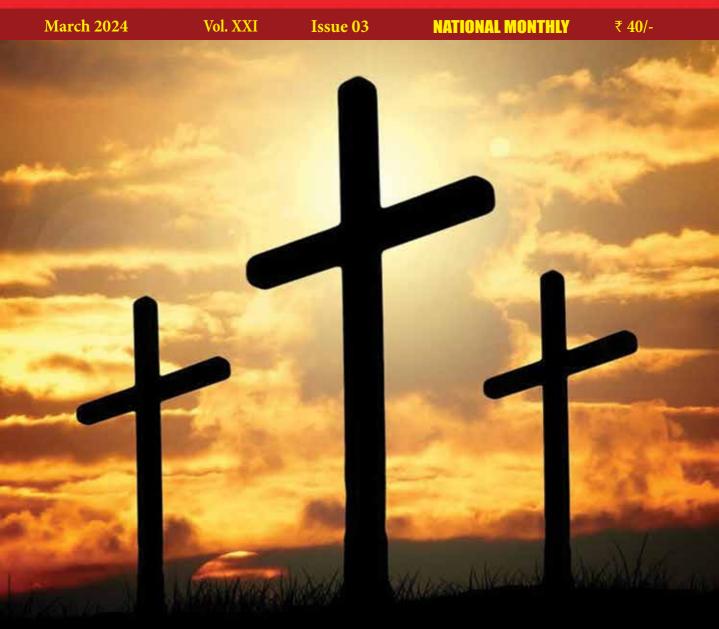


PRISON VOICE



TODAY YOU WILL BE WITH ME IN PARADISE



Farewell to the Superintendent of Aluva Sub Jail.



PMI Volunteers' Visit to Medekeri Prison.



PMI Kurnool Diocesan Gathering.



Most Rev Mar Kuriakose Bharanikulangara Inaugurates PMI Delhi Office cum Residence.



PMI Pune Volunteers Meeting with Bishop John Rodrigues.



PMI Visit to Central Jail Badwani.



PMI Kadapa Diocesan Gathering.



PMI Mysore Diocesan Gathering.

PRISON VOICE

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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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"I am the resurrection and the life" In 11,25.

Contents

Lent that Leads to Easter	4
7Cs of Success	5
Treatment of Prisoners a Measure of Society: Pope Francis	7
World Prison Population List	8
United in Prayer against Human Trafficking	9
Sr. Lilly Thomas Kurinjimla SH: Life Story	10
State/UT-Wise Types of Prison Inmates as on 31st December, 2022	13
PMI Delhi Office cum Residence Blessing	14
Ash Wednesday Celebration in Sundargarh Prison	16
Indian Prisoners in Foreign Countries	17
PMI Mysore Diocesan Unit Meeting	18
Paving the Road to Recovery	20
PMI Karnataka State Executive Meeting	22
PMI Delhi Unit Meeting	25
Madekeri Prison Visit	26
World's Greatest Opponents of the Death Penalty	26
A Shattered Image and the Church that Stayed	27
Sentenced to Life, Freed by the Gospel	30
New Wings and Horizons	33
Malaysia Urged to Abolish Death Penalty	35
District Jail Kohima, Nagaland	37

EDITORIAL



LENT THAT LEADS TO EASTER

Dying with Him to Newness of Life Pope Francis in his Lenten message, recalls that Lent "is a season of conversion, a time of freedom" because "God does not want subjects, but sons and daughters" and, citing the Book of Exodus, he emphasizes that the Word of God addresses each one of us personally: "I am the Lord, your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery". Along these lines, the Holy Father emphasizes that "it is time to act, and in Lent to act also means to pause. To pause in prayer, to receive the word of God, to pause like the Samaritan in the presence of a wounded brother or sister" because "love of God and love of neighbor are one love". So let us be united with the Lord in prayer through good deeds. The climax of the Easter Vigil Services is the celebration of the Eucharist. So the first Easter night is unlike every other night; because it is the night of our liberation from the bondage of sin and state of hopelessness; it is the night of our march for freedom with Jesus our Brother and Leader at the head. We must rejoice at Easter night because once again we are made to experience that we are not alone, that we are not to live our lives in isolation but that our lives are to be lived in Christ, continually dying with him to newness of life.

PMI Delhi Office cum Residence

Fr Francis Kodiyan MCBS, PMI Co-founder, the National Coordinator, and secretary to CBCI Desk for Prison Ministry India, is always a great inspiration and a priest full of dreams for the brethren behind bars. He introduced so many projects such as housing projects, scholarships for prisoners' children, releasing prisoners, employment schemes, etc. One of his greatest dreams was a house in Delhi and a rehabilitation center for prisoners and their children. We thank and glorify God for realizing this dream through Fr Francis and we are also very grateful to his family who are always at his side to fulfill his dreams through their highly generous contributions and the benefactors too for their valuable share in it. This dream home was blessed by Most Rev Mar Kuriakose Bharanikulangara, the Archbishop of Faridabad, who blessed the PMI Delhi office in the presence of many Fathers, Sisters, and PMI volunteers and delivered an inspiring message about God's numerous blessings on PMI and the value of the founder's great accomplishments for the brethren behind bars. Let us continue to support PMI ventures through our constant prayer.

Volunteers' Training Program

The volunteers' training program is essential to brush up their skills, to know more about PMI its vision, mission, objectives, and get to know each other, etc. It's a good platform to know about our ministry. We invite the volunteers who have not attended the training program. You are most welcome to come and profit from the talks, discussions, testimonies, sharing, prison visits, etc. Your valuable presence will highly be appreciated.

7Cs OF SUCCESS



Fr Francis Kodiyan MCBS

Let's strive our best to develop the 7 characteristics of success such as: clarity, competence, constraints, concentration, creativity, courage and continuous learning and bring forth hundredfold fruits in our minis try for the incarcerated.

Introduction

Brian Tracy is a renowned Canadian-American motivational public speaker and self-development author who spent more than 2 decades studying the behaviours and habits of self-made millionaires. After studying them, he put together a list of 7 Cs that they all did to arrive at success and happiness. In his opinion, if you want to achieve maximum success, then, you must practice these seven essential principles. These are powerful seven steps that you can use for the fruitfulness and effectiveness of Prison Ministry India as well. Let's strive our best to develop these 7 characteristics of success such as: clarity, competence, constraints, concentration, creativity, courage and continuous learning and bring forth hundredfold fruits in our ministry for the incarcerated.

1. Clarity

The first C of the 7 Cs of Success given by Brian Tracy is Clarity which has a huge role in both the success and the failure of a person. You need to know who you are, what your goals are and what you want to accomplish. 80% of success comes from this clarity and on the flip side, 80% of failures also come from the lack of this clarity. The greater clarity you have regarding issues such as values, vision, mission, purpose, and goals, the greater are the chances that you will accomplish something great in your life.

2. Competence

The second C is Competence. In every field, if you want to be successful, then you must be competent enough to stand among the top performers in this competitive world. To reach the next level of success, you must be excellent at what you do now. For this reason, you must resolve to join the top 10 percent in your field. As PMI volunteer, your primary goal must be to give excellent performance in the ministry and dedicate all your energies to doing quality service to the lost, the least and the last.

3. Constraints

The third C is Constraints. There will always be a constraint or limiting factor between you and your goals. You need to identify these chokepoints and double the time that you spend in solving them as this will determine how fast you'll be able to get to where you want to be. The faster you remove these constraints, the better you'll be able to achieve your goals.

4. Concentration

The fourth C is Concentration. It is the ability to focus on one thing at a time. You need to identify the most important things that you have to do and do them first. When you do that, at least you get the most important things done even if distractions get in the way. An essential prerequisite for success is your ability to concentrate single-mindedly on the most important thing and stay working on it until it is complete. If you do not have the ability to practice sustained concentration on a single goal or task, that is, in a single direction, there is no success possible.

5. Creativity

The fifth C is Creativity. Creativity includes new ideas and innovation which are the essence of a fruitful ministry and anything that you do to achieve great success. For that reason, you need to fill your life with ideas from different sources. Creativity is required to be exercised like a muscle because if you don't use it, you'll eventually lose it. Your ability to solve inevitable problems is the essence of creativity. Almost everyone has the potential. It's just that, you need to unleash your creativity and focus it on removing obstacles, solving problems, and achieving your goals.

6. Courage

The sixth C is Courage. You need Courage mainly to begin and to continue new ministries and visiting new prisons. What makes the difference is the courage to take the 'first step'. Most people never have sufficient courage to launch a new business or do something extraordinary. Then, the second step is the courage to continue and never give up. You will eventually achieve your goals and be successful if you have the courage to endure and to hang in there persisting in the face of all adversity until you succeed finally.

7. Continuous Learning

The seventh C is Continuous Learning. Every committed volunteer reads books on a daily basis. They keep enhancing their knowledge by reading these books going through websites, listening to podcasts, etc. You should also read books on prison ministry that will keep you miles ahead in your service for prisoners. Also, you must keep asking quality questions to get quality answers; otherwise your growth will slow down. Also, manage your time in such a way that you spend a minimum of 30 minutes a day exploring and going through websites as by this you can keep yourself updated about recent advancements in the ministry for the incarcerated.

Summary

The above-mentioned 7 Cs of fruitfulness given by Brian Tracy are the key elements that help you go all the way in your success journey and help you achieve your goals. These 7 Cs of success would be beneficial for PMI volunteers especially for the PMI Special Task Force warriors. When we blend these Cs with PMI spiritual exercises and the fruits, gifts and charisms of the Holy Spirit, success is

certain.

TREATMENT OF PRISONERS A MEASURE OF SOCIETY: POPE FRANCIS



Nicole Winfield

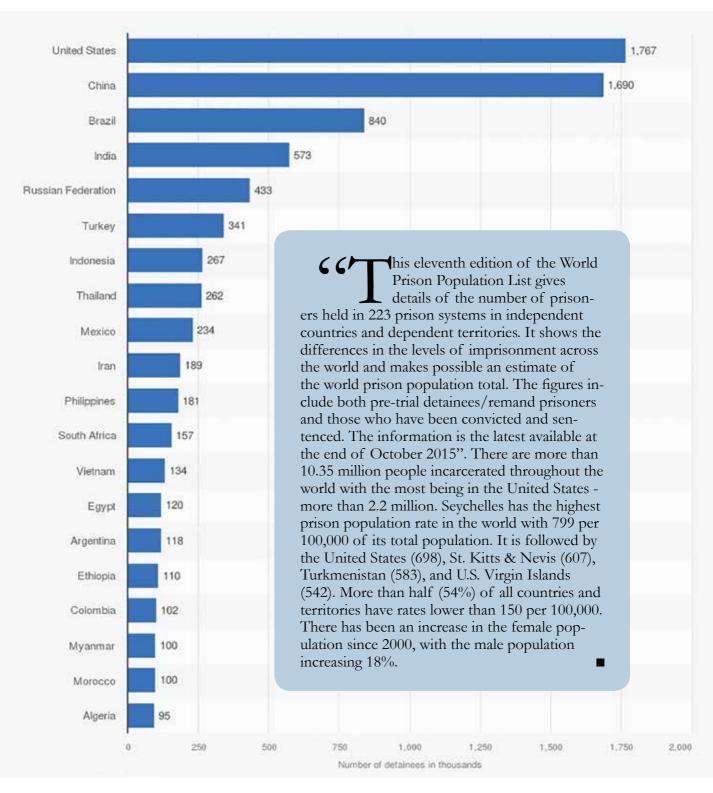
Pope Francis praised the prison ministry undertaken by some of the Catholic Carmelite nuns in Bahrain during a meeting with clergy and religious sisters at Sacred Heart Church in the capital Manama.

Priests and nuns to keep ministering to the Gulf kingdom's tiny Catholic flock. He specifically mentioned its prisoners, saying "the way in which these 'least ones' are treated is a measure of the dignity and the hope of a society." Francis again raised the plight of prisoners in Bahrain in the final event of his four-day trip. Human rights groups had urged Francis to use his Bahrain visit to call for an end to capital punishment and to advocate for political prisoners, hundreds of whom have been detained since Bahrain violently crushed the 2011 Arab Spring protests with the help of neighboring Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates. Francis praised the prison ministry undertaken by some of the Catholic Carmelite nuns in Bahrain during a meeting with clergy and religious sisters at Sacred Heart Church in the capital Manama. Sister Rose Celine told Francis that her congregation works specifically with women prisoners, offering them counseling and religious direction. Francis thanked her for her ministry and recalled that whenever he meets with inmates, he asks himself the same question: "Why them and not me?"

"Caring for prisoners is good for everyone, as a human community, since the way in which these 'least ones' are treated is a measure of the dignity and the hope of a society," he said. Francis has long maintained a prison ministry, staying in touch with Argentine inmates he got to know while archbishop in Buenos Aires. He frequently visits prisons during his foreign trips and has celebrated Holy Thursday liturgies with Rome-area inmates, but no such encounters were scheduled during his Bahrain trip. Bahrain's government maintains it respects human rights and freedom of speech, and that its criminal justice system is compliant with international law. However, activist groups repeatedly have criticized the condition of prisons and prisoners in the yearslong crackdown on dissent on the island. According to the Bahrain Institute for Rights and Democracy, Bahrain in 2017 ended a de-facto moratorium on the death penalty and has executed six prisoners since. The group and Human Rights Watch have documented a "dramatic increase" in the number of death sentences being handed down since 2011, with 26 people currently on death row, half for political activities. Francis called for authorities to refrain from recourse to the death penalty and to ensure basic human rights are guaranteed for all citizens. The government told The Associated Press the country has a "zero-tolerance policy towards discrimination, persecution or the promotion of division based on ethnicity, culture or faith." Still, the crackdown largely has targeted the island's Shiite majority and those calling for governmental reforms.

Courtesy: Vatican News.

WORLD PRISON POPULATION LIST



UNITED IN PRAYER AGAINST HUMAN TRAFFICKING



Sr Anastasia Ratnawati OSU To commemorate the International Day of Prayer and Awareness Against Human Trafficking, Talitakum Indonesia hosted a joint prayer event featuring various activities on 8 February.

o commemorate the International Day of Prayer and Awareness Against Human Trafficking, Talitakum Indonesia hosted a joint prayer event featuring various activities, including a Holy Mass and a novena dedicated to St Josephine Bakhita, whose feast day coincided with the celebration on 8 February. Talitakum Indonesia comprises nine networks: Jakarta, Palembang, Medan, Lampung, Yogyakarta, Surabaya, Malang, East Nusa Tenggara, and Sumba. The Jakarta network, led by Sr Irena Handayani OSU, organised an interfaith prayer at Jakarta Cathedral's Plaza Maria courtyard under the theme "listening, dreaming, and taking action in the fight against human trafficking". The event aimed to engage participants in prayer, reflection, and celebration of the struggle for human dignity, drawing inspiration from the spirit of Laudato sí through the elements of earth, air, fire, water, and metal. The presence of two migrant families added strength to the prayer atmosphere.

Sr Irena highlighted the interconnectedness between humans and nature, stressing that addressing human trafficking requires a respectful relationship with all creation. "We listen to the earth as the foundation of our human dignity; water and its flow of compassion and empathy; air as the breath of freedom and justice; fire as the spark of resilience and empowerment; and metal with its ability to break through to life. By understanding these connections, we can gain insight into how to combat human trafficking and fight for respect for human dignity. Hear, dream, and act for a world where humans are intimately connected with earth, water, air, fire, and metal in praising the One God," she said. The event featured religious leaders representing Catholics, Muslims, Sikhs, Bahais, Protestants, Buddhists, and other faith traditions, each bringing a symbol of the different elements of nature. Cardinal Bishop Ignasius Suharyo was present and greeted all religious leaders and attendees.

Sr. LILLY THOMAS KURINJIMLA SH: LIFE STORY



Fr Sebastian Thottippattu

For the past three years Sr. Lilly has been active in the prison ministry based in Bhadrawati diocese. In fact, she was the only Religious Sister from Bhadrawati diocese who worked in this ministry.

Tribute to Sr Lilly Thomas SH

Nirmala Province Mananthavady of Sacred Heart congregations together with members of Prison Ministry India offer tributes to our dear Sr. Lilly Thomas who has gone to her eternal Home of our Heavenly Father. She leaves behind us precious memories of a sincere life of sacrifice, filled with good works, touching all who came into contact with her by her life of dedication. The health and life that was given to Sr. Lilly Thomas as grace was shared by her with others generously till the day of her death. Sr. Lilly was born on 4 January 1959 as the eldest daughter of Thomas and Thressiamma Kurinjimalavil from the parish of Chundakara situated close to Pallikunnu that is known as the Lourdes of Mananthawadi diocese of Wayanad. She was the only sister of 4 brothers. She grew up in an atmosphere of love and affection from her parents and siblings and matured in her faith as well. The early life and education of Lilly was such that she could discern that God was calling her for something special for him. It was a matter of pride for her to know that she too could complete her primary and high school education from the same Lourde-Matha school in which her own mother studied. For some special reasons the family of Thomas Kurinjimala had to leave Chundakara parish and move to Nagavalli in Shivamoga. Before long the family was able to become one with the community there.

Shivamogga Mission

The MCBS Fathers arrived there in 1978 when they took up the Shivamogga mission. It was in the course of their search for founding new mission centers that they arrived at Nagavalli in Shivamoga. It was the Kurinjimala family that arranged food and accommodation for the priests and S.H. Sisters as they came to Nagavalli from Induvalli for pastoral services. On one occasion Lilly shared her dream of becoming a religious with Rev. Sr. Digna. Subsequently, she completed her 10th standard at Kottiyur high school and joined Thondi convent, the headquarters of the undivided Malabar province. Lilly made her first vows on 2 May 1984 and the Final vows on 25 April 1990. Sr. Lilly Thomas took to heart the Words of the Master, "Go and proclaim the gospel to all creation," and dedicated her religious life to the Shivamoga mission. The parish of Induvalli was the first place of her apostolate. Her services in uplifting the most ordinary of people who were socially, educationally and economically backward were praiseworthy. She did her BSW studies from Mangalore and made her mark as a good social worker and a prominent teacher. Sr. Lilly served in various places such as N.R. Pura, Makod, Shettykoppa, Muthanikoppa, Varkatta and Chettikudi. It was the distinguishing mark of Sr. Lilly that she was able to show her profound sense



of compassion and love towards all who came into contact with her.

Prison Ministry India Volunteer

Sr. Lilly who was conversant in English, Malayalam and Kannada had the determination to succeed in whatever she had set out to do. An excellent example of this is that she had completed all the formalities related to obtaining the registration of the dispensary at Induvalli just a week before she learnt of her illness. She was available to all who wished to meet her. In fact, she had succeeded in getting admission and jobs for many poor children in various hospitals. Today they are working either in their own native places or outside. For the past three years Sr. Lilly has been active in the prison ministry based in Bhadrawati diocese. In fact, she was the only Religious Sister from Bhadawati diocese who worked in this ministry. She had the energy to carry through any task that was entrusted to her and possessed great confidence and courage to complete whatever she undertook. It was for this reason that Most Reverend Joseph Arumachadath, the bishop of Bhadravati spoke of Sr. Lilly as a courageous woman.

As gold is melted in fire, many types of diseases continued to trouble Sister. She suffered from leg pain for the last 20 years. Variations in weather, the cold, rain and other factors aggravated her bodily sufferings. In the midst of these troubles Sister had some heart trouble too and had to be put on a pacemaker. Even in her busy schedule of life, Sr. Lilly gave great importance to her prayer life. In fact, she considered work and prayer as two sides of the same coin. Her Sisters testify that she used to spend days and nights in the presence of the Eucharistic Lord. After all the Sisters had left the chapel, she would make sure to touch and venerate the statues of Jesus and Mary before she herself retired to bed.

Cancer Victim

Although suffering from various ailments, her enthusiasm or zeal in work did not slacken in any way. It was in the midst of this she suffered also from Varicose veins and lack of appetite. She sought treatment at Narayana Hrydalaya hospital where in the course of undergoing tests such as CT scan and Endoscopy, Sr. Lilly came to know that cancer had invaded her body. Finding comfort in the Word of God that said, "Do not be disheartened even in the face of pressing misfortunes," she accepted even cancer with courage. Returning from the hospital, she went home on 29th November and stayed two days with her father who was suffering from age related illnesses. Subsequent to this she was admitted to Amala hospital at Thrissur for extensive investigations and treatment on 1st December. She looked cheerful and tried to converse freely with all she met during those days. Although the discomforts of her illnesses troubled her, she remained calm and composed. She accepted everything as coming from the Hand of God. Knowing that she may not have many more days in this world, Sr. Lilly asked for the anointing of the sick on 12 December from Rev. Fr. Paul Thattuparampil.

Journey to Eternity

On hearing from the doctors that cancer had spread all through her body and there was nothing more that could be done for her medically, she was brought to Assumption Hospital, Battery. While she was at Amala hospital the Mother General Rev. Sr. Alphonsa Thottunkal and Sr. Mercy George who was General Councilor visited Sister Lilly. On December 22, the Provincial Superior Sr. Gracey Mathew and her Councillors reached her to the hospital at Battery. Although 2 or 3 days passed peacefully, the illness took a serious turn and Sister Lilly had to be admitted to the ICU. As one who used to speak freely with everyone, Sister became completely quiet suddenly. Oxygen support became a constant need for her. Being fully conscious inside she made efforts to communicate with those standing by at least by signs and showed signs of recognizing them. Seeing the condition of Sr. Lilly the Sisters at Battery Hospital took great care to help her in every need. Fr. Joseph Parivummel and the Assistant priests gave her all the spiritual support she required. All those who knew Sr. Lilly personally, especially her family members, gave her all the support and encouragement she needed in her last hours. By 9 pm on 2nd January

her condition became critical and oxygen level became low. Early on 3rd morning at 2.55 Sr. Lilly surrendered her soul into the Hands of God in the presence of Sr. Ancilette, Sr. Vimala and Sr. Claris.

Funeral

The mortal remains of Sr. Lilly were kept in the chapel of the hospital at Battery for public viewing. Several priests, Sisters and parishioners paid their last respects to her. The first part of the last rites was conducted by Rev. Fr. Johnson KP from Don Bosco Ashram. The second part was led by Rev. Fr. Joseph Paruvummel, the Vicar of the Forane church and Rev. Fr. Ajin Chakkalackal, the Assistant Vicar. By about 11.15 in the morning, the mortal remains were shifted to the Study House in Dwaraka. Many Sisters, priests and lay persons from various places arrived there to pay their last respects to Sr. Lilly. The third part of the funeral service began with Holy Mass presided over by Rev. Fr. Jose Murickal, the Prior General of the Norbertine Congregation and Rev. Fr. Jaison Kanjiraparayil and Rev. Fr. Thomas from the family of Sr. Lilly. The 4th part of the funeral service was presided over by Most. Rev. Mar Jose Perunnedom, the Bishop of Mananthavady. The ceremonies at the cemetery were conducted by Fr. Binov Manchathumel and Fr. Libin Chakinimanthara. The words from the Prophet Isiah, "You come to the help of whose who joyfully act righteously," (Is.64: 15) were seen as befitting the anointed life of Sr. Lilly. Just as little streams of water merge gently into the ocean, the soul of Sr. Lilly became one with God. She had departed from this world leaving behind unforgettable memories of her dedicated life of service. We can recall the words of the Little Flower who said before dying: "I am not dying but only falling into the Hands of God to live on forever." May this entry into the eternal life of heaven give us all hope! May her soul rest in peace!

STATE/UT-WISE TYPES OF PRISON INMATES AS ON 3^{1ST} DECEMBER, 2022

No.	State/UT	Convicts	Undertrials	Detenues	Others	Total
1	Andhra Pradesh	1988	5123	134	9	7254
2	Arunachal Pradesh	151	184	0	0	335
3	Assam	2802	8608	0	182	11592
4	Bihar	7375	57537	1	1	64914
5	Chhattisgarh	7631	12820	0	0	20451
6	Goa	109	572	0	0	681
7	Gujarat	5148	11129	334	0	16611
8	Haryana	5957	19279	235	0	25471
9	Himachal Pradesh	955	1926	0	0	2881
10	Jharkhand	4808	14786	21	0	19615
11	Karnataka	3556	12605	33	9	16203
12	Kerala	3034	5610	159	80	8883
13	Madhya Pradesh	21761	26877	28	191	48857
14	Maharashtra	7998	32883	189	0	41070
15	Manipur	177	592	86	0	855
16	Meghalaya	308	829	0	0	1137
17	Mizoram	530	1049	0	1	1580
18	Nagaland	141	302	26	0	469
19	Odisha	2878	16058	23	3	18962
20	Punjab	6543	24198	0	60	30801
21	Rajasthan	5377	19233	6	43	4659
22	Sikkim	119	268	0	0	387
23	Tamil Nadu	5101	11564	2129	12	18806
24	Telangana	2102	4221	174	0	6497
25	Tripura	453	735	1	5	1194
26	Uttar Pradesh	27209	94131	172	97	121609
27	Uttarakhand	2136	4722	0	0	6858
28	West Bengal	4682	23706	2	399	28789
29	A & N Islands	85	173	0	0	258
30	Chandigarh	363	832	01195	0	
31	Dnh & Daman Diu	10	162	4	0	176
32	Delhi	1637	16759	15	86	18497
33	Jammu & Kashmir	180	4587	546	1	5314
34	Ladakh	4	26	0	0	30
35	Lakshadweep	0	6	0	0	6
36	Puducherry	107	210	6	0	323
	TOTAL	133415	434302	4324	1179	573220

PMI Delhi Office cum Residence Blessing



Fr Francis Kodiyan MCBS

Thanks to the unfathomable Divine Providence and the immense tender loving care of Jesus who came to seek and save the lost, PMI could purchase a 3BHK apartment near Nawada metro station in Ut tam Nagar, Delhi.

PMI Delhi Office

Prison Ministry India proudly announces the good news of the realization of our long-cherished dream to have an office cum residence in Delhi. Thanks to the unfathomable Divine Providence and the immense tender loving care of Jesus who came to seek and save the lost, PMI could purchase a 3BHK apartment near Nawada metro station in Uttam Nagar, Delhi. The registration of the flat took place on 19th February 2024. On 20th February 2024 His Grace Most Rev Kuriakose Bharanikulangara, the Archbishop of Faridabad inaugurated the PMI Delhi office by cutting the ribbon. His grace blessed the office in the presence of Fr Francis Kodiyan MCBS, PMI National Coordinator, Sr Amala DC, PMI National Secretary and many other distinguished guests and volunteers. Fathers, sisters and lay representatives from all the three rites participated in the blessing. In his message at the blessing ceremony the Archbishop pointed out that serving the people in the periphery is the best way to serve Jesus.

Groans of Tihar Prisoners

PMI Delhi office is 5KM away from the Tihar Prison, which is the largest prison in Asia accommodating more than 18,000 prisoners. Fr Francis Kodiyan MCBS in his welcome address citing psalm 102, 20 invited the audience to hear the groans of prisoners and to set free those who were doomed to die. The prisoners in Tihar have been crying, groaning and searching for God's army to set them free. This new apartment is to set free prisoners, to do reparation for their crimes and sins by offering Holy Masses and to intercede for the renewal of worldwide prisoners by Eucharistic adoration and other spiritual exercises.

Silver Jubilee Memorial

It was 25 years ago that PMI launched its ministry for prisoners in Delhi. As we celebrate the silver jubilee of Prison Ministry in Delhi, we thought of having a jubilee memorial monument. PMI has been trying to have an address and a dwelling place in Delhi since many years. Finally, the long-cherished dream to have a PMI office cum residence has been realized by the grace of God and thanks to the valuable cooperation of PMI volunteers.

PMI Delhi Warriors

When we bless this PMI Delhi office, I recall gratefully Fr Joseph Kavalakkatt VC of happy memory who initiated the ministry in Delhi. Sr Archangel SABS too did incredible ministry for prisoners in Delhi for many years. Fr John Puthuva, Bro Naveen, Fr David MSC, Fr George Peter Kachiryil MST, Fr Jose Thannippara MST, Sr Inigo, Sr Winifred, Sr Celine FCC, Sr Grace CHF, Sr Pushpa Francis, Sr Kokila, Sr Joy SCC and so many lay people like Mrs Pramila Fernandes, Mr Sanu, Mr Gabriel of happy memory and many others who worked hard for the wellbeing of the incarcerated brethren in Tihar prisons. Very gratefully I recall the generous collaboration of the Archdiocese of Delhi in the past years. PMI office functioned for many years in a house provided by the Archdiocese of Delhi.

Most Rev Kuriakose Bharanikulangara

Most Rev Kuriakose Bharanikulangara the Archbishop of Faridabad is a friend of PMI and very generously consented to come and bless this new house. When Fr Jose Thannippara MST the former PMI Delhi state and North Regional Coordinator came to Delhi it was Archbishop Kuriakose who generously accommodated him in one of his parishes. PMI is an official organ of CBCI to reach-out, release, reform, rehabilitate and reintegrate prisoners and I am happy that we have many representatives from the CBCI office.

Advocacy for Repatriation

His Grace Mar Kuriakose in his presidential address highlighted the significance of repatriation advocacy. He said this out of his prolonged experience in apostolic nunciatures and recommended that in this venture the Vatican offices also will be of assistance to us. Fr Ajit the assistant parish priest of Vikaspuri, Fr Joby vicar of Syro Malabar Church, Vikasnagar, Fr Sebastian Theckanath the former PMI national coordinator, Fr Antony Thumma the secretary of CBCI commission for dialogue and ecumenism and Bro Mani SG the former CRI president were felicitated. Sr Amala DC proposed a vote of thanks. She thanked specially Sr Pushpa, Sr Manisha, Mr Varghese Chackalalckal, Mr Biju, Mr George and their families for their dedicated service for the blessing of PMI Delhi office.



ASH WEDNESDAY CELEBRATION IN SUNDARGARH PRISON



Sr Mercyan

The priests present at the event took the seat of mercy to pardon the sins of the inmates in the name of Jesus Christ.

Heeding the call of Pope Francis who invites the faithful to "Pause" for prayer and to assist our brothers and sisters in need, in order to change our own lives and the lives of our communities, the PMI Jharsuguda Unit celebrated the commemoration of Ash Wednesday with 110 inmates of Sundargarh District Jail to begin fittingly the holy season of Lent on 14th February, 2024. To accompany our less fortunate brothers Fr. George SDB, Fr. Fuljames SVD, Fr. Claudius, Fr. Anand Pallotti and Fr. Pratap SDB willingly offered themselves to be

tion of the sacrament of Penance, the Holy Eucharist was celebrated by Fr. Fuljames SVD who, in his homily, highlighted the importance of living earnestly the grace-filled season of Lent to experience forgiveness and the unconditional love of God. During the Mass the prisoners were marked with blessed ashes on their forehead. Special thanks to Sr. Elizabeth and Sr Bimala HM for co-ordinating the entire programme and for preparing a meaningful liturgy. The day was a spiritually rich and gracefilled one for our brothers in prison.

in the name of Jesus Christ. At the comple-

present for the day. The presence of Sr Elizabeth SU, Sr. Linda, Sr. Angela FCC, Sr. Leena, Sr. Ursela, Sr. Maxima SCGR, Sr. Bimala and Sr. Reshma HM added energy to the Spiritual exercise. The sisters assisted in singing for the Mass.

The prayerful function began with the preparation of the prisoners for confession led by Fr. Pratap SDB. The prisoners were helped to examine their life and were readied to approach the sacrament of Reconciliation. The priests present at the event took the seat of mercy to pardon the sins of the inmates



INDIAN PRISONERS In Foreign Countries

Saudi Arabia	2200	England	278
UAE	2143	China	180
Nepal	1227	USA	170
Qatar	752	Italy	165
Kuwait	410	Oman	135
Bahrain	310	Singapore	86
Malaysia	309	Germany	77
Pakistan	308	Australia	65

PMI MYSORE DIOCESAN UNIT MEETING

The Archbishop was surprised to hear that there were nearly 30% youth in the Mysore Central Prison as undertrials / convicts for the offence accused or convicted under POCSO & NDPS Acts.



Mrs Bernie Fernandes

n March 25, 2024 the Mysore Diocesan PMI Units met with the Mysore Diocese Apostolic Administrator Most Rev Bernard Moras, Archbishop (Emeritus), the Vicar General Monsignor Alfred Mendonsa, & Fr Dr Joseph Marie, Coordinator of Mysore Diocesan

Commissions. The PMI Coordinators of Nanjangud Sr Mable SCB; K.R.Nagar – Sr Paul, BS; Mandya – Sr Joyce CSST; Madikeri – Sr Philomena SJT; & Mysore – Dr Michael Noronha were present with many PMI volunteers. The program started with Adoration led by Sr Felcy UFS, attended by



the 35 members. Thereafter high tea was served to all the members present. The members gathered at the Meeting Hall. Mrs Bernie Fernandes, Secretary, PMI Mysore Unit welcomed all present and gave thanks and praise to the God Almighty for sustaining us all these years in our Prison Ministry, an act of mercy for the least, the last and the lost.

In the welcome address the service rendered by the Apostolic Administrator

as Chairman of the Health Commission of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India (CBCI), Chairman of the Governing Board of St. John's Medical College and Hospital, Ecclesiastical Advisor to the Catholic Health Association of India, President of the Karnataka Regional Catholic Bishop's Council and Chairman of the Karnataka Regional Pastoral Plan, as well as being a member of the Governing Board of many charitable institutions and as a member of the CBCI Standing Committee. As the then Bishop of Belgaum, His Grace visited the Hindgala prison and met the four prisoners convicted in the Veerapan aide case and administered the sacraments to them. As Archbishop of Bangalore during his visit to Mysore for the State Youth Conference His Grace made it a point to visit these prisoners when they were transferred to Mysore Prison from the Belgaum prison gave them fruits, consoled and blessed them. His concern for the poor and the lost is manifested more by his deeds than words. His support to help the prisoners get justice is remembered by our Coordinator Dr Michael Noronha when he approached His Grace to help out in making arrangements for his stay at New Delhi when Mysore PMI unit desired to approach the Supreme Court to file a curative petition in the Supreme Court. Not minding his status as Archbishop, His Grace contacted Fr Chinnappa in the CBCI office and make necessary



arrangements for our stay which we thankfully remember to this day.

Two of the longstanding PMI members Sr. Joyce, CSST (Mysore Diocesan PMI Coordinator) & Sr. Nasita CSST (Asst Coordinator, Mysore PMI Unit) completed the golden years of their religious life were felicitated with a shawl, a gift and a Rose, by the Archbishop, the Vicar General, & the Director of Catholic Center. The Coordinators of various units presented the report of their activities to the Apostolic Administrator. Ther after the Archbishop recalled his close association with PMI as the Bishop of Belgaum and the Archbishop of Bangalore. As the KRCBC Chairman the Archbishop said he was instrumental in making PMI a Commission in Karnataka. He appreciated the work of PMI volunteers and assured that he would look into the financial needs of the PMI in the Diocese. The Archbishop was surprised to hear that there were nearly 30% youth in the Mysore Central Prison as under-trials / convicts for the offence accused or convicted under POCSO & NDPS Acts. There was a question answer session by the Archbishop who desired to know the problems of the Unit members. Sr. Mable D'Silva SCB, Coordinator, Nanjangud PMI, proposed a vote of thanks and thanked the guests and all the PMI Warriors who are serving the prisoners with great dedication and love by their visits and comforting words. Sr Felcy UFS, as the MC did an excellent job.

PAVING THE ROAD TO RECOVERY



Lexi Aggen

Celebrate Recovery takes complete strangers and makes them brothers and sisters. I'm friends with those men inside. I treat them like family. They're not inmates. They're not prisoners. I tell them all the time that they're people and they matter.

A n open bottle of beer sat on the table in front of Brian, next to a pamphlet for Celebrate Recovery. At 32 years old, he had a choice to make: continue living with his addiction or get help. He chose Celebrate Recovery, a 12-step program for those dealing with "hurts, hang-ups, and habits of any kind." The program became a foundation in Brian's life. But when he made the decision to attend Celebrate Recovery 10 years ago, he never anticipated that it would lead him to volunteer in prison.

A Downward Trend

Ten years before that, when Brian was 22, he needed a job. His girlfriend was pregnant, and they needed insurance to help cover medical bills. His cousin recommended joining the Army - which ended up being the perfect place for Brian. "The Army and I fit together like a glove," says Brian, who appreciated the structure and community the Army provided. "I found a place where I could be home." He and his girlfriend married before Brian was deployed. But the marriage didn't last long. During his second tour in Iraq Brian received divorce papers. The divorce left him with nothing-his home, clothes, and car were all sold off. Brian already enjoyed drinking, but after the divorce his habit started to get out of control. When Brian returned from Iraq, he struggled to adjust to life stateside.

He soon received orders to go to Fort Knox, where he met the woman who would become his second wife. After a year of marriage, the couple decided his time in the Army was done, but finding work after the Army wasn't easy. It would take a year before Brian would find work as a car salesman. His wife would often prompt him about his drinking, but Brian always denied any problems. It was through her promptings that Brian realized the need to change - to move past the addiction and find a better way of living.

The Other Side of the Door

That's when Celebrate Recovery entered his life - and he never looked back. He actively participated in the program through his church for seven years, becoming well known in the Celebrate Recovery community. After those seven years, Brian was eager for a more active role-he wanted to give back, both to Celebrate Recovery and to God. His pastor approached him about leading a Celebrate Recovery group inside Muskegon Correctional Facility through the Prison Fellowship Academy. The Academy is a yearlong program led by compassionate coaches and offers a holistic curriculum. In 2017, Celebrate Recovery and Prison Fellowship® partnered together to include Celebrate Recovery Inside as part of the Academy curriculum. Both Celebrate Recovery and the Academy are based in biblical principles and

emphasize the value of community, so the programs complement one another well. After a week of praying about the opportunity, Brian agreed to volunteer. Before entering the prison, he thought the men in his class might be angry and resentful about imprisonment and resistant to the program. Instead, he discovered compassionate participants who were willing to be vulnerable - because that is the kind of environment Celebrate Recovery fosters. "When we have our conversations, or when we have small group together, they share openly [about] their situation, how they got to where they are," he says of the men he leads. Most notably, Brian marvelled at the integrity of the men he encountered through the Academy. Integrity is one of the Values of Good Citizenship, six core values that the Academy is built upon.

A Greater Impact

Though the in-prison class in the Academy follows the same curriculum as outside Celebrate Recovery groups, Brian is astounded by Celebrate Recovery Inside. He feels the classes he facilitates in Muskegon Correctional have helped him. "I went in there and got more than I bargained for," he says. "I thought I was going into a place where I was going to help people, and it turns out the men have helped me more." One of Celebrate Recovery's customs is to avoid giving advice; instead, participants are encouraged to share their own experiences. For Brian, the men's stories have had a profound impact on his home life. Brian heard one prisoner expressing regret over his relationship with his late father and wishing they had spent more time together. The conversation left a mark on Brian, and when he was let go from his job selling cars, he counted it as God's mercy. He accepted a position at a bank, which freed up more time for him to be home with his family. Since then, Brian has seen an improvement in his relationship with his son. Recently, another conversation with the Celebrate Recovery group in Muskegon Correctional inspired Brian to deactivate all social media. After deactivating his accounts, his relationships with his wife and family have

greatly improved. "What they were trying to tell me is ... 'You need to leave the things alone that are really sucking you in and destroying your life," he says.

A New Brotherhood

Brian has found that, along with his own experience going through Celebrate Recovery, he can connect with the men in the Academy about his time in the military. "There's lots of veterans, unfortunately, who are incarcerated," he says, "who took the wrong path and need brothers like us, that they can relate with and share their story, so that they can find healing just like we did." Brian is correct. According to the Vietnam Veterans of America nearly 181,000 veterans were incarcerated in 2021. Often, when making a point or explaining a topic, Brian will share a story from his time in the Army. When he does, he always sees the veterans in his group "light up." "That person will always be a veteran," Brian says, "and he needs to have that respect. He needs to be shown it regardless of his current situation."

But Brian has gained more than just wisdom from his time leading Celebrate Recovery through the Academy - he has gained deep friendships with the men he leads. Throughout the yearlong program, Brian and the Academy participants work to break down barriers and build trust, starting from simple steps like learning the names of all the men. "Celebrate Recovery takes complete strangers and makes them brothers and sisters," he says. "I'm friends with those men inside. I treat them like family. They're not inmates. They're not prisoners. I tell them all the time that they're people and they matter." Now, Brian is eager to invite more people to experience the healing through Celebrate Recovery and the Academy. Sometimes it takes a little more convincing, as the stigma and fear around entering a prison can hold people back. But Brian knows it takes just one experience to ignite change -including your own. "Anyone who wants to get involved in prison ministry needs to just go," he says. "I promise you, the minute they walk in the gate, it will change their life." Courtesy: PFI.





Dr Michael Noronha Lotus Bud opens up when the sun rises in the east. Sunflower moves along with the sun and takes the shape of the sun all through the day.

The meeting started with a Prayer by the Belgaum PMI Team, followed by a welcome address by Sr Therese Mascheranhas, PMI Karnataka State Coordinator, and the Reading of the Minutes by Dr Michael Noronha, the PMI Karnataka State Secretary. The minutes were proposed to be adopted by Mr Rosario and seconded by Fr Maxim. Most Rev Francis Serrao, the Episcopal Advisor and Bishop of Shimoga gave his message on "Prayer".

Stages of Prayer

He spoke of prayer as a relationship with God. Any relationship has four stages: I Talk, God listens – termed as LOVE. I listen and God Talks – termed as INTIMACY. I listen and God Listens – termed as COMMUNION. Neither I talk nor listen nor God talks or listens – termed as ECSTASY. Emphasis should be given on the fourth stage. In the words of Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, the four stages of prayer were considered by the Bishop as: Words symbolizing Love; signs and symbols symbolizing Intimacy; mere Presence symbolizing Communion. Presence in absence symbolizing Ecstasy.

Ecstasy

He explained the fourth stage i.e., ecstasy which had three levels with an analogy of two young lovers seated at two different locations in an office: 1st level: Conscious of her and his presence. 2nd level: He is conscious that she is conscious of his presence. 3rd level: He is conscious that she is conscious that he is conscious of her presence and vice versa. He gave examples of Dance and the dancer; the singer and the song; the sun and its rays; and waves and the sea that are inseparable. He called upon the gathering to experience the fourth level of ECSTASY in Prayer. Such a union with God is expected of us in Prayer. He extensively quoted St Paul Gal 2:20: "It is no longer I who live but Christ who lives in me". "Who shall separate us from the Love of Christ?" (Rom 8:35). Two hearts becoming one is the deepest union. To drive home the point of attaining such a union, the Bishop quoted the nature of particular flowers: Lotus Bud opens up when the Sun rises in the east. Sunflower moves along with the sun and takes the shape of the sun all through the day. Chinese Rose or Cotton Flower change colour at different times of the sun and gets transformed as the Sun. He asked the gathering to supplement SUN with SON i.e., Son of God – JESUS CHRIST to attain Ecstasy.

Shravana-Manana-Niddhidyasana-Anushtana

The Bishop gave importance of the Word of God and asked us to Listen (Shravana); Meditate (Manana); and Treasure it – the Divine should be seen in us (Niddhidyasana), and Put into Practice (Anushtana). He advised us: Not to listen to our interjected ideas. Not to talk about God if we don't have God in us. Treasure i.e., the Divine should be seated in me. He asked the gathering if we received all that we asked in Prayer by quoting the scripture "Ask and it will be given to you... For the one who asks receives" Lk11:9-10. He gave the three laws to receive what we ask: 1st Law: Pray as if you received it. Make your prayer in faith without doubt. 2nd Law: Desire only God. As St Paul said to the Philippines 3:7-9 "But once I found Christ, all those things that I might have considered as Profit, I reckoned as a loss. Still more, everything seems to me as nothing compared with the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord. For his sake, I have let everything fall away and I now consider all as garbage, if instead I may gain Christ." He quoted the scriptures from Mt 13: 44-46 "The Treasure and the Pearl" the one who has the treasure; "Selling everything to buy the field and the pearl". The Bishop asked if we were willing to sell everything in our desire for God. 3rd Law: Disposition: He quoted Luke 12: 13-21 on the "The rich fool" saying that His possessions possessed him. He quoted the definition of 'Fool' from Psalm 14 v1 & Ps 54 v1 which says - 'one who says in his heart there's no God'. The side effects of possessions are that we become Godless and Heartless. He gave the example of how we can get enslaved to the mobile.



Most Rev Dr Duming Dias

The tea break was followed by Felicitation to the Bishop-elect of Karwar Diocese, Most Rev Dr Duming Dias. The PMI State Secretary appreciated and thanked the Bishop-elect for his support to the PMI especially during the State Convention and Executive Committee meetings. A sapling, shawl, a Headgear / PETA and a gift were presented to him. Thereafter there was a photo session with the Bishop-elect.

KRCBC Report

The PMI State Coordinator presented the report which was presented at the KRCBC. Some members pointed out that some major PMI activities of the dioceses of Shimoga, Mysore & Bangalore were highlighted by the State Coordinator. The Coordinator was asked to inform the KRCBC that Seminarians are involved in visiting the Boys Correction Centre; Boys Home & Sisters visit the Girls Correction Center and the Girls Home. It was decided that henceforth the KRCBC report be circulated to all the Executive Committee members for their input and review before finalizing the report to KRCBC. As the Treasurer was absent the audited report for the year 2022-2023 was presented by the Secretary.

PMI Karnataka State Convention 2024

The member from Mangalore informed that their Diocesan Coordinator desired to know the decision about the State Convention planned at Mangalore during August 2024 to mark the silver jubilee celebrations of Mangalore PMI which was communicated to the State PMI by email. The member was informed that the Mangalore unit couldn't host a state-level Convention unless the State unit delegated the responsibility to the local unit. He was also informed that the availability of the Episcopal Advisor of Karnataka PMI, the KRCBC President, the National PMI Coordinator or his Representative, the involvement of Bishops of Udupi, Karwar, Puttur, Belthangady, and a general invitation to all the Bishops of Karnataka has to be planned by the State Executive Core team. However, the

Mangalore Unit was informed that they could organize a Diocesan level Convention for all the Parishes in the Mangalore Diocese to create an awareness of PMI and its activities. A member suggested that the State Convention be held in November instead of August as all the Diocesan units would be busy with PMI Sunday during August.

Next State Executive Committee Meeting

Members were informed that the next State Executive Committee meeting venue would be at Bangalore in August 2024, but the date and venue would be fixed in consultation with the Episcopal Advisor. The last Executive Committee meeting of this team will be at Karwar

The side effects of possessions are that we become Godless and Heartless.

in Feb 2025. The elections to the State Executive Committee would be in April 2025 to be held at Shimoga. Dates will be fixed later. The Secretary requested the Diocesan Coordinators not to concentrate just on the Prisons but to render service outside the prison in the Correction Centers for Boys & Girls; Homes for Boys and Girls; and to the Eunuchs.

Vote of Thanks was proposed by Ms Veera Pinto thanking the Episcopal Advisor, the Director of Chaitanya Fr. Roshan, Sr. Helen Moras Joint Secretary & local Coordinator and all the other PMI Executive Committee members present for the excellent arrangements The members assembled at the Chapel for Holy Mass which was offered for the soul of Sr. Lilly, Coordinator of PMI Bhadravati diocese who passed away recently. After lunch, the members dispersed.

PMI DELHI UNIT MEETING



Mrs Bindhu Sunny

The meeting discussed the significance of repatriation advocacy and the need to take up the cases of foreign undertrials in Tihar as well as to take up initiatives to release foreign nationals with the assistance of embassies.

On 20th February 2024 after the blessing of PMI Delhi Office, the public meeting and agape Delhi PMI unit members had a meeting under the chairmanship of Fr Francis Kodiyan MCBS, PMI national coordinator and Sr Amala DC PMI national secretary. The meeting began with a prayer. Fr Francis Kodiyan welcomed everyone and enquired about the recent developments. Though applications were given for the pass to visit the Tihar prisons so far no positive signs were received from the prison authorities. The following main points were discussed and decisions were taken in the meeting:

Spiritual Empowerment

To spiritually empower PMI volunteers and assist prisoners the meeting decided to gather in the newly blessed PMI Delhi office every Saturday from three to five in the afternoon to pray, adore and intercede for the reformation of our brethren behind bars. Every 4th Saturday from 2 to 5 all volunteers shall gather in the new office to pray, discuss, review and share the challenges and problems of PMI services. It was decided also to organise chain prayer, chain fasting, chain rosary, and intercession prayer to spiritually empower the volunteers and to renew prisoners worldwide. Sr. Sicy FCC who was appointed as the spiritual animator will take care of the weekly prayer gathering.

Repatriation Advocacy

The meeting discussed the significance of repatriation advocacy and the need to take up the cases of foreign undertrials as well as to take up initiatives to release foreign nationals with the assistance of embassies. Ms Emily who works in the embassy was appointed to take care of the responsibility of advocacy.

Legal Service Cell

PMI members discussed the importance of legal assistance to be given to prisoners and appointed Sr Kokila, Sr Manisha, Sr Asrita and Sr. Rama Rani as legal coordinators.

Pass to Visit Prisons

The group evaluated the procedures done to obtain passes to visit the Tihar prison. Last year we did not receive the passes and could not even celebrate Christmas with the prisoners. The Group decided to find out alternative ways to get the passes and to meet the Government officials for the smooth functioning of PMI services in Delhi within six months.

PMI Delhi Unit Coordinator

The PMI Delhi Unit members wholeheartedly thanked Fr Jose Thannippara MST who served as the PMI Delhi State coordinator in the past years. As Fr Jose went back to his community, we temporarily appointed for the coordination of various ministries and better and smooth functioning of PMI Delhi unit the following people:. Mr Shanu was appointed as the PMI Delhi Unit coordinator, Mrs Bindhu Sunny was appointed as the PMI Delhi Unit Secretary and Mrs Pramila D'Souza will continue as the treasurer. The meeting ended with a thanksgiving prayer song.

MADEKERI PRISON VISIT





Rosario D'Souza

Sr Melania D'Souza

n 26th February 2024, we the seven PMI volunteers Udupi set on a pilgrimage to Madekeri jail at the invitation of jail superintendent Sri Sanjay Jetti and Sri Sanjay Thambad. The jail authorities welcomed us warmly and gave us an opportunity to interact with two hundred twenty-five (225) inmates of the jail by creating the forum for the same. Mr. Rosario D'souza welcomed all and introduced PMI members to the forum. After lighting the lamp by us along with jail superintendent, Sr Melania D'souza, Mr. Walter Martis and Mr. Maxim D'souza spoke to the prisoners on change of their mind set with examples. Mr. Sanjay Thambad gave an appreciation for the services rendered to District Jail Hiriadkka Udupi by us, where he had personally witnessed in his tenure of service at Udupi jail. Mr. Rosario D'souza proposed the vote of thanks. After the short programme inmates of the prison, as many of them met us and interacted with us. The six inmates requested to help them for rupees five thousand (Rs.5000/-) cash surety bond to pay to the court in order to release them. We sponsored the puffs, banana, biscuit packets and malt to all of them at the cost of rupees fifteen thousand (Rs. 15000/-). The inmates of the Jail and Jail authorities requested for the frequent visits from us. We are grateful to God, the Jail authorities and all volunteers PMI Udupi making this event a memorable one by boosting our spiritual journey vibrating the words of Jesus in us "When I was in prison you visited to me " - Mt 25:36.

WORLD'S GREATEST OPPONENTS OF THE DEATH PENALTY

mnesty International **L** says Robert Badinter, the former French justice minister who recently died, fought to eliminate capital punishment in every country around the world. With the death of Robert Badinter, who served as Minister of Justice in France from 1981-86, the fight for a universal ban on the death penalty has lost one of its most illustrious activists. Badinter, who died on February 9 at age 95, played a key role in his country's abolition of capital punishment shortly after he took up his ministerial post. But he also fought for the practice to be eliminated in other parts of the world, as well. Anne Denis, head of the commission to abolish the death penalty at Amnesty International France, talked about his work and legacy in an inter view. Robert Badinter's fight began in 1977, alongside Amnesty International. He had just prevented Patrick Henry from receiving the death penalty. Our organization held a large conference on the abolition of the death penalty, and Robert Badinter represented the French section.

A SHATTERED IMAGE AND THE CHURCH THAT STAYED

"Mark absolutely gave his heart to Christ that day," Joy says. "He was a new man, and all of the friends who knew him before, and all of our kids, now talk about 'old Mark' and 'new Mark." Joy knew the tears spilling down Mark's face were a sign of powerful surrender.

oy couldn't comprehend what she was seeing. Her ambitious, self-reliant husband - the man who hadn't cried once in their 25-year marriage- was curled up on the floor, sobbing. Joy had been excited to bring Mark on the retreat to learn more about the Holy Spirit. Their new church was breathing fresh life into her walk with God, and she was eager for Mark to experience the same. "Mark absolutely gave his heart to Christ that day," Joy says. "He was a new man, and all of the friends who knew him before, and all of our kids, now talk about 'old Mark' and 'new Mark."' Joy knew the tears spilling down Mark's face were a sign of powerful surrender. But she didn't yet know that Mark was also weeping over a secret he had been carrying for $2\frac{1}{2}$ years.

'He Had My Back'

Joy and Mark met in college. While he was ready to marry the cute girl in red overalls from day one, it took Joy a little longer to be sure. She still remembers the moment she knew. Joy had confided to Mark that she found it hard to do math in her head. They were playing cards with friends one night, and at the end of the round, each player had to add their points based on their remaining cards. Mark casually grabbed Joy's stack and counted them up for her. "No one noticed or questioned it," she recalls. "He had my back, and I realized that's what I wanted in a life partner - someone who would have my back. Our relationship shifted at that point." They married right after Joy graduated in 1982. She secured a job as an elementary school teacher and soon after, Mark launched a career in sales.

Just One More Time

The youngest of four daughters from a small town in Iowa, Joy grew up going to church every Sunday. She loved to babysit for local families and help her aunt on her farm. Popular and bubbly, Joy got used to hearing the comment "your mom named you right!" Her name became something to live up to. "I wanted to be liked," she says. "And to be liked, you need to do the things that others think you should do. I wanted to be the best wife, the best mother. Image was extremely important to me." When Mark confessed his secret to Joy, her security in being someone others admired evaporated. In his role as area sales manager at a Fortune 500 company, Mark had been siphoning company funds to support a short-lived business venture, to take customers on trips, and for personal use. After he gave his life to Christ at the retreat, Mark had begun begging God to free him from his addiction to money and accolades. "The time I wrote that last check, I audibly heard the voice of God saying, 'Don't do it,"' Mark remembers. "And on the other side of my shoulder, a voice said, Just one more time." A few months later, a coworker turned him in. and he was fired. When two FBI agents showed up at the door to confiscate Mark's computer and files, Joy stared at them in disbelief. "I was scared and sick to my stomach," she recalls. "I just couldn't believe this was happening in our life. This was never anything I thought my life would be."

Praying, Serving and Waiting

It would be two years before Mark was for-

mally charged and another year before he was sentenced. During those three years, Mark and Joy were instructed to talk to no one about his crime, not even their children. Church friends, family members, and Joy's colleagues at the school where she taught all thought he had lost his job because of the economic downturn. But Mark and Joy were allowed to confide in their pastor and his wife, who became their best friends, faithfully coming over every Sunday night to pray and talk together over ice cream. Mark and Joy sold their home, downsizing from 4,500 square feet to 750. They used Mark's pension to pay back the nearly \$300,000 he owed in restitution. Mark had a good friend who was also out of work, and together they'd load up a van with day-old baked goods and distribute them to people who were homeless. Mark, a man who

was once obsessed with making money and his reputation as a successful sales manager, was fixing his eyes on Jesus, reading Christian books, and dreaming up ways to serve others all while waiting to see what the consequences of his sin would be.

Support that Encircles

The FBI probe concluded and sentencing finally happened in November 2011. Mark was charged with fraud and conspiracy to commit money laundering and - because his crime crossed state lines via the U.S. mail - was sentenced to 16 months in a federal prison. Joy never expected to sit in a courtroom and absorb facts like these. She never dreamed that the man who shielded her from embarrassment during a card game would expose her to this kind of shame. But all around her sat members of their church small group, a band of people committed to walking beside



the couple no matter what. The next morning, Mark's sentencing was reported across the state by what seemed like every news outlet. Mark was a worship leader and well known at the church, so their pastor decided to address the issue head-on. During his sermon, which was on money, he shared openly about Mark's crime and repentance. "As I looked around, I saw our small group circling us, sitting all around us and praying for us during the message," Joy remembers. God was doing a work in Joy's heart, dismantling her desire for approval and replacing it with humility and trust. "I just had to remember that we're all sinners and that Mark has been redeemed," Joy says. "I learned to hold my head up high."

Held Together by Love and Truth

Mark surrendered on Dec. 28, 2011, at FPC Duluth, a prison camp six hours north of their home. Joy drove him there, and a friend from church came along so Joy wouldn't have to drive home alone. Over the next year, the local Body of Christ showed up in ways big and small. They left gift cards for gas on Joy's porch. They prayed for her and invited her to holiday celebrations and picnics. They wrote letters to Mark and sometimes came along to visit him. "If I hadn't had my church, if they had left me alone and I had to go through it all by myself, then I do not know if our marriage could have survived it," Joy admits. "I think I would have divorced him, so my image wasn't tarnished. I would have felt so alone." Joy says that in addition to helping in practical ways, her church friends loved her with their words, reminding her that she is God's beloved, that Mark has been forgiven by Christ and is loved, that no sin we commit can separate us from God. "They spoke God's truth to me when I forgot," she says. "And they also continued to help Mark transform into a godly man. That transformation - along with their support - is what saved our marriage." Mark and Joy wrote each other letters every day. They talked as often as they could. And finally, in the late fall of 2012, their separation was over. Once again, the church came through. A friend offered

Mark a job at a drug and alcohol treatment center, giving him a ride daily until Mark was allowed to use his own car. Mark became certified as a drug and alcohol counselor and began a new chapter.

No Action Without Knowledge

Once the class was over, the group members wanted to know what they could do to help people impacted by incarceration. They settled on Prison Fellowship Angel Tree, serving about 50 local families the following Christmas by bringing gifts to children on behalf of their incarcerated parents. Joy says that 12 of the families lived in their town - a fact that shocked some members of their predominantly white, affluent church. She is grateful for the way her church is realizing that incarceration touches all kinds of people. "If you have contact with the justice system, you keep it like a deep, dark secret," she says. "It's just really humbling and shameful to admit. But that's changing. The more people start to understand this more, the more things shift." The next spring, Joy led another Outrageous Justice small group, and the group decided to throw a Christmas party at the church for Angel Tree families. The following year, there was another Outrageous Justice study and another new initiative for families of incarcerated people - this time, a back-to-school supply drive. Joy is currently leading a fourth group of church members through Outrageous Justice. The church now serves more than 200 Angel Tree families and has caught a vision for in-prison ministry, with many eager to go behind bars as volunteers. But Joy's deepest ministry commitment is to Outrageous Justice. "Outrageous Justice has been the catalyst of all of it," Joy explains. "People just aren't aware. I wasn't aware of all the injustice that is happening. The number one purpose is to inform, because you can't have action until you know." Twelve years after being carried and cared for by her local church, Joy now delights to equip its members with information - along with a personal story - that is unleashing powerful ministry.

Courtesy: PFI.

SENTENCED TO LIFE, FREED BY THE GOSPEL

- Kate Campbell & Stacia Ray -

Albert says he believed the promises God revealed in His Word, "that He would restore me, He would restore my life, and He would make me the kind of person that people would trust."

C chool was easy for Albert - so easy that he took the importance of his education for granted. Class wasn't very exciting. Gang life at that time, however, seemed anything but boring. In Albert's east Los Angeles neighborhood, a local multigenerational gang ran the streets. Albert, the oldest son of Mexican-Salvadoran immigrants, grew up in a household with no affiliation to gang life. Albert's parents worked hard to pay the bills and to protect their kids from trouble. But his parents' busy work schedules often left Albert and his two younger sisters unattended at home. "Since [my parents] were doing what they were supposed to be doing, they assumed we were doing what we were supposed to be doing," Albert says. But that wasn't always true.

Working Harder, Not Smarter

Although Albert was a hard worker - he got his first paid job at only 11 years old -he didn't have to work hard to get good grades. Academics came naturally to him, so he didn't spend much time studying. During his free time, Albert would hang out with some neighborhood boys he had grown up with, and some of their older brothers were members of the local gang. Grandfathers, fathers, and sons all shared a sense of gang "community" in this section of east LA. Eventually, Albert also joined the local gang. He felt it was the logical next step for a young man in this neighborhood. Unfortunately for Albert, gang life was accompanied by criminal activities, from petty misdemeanors to major felonies. Shortly before his 18th birthday, Albert was under investigation for multiple activities. When he turned 18, Albert was arrested for what he explains were decisions "that evolved from bad to worse." The judge handed down a life sentence. "I knew that I brought [my incarceration] upon myself, so I just had to figure something out," says Albert. Adding weight to his heavy sentence was the fact that Albert, barely an adult himself, was about to be a father. He knew incarceration may mean missing out on his child's life. Six months after his arrest, the mother of his child gave birth to a daughter, whom he would not have the chance to hold in his arms for years.

New Light on an Old Subject

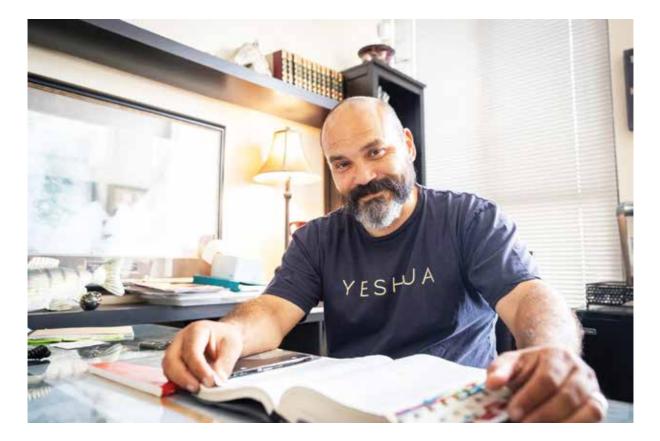
While he was in county jail, Albert ended up going to a chapel service. His reason for attending was not to learn about God. It was simply to socialize with a friend from another unit. The service was in a room so small that he couldn't even whisper with his friend. So instead, Albert listened as a man shared his testimony about how God had become real in his life. "Something about the way he was communicating drew me into his story," says Albert. "And in that story, I put together some very important things that I had never heard about God and Jesus."

Albert had grown up knowing about God, but he didn't really know God. He attended Catholic school as a child and heard teachings that made Jesus sound impressive but rather impersonal. He had never formed a personal connection with his Savior. "I knew that He died for our sins ... I knew He rose from the dead. I knew all the essential things," says Albert. "I just couldn't make sense of them in a way that played into somebody's real life." When he heard that man's testimony in the jail chapel, he saw Jesus in a new light. He was understanding the Gospel for the very first time. "There was grace, there was mercy, and there was His love for us - a desire to live in the hearts of those who trust and obey Him," Albert explains.

Opening What Was Closed

A female friend had been writing him letters with Bible verses in them that flowed with her communication. Albert asked her how he could get to know God and the Bible better. She encouraged him to open his heart as he opened God's Word and to ask the Lord to guide his life. Albert then prayed this prayer: "Lord, I know that I cannot ask you to open these prison doors because I'm here for what I did. But if You could just do something to not allow this to be a waste of time, I'll do whatever You want me to do." After that prayer, he read the whole Bible in just 17 days. Through his reading, he began to have hope that God could truly and fully transform his life. In prison, Albert was eager to learn and grow in his faith. He took dozens of classes, Bible studies, and correspondence programs. As a Spanish speaker, he was able to help translate for the prison chapel programs. He got involved in developing and leading Christian programs.

He was part of the first graduating class



of the TUMI (The Urban Ministry Institute) program, an extensive in-prison program that equips leaders to disciple others inside, with the goal of eventually discipling those outside. This intensive biblical studies program, developed by World Impact, is typically led by Prison Fellowship volunteers. Albert also became intentional about connecting with his daughter early on. "I've been writing my daughter since she was $2^{1/2}$ years old every other week, even before she could read, even if it was just a picture," he explains. "And that was one of the things that helped just kind of punctuate to my daughter, like how serious I was about trying to even be there for her, even for those times where there's no reason why I shouldn't be there, except that I messed up."

Priceless Relationship Connections

One connection with his daughter was through Prison Fellowship Angel Tree®, which provides children with Christmas gifts, the Gospel message, and a personal note of love on behalf of their incarcerated parent. Over the years, Albert was able to maintain a relationship with his daughter through Angel Tree, letters, and visits.

As he grew in his relationship with her, he saw the parallels of his own spiritual growth. He credits his connection to her with his deeper understanding of his connection to God, in how deeply a father loves a child. "I thanked the Lord for that because I had the assurance that He would take care of my daughter, and those were moments where I really saw Him as my best friend and protector of my child," says Albert. Albert cherished the visits from his daughter and the photos of him holding her in the visiting room. When she was old enough to drive herself, she would come visit on her own. "At one point, my daughter told me, 'You're the most consistent person in my life," Albert recalls.

A New Lease on Life

Albert stayed out of trouble during his incarceration and focused on making each day matter. More than two decades into his life sentence, Albert stood before the parole board for the fifth time - and was finally approved for parole. Six months later, he was released. Albert says he believed the promises God revealed in His Word, "that He would restore me, He would restore my life, and He would make me the kind of person that people would trust." Upon his release, Albert connected to a Bible-based church and began faithfully serving there. He kept a reliable and positive attitude, and he felt God confirming that this was the right church to plant his roots.

A Passion, Not a Pay check

After about a year, his pastor offered him a position on staff as the church's community resource director, overseeing operations, which is still his role today.

"For me, it was a calling," Albert explains, "It wasn't a pay-check." At age 45, Albert married a wonderful woman who is the mother of two young children. He and his wife are about to celebrate their five-year anniversary. Albert and his daughter also continue to have a great relationship. They live near each other and enjoy spending time together. For almost a decade, Albert has also served on his church's board, where he is currently recognized as an elder. He works with the men's discipleship program and helps run a community soup kitchen. He has been on excursion trips to both Greece and Israel, and he also supports his church's missionary work in Mexico, Haiti, and Northern India. If Albert could give advice to someone who is newly incarcerated, he'd tell them, "The best thing they could ever do is just turn their attention to the God that's probably trying to get their attention. If they didn't die out there, then there's gotta be something else for them that's better." As for this chapter in his journey, Albert says, "I'm just hoping that the second half [of my life] gives honor and glory to the God who allowed me to survive and learn from the first half."

Courtesy: PFI.

NEW WINGS AND HORIZONS



Sr Sherly Kidangan OSB It is the responsibility of every individual to explore the concept of spreading new wings in life, symbolizing the courage to embrace change and take on new challenges to be the best version of oneself.

New Wings and Horizons

Life, much like a butterfly emerging from its cocoon, often presents opportunities for personal growth and transformation. It is the responsibility of every individual to explore the concept of spreading new wings in life, symbolizing the courage to embrace change and take on new challenges to be the best version of oneself. Many factors challenge someone to take a 'U' turn in life. It demands sacrifice, determination, and openness to embrace it willingly without compromise. Then it leads to transformation and a change of life. Embracing change is akin to unfurling the first delicate feathers of newfound wings. When I looked back at the lives of our brethren behind bars and the mindset, they had created for themselves, it was found to be obviously one of frustration, keeping aloof from everyone, negligence, fear, hopelessness, a tired mind, unwanted thoughts, etc. They would give up very easily and be frustrated in the worst circumstances they found themselves in. They were all used to living a mechanical life, and in the process, amidst their wandering minds, got into dilemmas, rivalry, aggressiveness, and failed to perceive things as they were. In spite of all these untoward situations, there were some among them who set goals for their lives, who try to see the moon along with the stars, and who learn to count the stars, though they are uncountable. They nurture the seeds of hope, a positive attitude, a transformation of their past lives, bringing about a new orientation to their lives. I bring to your attention one such person whose life serves as an example for others to

transform and to look for new wings to fly high on the horizon. For those who love to yearn to be productive, the sky is the limit. Prison Ministry India Bhopal Unit supports, encourages, and motivates those who love to make their trodden path straight, dispelling the darkness and coming out with a positive outlook to achieve something greater in life. St. Luke 5:31–32 says, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick; I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." Great things happen when one is docile to the will of God and realizes his intervention in life. Then there is nothing else to be done but to mend one's ways according to the design God has planned.

Sohan's Story

A young lad, Sohan, was caught within the four walls of the jail due to circumstantial evidence. He couldn't prove the case otherwise. Without giving way to the impulses of nature and situations, he began to develop his career by pursuing BA in music. He worked hard and began to dream big, and it did bear fruit. He became part and parcel of the choir team in the central jail. To experience fulfillment and satisfaction in life, he possessed determination, a positive outlook, trust in providential care, and made maximum utilization of the given scenario to produce the best impact. Above all, he had enough of love and optimism to see that the day would come to blossom to enable him to see the better side of the world. Today, he is overly thrilled by the new wings and horizons he has explored in his life. Due to his good nature, character, and commitment, they sent him to an

open jail, where he was required to find a livelihood by working outside. It is indeed very hard to cast oneself from an enclosure into an open environment. The image that he had in social life outside kept chasing him, haunting him, and threw him off. For the people outside, once a prisoner, always a prisoner and the person is made to carry the scar of it. So, there is need for tremendous patience, forbearance, and courage to make the new wings flutter in the air. In order to achieve this target, one has to equip oneself with the following indicators:

Overcome Fear

Just as a fledgling bird must overcome the fear of leaving the nest, individuals embarking on a new journey often grapple with fear and uncertainty. This is the first step in the process of transformation. It needs an extra ability in the mind and heart of the person to decide firmly to bid farewell to the fear of what others will think and consider. Confronting these fears head-on becomes the catalyst for personal development which allows one to soar to new heights.

Setting Goals

It plays a pivotal role in the lives of all those who wish to make progress in life. Once it is done, one should not swerve from the right path, come what may. These goals serve as milestones, marking progress on the journey of self-discovery.

Cultivating Resilience

Life's journey is filled with unexpected challenges. These challenges can take any form at any time. To safeguard against such challenges, one must have the ability to be resilient. Cultivating resilience is essential when faced with setbacks. Just as a bird withstands all the tough and rough realities of flying for the first time, resilience strengthens the soul to navigate through all the adversities.

Hunt New Horizons

Just as a bird explores new territories, individuals with newfound wings should always search for new skylines. This investigation may comprise jumping into new ventures, mounting on public platforms, or even embarking on an entirely different life path. The pursuit of new horizons keeps life dynamic and full of possibilities.

Nurturing Self-Discovery

This process of growing new wings enables one to journey towards self-discovery. To know oneself in its totality, understanding one's strengths, passions, soul-touching desires, and values is crucial for a fulfilling journey. It's a continual process of self-reflection and refinement, a positive outlook, and lasting vision, much like a butterfly refining the intricate patterns on its wings.

Embracing the Journey

Embracing the journey itself is the key. Life's unfolding story may not always follow a linear path, but it's in the twists and turns that the most profound growth occurs. Each step, whether forward or backwards, contributes to the evolution of the individual with newly-found wings.

New Wings to Soar High

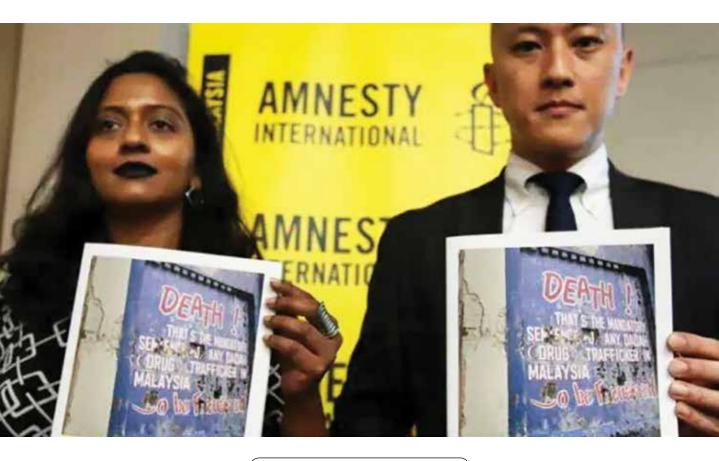
Mr. Sohan has absolutely complied with all these and emerged as a successful individual. His goodness and character has left an indelible mark on PMI Bhopal, as he always used to be instrumental in all our programs in the Central Jail. Looking at his caliber and his deep-down desire to accomplish something in life, PMI Bhopal joined him to give him new wings to soar high by providing a professional harmonium according to his choice that was presented to him. At the moment, he moves out with some families, and some do come to the open jail to learn music. He revived his social esteem in a society where people accepted him forgetting his past by giving him a chance to be reborn with his new wings and embrace the life that was in store for him. In short, the concept of discovering new wings in life encapsulates the essence of growth, resilience, and the pursuit of one's true self. Just as a bird takes flight, individuals can soar to greater heights by embracing change and, ultimately, the journey itself. May the winds of change lift you to extraordinary places as you unfurl your wings and navigate the skies of your destiny.

MALAYSIA URGED TO ABOLISH DEATH PENALTY Total 34 criminal offenses still warrant death penalty under Malaysian law

Goldstrights watchdog Amnesty International has urged the Malaysian government to extend the moratorium on executions and fully abolish the death penalty. During the past six months, the official figures indicated a "significant decrease in the number of death sentences imposed or upheld by the courts," the London-based group said in a statement on Feb. 26. The rights group urged the Malaysian government and its legislators to "indefinitely

extend the official moratorium on executions until the death penalty is fully abolished and all death sentences commuted."

Malaysia enacted the Abolition of Mandatory Death Penalty Act on July 4, 2023, after its parliament had passed a resolution in 2018 placing a moratorium on executions. Under Malaysian law, 34 criminal offenses including murder, drug trafficking, treason, acts of terrorism, waging war against the King of Malaysia, and, since 2003, rape resulting



in death, or the rape of a child warrant the death penalty. The 2018 legislation removed the death penalty as a mandatory sentence and added alternate punishments such as life imprisonment between 30 to 40 years and whipping. Based on the data collected from the Registrar of the High Courts of Sabah and Sarawak states, Amnesty analyzed 139 cases of individuals facing the death penalty. It found that 42 people (28 percent) had their charges amended to a lesser offense or were acquitted in the High Court or on appeal.

In the remaining 97 cases, where defendants were charged with a capital crime, 26 cases (27 percent) resulted in the death penalty being imposed or upheld. In a remarkable 71 cases (73 percent) individuals were handed alternative punishments instead of the death penalty. "Discretion appeared to be embraced in favor of non-death penalty sentences proportionally more by appellate courts," Amnesty said. About 44 percent of recorded cases before the High Courts were handed down a death penalty, whereas this was reduced to 21 percent and 25 percent penalty for drug trafficking offenses was still being imposed in large numbers despite the sentencing discretion available to courts. "Although it is encouraging that sentencing discretion has resulted in fewer death sentences, it remains greatly concerning that the death penalty continued to be imposed for drug trafficking, in violation of international law and standards," Amnesty said. Eight out of 26 cases (31 percent) of drug trafficking received the death penalty. The Malaysian High Courts had imposed the death sentence in six out of eight cases. "The treatment of cases potentially subject to the death penalty pointed to systemic flaws that undermine the right to a fair trial at various stages of the proceedings," Amnesty said. The group cited media reports relating to 50 people – Malaysian and foreign nationals – who appeared before magistrates' courts to be charged with capital crimes. Of the accused, 28 people (56 percent) were reported as represented by a legal counsel, and a significant 20 individuals (40 percent) were unrepresented.

before the Court of Appeal and Federal Court, respectively. The Federal Court had commuted all confirmed death sentences which were evaluated by it, Amnesty said. The offense of murder has seen a high number of death penalties being imposed (18 out of 26 cases).

Amnesty pointed out that the imposition of the death



DISTRICT JAIL KOHIMA, NAGALAND



Mhalenuo Regina

We feel blessed and happy to be a part of this ministry. Everyone who visits receives a different kind of joy and wishes to visit more often and do more for the inmates in any way possible.

n the ninth of March 2024, eleven of us, which included two religious sister's, one brother, one lecture, three students, four outsiders representing Don Bosco College, Kohima attended the morning service in District Jail, Kohima. The service started at 8:30 am and ended by 9:30 am. The total inmates included 77 males and 4 females. The service was led by the inmates and from Don Bosco College. Regina gave a short sharing while Cornelius gave counselling to those who volunteered. In the meantime, the two religious sister's had a separate prayer time with the female inmates in their cell and the rest lead the inmates into praise and worship followed by benediction.

The team had a wonderful and blessed experience. Also, the activities conducted by the team together with the inmates was very satisfying. All thanks and glory to God for giving us good health and calling us for this ministry. I also thank Fr. Dr. P. Suresh, Principal of Don Bosco College, Kohima who is always supporting us, helping the ministry to grow, praying for us and also for this blessed opportunity. We are thankful to him. We pray that our God Almighty use the ministry to help the inmates to receive the truth and to let the truth set them free.

Things to Improve

We need a spiritual counsellor. We have a psychologist but I feel the inmates who have serious crimes need more of a spiritual counsellor. We need to have the support of the religious nuns always so that we can also have separate service and interactions with the female inmates in their cell since they do not come for the common service.

Feedback

We feel blessed and happy to be a part of this ministry. Everyone who visits receives a different kind of joy and wishes to visit more often and do more for the inmates in any way possible. All praise and glory to God for that.





PMI Volunteers' Visit to District Prison West Garo Hills.



PMI North Regional Coordinator Meeting with Fr Thomas Seson, Tura Coordinator.



PMI Srikakulam Diocesan Gathering.



PMI Volunteers Visiting Chikkaballapura Prison.



Mr Anthony Jacob Receives Certificate of Appreciation from Superintendent of Open Prison, Yerwada.



PMI Guntur Diocesan General Body meeting.



MI Pune Releasing Prisoners from Open Jail by Paying their Penalties & Fines.



PMI ELuru Diocesan General Body Meeting.



Ash Wednesday Celebration, Sundargarh Prison.



PMI Cuddalore Volunteers Donating Books, Microphone and Sports Articles.



PMI Berhampur Diocesan Unit Distributes Shirts and Pants to Special Subjail, Bhanjan Nagar.



PMI Shimoga Diocesan Unit Organizing Health Camp at Central Prison Shimoga.



PMI Maharashtra Online Executive Body Meeting.



PMI Volunteers' Visit to Sundargarh Prison.



PMI Karnataka Executive Body Felicitating Karwar Bishop Most Rev Duming Dias.



PMI Karnataka State Executive Body Meeting, Shimoga.

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PMI DELHI OFFICE CUM RESIDENCE BLESSING

















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