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NATIONAL MONTHLY

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A photograph showing a circle of diverse hands of various skin tones (light, medium, and dark) reaching in from the edges and holding each other in a supportive grip. The hands are arranged in a circular pattern, with fingers interlaced or overlapping, symbolizing unity and human fraternity.

**HUMAN
FRATERNITY**



PMI Chennai Unit Distributes Educational Scholarships to Prisoners' Children



Distribution of Scholarships to Prisoners' Children, Bengaluru



PMI Volunteers Distribute Sanitizers and Masks to Jashpur District Prison



PMI Volunteers Distribute TV to Kottayam District Jail



PMI Chhattisgarh Donates Clothes to Prisoners



Hearty Welcome to Sr Cecily FSM to Kolbe Home

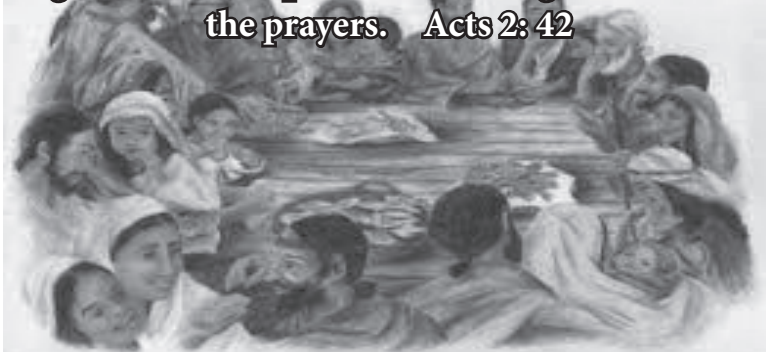
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“They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. Acts 2: 42



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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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Patron

Most Rev Dr Allwyn D'Silva

Managing Editor

Rev Dr Francis Kodyian MCBS

Chief Editor

Sr Rosily SCC

Associate Editor

Fr Benny Thomas Pachanal CRSP

Circulation Managers

Fr George Kalassery VC
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Editorial Board

Fr G J Anthonysamy
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Magazine Staff

Ms Teena Antony, PhD
Sr Basil SCS
Sr Joanna SCS
Sr Cecily FSM

Graphics and Layout

Dinto Tom K T

Printing

Sevasadan Printing Press
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Prison Ministry India

**52, Thomas Layout
Sarjapur Road
Carmelaram
Bangalore-560 035
Karnataka, India**

☎ **09447710488
9880022209**

Email

prisonvoice123@gmail.com
nationalpmi2015@gmail.com
pmi2005@rediffmail.com

Website

www.prisonministryindia.org

PRISON MINISTRY INDIA: A CHANNEL OF HUMAN FRATERNITY



Sr Rosily SCC
Chief Editor

Jesus Fraternity

Prison Ministry India, a channel of human fraternity, began with the name Jesus Fraternity in 1986 in Kerala. This divine offspring of human fraternity spread all over India under the special desk of Justice, Peace and Development Commission of CBCI. Prison Ministry India, as its first name signifies, is a fraternity, a family. Its lifestyle is biblically founded and is based on the way of life of the early Christian community, "They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. Awe came upon everyone because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved (Acts 2: 42-47).

Fratelli Tutti

As Holy Father Pope Francis envisioned in his encyclical Fratelli tutti, PMI volunteers tirelessly work for the release, reformation, reconciliation, rehabilitation, reintegration, and redemption of our brethren behind the bars and consider them as brothers and sisters. Pope Francis' solution to the world's growing divisions is human fraternity and social friendship. The Pope urged people of goodwill to promote fraternity through dialogue, renewing society by putting love for others ahead of personal interests. Throughout the encyclical, the Pope emphasised the primacy of love, in both social and political contexts. Fratelli tutti, the text's opening phrase, is taken from the writings of St. Francis of Assisi, to whom the Pope paid tribute at the beginning of the encyclical, describing him as the "saint of fraternal love." Saint Francis, whose way

of life marked the flavour and smell of the Gospel, invites all men and women to a love that transcends the barriers of geography and distance.

Human Fraternity

Contemplating on the parable of the Good Samaritan, who helped a traveller who had been robbed and left for dead as a model of human fraternity, Pope reminds us that we are constantly tempted to ignore others, especially the weak. He stresses the importance of a fundamental attitude of love in the face of poverty and inequality. The spiritual stature of a person's life is measured by love. He admonishes us to welcome, protect, promote, and integrate newcomers. The Pope highlights the urgent need to combat all that threatens or violates fundamental human rights, especially hunger and human trafficking, which he called a source of shame for humanity. He discusses the conditions for peace and reconciliation, deploring the injustices of war and calling for an end to the use of the death penalty worldwide. He also emphasised that the death penalty today is "inadmissible," recalling his 2018 change to the Catechism's teaching on the topic.

Prayer to the Creator

The Holy Father ends the encyclical letter with an ecumenical prayer and a prayer to the Creator: "Lord, Father of our human family, you created all human beings equal in dignity: pour forth into our hearts a fraternal spirit and inspire in us a dream of renewed encounter, dialogue, justice and peace. Move us to create healthier societies and a more dignified world, a world without hunger, poverty, violence and war. May our hearts be open to all the peoples and nations of the earth. May we recognise the goodness and beauty that you have sown in each of us, and thus forge bonds of unity, common projects, and shared dreams. Amen".

***Fratelli Tutti* and Jesus Fraternity**

Brothers and Sisters All

Pope Francis signing the third encyclical of his pontificate *Fratelli Tutti* - "Brothers and Sisters All" in Assisi on 3 October 2020, invites everyone in this wounded world to renew hope. Focusing on human fraternity and social friendship, the Holy Father encourages every member of mankind to come out of their cell of cool, comfortable and globalised indifference to outreach, and extend caring love like the Good Samaritan to the suffering, the wounded, the oppressed, the dejected and the rejected of society. After celebrating Holy Mass at the tomb of St Francis in Assisi, the Holy Father signed the encyclical *Fratelli Tutti* on the day before St Francis' Feast. I am proud to remember that Prison Ministry India began in the 1980s with the same values and aspirations of *Fratelli Tutti* with the name Jesus Fraternity.

Jesus Fraternity

In 1986 when PMI was conceptualised among a group of seminarians at St Thomas Apostolic Seminary, Kottayam, Kerala the name they preferred was Jesus Fraternity. Its biblical foundation was Mathew 25: 36-44, and the motto was "be a love bomb; not to kill but to heal the broken-hearted". What we had in our mind was that PMI would be a fraternity where its members, enriched by the divine and brotherly fraternity enjoying freedom, equality, and friendship, would extend our fellowship to the lost, the least and the last and share our richness with them for their integral human development.

From National Coordinator's Desk



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

Trinitarian Fraternity

Jesus Fraternity and Prison Ministry India is founded in the fraternity and communion of the Holy Trinity – the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. PMI exists and does wonders for the lost, thanks to "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit" (2 Cor 13:14). As St Paul writes to the Romans, we are loved by God and called to be his holy people to convey grace and peace from God our Father and Lord Jesus Christ to our incarcerated brethren (Rom 1: 7).

Jesus' Fraternity with Disciples

Prison Ministry India always looks towards the fraternity between Jesus and his disciples. Jesus had different levels of friends like John whom he loved (Jn 20: 2), the inner circle of friends - Peter, James and John, who were the weakest and needed extra attention (Mt 17: 1; Mk 13: 3), the twelve disciples (Mt 10: 2-4), the 72 disciples (Lk 10: 1-24), the women who followed him (Lk 8: 1-3; Mk 15: 41) and the large crowd who followed him (Mt 8: 1; Mt 20: 29; Jn 6: 2). Jesus' friendship with his Father was extended to his large friend-circle and he proved the depth of his fraternity with them by shedding blood



From National Coordinator's Desk

and allowing himself to be crucified on the cross for their salvation.

Early Christian Fraternity

PMI imitates and receives inspiration from the powerful fraternity prevalent in the early Christian community. "They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people (Acts 2: 42-47). In Chapter 3 of *Fratelli Tutti*, Pope Francis emphasises the value of solidarity and suggests reenvisioning the social role of property.

Human Fraternity

The encyclical focuses on the theme of human fraternity which the Holy Father Pope Francis himself practises daily in his own life. Through this encyclical, Pope Francis suggests ways in which we could build a more just, peaceful world, one in which we recognise each other as brothers and sisters of one human family developing the culture of encounter. Recognising every member of the universal family as brothers and sisters, the Holy Father highlights the importance of solidarity in the contemporary wounded world and promotes peace and harmony between individuals and nations. The concept of human fraternity takes on a particular relevance given the dramatic situation in the world today in which the

coronavirus pandemic is causing great suffering to millions of people in more than 188 countries and territories. Quoting the bishops of India, the Holy Father writes, "The goal of dialogue (between the different religions) is to establish friendship, peace and harmony, and to share spiritual and moral values and experiences in a spirit of truth and love."

Fraternity with Prisoners

Fratelli Tutti highlighting social friendship invites us to extend our communion from close blood relatives and community members to other human beings, regardless of any difference or affiliation such as prisoners, prostitutes, beggars, drug addicts and the like. The PMI logo based on the last judgement in Matthew 25: 31-46 illustrates our fraternity with the least, the last and the lost that is the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, the naked, the sick and the prisoner. We are their caretakers, for taking care of those who are sick, sinners, those in need, and those who are cast aside, is not only human but also Christian. This taking care of prisoners must be expressed through our spiritual exercises, kind deeds, works of justice and generous actions in times of need. Prison ministry is a God-given opportunity to express and extend brotherly and sisterly love towards our brethren behind the bars and thereby to dedicate ourselves for their release, reformation, rehabilitation, reintegration, and redemption. *Fratelli Tutti* underlines that the words of Jesus shall compel us to recognise Christ himself in each of our abandoned or excluded brothers and sisters (Mt 25: 40-45).

PMI LOGO: AN ILLUSTRATION OF HUMAN FRATERNITY



Introduction

Pope Francis and the Grand Imam of Al-Azhar signed a document on Human Fraternity on 4 February 2019. It highlights the need for a sense of fraternity amongst all men and women of goodwill who are invited to promote justice and peace, guaranteeing human rights and religious freedom. Pope Francis, on the first anniversary of the document on 'Human Fraternity', gratefully acknowledged the people who work for the upliftment of the poor, sick, persecuted, the weak brothers and sisters regardless of colour, religion or race. He says, "As we celebrate the first anniversary of this great humanitarian event we hope for a better future for humanity, a future free from hatred, rancour, extremism and terrorism in which the values of peace, love and fraternity would prevail. St Mother Teresa said from her heart, "God doesn't require us to succeed; he only requires that you try. Let us always meet each other with a smile, for the smile is the beginning of love. Let us not be satisfied with just giving money. Money is not enough, money can be got, but they need your hearts to love them. If you are humble nothing will touch you, neither praise nor disgrace, because you know what you are. Do not wait for leaders; do it alone, person to person. We do not need guns and bombs to bring peace, we need love and compassion". This article on the PMI logo illustrates our unique call to



Sr Lini Sheeja MSC

create a better society in this broken world and our fraternity with prisoners, prostitutes, beggars, strangers, drug addicts, the sick, the hungry, the thirsty, the neglected and the rejected of society.

Six Chained Hands

PMI volunteers do not carry guns and bombs to prison cells, rather they carry love and compassion as their very call is to become 'love bombs'. The Prison Ministry India logo consists of a globe from which emerge different types of six chained hands. These hands represent the six different groups of people mentioned in the gospel of Mathew, "For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me" (Mt 25: 35-36). The six hands represent those oppressed, imprisoned, bonded, neglected and rejected by the society, such as prisoners, prostitutes, beggars, street children, AIDS victims, drug addicts, mental patients and the like.

The Dove

Some of these rejected, oppressed and bonded people become disappointed and disturbed while others turn violent and revolutionary. They are unable to break their bonds by themselves. They are like the dry bones in Ezekiel's vision (Ez 37: 1-14) that are badly in need of life and spirit. Into this world of darkness comes the dove, which represents the Holy Spirit. This is the same Holy Spirit who descended on Jesus during his baptism when heaven opened. This is the same Spirit which descended on the disciples when they were in a locked room in fear of Jews and were strengthened. This same Holy Spirit, the dove, stands for prison ministry, which brings gifts and fruits in abundance pouring His love, joy, freedom, peace, hope and consolation on prisoners. It also symbolises the messenger of peace in the book of Genesis (Gen. 8: 8-12) and the angel who appeared at the Oak of Mamre to announce the good news to Abraham and Sara (Gen 18: 1-15). In the same way, it symbolises Jesus the Good Shepherd (Jn 10) who goes in search of his lost sheep and Jesus who joined the disciples on the way to Emmaus and revealed to them the mystery and meaning behind His passion and death (Lk 24: 13-25).

A Call to Sacrifice

Thus, in a world of darkness filled with the works of self-indulgence, PMI goes to sow the works of the Spirit. This indicates how caution is needed in this ministry. As Jesus said, "Go your way; behold, I send you out as lambs in the midst of wolves" (Lk 10: 3).

Therefore, "be cunning as snakes and yet innocent as doves" (Mt 10: 16). According to the liturgical traditions of the Israelites, the dove is like the paschal lamb used for sacrifice. In this sense, the PMI member who represents the dove should be ready to sacrifice herself/himself as Jesus did on Mount Calvary in order to have life and have it in full.

The Globe

The globe represents the world of prison ministry in the five continents and Prison Ministry India is a part of the universal ministry for the brethren behind the bars. The entire population works together, to achieve true freedom. Any crime, wherever it is committed, is a crime against society in general. As there are people in all nations we have to think globally and work locally for a better world. The globe brings out this universal character.

The Open Hands

The hands represent the work of prison ministry volunteers. God always invites the cooperation and collaboration of His chosen ones. We are His hands and heart today. We carry hope and consolation in our hands, love and compassion in our hearts. Renew a prisoner today and better the world tomorrow is what the PMI believes in. Jesus redeemed a prisoner from the Cross. We, the volunteers of PMI, continue God's work of redemption and make our brethren behind the bars feel that they are cared for, loved and needed to make a better world. The open posture of the hand shows that we always depend on God for the fruition of the work. God is the one who pours grace for the conversion of hearts.

A LIFE RENEWED

“I have come to call not the righteous, but the sinners” (Mk2:17) This was the answer Jesus gave to the scribes and Pharisees who asked his disciples, “Why does he eat with the sinners and tax collectors”. In his great love for us, Jesus invited us the volunteers of Prison Ministry to continue the mission started by him on earth for the salvation of all for whom he laid down his life. We have chosen the path the Lord traced for us with longing in our hearts to become partakers in the redemptive mission of Jesus. We are conscious of our mission to be Good Shepherds who care for the lost sheep, save the lost and win them back for the Kingdom of God, “Rejoice with me for I have found my sheep that was lost. Just so I tell you there is more joy in heaven over one sinner that repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons that need no repentance.” (Lk 15:6,7).

During my regular visits to the prison, I have met several inmates. The habitual offenders get used to the prison life. Among the large number of those who are incarcerated, a large majority continue to live a life of their choice within the prison. But I have met also brethren who feel very sorry for having fallen into crime in a moment of frustration and repent for their past life. Some of them cry out and say, “Please give me another chance. I heard one saying, “In my present understanding I will never repeat that mistake again.” They are the persons who express their wish to take a ‘U’ turn in their life and to live a renewed life. The greatest joy I experience in my mission of serving the brethren behind the bars is when I see them opening their hearts to the Creator and Redeemer and accept the grace given by God for a change of life.



Sr Adele SCCG

Freddy (name changed) entered the prison after he was accused of a murder case. Though he is the only son of his parents he was deprived of his parents love and care due to poverty. In his pursuit of human love and acceptance, he fell in love with a girl and desired to live with her. When the girl's father objected, he wouldn't turn back but decided to kill him and escape with the girl. He waited for an opportunity. He succeeded in taking his life but not in running away with her. After his arrest, during his prison life, he got in to drug abuse and tried to cover his guilt and disappointment under drugs. While some agents of darkness try to draw their friends in to their trap, there are some good angels of light in the prison who try to draw them out and lead them to light. They act as catalyst to bring new energy in to those who are disheartened, by being friendly and gradually leading them to good. They are the inmates who opened themselves to the light of God and with God's grace started a renewed life while in prison and became human catalysts. They empower their fellow prisoners to turn from evil and accept to live a life of goodness.

When some good friends brought him to the Prison Church since he is a Catholic, I was happy to be helpful to Freddy to understand himself through counseling and prayer. Though he was a baptized Catholic, he never received any other sacrament and had not opened his heart to the love of God and



Prisoners' Conversion

his grace. When he started attending prayer meetings regularly, came to true repentance of his crime filled life. Though he didn't know English well, he started reading Holy Bible. He was improving steadily in leading a life in grace. Though he expected to get a verdict from the court in his favour, he was disappointed, when he came to know that he had to undergo life imprisonment.

He desired to go out on parole and help his mother and sister as he is the only son. Since he had no money for his expenses, while on parole, he approached a friend he had met once in the prison. His friend invited him to Mumbai assuring him of his help. His acquaintance led him to a life of crime again. Satan uses several tactics to lead souls away from light and to draw them to a life of sin. That is why it is said, "Discipline yourselves, keep alert. Like a roaring lion, your adversary the devil prowls around, looking for someone to devour" Too late he understood the fact that he had fallen again in the trap of the evil one. Freddy's greed for money led him to the trap laid by the evil one, who came to his help in the pretext of befriending him. He failed to keep in touch with Lord whom he received while he was in prison, and to read the Word of God he had received. "Thief comes to steal, kill and to destroy, I came that they may have life and have it abundantly" (Jn 10:10).

Freddy was caught by the police in his attempt for theft and was kept under judicial custody in Mumbai. With his friend's help he succeeded in obtaining bail and came out of the prison. But he was arrested by the police who were in search of him as he failed to return to prison at the end of the period sanctioned for parole. Since he had escaped parole he had to remain in prison for a longer period. Once again he returned to Jesus the Good Shepherd who gave him his

forgiveness and love. Thus he got another chance to begin afresh the new life he had once started, recalling God's WORD which he had once learned. "Do not remember the former things, or consider the things of old. I am about to do a new thing now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert" (Is 43:18,19). "I came that they have life and have it abundantly" (Jn 10:10). Encouraged by the invitation of the Lord who had started to rekindle the light of the Holy Spirit in him through the Sacramental life, he revived his renewed life once again and it was truly a new awakening which led him to a deep study of the WORD OF GOD. Thus Freddy began to share the precious Word among his friends. Holy Spirit taught him the language he needed and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit he became a bearer of Good news to the erring brethren behind the bars.

When Jesus chose the first disciples, he said to them, "Come after me, and I will make you Fishers of People and at once they left their nets and followed him." Jesus invites many more today saying to us, "Come after me". He knows how to transform us too to become "Fishers of People" Yes, the harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few, therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest" (Lk 10:2). No volunteer can transform another human being. But every person can be a collaborator in the hands of the Almighty and be a connecting link to the Divine Light. Let us go forth to bear the light of Christ among those who live in the valley of darkness. We believe that the Spirit of God living in us is the same spirit of Jesus who raised the dead to life. Let us pray that the Lord may open the inner eyes of our soul to see his light and life dwelling within us and be able to say with St. Paul,- "For the Love of Christ urges us on" (2 Cor 5:14).




Rely on God and Do Wonders



Adv KK Paulose, Bengaluru

All praise and honour to the God of the Lost whose blessings are uncountable on the PMI family. PMI seed was sowed in 1981 and it's grown like a banyan tree; the growth of PMI is tremendous than we can imagine. It is really a stupendous service that the PMI volunteers render and marvellous are all their undertakings. They deserve backing and encouragement from all the readers of Prison Voice for their selfless dedication for the cause of humanity. Their regular visits to prisons, taking care of prisoners' children, reaching out to their families, accompanying the prisoners to the courts, paying their legal fees by begging will be spoken for years. No one is born criminal. With God everything is possible is the creed and hope of PMI volunteers. PMI reach out to the unreached, love the unloved, knowing that most of them are the victims of circumstances and trying to transform them as new human beings with the love and affection shown by Jesus Christ, cherished by his disciples as explained by St Paul in his letters.

Since in most of the cases, it is the life circumstances that contribute a lot not only in the growth of people but also their attitudes to the life. Reformation is a process the prison ministry has undertaken, reformation within the prisoner, to become a better person. In this reformation process the PMI volunteer, the prisoners' family



members and the circumstances play a vital role. When we rely on God, He does wonders. This process does not end in the prison, it continues after their release too. If dairy farms and other similar ventures started and employed the released jail inmates for the work, by rendering continuous contact and counselling, to certain extent such people's mind set up can be changed and we can make them altogether new persons. We have to instil love in their hearts, kindness in their mind, humanism in life. This is the noble task of the volunteers of PMI.

We find that the books of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy had established the Law of Moses, during the time when the children of Abraham were freed out of 400 years of slavery in Egypt and came into a land of Israel. But Jesus Christ modified the law, the law of love and community service. Till that time the offenders were treated with very harsh punishment and Jesus gave a new definition of law. In the famous story of the sinner woman who was brought by Jews to pelt stones and kill is a 'living example', as he said, You may pelt stone, provided those who throw stone should be free from sins. And, we found the crowd dispersed one by one. His disciples learnt the real elements of love and implemented it in their very life. If you take sword, you will be killed by sword alone, exclaimed Jesus Christ.

We find throughout the writings of St Paul on love and repentance. When he says, "Love is patient, Love is kind. Love is not boastful or envious or arrogant or rude, Love does



Do Wonders

not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Even I speak in the tongues of men and angels but have not love; I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge and if I have faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.” (1 Cor 13:1-5). It was the beginning of a new legal era commenced from Christ, followed by his disciples and brought through the church hierarchy. ‘Repent’ is the message or the underlying fact of Christian principle of love. Repent does not mean, do sin and repent again, as many of the non-Christians mistakenly thinking of Christianity.

Criminal nature of men from the bible to be quoted are more, starting from may be, Abel and Cain, in which Cain killed Abel merely on jealousy emitted out of anger for his offering not accepted by God but the offering of his brother Cain. As per the Bible, though God said, “you shall surely die. But if one turns from the sin and repent, he will be saved.” And, we are sure, with such slogan the prison ministry moves forward. It is happy to know they have done 25 years of wonderful national level service in the field of prison ministry, nay, to the humanity. We encourage all of you, stand by you, praise God for the gift of all of you and pray for you.

It was in the year 1981 Pope John Paul went to prison to meet the gunman who gravely

wounded him and when reporters asked him what he had conversed with the latter, he said “I spoke to him as I would speak to a brother whom I have forgiven and who enjoys my confidence”. Mehmet Ali Agca, knelt and kissed John Paul’s ring as the Pope rose to leave. Prison guards and papal officials observed the meeting from a corridor outside the open cell, but the two men spoke with such low intensity that they could not be heard. The Pope publicly forgave his assailant and Agca has publicly expressed his repentance. He had struck the Pope with two bullets fired from a pistol at close range as John Paul was driven through a crowd of 10,000 people attending his weekly general audience. Yes, that is an inspiration to every person who is involved in this noble ministry, a humble service for the lost ones.

Let us remember Pope Francis remark to the participants in the international conference on the theme, “Integral Human Development and Catholic Prison Pastoral Care”. He urged for a change in the outlook and approach in treating prisoners who, he said, must be offered equal opportunities for reform, development and reintegration. The Pope said, “Many times society, through legalistic and inhumane decisions, justified by an alleged search for good and security, seeks in the isolation and detention of those who act against social norms, the ultimate solution to the problems of community life.”



Holy Rosary: A Grace-Filled Prayer of Eminent Catholics

Fr Allam Sagar Manoj Kumar

When we enter into October, we specially remember and recite the Holy Rosary along with our family members and companions. During this month our Holy Mother Church celebrates the feast of Our Lady of Holy Rosary. At this juncture let us look at the significance of this feast. Pope St Pius V established this feast in 1573. The purpose was to thank God for the victory of Christians over the Turks at Lepanto, a victory attributed to the praying of the rosary. Pope Clement XI extended the feast to the universal Church in 1716.

The development of the rosary has a long history. First, a practice developed of praying 150 'Our Fathers' in imitation of the 150 Psalms. Then there was a parallel practise of praying 150 'Hail Marys'. Soon a mystery of Jesus' life was attached to each Hail Mary. Though Mary's giving the rosary to St. Dominic is recognised as unhistorical, the development of this prayer form owes much to the followers of St. Dominic. One of them, Alan de la Roche, was known as "The Apostle of the Rosary." He founded the first Confraternity of the Rosary in the 15th century. In the 16th century, the rosary was developed to its present form with the 15 mysteries such as joyful, sorrowful and glorious mysteries. In 2002, Pope St. John Paul II added the Mysteries of Light to this devotion.

Yet, we clearly understand the devotion encouraged by different Popes: Pope Pius V instituted the Feast of the Queen of the Rosary in the 16th century in thanksgiving for the Lepanto victory. Pope Leo XIII, in

1891, declared October as the Month of the Rosary. For Pope Pius VII, the rosary was an antidote against the evils of the day. For Pope Pius XII, the rosary was the sure means of God's blessings to families. Pope Pius X said that on reciting the rosary devoutly we would have peace in our families. In his "Marialis Cultus" Pope Paul VI reminds us that we are praying Bible-based prayers in the rosary. Pope St. John Paul II described the rosary as looking into the mysteries of Christ's life through the eyes of Mary.

Most of the times we do ask ourselves why we need to pray the rosary? The ideal is to recite at least five decades of the rosary daily with the whole family. We need to recite the rosary slowly enough to make its recitation devout and reverent. Reflect for a minute or two on the mystery and then concentrate on the meaning of the prayers as we recite them to avoid distractions. Besides reciting the rosary before bedtime with others in the family, let us make a habit of reciting the rosary during our journey to the workplace and our exercises. If we do so, we shall experience for ourselves the truth of these words: "Meditating on the mysteries of the most holy Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary, may we imitate what they contain and obtain what they promise."

The rosary appeals to many. It is simple. The constant repetition of words helps create an atmosphere in which to contemplate the mysteries of God. We sense that Jesus and Mary are with us in the joys and sorrows of life. We grow in hope that God will bring us to share in the glory of Jesus and Mary forever.

Indeed, the purpose of the rosary is to help us meditate on the great mysteries



PMI Prayer

of our salvation. Pope Pius XII called it a compendium of the gospel. The main focus is on Jesus – his birth, life, death and resurrection. The ‘Our Father’ reminds us that Jesus’ Father is the initiator of salvation. The ‘Hail Mary’ reminds us to join with Mary in contemplating these mysteries. They also make us aware that Mary was and is intimately joined with her Son in all the mysteries of his earthly and heavenly existence. The ‘Glory Be’ reminds us that the purpose of all life is the glory of the Trinity.

My dear faithful in Jesus Christ, let us now take a strong resolution that we will strengthen our lives under the watchful providence and protection of the Holy Rosary. The head of the serpent can be crushed only by the power of the Holy Eucharist – the first weapon – that fills the tabernacle of our immaculate hearts and by the recitation of the Holy Rosary – the second weapon – which is ten times more powerful than the atom bomb. Thus, recite the rosary with great devotion. It is certain that the head of Satan will be crushed.

David’s Prayer for Discernment

Rev Dr Francis Kodiyan MCBS

In the first book of Samuel we find a beautiful prayer practiced by David the king. This is nothing but a personal dialogue or discussion with God who dwells within oneself. David’s custom was to consult God before he went for a mission or before he did an important thing. For instance, when David was informed that the Philistines were fighting against Keilah, he consulted with the LORD, “Shall I go and attack these Philistines?” The LORD said to David, “Go and attack the Philistines and save

Keilah.” But David’s men said to him, “Look we are afraid here in Judah; how much more then if we go to Keilah against the armies of the Philistines?” Then David inquired of the LORD again. The LORD answered him, “Yes, go down to Keilah; for I will give the Philistines into your hand.” David and his men went to Keilah, fought with the Philistines, brought away their livestock, and dealt them a heavy defeat (1 Sam 23, 1-5).

At times David used ephod, a sleeveless garment worn by Jewish priests for oracular practices and priestly ritual, to know the will of God. For instance, when David learned that Saul was plotting evil against him, he said to the priest Abiathar, “Bring the ephod here.” David prayed, “O LORD, the God of Israel, your servant has heard that Saul seeks to come to Keilah, to destroy the city on my account. And now, will Saul come down as your servant has heard? O LORD, the God of Israel, I beseech you, tell your servant.” The LORD said, “He will come down.” Then David asked, “Will the men of Keilah surrender me and my men into the hand of Saul?” The LORD said, “They will surrender you.” Then David and his men set out and left Keilah; when Saul was told that David had escaped from Keilah, he gave up the expedition (1 Sam 23, 9-13).

Through these prayers David was practicing the art of discernment of the spirits which would be very beneficial in PMI ministries. As this is an art, through practice we can attain it and become experts in it. Instead of the Old Testament Ephod we have the Holy Bible, gifts of the Holy Spirit, superiors, spiritual mentors, and ecclesiastical authorities. This consultation with the Lord, listening the command of God or knowing the plan of God and executing it at any cost is core to the PMI ministries. Let us try our best to reach this goal beginning with the consultation or dialogue with the Lord within us. Spiritual life means our friendship with Jesus and friendship deepens along with our dialogues, conversations and consultations. This method of discussing, listening, discerning and implementing the will of God is very significant in PMI.

Chhattisgarh State PMI Report

July 2019 to March 2020

Sr Joy Panikulam SCC

Background

In 2018, the PMI State Coordinator Fr Arvind SJ was transferred, and Fr Theodor Kujur took over as state coordinator. But gradually, as Fr Theodor's work and responsibilities expanded, he was unable to continue. In this context, we informed the need of a state coordinator to Fr Wilfred Fernandes, the PMI central region coordinator and Fr Francis Kodiyan MCBS, the national coordinator. On 9 September they convened a state online conference and elected Fr Alexander Ekka SJ from Raipur as the new PMI state coordinator of Chhattisgarh. This report was presented at the meeting on 9 September 2020.

Location

Ambikapur

Raigarh

Raipur

Durg Central jail

Bilaspur

Jagadalpur

Kanker

Jashpur

Coordinator

Fr Peter

Sr Jwala CTC

Fr Ponnur

Fr Joby V

Sr Reeta OSF

Fr Thomas Muppathilchira VG

Fr Jimmy Vadakan

Fr Sergius Kindo

Ambikapur

Fr Peter is the coordinator of Ambikapur diocese. He works in collaboration with the different congregations. We have a program in the ladies' section on Saturdays along with counselling and moral teaching. In the male section, we hold programs only on special days like Christmas and Easter. Any celebration is held in conjugation with Holy Mass, Confession, etc. On PMI Sunday, we have a grand celebration, along with gifts. We celebrate Deepavali and Women's Day grandly. We gave the women's section two sewing machines donated by Holy Cross School and the men's section three computers sponsored by the Holy Cross Women's College Ambikapur. For Christmas, we distributed blankets, shawls and saris to the women and sweaters and dresses for their children. Additionally, towels have been distributed in the gents' section and among the juveniles. For Juveniles Day, we gave a notebook and pen to each student. Moreover, we visit juveniles each week to provide counselling and moral teaching. Currently, Ambikapur is looked after well. We were ready to release some prisoners before the Corona outbreak which has now been put on hold due to the lockdown. We are trying to release some more prisoners including a priest who has been in jail for seven and a half years. In Ambikapur, we conducted an eye camp. 200 prisoners had eye check-ups and spectacles could only be given to 50 of the inmates. The Superintendent, Mr Gaikwad is



Report

helpful and cooperative, making it conducive to work. Spiritual services such as Way of the Cross, penitential service, confession, washing of the feet, etc. done on Good Friday, Holy Mass on Christmas and Easter were very meaningful only in a few jails. PMI Day, Children's Day and Women's Day were celebrated in Bilaspur Jail. We visit the female section every week and have appointed one tailoring teacher. The female and male sections only permit visitors on special occasions like Christmas and Easter. We visit and celebrate Holy Mass and offer Confessions. Deepavali and Prison Ministry Sunday are celebrated with great joy and happiness. Volunteers teach English and Maths to prisoners' children from K.G. to 12th standard. A dental camp was organized for 50 persons. We provided library books for their library. In 2018, we assisted with the release of 62 prisoners. They visit the juveniles to teach them English, moral class and conduct entertainment programs. However, since my return from Bilaspur, the authorities have not permitted PMI volunteers entry into the Juvenile Homes.

Durg Jail

Fr Joby, with FC sisters, visit the jail on special days. The authorities have not yet permitted PMI a weekly program. On special occasions like Christmas, entertainment programs and gifts are permitted but not Holy Mass. PMI is not permitted entry into the women's section.

Jagdalpur

There is a lot of enthusiasm from the priests and sisters, but the superintendent has not granted permission. We were allowed in only once with permission from the Collector for a Christmas Mass. However, we are more successful with the Juvenile home. We can enter weekly and conduct programs for them. We can also conduct programs on special occasions like Juveniles Day and give gifts as well.

Raigarh District Jail

Sr Jwala is the coordinator. She has arranged a PMI group that goes only on special occasions like Christmas, PMI Day, Diwali, and Women's day. PMI conducts entertainment programs and gives gifts to male and female prisoners. We also try to release prisoners and arrange money for their release. While there is a juvenile home, we do not yet have permission for entry.

Jashpur

Fr Sergius, with permission from the bishop, has accommodation and has set up a PMI office. He also attended the Online PMI course for 15 days. He has good knowledge of PMI. He is very enthusiastic and has a good rapport with the jail authorities. He is trying to convince them that he is willing to make arrangements for the release of some prisoners. He has prepared a team of priests and nuns, but due to the lockdown things have come to a standstill. In the past, the team had been visiting on special occasions like Christmas, Deepavali etc. Currently, the team is trying to collect money for the release of prisoners. They occasionally provide food to the prisoners as well as clothes.

Kanker Sub Jail

Fr Francis and Sister Jismy visit on special occasions like Christmas, Deepavali etc. They had celebrated Christmas Mass at the jail, thanks to the cooperation of the Collector. On all special occasions, they provide prisoners with things as needed.

The Unforgettable Prison Ministry at Bellevaux, France

Introduction

St. Jeanne Antide is the foundress of Sisters of Charity and the reorganizer of the Prison in Bellevaux, France. In these few pages of writing let's see the extraordinary work of mercy done by this ordinary woman and her companions. Before beginning to talk about her courage of Charity, let's have a brief look into the journey of her life.

A Brief History

Jeanne Antide was born on 27th November 1765 in France, she was the fifth among the eight siblings. Jeanne François was her father and Jeanne Claude Labbe was her mother. Her mother was feeble in health and she was bedridden for four long years and passed away when Jeanne Antide was just sixteen years old. As a young girl, she searched for a way that would give meaning to her life and believed that it was important to respond to God's will for her. At 22 she left her home and joined the Daughters of Charity, a congregation at the service of the poor founded by St. Vincent de Paul in Paris.

As the French Revolution dissolved all the Religious Congregations she had to turn back to her native place. But her ardent desire to commit herself to Christ and her religious vocation, made her to go to Switzerland to join a different religious itinerant community, Solitaires, where she cared for the sick. Here too the Revolution made the group of Solitaires to travel across Switzerland Germany, and Austria. The group had taken an oath to go to Jerusalem.

But in the travel Jeanne Antide realized that this was not her vocation and she decided to return to France. She did so on foot, alone,



Sr Sheema SOC

without a passport and through unknown places at the risk of her own life. She passed through the Mary's sanctuary of Einsiedeln, Switzerland. She wished to continue her life there being in the footsteps of Mary but during a confession the priest told her to go back to her country and to evangelize the poor. Thus, she continued her travel and reached the village of Landeron, Switzerland. It was there the representatives from the dioceses of Besançon, priests in exile, requested her to continue to France and take in young girls whom she should train in the same way she was trained. Accepting their call, Jeanne Antide returned to Besançon, France to teach children and to care for the sick. In 1799 April 11th, she opened a school, a dispensary, and a soup kitchen for the poor in Besançon. She had found a new congregation!

In 1810 Madame Letizia, mother of Napoleon Bonaparte, asked Jeanne Antide to expand the congregation to Naples, Italy. There she and a group of sisters faced working in a very hierarchical social system where the wealthy never encountered the poor. She was in charge of the Hospital of the Incurables, the largest hospital in the city. The sisters often visited the poor and sick in their homes. In 1819, the Pope approved the Rule, the book she used to organize her congregation and the life of the women who had followed her. Jeanne Antide died in Naples in 1826. In 1934, she was canonized

by Pope Pius IX.

The Context of the Mission at Bellevaux

Bellevaux was a prison in France. It might to be a workshop of the poor, but even before the outbreak of the Revolution, it had become a degraded and dangerous den, housing all types from the fringes of society. Gathered within the walls of the ancient abbey were beggars, thieves, and prostitutes. Nobody from Besançon dared to wander through the neighborhood after the dark. The Citizen's Revolutionary Committee had tried to transform Bellevaux into the house of correction and justice, a prison for thieves and murderers, from hell to purgatory. But it was not practically possible due to the category of the inmates.

When Jean Debry, the prefect of Besançon, found himself with the problem of the Bellevaux in his hand he thought of the sisters. He thought that the sisters would be able to succeed with their humble generosity to win the heart of the inmates. The duty to reorganize the Prison was given to the Sisters of Charity in 1802. When they requested to work in the prison the answer of the Mother Jeanne Antide was a prompt yes.

During the entrance of the Soup Sisters in the Prison of Bellevaux on 23rd September 1802 the authorities warned the prisoners, "if you dare to harm them, the punishment will be terrible". The nuns would have preferred a completely different welcome, more personal, and reserved.

The Salient Features of Prison Ministry

- **Availability:** When the authorities requested to take up the renovation of the prison, she did not have even an instant of thought, she responded promptly 'Yes'. It shows her availability and dares towards the service to the poor.

- **Service began at once:** After taking up the in charge of the mission there was no delay of time, immediately they started to clean and keep the things in order.
- **Actions speak faster than words:** They started to do everything as a first-person so that some inmates (women of the prison) joined with them in cleaning. Self-service worked well.
- **Occupation reduces preoccupation:** Mother reorganizes the life of inmate by giving them the cotton to work.
- **Organization:** prison was organized well: they got money of their work and also good food. Mother was well known for the organization since her heart was filled with compassion for the poor.
- **Tender mother and corrective father:** She never dare to punish the people who refused to work and collaborate. But always tenderness was with her. Thus, she takes into consideration all the sufferings that was inside the prison and inside of the person.
- **Vigilance and Prudence:** She was very prudent with the inmates and vigilant in keeping them on watching.
- **Transparency:** She was very clear as crystal in her service, accounts, and her conscience too. She never dared to do or think something that brings harm to the persons.
- **Prayer:** She organized moments of prayer and invited priest for the Holy Eucharist which gave solace to the prisoners.

Conclusion

Even amid the insecurities St. Jeanne Antide responds to the signs of the time. After the revolution, the moral life of the persons was very down due to the loss of many things. But courageous work of Charity of Mother Jeanne Antide and her companions brought back many souls into the way of salvation. Let's learn from them.



IL Risveglio - The Reawakening

Awake and Arise, Christ will Shine on
You (Eph 5:14)

Sr Lini Sheeja MSC

Introduction

Prison Ministry India national team conducted an online retreat for 90 volunteers on 13-19 September 2020. The purpose of the retreat was the renewal of the PMI volunteers before the renewal of our brethren behind the bars. It was a moment of blessing as we began the retreat with the Eucharistic adoration. Every morning at 10.00 am the retreat commenced with praise and worship followed by the Holy Eucharist with inspiring homilies by Fr Francis Kodiyan. This was followed by an hour of talk by erudite and experienced resource persons. Every evening at 5.30 pm, we began with Rosary followed by Divine Mercy Chaplet, an evening talk and concluded with the Holy Hour.

Welcome Address

Fr Francis Kodiyan MCBS, the national coordinator, in his welcome address gave a brief introduction on how to derive optimum benefit from this online retreat and inspired the participants with the 6 T's - introduction, invitation, introspection, investigation, insight and innovation. As Jesus was a man of prayer, He invites PMI volunteers to plunge into deep spiritual life. This retreat was an opportunity to enter into the depth of our hearts to know the Master and to renew our PMI vocation.

Inaugural Mass

The inaugural mass was celebrated by Most Rev Dr Peter Machado, the archbishop of Bengaluru. The Holy Eucharist was celebrated for the fulfilment of the intentions of the brethren behind the

bars, their families, and PMI volunteers all over India. The Archbishop emphasised the profound meaning and the value of carrying the cross for the sake of the lost ones behind the bars in the hearts of the retreatants.

God's Love

Most Rev Dr Allwyn D'Silva, the PMI Chairman delivered his talk on 'God's Love'. His message on God's love was quite different as he asked the volunteers to recall their personal experience of being loved by God. "One cannot understand God's love unless one experiences it personally. The deepest need of a human being is to be loved and the greatest liberation is to know and experience divine love. The moment you are convinced of divine love we will be able to love the ones who are entrusted to us."

Jesus's Love

Fr Varghese Karipperry, PMI cofounder gave an inspiring note on Jesus' love based on his personal encounter with Jesus, who willingly went up to the cross for the redemption of mankind. Jesus was with the people, the marginalised, the poor and the lost ones. The human methodology is to go with the 99 or 95, but the methodology of Jesus is going after one, the failed one, the lost one. Let our methodology be that of Jesus. Though we may not get results initially, let us never give up our methodology of focusing on the failed one.

Holy Spirit

On 15 September 2020, the morning talk was delivered by Fr Wilfred Fernandes, the PMI central regional coordinator. In today's terminology, the Holy Spirit is like a GPS whose battery never goes down on us. He knows everything. He is the memory of

God. 'Being led' means living according to Jesus' teaching. He is our advocate, our counsellor, helper etc. The three basic truths of the Holy Spirit are, He is all-powerful, He is wise, He is everywhere.

Holy Eucharist

Mar Tony Neelankavil, the auxiliary bishop of Thrissur, began his talk on the Holy Eucharist saying that prison ministry always confirmed his vocation. Whenever there was confusion within his mind, he was strengthened and felt that the people required him and his service. The Eucharist brings us close to God and prisoners. The mystery of death and passion in the Holy Eucharist is close to people's suffering. Our God shares and takes part in our suffering. Eucharist is just not a memorable event that took place 2000 years ago, but it is a reality.

PMI Virtues

On 16 September 2020, the morning talk was delivered by Sr Inigo SSA, the former superior general and the PMI volunteer at Tihar Prison, Delhi. She challenged the retreatants as her every word was based on her experience with the brethren behind the bars. Jesus prayed in two ways "mountain prayer", where he went all by himself and prayed and "multitude prayer" where he was with the people. We need to follow the path of the mystic if we want to be missionaries and therefore prayer is the most important aspect of Prison Ministry. Prison ministry is not social work; it is a mission, an ethical and spiritual mission.

Mother Mary

Honourable Justice Kurian Joseph, former Supreme Court Judge, spoke on Mother Mary. We celebrated the Feast of Seven Sorrows of Mother Mary. But prisoners may have 70 sorrows. Prison Ministry is not

a service. It is a ministry. The disciples of Jesus did not do service, they did ministry and it is to be continued. The first Christian is Mary and she is the tabernacle of Jesus. When he had many ups and downs in his profession, and the storm was rough, he had recourse to Mother Mary. The most significant virtues of Mother Mary are humility and holiness. One cannot do this ministry unless one has simplicity and humility. Mother Mary is present in prisons together with her son Jesus.

PMI Mission

On 17 September 2020, Fr Alexander Kureekattil CMF moved the hearts of the retreatants as he poured his experiences with released prisoners in rehabilitation centres. Quoting Mother Theresa's, 'Open your eyes in front of your home', he challenged PMI volunteers to serve and care for the people around us. We need not travel far but look around in our area for which your eyes need to be opened. "Unless you have communion with God, you cannot have union with the prisoners".

PMI Vocation

Fr Sebastian Vadakumpadan, the former PMI national coordinator, affirmed that prison ministry is a call within a call. He congratulated all the dedicated PMI volunteers who allowed themselves to be restricted for a cause. At the Sea of Galilee, Jesus called Peter, John, James and Andrew (Lk 5:1). The first miracle of catching fish and the last fish-catching after the resurrection took place at this sea. There is a 'smell of call'.

Sin and Repentance

On 18 September 2020, Fr Sebastian Thekkanath, the former PMI national coordinator spoke on sin and repentance. We render our service to a group of

people who are branded as sinners or about whom we think of as them having to repent their sins because they were caught in wrong actions and accused of such actions. Prisoners are wounded people, isolated people, psychologically distressed, depressed people with grudges, and nobody believes them, and they are to be treated in a special way.

The Sacrament of Reconciliation

Fr John Ponnore from the diocese of Raipur spoke on the sacrament of reconciliation. Sin is poison. Poison spreads. In the prisons, we meet people who have been wounded and are hence vulnerable. If PMI volunteers are not transparent/pure as crystal, the sin in them can affect the prisoners. Hence the need for PMI volunteers to take confession seriously and to do it more often. Confession is a mirror through which we can see our inside, see the dirt inside us and when we accept them, the Lord cleanses them through his blood. Feel sorry for our sins, cry out to Him for forgiveness and healing. Feel His arms around us as He waits for our return as the father waited for the return of the prodigal son.

Renewed Life

On 19 September 2020, Most Rev Dr Allwyn D'Silva, the PMI chairman enlightened the retreatants on 'Renewed Life'. As we had listened to several talks during this retreat it was time to examine ourselves as we were at the end of our retreat. Talks are like chewing gum. Chew them and examine yourself. Let us ask ourselves, what treasure do we carry away from these past few days. The first treasure is the realisation of what we are and what we have is a gift of God. Yahweh is telling us, we are precious. Experience that we are God's gifts. The moment we realise that we are God's gifts we learn that others too are the gifts of God.

Call to be a Blessing to the Broken Beings

At the concluding talk, Sr Lini Sheeja MSC, former PMI national secretary invited the volunteers to be a blessing to the broken beings. She reminded the retreatants of the begging style as she said, 'Feel blessed to beg'. Prison ministry is a continuous struggle undertaken for our brethren behind the bars and this struggle is expressed by our begging lifestyle. Why do we follow this lifestyle? The reason is very simple – it touches the hearts of our inmates in the rehabilitation centres. We beg to make them kings and queens. Let our attitude be, they are the kings and queens and we are the servants.

Inner Healing

This last session of the retreat was the time for Inner Healing, which was led by Rev Fr Jose Vettiyankal VC, the director of Logos Retreat Centre Bangalore. Father Jose prayerfully led all into this healing session with his talk on Inner Healing. Moses put a piece of wood in bitter water; it was changed into sweet water. Similarly, the power of the cross can change all our bitter memories and experiences into sweet ones. Imagine that white rays are radiating from the cross to our hearts, where all the bitterness is stored up. These powerful rays bring the inner healing that we need.

Final Blessing

The inner healing talk was followed by the Eucharistic adoration wherein Fr Jose invoked God's blessings and protection over the retreatants. It was a moment of grace and heavenly experience as everyone was gazing at the Eucharistic Master pleading for His healing touch. The retreat was concluded with the blessing of the Most Holy Eucharist.

Marie Poussepin's Girls Home

The Origin

Marie Poussepin's Girls Home is an initiative of the Dominican Sisters of the Presentation in Ranchi, Jharkhand for prisoners' girl children. The Home is named after our Foundress Bl. Marie Poussepin. Our congregation was founded in 1696 in a place called Sainville, France by Bl. Marie Poussepin who was very keen to be a Dominican. We came to Ranchi in 2006 and while working with the Prison Ministry India, we became aware of the need to reach out to the children of the incarcerated and designed a home for them.

Option for Prisoner's Children

Children of prisoners are one of the most vulnerable and yet ignored categories of children. They are silent victims of incarceration. Parental imprisonment results in lasting and serious negative effects on the children. They suffer from separation anxiety, expressed through self-isolation, erratic behavioural patterns and sleep disorders, as well as displays of aggression and excessive anger. They experience other emotional problems, including feelings of fear, abandonment, lack of coping ability, shame and guilt. It is coupled with an increased risk of lower academic performance. Their emotional, mental and physical growth is at stake. The absence of parents deprives the children of parental love, care, protection, guidance, and emotional as well as financial support.

The Beginnings

The matter of setting up a home for such children was discussed in the meeting of PMI. Looking at how Marie Poussepin rose to the challenge at hand we decided to take up the challenge and present it to the authorities. All those present in the meeting gave positive nod to the proposed idea. The proposal was



Sr Jini Joseph OP

presented to our provincial team as well as to the Cardinal of the Archdiocese of Ranchi. After looking into the matter very seriously and prayerfully, permission was granted to start a home for the female progeny of prisoners. Meanwhile, we also visited the Women and Children Welfare Department and got acquainted with the staff. The names and addresses of eligible children were collected quietly from Hotwar Prison Ranchi. Since we were keen to take the neediest among those we had shortlisted and visited, eight children were chosen on priority. Marie Poussepin's Girls Home began its existence on 7 April 2017 and a few months later it was affiliated to the Prison Ministry India. There are eight children in the age group of 8 to 15 from different parts of Jharkhand.

The Ethos of Marie Poussepin's Girls Home

This home is an arrangement whereby a child lives, usually temporarily, with an extended or unrelated member, as a family. Such an arrangement ensures that birth parents do not lose any of their parental rights or responsibilities. This arrangement is for children whose one or both parents are incarcerated and are vulnerable and deprived. The aim is to eventually reunite the child with her own family when the family circumstances improve.

Vision: To provide a home-away-from-home for the integral growth of the children.

Mission: Foster human dignity in the vulnerable and disadvantaged girls and to assist them to actualise their potentialities to live a dignified life.

Our main objectives are:

1. To provide immediate shelter, care and protection to girls, especially of the prisoners.
2. To provide a homely environment as these children do not have a proper experiential understanding of home.
3. To provide psycho-social and emotional support to enable them to grow up as integrated and balanced children as they have gone through tremendous negligence and social stigma.
4. To provide quality education.
5. To provide healthcare, emotional security, and make their childhood and school years pleasant and memorable.
6. To provide skills and training to the children to help them to face life with confidence.
7. To enable the children to participate in extracurricular activities to help them grow as future leaders by infusing confidence and courage.
8. To rehabilitate the girl children who are going through a lot of social stigmas.
9. To provide legal assistance against exploitation.
10. To promote economic independence and self-reliance.

The functioning of Marie Poussepin's Girls Home

Admission to the Girls Home is restricted to children between 5-18 years of age. Our criterion for the selection of the girl child is that they should be at a serious disadvantage. The children of prisoners who are in touch with us in prisons do get preference. They will stay in the children's home until their basic education (class X) is complete. The maximum number of children admitted to each care home during the year will not exceed more than eight. We aim to complete the education of these children up to Matriculation in the first phase.

If there is a need, the child may be promoted to the second phase of education i.e. either vocational training or higher education. This would be done in liaison with other NGOs, agencies or even PMI. Finally, the child will be rehabilitated in the community where she prefers to live. We also leave the option open for those children who or whose parents want to discontinue at this home.

To achieve the above-noted objectives we are financially supported by our province. We get legal help from priests and religious lawyers. We also avail psychological help from the state government-run psychiatric hospital RINPAS. At present, the children with us are studying at the St Mary's Girls Middle School/ Anitha Girls High School run by the Sisters of St Anne's of Ranchi. This fosters collaboration among different religious congregations.

Conclusion

In the opinion of Jeb Bush, American politician and humanitarian, "Education must be viewed from the lens of providing each child with the learning environment that best meets his or her needs". We can get the blossoming meadows only when the environment for the growth of the plants is conducive. The same thing happens to children when they are provided with a positive learning environment. It is human nature to work better when appreciated and valued, and the young minds thrive when their environment resonates that. We take every effort to provide an atmosphere conducive for the children by accepting, valuing and loving them. By employing different methods and strategies, the best in the children are brought out. We strive to accomplish the ideals we have set for ourselves in running this Home. We too say with St. Paul, "Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been perfected, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me" (Phil 3:12).



Prominence of Prison Ministry in Seminary Formation

Introduction

Prison ministry in different seminaries is an inspiring moment for brothers during their priestly formation. I am happy to tell you that at present, Jesus Fraternity units are effectively functioning at seven different major seminaries in Kerala. It is a wonderful opportunity to do mission service in a specific manner. Jail visit in different areas helps the seminarians to have a foretaste of pastoral ministry in the future. Prison Ministry is encouraging, useful, precious and helpful for the spiritual and mental nourishment of seminarians. Though it is a missionary activity, the seminarians get involved in this with a different and merciful vision. They show the merciful face of God to prisoners. They find firm faith in the words of Jesus, "When I was in prison you visited me."

The Role of Seminarians in Executing the Three 'R' Theory

We know the focus point of prison ministry is release, renewal and rehabilitation of prisoners. 1) Release: It is an act by which a prisoner is freed by the government. 2) Renewal: It means strengthening the person in a new life with the help of the Holy Spirit. 3) Rehabilitation: Leading the prisoner to normal social life by training in/through different stages. The seminarians deal with these three aspects by mediation. Firstly, they pray for the prisoners that they achieve their transformation through spiritual empowerment. Secondly, they guide them with the power of fraternal love. Thirdly they guide them to renewal centres according to



Fr Joseph Mackolil

the will of God. Prison ministry is a call within a call to become something to someone.

Prayer Services for the Prisoners

Prayer is most precious, for it nourishes one's daily commitment to love. 'Gaudium et Spes' explains, "Our worship becomes pleasing to God when we devote ourselves to living generously and allow God's gift, granted in prayer, to be shown in our concern for our brothers and sisters" (GE, 104). Receiving inspiration from this vision, the seminarians find time to spend more time in front of the blessed sacrament and pray for the conversion of prisoners. They conduct chain prayer, Jericho prayer, Torpedo prayer and other prayer gatherings for the betterment of the ministry. As St. John Paul II said, "If we truly start out anew from the contemplation of Christ, we must learn to see him specially in the faces of those with whom he himself wishes to be identified."

Prison Ministry: Activities and Services

The academic curriculum of the seminary includes programs of prison ministry. Let us have a look at them.

Fasting Prayer

The seminarians fast once in a week and they dedicate that time for prayer services. They pray for the prisoners and their family. They also pray for the conversion and transformation of prisoners. It is important, moreover, to pray for the smooth functioning

of the prison ministry. All these elements are included in their spiritual activities especially in the prayer services. Our tiny daily sacrifices, which we offer together with the daily Holy Qurbana for the reformation of the lost become a very effective means to transform the hardened mind of criminals.

Prison Pilgrimages

We do not use the term 'jail visit' in a simplified way. Instead, we say 'pilgrimage to the prison'. Seminarians consider jail visit as a pilgrimage to see the face of Jesus behind the bars. They conduct this pilgrimage weekly, monthly, annually and also during their vacation. Occasions like Christmas and Easter become events to share the love of Jesus with the marginalised and separated. They do perform penitential activities like begging to humble themselves to prepare for this pilgrimage. During the time of pilgrimage, they spend some days in the renewal centres for prisoners and they work, pray and eat with them.

Art & Literary Competitions

The seminarians conduct many competitions for the prisoners before they visit and distribute prizes during the visit. These occasions help them to realise their hidden talents. These include short-story writing, poetry, cartoon, drawing etc. Publications are the best medium to popularise the activities of prison ministry. They provide an invitation to the people to partake in the activities of the Prison Ministry. These programs focus on the education and transformation of prisoners.

Visiting the Houses of the Prisoners and Renewal Centres

Pope Francis called on the world's priests to bring the healing power of God's grace to everyone in need, to stay close to the marginalised and to be "shepherds living with the smell of the sheep." Like the good shepherd who searches for the least, the last and the lost, the seminarians visit the houses of prisoners and encourage them towards a

better future. They distribute small gifts and aid them financially which helps to meet their day-to-day needs.

Special Effects of Pilgrimage for the Renewal of Prisoners

Experience is the primary effect of prison ministry. Jesus Fraternity (PMI) takes up the challenge of fighting against the moral degradation of human society and has great success. Among those imprisoned, there are even innocent people who were cheated and mistakenly or intentionally accused and condemned of crime. The members of Jesus Fraternity impart the message of love, peace and harmony and give them friendship and company. This way of relating to the imprisoned inspires the prisoners and help them to transform to begin a reformed lifestyle. Jesus Fraternity members take radical measures for the sinners and the lost and developed this adventurous and revolutionary ministry of reaching out to the least of the society. This is the dynamic, action-oriented lifestyle of Jesus, instead of a comfortable armchair ministry, or the traditional presbytery centred ministry. Pope Benedict XVI explained in his first encyclical 'Deus Caritas Est': "Jesus identifies himself with those in need, with the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, the naked, the sick and those in prison". "As you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me" (Mt 25: 40).

Conclusion

The significant features of the Prison ministry can be divided into two, such as Jesus-centred and people-oriented. We need the blessings of God as well as the cooperation of people. For this, we have to utilise the best methodology for the application of our ideas. It leads to the reformation of prisoners as well as society. Finally, we can say that it is a ministry of hope both for the inmates and the volunteers.

Behind Bars: Prison Tales of India's Most Famous

Sunetra Choudhury

Fr Rajendrakumar

The book, *Behind Bars*, begins with Amar Singh's experience at Tihar Jail. The book, through the stories of 13 prisoners, chronicles life inside Indian jails. It narrates the life of men, women, a transgender, and a juvenile prisoner. Through their experiences, it gives a peek into the various facets of prison – toilets full of shit, over-crowded cells, custodial torture, and the varied defence mechanisms that prisoners develop to survive incarceration. While some seek solace in prayers, others do so in writing, teaching, and spiritual internalisation.

Behind Bars has a list of celebrity case studies, from Indian politicians like Amar Singh, A. Raja and Pappu Yadav, the controversial arms dealer Abhishek Verma and his supermodel Romanian wife, Anca, to the former Star TV CEO Peter Mukherjee, who is currently an undertrial in Mumbai's Arthur Road jail for his step-daughter's murder.

Behind Bars shares the experiences of people in Indian prisons, especially the rich VIPs who feel it as a mild impediment excluding the few humiliations, while the poor suffer in obscurity for years. From Anca's request for Mochi Wedges Sandal, Kobad Ghandy's description of Afzal Guru, Amar Singh's displeasure towards his once friends, the rape of a Transgender in a police station to the torture of the weak by a team once led by a martyred national hero, we see the complex world inside the penitentiary.

This book gives insight into the lives of prisoners from different backgrounds, charged for different crimes and serving their different jail terms. The book consists of short stories based on the lives of the prisoners during their jail term and importantly focuses on the crime they actually committed. Some stories will make you cry, some will make you angry and you may feel wretched. This book gives us an understanding of the loopholes in the judicial system, government policies, police stations, etc. The author's shock at the intrigue and inequality in life within Indian prisons is very evident. For wealthy and influential politicians, prisons are like resorts. One can buy any favour by bribing the authorities.

A medley of custodial stories of the powerful, the poor, the marginalised, and the marginalising, each story is presented in a very dramatic manner. It makes sure that the reader is introduced to the back story of how the accused/under-trial/prisoner ended up there, going into their lives inside the prison and then the present life. It narrates the violent details of torture and unlawfulness going on inside our country's houses of reformation. The book is an inspiring one forcing the reader to contemplate on why this is happening, even though no individual, police personnel, politician, or society at large wants this to continue.

The author has interacted first-hand with prisoners, asked difficult questions and has managed to gain an appreciable insight into their jail stint. Through the many cases, she has successfully established how prisons are far more comfortable for the rich, that money can buy comfort in a cramped cell, and that a VIP inmate need not compromise on his/her air conditioning and butter chicken even when s/he is clapped in irons - not that they are ever clapped in irons.



Book Releasing of Fr Mathew Puthiyedath, Pala



Bishop Mar Jose Pulickal's Talk during the First Burning Bush Program



Renovated Snehashramam Thrissur



PMI Online Retreat September, 2020



PMI Retreat Souvenir Release by Most Rev Allwyn D'silva



Reception to Sr Basil SCS & Farewell to Sr Gertrude SCS

PMI ONLINE RETREAT IL RISVEGLIO – THE REAWAKENING



"Awake and Arise, Christ will shine on you" Eph 5:14



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