law in the silence of one’s cell’. He spent time praying the matins, lauds and vespers; reciting the liturgical prayers, contemplating and growing in spiritual communion. He wrote his spiritual insights in papers available to him, and even between the lines of his breviary. One of the verses: *“My soul is full of peace and light, although in pain this light shines”* resounded the faint echoes of the great Carmelite



mystique St. John of the Cross who too was imprisoned. Even in the midst of chilling winter, hostility and brutality and immense suffering, he sang that his soul was full of peace. Moreover, in pain he saw the light of Christ. His writings portray the purity of his soul and his life may bring solace to migrants, refugees, prisoners and all those who are torn apart by war. Blending the thoughts of St. Teresa of Avila, Father Titus considered his sufferings as the purification in various mansions and his soul longed to enjoy the eternal bliss of the Seventh Mansion.

On 12th March 1942 together with 105 other prisoners Fr. Titus was transported to the “Hell of Amersfoort”. The brutal treatment by the sadistic supervisors and dysentery brought in by bad food made his already frail body weaker. However, these did not stop his evangelical spirit. He used to gather small groups of prisoners and would whisper to them God’s Word, meditate and pray with them. He made many fellow prisoners, both Catholics and Protestants, to deepen their faith.

The Honour of Death

On 12th of June 1942, he was brought to the torture chamber at Dachau. He was subjected to innumerable persecutions, and later was admitted to hospital unconscious. After two days, on 26th July 1942, he was killed by a lethal injection as part of Nazi program of medical experimentation on prisoners. In the morning his mortal remains were incinerated at the crematorium of the camp. Brandsma is honored as a martyr within the Catholic Church. He was beatified on 3rd November 1985 by Pope John Paul II. His feast day is observed within the Carmelite



SAINT TITUS BRANDSMA

Order on 27 July. “The souls of the just are in the hands of God and the torment of death shall not touch them”. Almost 10 years after his death a boy named Frans Bordens who suffered from serious concussions of the brain, a fractured skull and interior bleeding due to an accident was miraculously cured due to the intercession and novena to Titus Brandsma. Recognizing this Pope Francis ordered to canonize Blessed Titus Brandsma on 15th May, 2022 together with Charles de Foucauld and eight others. “Sweet Jesus abide with me, my deepest peace I find in Thee” – Saint Titus Brandsma.

Women Cell, Nazik Central Prison

Walter Kamble

We recently visited the Central Prison, Nashik Road along with the Sisters of St Philomena on the occasion of the feast of their Foundress Sister Maria together with Fr. Nolasco Gome and Fr Santan Rodrigues. We also met the Superintendent of Central Prison Mr Pramod Wagh. The Senior Jailor Mr A.V. Melwad was happy to welcome all of us. We visited the Women’s Cell and interacted with them. Fr Nolasco prayed for all of them. There were 10 small children with their mothers in the prison. The women Jailor informed us that as the Corona period is over, the jail administration is open for visit to the Prison. But this would be possible only after obtaining due permission from the DIG Prison Aurangabad as Nashik Central Prison falls under the jurisdiction of DIG Aurangabad. Your valuable prayers in this regard would highly be appreciated.

BEGGING OUR LIFESTYLE



Sr Lini Sheeja MSC

“So young you are! Are you in prison ministry? And you are here with a bucket to beg for prisoners! I’ll come in 5 minutes. My house is very close by. Please wait till I come”, said an elderly lady in 2019 from Kammanahalli Parish, Bangalore on Prison Ministry Sunday. Prison Ministry India volunteers go to the parishes as a team for prison ministry Sunday celebrations. After the celebration of the Holy Eucharist, we stand at every door of the Church with buckets in our hands asking for some help from these parishioners. Something inspired the lady, by seeing sisters and priests standing at the door with buckets. She went back to her house, brought Rs 2000 and dropped it into my bucket which I was holding, gave me a kiss and said, “God bless you”. The incident remains so fresh in my mind even today and this incident had motivated me to go out of my way many times and to beg for our brothers and sisters behind bars, for their families, for their children who are in our rehabilitation centres and released men/women brethren from prison cells who live in our rehabilitation centres.

Saint of the Gutter as Beggar


St Mother Teresa, a Saint of the Gutter was once living in a small house in Calcutta along with some orphans. One day it so happened that there was nothing for the children to eat. Mother Teresa did not know what to do. She called all the children and said, “Come children, today we have nothing to eat in the house. But, if we pray to God, He will surely give”. After

10 minutes of prayer Mother Teresa went out. She went to a neighbourhood shop and said to the shopkeeper, “Please give us something to eat”. The shopkeeper looked at Mother Teresa with anger and spit on Mother Teresa’s hand. Saint of the Gutter gently wiped the saliva with her sari and said, “Thank you for what you have given for me. Now, can you give something for my children?”

The shopkeeper was shocked at the humility of Mother Teresa and asked pardon from her. Immediately he called his workers and send sacks of groceries to Mother Teresa’s children. It did not stop with that day; he continued to help those orphan children regularly. What fascinated this Mother to go and beg for someone? This Saint of the Gutter begged to give life for the ones who were thrown out in gutters. We the PMI volunteers beg for the ones who are thrown behind bars with the label of criminals. They are branded as criminals, thieves, murderers, rapists and what not? We beg for these lost brethren of ours to give hope. We stand at Church doors and beg to tell those behind bars, we are with you! You are not alone! We beg, so that they may have a future.

Begging: Our Spirituality

“Then Jesus said to them, suppose you have a friend and you go to him at midnight and say, lend me three loaves of bread; a friend of mine on a journey has come to



me and I have no food to offer him” (Lk 11:5-6). This parable is one of my most favourite passages in which Jesus teaches about begging. Begging for whom? Jesus is addressing this passage directly to each of us. Is it for our families are we are going and knocking at someone’s door? No, it’s not for our blood relations. It’s for a friend. A friend who had come to us, trusting that we would provide him/her something. The disciples of Jesus came to Him and asked Him to teach them to pray. After having taught them the great prayer, “Our Father”, Jesus continues His powerful teaching with the challenging message. Jesus makes begging part of our spirituality. He not only taught His disciples to pray but also to stretch out their hands before His Heavenly Father. Besides that He also taught His disciples to stretch out their hands before human beings to give life for someone. Jesus who taught the disciples to go and knock at someone’s door to feed someone, continues to teach us to go and beg for someone whom He has placed in our care today. The prisoners are our brothers and sisters for whom we stretch out our hands in joy.

Begging to Feed

Joyson, (name changed) was jailed with his parents and younger brother in Parappana Agrahara Central Prison, Bangalore. His parents were arrested in a murder case when Joyson was 4 years old and his younger brother 2 years old. What crime did Joyson and his brother commit that these little ones had to go through jail experience and be deprived of their childhood? When Joyson was 6 years old, he was shifted to our Kolbe Home, home for prisoners’ children located at Carmelaram, Bangalore. Kolbe children are God’s precious gift for our PMI family



BEGGING OUR LIFESTYLE

and we beg at the Church doors to feed these vulnerable ones. Whenever I give a talk to young religious and priests, the first question that I ask them is to tell me about the core of their vocation or to write down the reason for God’s call to them. I used to notice that on hearing what I said they would be engrossed in deep reflection and thought. “And now the cry of the Israelites has reached me, and I have seen the way the Egyptians are oppressing them. So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt” (Exod. 3:9-10). God heard the cry of the Israelites that resulted in the call of Moses. Israelites cried out to God and Moses received a vocation. Our brethren behind bars cried out to God and that’s why we have Prison Ministry India.

Begging as Blessing

Our vocation is to wipe out those tears which God saw and heard. How can we remain in our comfort zones and make them cry continuously? Moses was called and sent on a mission. Remember, we too are called and sent on a mission to the ones whose cry resounded so loud before God. We have no foreign fund. Our only fund is God’s providence and our very life-style is begging. God called us not only to counsel prisoners, but He called to dedicate our lives for the integrated human development of our brothers and sisters behind prison walls whose cry the Lord of the universe heard and called us. We beg, so that they may be liberated! We bent down, so that our brethren behind bars may look up. Begging is a blessing! Do you have the call to beg to liberate the chained? Please join us and receive the blessings in abundance.




Forgiveness will Liberate you: the Lesson of Nelson Mandela¹

Alessandro Gisotti

The United Nations celebrated International Nelson Mandela Day, a day to remember the South African leader who fought and defeated Apartheid. For UN Secretary-General António Guterres, Mandela is an example that inspires us to improve the world. Central to Mandela's civil struggle was forgiveness, a theme that puts him in particular harmony with the Teachings of Pope Francis.

“It is only permissible to look down upon someone if we are about to bend down and help them get up.” This phrase, which Pope Francis has repeated several times, describes particularly effectively what was witnessed by a great man of our time, Nelson Mandela, whose International Day the United Nations is celebrating today on the day of his birth. In his non-violent civil battle, in his commitment as a “dreamer who never gives up,” as he liked to describe himself, Mandela demonstrated precisely that no one is superior to another because we all have the same dignity. And it is precisely for this reason, to use an expression dear to Pope Francis, that “no one is saved alone.” For the South African leader, who had paid for his ideas of justice and equality with 27 years in prison, white domination over blacks was not acceptable, but neither was the opposite.

That is why, when he finally became a free man again on 11 February 1990 and, in a few years later, was elected President of his country, he radically rejected any temptation to revenge on the part of the blacks and instead embarked on a courageous process of reconciliation and healing of the deep wounds that Apartheid had inflicted on the South African people. This commitment earned him the Nobel Peace Prize and still makes him -



nine years after his death - one of the most inspiring figures for new generations.

As UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres noted in a message for this year's Nelson Mandela Day, the South African leader “showed that each and every one of us has the ability – and responsibility – to build a better future for all.” For everyone, not just for one side. Because, as one of his most quoted statements recalls, ‘It is so easy to break down and destroy. The heroes are those who make peace and build.’ But what enabled Mandela to endure being deprived of freedom for almost 30 years of his life and then to be that peace-builder that everyone admired and continues to admire? Forgiveness.

Certainly Madiba, as he was called in his home tribe, did not come to forgive his torturers effortlessly, it was not a ‘cheap’ conquest. He himself confided that in the first moments after leaving prison, anger was his predominant feeling. But it was at that key passage in his life (and in the history of South Africa) that, as he recounted, he heard this admonition from the Lord: ‘Nelson, while you were in prison you were free, now that you are free, don't become their prisoner.’ Mandela thus decided not to remain trapped in the past, to let the bitterness go. He was aware, as he later stated, that “Forgiveness liberates the soul. It removes fear. That is why it is such a powerful weapon.”

Who knows what Mandela would say today about Pope Francis' statement that forgiveness must be considered “a human right, because we all have the right to be forgiven.” His daughter Makaziwe already gave us an indication of this in an interview with Vatican Media last December. To a question from us on what was the greatest teaching she received from her father, she replied: “That nobody is born hating another because of the colour of their skin, culture or religious belief – we are taught to hate and if we are taught to hate, we can also be taught to love because love comes naturally to the human spirit.”

1. Courtesy to Catholic News Update, 7/18/2022 7:07 PM



PMI Chhattisgarh State: Achievements, Challenges and Opportunities

Alexander Ekka, SJ

What greater mental assault one can go through than when we tell a person that he is going to be killed in 2 weeks, in 3 days, or “tomorrow will be the last Tuesday of your life here”. Those who are on death row have nightmares every day. “Guards are coming, it’s my time, I say “No, no, no!” I struggle and I wake up. I look around. I am in my cell.” It was a dream. But they will certainly come for me, soon. We have seen in movies about death row prisoners and death penalty. The death row prisoner is brought to the death chamber, the jailor looks at the time, nods his head and then the hangman pulls a lever and the body gets suspended in the air and a person is executed. This is what we see in movies? Is this same in real life?

How is a person executed? How is death warrant signed? What happens just before an execution? What is said to the convict? These are several questions that rise in our minds when we talk about death penalty. But my question is what does he/she go through as he/she knows that he/she will be executed in a few hours time? What happens to a convict just before the hanging? Once the date of the hanging is decided, the convict is taken out of the death cell and put in another cell. How does this human being spend the rest of his days and hours? What do their families go through?

The death row prisoners’ only hope will be the review petition, the curative petition and the mercy petition which will be with the President of India. The moment the petition is dismissed, a black warrant will be issued by the Patiala House Court. This is the last step before the final death sentence is carried out. After the signing of the black warrant the court decides the date and time of the execution by looking at the suggestions and preparations. The death row prisoner is allowed to see the person he wants to meet for the last time. He is picked up around 4 in the morning of the execution day and he is asked to bathe and wear new clothes. One can imagine the agonizing moments this convict goes through. Usually, when someone dies we bathe them and make them wear a new dress. But, here it is just the opposite. A human being prepares himself to be killed, to be hanged as he bathes himself and wears a new dress. Imagine how a human being can walk towards the death chamber! Sometimes the convict is carried by the prison guards as their legs tremble.

Death Penalty and Human Rights

India has carried out eight executions since 2000, the last having been in 2020. Jyothi Singh Pandey was a young woman. She loved her parents. She loved her brothers. She loved cinema and life. She was training to be a physiotherapist and dreaming of being a doctor. Her dreams all were shattered on 16 December 2012. On March 20, 2020, death row convicts, Mukesh, Akshay Kumar Singh, Vinay Sharma and Pawan Kumar were executed for the

December 2012 gang-rape and murder of Jyoti Singh (Nirbhaya). Finally, the rapists of Nirbhaya were hanged. Prison Ministry India volunteers from Delhi tried their level best for restorative justice by meeting the victim's parents.

Victims and their families need justice. Yes, they should be respected and given justice. But, does death penalty lower crime rates or murder rates? Take our own country for example. In 2020, four of them were executed. From 2020-22, how many girls were raped and murdered? It leaves a big question in each one of our minds. Is death penalty a good and just punishment? The death penalty violates the right to life which happens to be the most basic of all human rights. The death penalty undermines human dignity which is inherent to every human being. A human being walks towards the death chamber and closes his eyes to be killed! The moment the death sentence is passed, they are half dead.

Death Penalty and Catholic Church

In 2018, Pope Francis revised the Catechism of the Roman Catholic Church, a doctrinal manual used for teaching Catholic children and converts worldwide, to describe the death penalty as “an attack on the inviolability and dignity of the person” that is “inadmissible” in all cases.

Wrongful Convictions

One person for every 8 executions carried out has been wrongly convicted. One was

sentenced to death row, was in jail for 20 years, but by the grace of God, a good lawyer and because of the preservation of DNA evidence by the prosecution, he was saved. Manuel Ortiz was innocent and was in prison for 30 long years in Louisiana's death row. When he finally did get a hearing of his Habeas petition in the federal court, the judge made a mistake, a human error.


Victim's Father.....

Bud Welch whose daughter Julie was killed in the Oklahoma City bombing (19 April 1995) by Timothy McVeigh and Terry Nichols says, “Even if I had watched Timothy being executed, when I would come home, the chair that my daughter Julie sat on would still be empty. I would still have to deal with the fact of her death.”

No Love in Death Penalty

“The prisoner is a human being and worth much more than the worst crime that he or she has committed. Every human made in the image of God has that divine spark which is the capacity to love. God's energy is love. St John says God is love, where there is love there is God. In a death penalty there is no love. It is whimsical to claim that I am killing a person out of love for him,” said Sr Helen Prejean CSJ when she addressed Prison Ministry India volunteers during the international conference on Death Penalty Abolition.

Sr. Helen Prejean CSJ is a leading American advocate for the abolition of the death penalty. She is known for her best-selling book, *Dead Man Walking*, based on her



experiences with two convicts on death row for whom she served as spiritual adviser before their executions. It was produced later as movie. The message of 'Dead Man Walking' movie is 'The Redemptive Power of Love'. Throughout Dead Man Walking, Sr Prejean presents love as the one force that has the power to alter and redeem human life, as well as restore its dignity. Sr Helen accompanied 6 men who were executed. That is what ignited her heart and soul to rescue death row prisoners. She could not just walk away indifferently after witnessing the horrific. It became her moral responsibility. And she firmly believes that this is what Evangelization is all about.

The Wounded in Death Chambers

Jesus taught that God is to be found in the prison too. Pope Francis said the Church should be the field hospital where the wounded are. The wounded are more in the prisons, especially in the death chambers. The Pope defines a holy person as one through whom God passes. We are the hands of God, we are the eyes of Christ, and we are the voice of the voiceless. When we look into the eyes of the prisoner, undoubtedly, grace passes to us from them too. 90% of the death row prisoners are victims who have been abused as children, who have faced violence, witnessed violence, and finally they act out that violence which has been all too familiar to them and the cycle is completed.

No to Death Penalty

Death penalty is inhuman and it needs to be abolished. In the November 1947 issue of



PMI CHHATTISGARH STATE

Harijan, Gandhi wrote, "All criminals should be treated as patients and the jails should be hospitals admitting this class of patients for treatment and cure. No one commits crime for the fun of it. It is a sign of a diseased mind." These diseased minds should not be killed, they should be treated, they need to be cured. Who has given us the right to take away someone's life? God is the giver of life and it belongs to Him. Prison Ministry India celebrates Prison Ministry Sunday on 14 August 2022 with the theme of Integral Human Development and Pastoral care for Prisoners. Pope Francis invites the Church to learn motherhood and to be mothers to the broken ones behind bars. We learn motherhood from Jesus who left 99 sheep and went in search of the one sheep that was lost.

Jackfruit Mahotsav at Jharsuguda Sub-Jail

Sr Mercyan

Sr Mercyan along with Sr Bimala HM, Sr Suman SCGR of Jharsuguda PMI Unit taught inmates and staff of Jharsuguda prison how to make jackfruit chips. The prison management has opened a new canteen, which will be another income-generating institution. We were delighted to see the eagerness and willingness of the staff and inmates to learn the jackfruit chips preparation. They all enjoyed it, and after making we shared the chips with all the inmates and staff. We thank Sr Shanti Minz SSPS and the community for providing Jackfruit.



Talitha Kum: Catholic Nuns Saving Thousands of Women from Human Trafficking¹


Sr Aurea Abby Bisnar Avelino

As many as 26,065 women from Asia were prevented and rescued from human trafficking in 2021 by “Talitha Kum”, a Federation of Catholic nuns that is committed to combating and eradicating human trafficking. “Prevention was the Asian networks’ priority. It was fostered through training and awareness-raising campaigns in schools, parishes, and local communities, targeting especially women, youth, religious, tribal communities, and migrant workers”, said Sr. Abby Avelino, director of Talitha Kum Asia. According to her, the issue of human trafficking in Asia has been exacerbated by the current socio-economic situation. Many countries in Asia face severe economic crises due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and political conflicts such as in Myanmar, Sri Lanka, and Pakistan.

“Crises like these increase the number of people who become vulnerable to trafficking, particularly women, girls, young people, migrants, and refugees. The predominant forms of domestic and international human trafficking are forced labor, forced marriage and sexual exploitation”, the nun says in a report of Talitha Kum sent to Fides. “As the economic problems become increasingly complicated, more vulnerable people get trapped in exploitation in order to survive. One area of entrapment is cyber-based trafficking and Online Sexual Exploitation of Children (OSEC), “ says Sr Avelino, a member of Maryknoll congregation.

Talitha Kum

Talitha Kum Asia continued its prevention campaigns that have been moved online since the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic to ensure continued information sharing on



anti-trafficking. Talitha Kum networks in Asia hosted monthly webinars on human trafficking to strengthen prevention, protection, capacity building, and networking, as well as collaboration, and advocacy. The impact of this program has given greater visibility to Talitha Kum networks. Talitha Kum Bangladesh and Talitha Kum Vietnam were established in 2021 as an outcome of the growing visibility of their work.

“We have organized activities using the Sufficiency Economy Program, helping women and young people in villages and mountainous areas to manage natural food resources, such as herbs and vegetables that can be found in the local forests. This program has had a satisfying impact on the local community in supporting and promoting capacity building,” Sr Avelino notes. “We launched the Talitha Kum Anti-Trafficking Youth Ambassadors program in 2021 to engage more young people with the vision and mission of Talitha Kum. Young women and men, representing ten countries in Asia, were trained to be anti-trafficking youth ambassadors among their peers at the grassroots level,” she remarks. These trained youth leaders developed their skills in promoting Talitha Kum’s work at the grassroots in creative and innovative ways with the coordination of Sisters in the networks. As a result of this program, many young people’s awareness of the issues of trafficking grew as they participated in various levels of Talitha Kum’s anti-human trafficking campaigns.

Talitha Kum is a Rome-based international network of religious sisters dedicated to combatting and eradicating human trafficking. It was founded by the International Union of Superiors General (UISG). Talitha Kum Asia partners with 65 Catholic organizations, 56 NGOs, 18 national organizations and 42 international government agencies. In the Asian region, Talitha Kum has 3521 members from 205 women religious congregations in 20 countries. In 2021, Talitha Kum Asia provided care and support to 3972 victims of human trafficking. It organized 3909 trainings and workshops.

1. Courtesy to Agenzia Fides & Vatican News, 15/7/2022)



Prison: A Call for Transformation

Sr Helen Moras SCB

“Behind the Bars!” - has become so stigmatized that upon hearing it, the society associates this phrase to murderers and rapists. However, we should not be too eager to condemn such people, who are behind the bars. The Central Prison of Shivamogga has a compelling ambience of hope brought by the ample opportunities that the prisoners there receive. This encouraging atmosphere maintained at the prison, gives the condemned humans a second chance - a chance to exhibit their talents and emerge with extraordinary characters.

Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav

On the 15th of July, the PMI team visited Dr Anitha, the new chief superintendent of Central Prison Shivamogga, to seek permission to continue our service at the prison. After our incessant requests, she provided us an opportunity to conduct a three days program in the prison. The program was called *Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav* and we were to conduct it on the 28th of July. We worked in close collaboration with the primary and high school children of St Charles school, Bhadravathi, new town. The kids performed outstandingly! They gave such a spectacular program that Dr Anita, Superintendent of Central prison Shivamogga, applauded and appreciated our efforts at the national level, remarking that PMI connects with most of the prisons in India at an interpersonal level, mentioning that the team and volunteers are ever ready to render their selfless services. For the school children, it was their first time being in a prison and being biased by misconceptions about the abominable nature of the prisoners, the children were incredibly surprised and taken aback by the humble and amicable prisoners. We were able to show the kids that people behind the bars are also humans and are to be treated humanely.

Counseling Session

The next day, on the 29th of July, we were asked to conduct a counseling session which

Sr. Therese and Sr. Helen took over. This was our first counseling session after the pandemic; it was very nostalgic and wonderful for us and the inmates expressed their joy of meeting us again. Before the pandemic, the PMI team in Shivamogga Prison conducted counseling sessions four hours each week, which enabled us to reach out to numerous inmates. This proved to be a golden opportunity to continue our ministry.

Eye Camp

On the third day, the 30th of July, we held an eye camp for over a hundred inmates. The famous Shankar eye hospital in Shivamogga was generous enough to give their service through the PMI's initiative. The hospital staff were so warm-natured and professional in their conduct and interaction that the unit coordinator declared that every month the Shankar Eye hospital would send their staff for eye checkup and further treatment of the inmates. This way, none's eyesight would be blurred and faulty, so that the Almighty God's beautiful creation could be wholly appreciated.

The three consecutive days of service in the prison filled the big gap in our hearts and minds with great joy and happiness. It is this ministry which challenges us to walk the extra mile. Here, we reach out to people irrespective of their caste, class, and creed. All come to us and express their deep sorrow in being away from their families. Through PMI's initiatives, we are able to meet their grieving families and comfort them. Together with the families, we work on their release, reformation, and rehabilitation. Working at the Central Prison Shivamogga, the PMI team has found satisfaction. Despite there being constant changes at the administration of the prison, nothing has hampered the continuity of our services, leading us to believe that nothing comes in the way of God's work. We are grateful to the Lord Almighty for his protective hand over our work so far. When we share our positive and prayerful vibes with the inmates, it spreads far and wide like wildfire and transforms their lives. Let us become the vessels and messengers of God's love and peace. Our very lives are an evangelization for all the inmates of the prison and may this be their weapon for transformation throughout their lives.




Tomorrow Will be the Last Tuesday of Your Life! The Wounded in Death Chambers

Sr Lini Sheeja MSC

What greater mental assault one can go through than when we tell a person that he is going to be killed in 2 weeks, in 3 days, or “tomorrow will be the last Tuesday of your life here”. Those who are on death row have nightmares every day. “Guards are coming, it’s my time, I say “No, no, no!” I struggle and I wake up. I look around. I am in my cell.” It was a dream. But they will certainly come for me, soon. We have seen in movies about death row prisoners and death penalty. The death row prisoner is brought to the death chamber, the jailor looks at the time, nods his head and then the hangman pulls a lever and the body gets suspended in the air and a person is executed. This is what we see in movies? Is this same in real life?


How is a person executed? How is death warrant signed? What happens just before an execution? What is said to the convict? These are several questions that rise in our minds when we talk about death penalty. But my question is what does he/she go through as he/she knows that he/she will be executed in a few hours time? What happens to a convict just before the hanging? Once the date of the hanging is decided, the convict is taken out of the death cell and put in another cell. How does this human being spend the rest of his days and hours? What do their families go through?



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The Greatest Commandment

"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets" (Mt 22,37-40)



Answers to the Questions of Tihar Inmates from a Biblical Perspective

Amalraj

1. Why Put the Forbidden Fruit Tree in the Garden?

The “Tree of Knowledge” was similar to the rest of the trees in the sense that its fruit was “pleasant to the sight and good for food.” Eating from this tree was clearly forbidden. That does not mean that the tree was poisonous, or its fruit was toxic, however, because everything God created was “good.” God caused the Tree of Knowledge to grow in paradise, and he made a covenant with Adam and Eve to refrain from eating from it so they would have a choice between receiving the eternal blessings that come through obedience and worship of a gracious God or the consequences from disobedience and idolatry against a just God. Instead of embracing their destiny to rule creation in joy, freedom, and life, they sadly chose their own path to pain, enslavement, and death. God gave them an invitation to fully satisfy their desires, yet they ignored it and chose dissatisfaction and a diminishing life instead. Why did God prohibit Adam and Eve from eating from the Tree of Knowledge? Because he knew that it would destroy their innocence and purity, introduce shame and guilt, and bring death into their lives. God told Adam that if he ate from it, he would “surely die.”

2. Why must Serving God Come with Challenges?

An example of suffering: “Five times I received at the hands of the Jews the forty lashes less one. Three times I was beaten

with rods. Once I was stoned. Three times I was shipwrecked” (2 Cor 11:24-30).

Why Suffering?

“Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice insofar as you share Christ’s sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed” (1 Peter 4:12-13). “Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him” (James 1:12).

3. If Christ is the Only Way, What Happens to People Born in Non-Christian Families without their Choice?

How were people saved prior to Christ’s crucifixion and resurrection? People then were saved by responding positively to God’s revelation. In other words, people are held accountable for what they know. The same would be true for people today who have never heard of Jesus. If someone lived in China prior to Christ’s death and resurrection, how could they be expected to believe in Jesus’ death and resurrection for the forgiveness of their sins? Obviously, they could not believe in something they had never heard of. In fact, that’s what the Bible tells us: “*How shall they believe in him whom they have not heard?*” (Rom 10:14).

4. God Knows Everything. Didn’t He Know How the World was Going to be? Why has He Created Humans to Go to Hell?

Hell is a state where one cannot experience God’s love. God loves us. He is angry at wrongdoing because He cares about the weak and vulnerable. In fact, He loves us so

much that He suffered Himself so that we don't have to. God is angry because He loves passionately: you can't have love without anger. Imagine a woman being bullied by her husband: Because God truly loves her, He is angry at her husband. Imagine a man being fired because of his skin color: Because God truly loves him, He is angry at his employer. Imagine a child who is touched inappropriately by a minister: Because God truly loves that child, He is angry at that minister. God is angry at us because of the way we treat each other. In the Bible, the curses of the law and God's judgment on nations are small pictures of hell, which is God's final and eternal judgment. The curses of the law show us that God cares about the vulnerable, the poor, and the weak.

5. If God Loves me, why has He Allowed Innocent People to be Arrested and Punished?

Rom: 3: 10-12 states, "There is no one righteous, not even one; there is no one who understands; there is no one who seeks God. All have turned away; they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one." Rom: 3: 23: "All have sinned". Thus, the idea of the innocent suffering is a false one. There is no one who is innocent. When our lives are coming apart, when we're enduring suffering, we cry out, "Why is God doing this to me? Why is God punishing me?" The Bible also reveals that sometimes our suffering is not the result of our sin. Consider the example of Job. He suffered greatly, losing his substantial wealth and his family. His friends urged him to admit that it was divine punishment because

of his sin, but Job resisted, insisting that he had not deserved his sorrow. In the end, the Lord rebuked Job's friends, revealing that they had not spoken rightly about God when they said he had been punishing Job (Job: 42: 7-8). God is still in control. He uses suffering in several positive ways.

1. To Show His Glory

In John 9: 1-2: When the disciples asked Jesus about who was responsible for the man to be born blind, Jesus said: "This happened so that the works of God might be displayed in him" (Jn 9:3).

2. To Improve Us and Bring Us Closer to Him

When times are good, it's easy to forget about our need for God, even though He is the one sustaining the very world we live in. It's easy to become complacent in our relationship with Him. Thus, Paul writes, "Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope" (Rom 5:3-4). Suffering helps us to lean on God and improves our character.

3. To Keep Our Eyes Fixed on Greater Things to Come

If the world were comfortable, we might be tempted to become complacent. But God has something far better for us. In Romans 8:18, Paul says, "I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us." It is important to remember Rom 8:28: "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose."



Fr Casimir Zeglen: Bulletproof Vest Inventor

Did you know? A Catholic priest invented the bulletproof vest. In 1897, Father Casimir Zeglen was shot in Chicago – on purpose. Temporarily keeled over, he got up and raised his hands to show he survived unscathed much to the cheer of surprised spectators. 15 years ago prior, he began experimenting with hopes of making bulletproof cloth. He tried different combinations of steel shavings, moss, hair and other sorts of materials to no avail. After the mayor of Chicago was assassinated in 1893, his efforts were renewed. Father Zeglen's breakthrough came when he read a post-mortem medical report in which a silk handkerchief significantly reduced a bullet's penetration. He needed a special way to weave the silk lest it be an immovable mat rather than a true fabric for clothing. Visiting weaving mills in Austria and Germany, he was able to produce a four-ply bulletproof vest there just an eighth of an inch thick with the help of "Polish Edison" Jan Szczepanik. Their new weave ended up saving the life of King Alfonso XIII of Spain, when a bomb exploded near his carriage but did no harm to him as it was covered in special armour made from the bulletproof fabric.



St Maximilian Kolbe Quotes

For Jesus Christ I am prepared to suffer still more.

A single act of love makes the soul return to life.

The Cross is the school of love.

If angels could be jealous of men, they would be so for one reason: Holy Communion.

Be a Catholic: When you kneel before an altar, do it in such a way that others may be able to recognize that you know before whom you kneel.

That night, I asked the Mother of God what was to become of me, a Child of Faith. Then she came to me holding two crowns, one white, the other red. She asked me if I was willing to accept either of these crowns. The white one meant that I should persevere in purity, and the red that I should become a martyr. I said that I would accept them both.

"My aim is to institute perpetual adoration," spoke St. Maximilian Maria Kolbe, Franciscan priest and founder of the Knights of the Immaculata. For he said that this is "the most important activity," and "if half of the Brothers would work, and the other half pray, this would not require too much."

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Dear Prison Voice,

Congratulations on your 530th Mention!

The name “Prison Voice” was mentioned in 1 paper recently found by Academia, including a cirkon paper.

A paper published by a member of the Facultad de Filosofía y Letras department at Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México mentions the name “Prison Voice”.

The name “Prison Voice” is mentioned in a paper published in Normes et hagiographie dans l’Occident latin (Ve-XVIe siècles) Actes du colloque international de Lyon, 4-6 octobre 2010.

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The name “Prison Voice” is mentioned by someone in Peebles, United Kingdom.

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PMI Volunteers Distributing Colour Printer to Central Prison, Trivandrum



PMI Volunteers Releasing Prisoners



PMI Volunteers Teaching Mopstick Making to Jharsuguda Prisoners



PMI Volunteers Visiting Central Prison, Trivandrum



PMI Volunteers Visiting Chikkabellapura District Prison



PMI Volunteers Visiting Coonoor Prison



Prison Ministry Sunday Celebration Infant Jesus Church, Bangalore



**Prison Ministry Sunday Celebration
St Antony's Friary Church, Bangalore**



**Prison Ministry Sunday Celebration
at Holy Ghost Church, Bangalore**



**Prison Ministry Sunday Celebration
at Pius X Church, Bangalore**



**Rakshabhandan Celebration at
Bhanda Jail**



**PMI Volunteers Celebrating
Rakshabandhan, Sagar Central Jail**



**Azadi ka Amirt Mahotsav,
Shimoga Prison**



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