



PRISON VOICE

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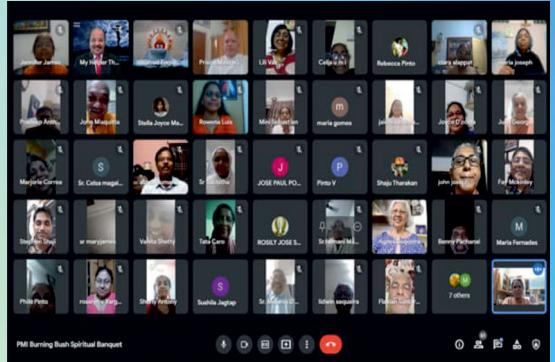
Renew My Church



**Farewell Gift to Welfare Officer,
Trivandrum Women Prison**



**Foundation Stone Blessing of PMI
National Office Annex, Bangalore**



Burning Bush Spiritual Banquet October 2021



**Hearty Congratulations to Faustina
and Doni Who Tied Knot at Jeevodaya**



**Mar Jose Pulickal Blessing the PMI Ruby
Jubilee House for Mrs Alphy Johnson**



**PMI Pune Volunteers Appreciating
Government for Reducing the Working
Hours of Women Police**



**PMI Volunteers Congratulating the New
Superintendent at Yerwada Central
Prison, Pune**

Contents



PRISON VOICE

NATIONAL MONTHLY

"Jesus said to him, "If you wish to be perfect, go, sell your possessions, and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me" (Mt 19,21).



Editor's View.....	04
National Coordinator's Desk.....	05
St Francis Assisi: A Universal Brother.....	07
Prayer For PMI National Conference.....	09
Life After 44 Years in Prison.....	10
Locked as Chain Gang.....	12
Mercedarians.....	14
Sacred Heart Brothers.....	16
PMI Central Regional Meeting.....	18
From a World behind Walls.....	20
PMI Madhya Pradesh.....	21
PMI Mangalore.....	22
PMI Aurangabad.....	23
Listen to Your Gut Feeling.....	24
The Church is Built.....	26
13th PMI National Conference Spiritual Preparation.....	28

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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THE POWER OF THE HOLY ROSARY

Dear Volunteers, the greatest weapon to fight against evil, crime and sin is the Holy Rosary. The practice of dedicating the entire month of October to the Holy Rosary developed toward the end of 19th century. Pope Leo XIII (papacy: 1878-1903) strongly promoted the increase of devotion to the Blessed Mother by encouraging the constant use of the Rosary, saying, "The Rosary is a means given by the Virgin to contemplate Jesus and in meditating on his life; we love him and follow him ever more faithfully. It is this message that Our Lady has also bequeathed to us in her various apparitions."

St Dominic

Most of us are familiar with the tradition that goes back many centuries, and which has been accepted in the writings of many popes referring to the connection of St Dominic with the beginnings of the devotion to the Rosary. According to tradition, the occasion was the Albigensian heresy which ravaged Christendom, particularly in southern France during the latter part of the 12th and the beginning of the 13th centuries. St Dominic was distressed at his lack of success in his preaching for countering this heresy, and in his desperation turned to the Mother of God for help. She appeared to him and told him to use her Psalter in conjunction with his preaching of the mysteries of our salvation, as an instrument in combatting the great heresy of his day. Thus began the devotion to the Rosary.

St Francis Assisi

In the summer of 1215, St Francis and a small group of friars were in Rome seeking approbation for his Rule. One night while Francis was praying, he saw Our Lord



Sr Amala DC
Chief Editor

prepared to unleash the most terrible chastisements upon the world. The Virgin Mary made an effort to placate Him, asking His mercy and forgiveness by presenting two men who would labour for the conversion of the world and return a countless number of lost sheep to the fold. Francis recognized himself as one of these apostles. In the Office of the Passion, however, St Francis combines devotion to both the Cross and the Blessed Mother, but his collage of scriptural passages and antiphons relating to the mysteries of the Holy Rosary, reflects many characteristics of his unique vision in which he saw Jesus and the Blessed Mother.

By the grace of God, we find a similar spirit in our co-founder Fr Francis who has also a great devotion to Mother Mary and his greatest weapon to achieve his dreams for the prisoners behind the bars is the Rosary. Within a short time, my eyes have witnessed his life of hard work and dedicated service to the prisoners, their children and their families. Dear Volunteers, such a life transformed by the power of the Rosary edifies us. It inspires us to do the same. How is God inviting you to be transformed by hearing the cry of the needy? Let us introspect and reflect how we can uplift the brethren behind the bars at this time of the pandemic and assist them in times of pain and despair? In this month of October, let us consider this beautiful prayer of the Rosary as a means that we too can use in order to draw closer to Jesus and Mary by meditating on the great mysteries of our salvation.



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INTERNATIONAL DAY OF EDUCATION IN PRISON

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Education is a Human Right

The right to education is enshrined in article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The declaration calls for free and compulsory elementary education. The Convention on the Rights of the Child, adopted in 1989, goes further to stipulate that countries shall make higher education accessible to all. Education offers children a ladder out of poverty and a path to a promising future. But about 265 million children and adolescents around the world do not have the opportunity to enter or complete school; 617 million children and adolescents cannot read and do basic maths; less than 40% of girls in sub-Saharan Africa complete lower secondary school and some four million children and young refugees are out of school. Their right to education is being violated and it is unacceptable. Without inclusive and equitable quality of education and lifelong opportunities for all, countries will not succeed in achieving gender equality and breaking the cycle of poverty that is leaving millions of children, youth and adults behind. Taking into consideration the above facts, Prison Ministry India takes extra care to educate prisoners and prisoners' children by providing them scholarships, establishing libraries in prisons and facilitating their enrolment in school and university exams.

UNESCO

UNESCO recognizes that education is a human right to which all people are entitled, regardless of their background or circumstances. The UNESCO Institute



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

for Lifelong Learning (UIL) has actively supported prison education since it led preparations for the Fifth International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA V) in 1997, putting prison education firmly on the agenda of the global education policy community. The UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) has been working on two publications on this important topic. The first, *Books Beyond Bars: The Transformative Potential of Prison Libraries*, by Lisa Krolak, has been published in English. There is a special issue of the *International Review of Education – Journal of Lifelong Learning*, entitled 'Education in prison: A basic right and an essential tool'.

Council of Europe

On 13 October 1989, the Council of Europe adopted a set of recommendations outlining the needs and responsibilities concerning the education of imprisoned persons in Europe. These recommendations stipulate that all imprisoned persons should be offered the opportunity to engage in educational activities and that these activities should serve to develop the whole person, be conducive to effective reintegration, and encourage a reduction in recidivism. These recommendations form



EDUCATION IN PRISON

the basis of the objectives of the European Prison Education Association, and have been ratified in the educational policies of a number of European countries.

The International Day of Education in Prison

The International Day of Education in Prison was created on 13 October 1989 to mark the 25th anniversary of the Council of Europe adopting a set of recommendations, outlining the needs and responsibilities concerning the education of imprisoned persons in Europe. The day is an important opportunity to highlight the benefits of prison education, to consider the barriers to it and reflect on how it can best be promoted. This day will be important in helping to maintain international awareness of the issues concerning prison education in an ever-changing world. We hope this day will serve to encourage activities and events within prisons, raising awareness of – and celebrating the successes of – educational work in prisons, but also to keep prison education an important issue amongst policy makers, ombudsmen and other critical stakeholders. This day will not only result in practical activities, promoting grass-roots participation by prisoners and educational professionals, but also foster symbolic support from major international organisations and further highlighting the importance of prison education at an international policy-making level.

Prison Ministry India

Prison Ministry India which celebrates its Ruby Jubilee can be proud of its contributions in educating prisoners and their children. In the last 40 years

PMI established innumerable libraries by providing thousands of books and shelves to many a prison. PMI volunteers all over India take extra care in facilitating prisoners to enrol in school and university as well as to take part in exams. PMI has more than 12 homes for the education of prisoners' children. PMI Ruby Jubilee Projects of 2021 includes 4 new Kolbe Homes and scholarships to 400 children. On 8 September 2021 Sindhudurg diocese blessed St Antony's Home for Prisoners' children. This home is under the care of the Holy Cross Sisters. On 20 November 2021 Gandhinagar Archdiocese will launch a new Kolbe home in Patan. SMMI sisters will take care of the children here. Snehadeepam at Kanjirapally and Kolbe Home in Bangalore are typical examples of educating prisoners' boy children. Asha Sadan in Noida, Premodaya in Bangalore, Karunya Ashramam in Kochi, Jeevan Jyothi at Anavilasam, Bonal Bhavan at Kasargod, Marie Pushpan's Home at Ranchi, and Ashakiran at Khunti are examples of educating the girl children of prisoners.

Conclusion

Studies consistently show that education in prison is an effective way of reducing the rates of recidivism, which saves the expense of future prison sentences. In the UK, it is estimated that every pound spent on prison education saves taxpayers more than two pounds, and in the US, the rate is four to five dollars saved for every dollar spent. Prison education reduces the financial and social costs of reoffending. It gives prisoners an opportunity to overcome disadvantage, to build new and different lives and to contribute fully to society. PMI volunteers are invited to celebrate with relevant programs the International Day of Education in prisons.



ST FRANCIS OF ASSISI: A UNIVERSAL BROTHER

Br Pradeep Anthony L OFM

Introduction

The present Epoch embraces 'Franciscan Spirituality' universally. It embraces the whole world in the sense that this spirituality fits exactly into the needs of the time. Pope Francis significantly calls out the spirituality of St Francis in his 'On Care for Our Common Home.' Pope Francis even in his recent encyclical, 'Fratelli Tutti' strongly points towards the direction of universal brotherhood. Our core identity is found in being human: brother and sister to one another, respecting each one's dignity, building and helping others. But often in our lives the danger lies in getting trapped in the roles that we play. The role indicates a particular task we do for some time such as, being a Provincial Superior, Manager, Team Leader, and President and so on. But we tend to lose our true selves i.e., being brother/ sister, as humans by identifying ourselves too closely with our roles. Each saint's stories are worth reflecting upon; they inspire us to imitate and get closer to Christ. St Francis of Assisi himself was clearly a victim, who was trapped in the roles he played. He realized this trap and started to serve the Lord after his imprisonment of almost a complete year in the civil war.

Historical Role of Franciscans

In brief, it is very essential to retrace the role of Franciscans in history. Franciscans played an important role in the Church by introducing an evangelical form of life in the 13th century, when monastic life took its highest form. By highest form we mean


to say that the monastic Church was very wealthy and opulent with political power and financial stability. Therefore, the peripheries of the society were neglected; in other words the least, last and lost were neglected. During this time, the evangelical life of the Franciscans was able to reach out to the peripheries of society through the Gospel way of life. Those in the peripheries in those times were the lepers, robbers, prisoners and all the downtrodden people. St Francis of Assisi is the outstanding proponent of this moment. His life attracted people from many walks of life. Thus, he established three orders namely: the first order meant for friars, then the second order meant for religious women, and the third order meant for lay people. St Roch belongs to the third order secular.

Early Life

St Francis of Assisi was born in 1181 in the city of Assisi, Italy. His father, Peter Bernardone was a rich merchant and mother, Monna Pica, who had come from a noble family. Thomas of Celano writes in his biography that Francis was a passionate youth, who was by nature cheerful and generous. However as a spendthrift he threw parties very often for his friends. He desired earnestly to be a troubadour and after that to be a Valiant Knight. However, once he had encountered God, his entire aspirations drifted from worldly glory to Divine Glory.

Imprisonment

The civil war that broke out between Perugia and Assisi in 1202 made St Francis a captive after the defeat of Assisi. His one-year imprisonment made him to be still, when he heard the voice of God. No wonder the word of God says: 'Be still, and know



that I am God' (Ps 46: 10). As it is said, the greatest journey one must make is not outside of one person but rather into one's own deeper self. This is what happened to St Francis during that one-year period of time. He pondered more on the word of God, reflected upon his own aspirations which completely turned to vanity and emptiness. What he considered as great at one time seemed nothing to him later; be it a troubadour or a Valient Knight. After one year, he was given a huge ransom by his Father Peter Bernardone and taken home.

Transformation

St Francis sought solitude to hear the voice of God. He started to feel the sweetness of silence and the fruit of being in solitude i.e., listening to the voice of God. He received the message from the Cross of San Damiano church to 'Go and Repair My Church.' Likewise in another instance he heard the voice of the Lord. 'Francis, do you want to serve the Master or the Slave.' Only after listening to the constant whispers of the Lord, his own conversion began. St Francis encountered the Lord in lepers; God was found in the peripheries. In his own testament St Francis acknowledges that what seemed bitter to him then, later turned out to be sweet. The bitter experience for him was to meet the lepers. It turned out to be sweet because he found Christ in them. Most of the time, Christ is present in those forms that we would never expect. This was the time when there was formed in St Francis a conscience that started owning the responsibility of another human being.

Stigmatization and Death

In the year 1224 St Francis had gone alone to fast for forty days at mount Laverna in

honour of St Michael. During this time, he received the stigmata. Stigmata refers to the five wounds of Chris that were imprinted in the body of St Francis. The Church accepts that Like St Paul even St Francis of Assisi bore the marks of Christ in his body. Just two years after receiving the stigmata, in 1226, St Francis embraced Sister Death in a dramatic way that so distinguishes him from all other saints. St Francis, made peace between the Bishop and the Mayor at that time, blessed the bread, broke it and gave it to all his brothers and joyfully accepted death by singing the *Canticles of Creatures*. Since then, Franciscans all over the world profoundly celebrate this event as transitus. Transitus means passing away from this temporal life to eternal life. St Francis was canonized on 16th July 1228 by Pope Gregory IX. He is presently known as the patron of ecology and merchants. His followers are known as Franciscans. He is also remembered for making the first Christmas crib and spreading devotion in the church for the crib and the cross.

Conclusion

The close union of St Francis with the Lord made him to be close to his neighbours, with nature and with people of other faiths as well. This aspect is explicitly seen in his canticles of creatures where he associates with every being in a brotherly and sisterly manner. As St Francis was getting closer to the mind of Christ he started to expand universally and was able to interconnect with all beings. Hence St Francis shows himself to be for us the model of a universal Brother by recognizing the dignity of all creatures and respecting all beings.

PRAYER FOR PMI NATIONAL CONFERENCE 25-28 October 2022, Goa

Lord Our Loving Father, we praise and worship you together with Jesus Christ who taught us to visit the incarcerated. We thank and glorify you for sending your only begotten Son Jesus to proclaim liberty to the captives and saving us through His unjust imprisonment and death on the Cross. Merciful Father, give us the grace to see your face in our brethren behind the bars; help us to remember them as though we were in prison with them (Heb 13:3); bless us to hear the groans of the prisoners and to set free those who are doomed to die.

Beloved Father, we entrust into your compassionate hands the 13th national conference of Prison Ministry India to be held in Goa on 25-28 October 2022. Anoint the Goa PMI unit members and the national team with the fruits, gifts and charisms of the Holy Spirit to convene the conference for the greater glory of God and for the reformation and redemption of the incarcerated. Let the conference motivate the participants to recommit themselves to reach-out, release, rehabilitate, reintegrate and redeem our brethren behind the bars. Sanctify the speakers, organizers, convention center, conference hall, places of accommodation, vehicles and journeys with your precious blood and deliver us from all sorts of dangers and tactics of the evil spirits. Let the conference revive the prison ministry, illumine PMI volunteers to find your ways and means to redeem our brethren behind the bars; bless the people of Goa and renew the face of the earth. May the conference deepen our God experience, strengthen our fraternity, reinforce our solidarity with the lost and promote our communion with the Church and its hierarchy.

Compassionate God, make us instruments of your peace and reconciliation; where there is hatred let us sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; where there is sadness, joy. Merciful Father, have mercy on our incarcerated brethren, anoint them with repentance and reformation, bless their family members and prison staff that they may be kind, gentle and understanding towards those under their care, sanctify and strengthen the victims that they may reconcile with those who offended them. Bless our benefactors and all those who work hard for the fruitfulness of the conference. Mary, Mother of Jesus, pray for the reintegration and redemption of our brethren behind the bars. We make this prayer through Christ our Lord. Amen

**Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be
Mother Mary, pray for us; St Maximillian Kolbe, pray for us; St Francis Xavier, pray
for us; Venerable Francis Xavier Van Thuan, pray for us**



Life After 44 Years in Prison


Sr Amala DC

Otis Johnson

Stepping out into Times Square in New York City, Otis Johnson was struck by the overwhelming number of people. Everyone seemed to be walking quickly with blank faces and wires in their ears. He was confused. Being completely removed from society since 1975, Johnson thought he entered a dystopia where everyone had become a secret agent wearing wires. The Steve Jobs era had completely passed him by. In August 2014, Johnson was released from prison after serving a 44-year sentence for the attempted murder of a police officer. He went to jail when he was 25 years old. By the time he came out, he was 69. Johnson's release date was originally scheduled for earlier, but he ended up serving an additional eight months at the age of 69 for a juvenile shoplifting charge he had received when he was 17. Johnson represents a very small set of people in the United States. In 2013, approximately 3,900 inmates were released from US prisons after serving at least 20 years, according to the Bureau of Justice Statistics. That is less than 0.7% of all state prisoners released that year.

US Prison Population

About 6,000 federal prisoners were to be released in November 2015. The United States Sentencing Commission has implemented early releases for some drug offenders. Prison reform had become a major focal point for the White House



during US President Barack Obama's final year in office. In a recent speech at Rutgers University, he highlighted the need for prisoner re-entry programmes focused on education, job training and housing, and recounted success stories of formerly incarcerated citizens who had escaped the cycle of recidivism that plagued many inmates. In 2014, according to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the overall US prison population fell to its lowest level since 2005. However, the data also showed that from 1999 to 2014, the number of state and federal prisoners aged 55 and older grew by 250 percent, while those younger than 55 grew by only 8 percent. Elderly prisoners were only 3 percent of the total prison population in 1999. But by 2014, that number had grown to 10 percent.

The justice department sees the nearly quarter-million elderly prisoners as a top issue year after year, not least because housing and feeding an aging population is expensive. But the number of senior citizens released from prisons remains small. "It's not too late," Obama said. "There are people who have gone through tough times, they've made mistakes, but with a little bit of help, they can get on the right path." But while initiatives to reduce the sentences for drug offenders and nonviolent crimes are under way, the elderly prison demographic is beginning to emerge as another group in need of legislation reform.

Mass Incarceration

There was consensus on mass incarceration. New sentencing guidelines could result in 46,000 of the nation's approximately 100,000 federal drug offenders qualifying for early release. Elderly inmates could be the next wave of ex-convicts to be reintroduced into society. But former



prisoners like Johnson, who was released after decades of isolation, encountered obstacles that transcended those the current, younger, wave of ex-convicts faced. Their needs were drastically different. Mental health issues, coping strategies and other side effects of long-term imprisonment came into play. Marieke Liem, a researcher at Harvard Kennedy School interviewed prisoners who had served decades behind bars. She said there was a large lack of resources for those coming out after serving long sentences. From being introduced to modern technology, to navigating public transportation, to opening a bank account, to making simple life choices like what to buy at the grocery store, Liem says many of these kinds of ex-prisoners struggled due their lack of agency. “The Prison decided when lights would be on and when they should be turned off,” Liem said. “Every moment of the day is scheduled. When you have been in the prison system the majority of your life, how can you be expected to function as a member of society? And make a plan?”

Fortune Society

Upon release from prison, Johnson was handed an ID, documents outlining his criminal case history, \$40 and two bus tickets. Having lost all family connections while serving his sentence, Johnson now relies on Fortune Society, a nonprofit that provides housing and services to ex-prisoners in Harlem. Each day, he navigates the world as best as he can. He involves himself with a local mosque. He practices tai chi and meditates. He attempts to pursue his dream of opening up a shelter for women, though with his lack of credit history, securing funds for such a project has proven close to impossible. He walks

44 YEARS IN PRISON

the streets of New York, observing people around him. He returns to Fortune Society by 9 p.m. each night, heeding his curfew. With the current focus on reform, Johnson hopes that re-entry for ex-prisoners, including those having served for decades, will be streamlined to effectively address their needs. Whether freedom can prove liberating, rather than overwhelming, for those convicts who have greyed behind bars, remains to be seen.

Peace Prayer of Saint Francis

Lord, make me an instrument of your
peace:
where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
where there is sadness, joy.

O divine Master, grant that I may not so
much seek
to be consoled as to console,
to be understood as to understand,
to be loved as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive,
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
and it is in dying that we are born to
eternal life.

Amen.



Locked as Chain Gang

A chain gang or road gang is a group of prisoners chained together to perform menial or physically challenging work as a form of punishment. Such punishment might include repairing buildings, building roads, or clearing land. The system was notably used in the convict era of Australia and in the Southern United States. By 1955 it had largely been phased out in the U.S., with Georgia among the last states to abandon the practice. North Carolina continued to use chain gangs into the 1970s. Chain gangs were reintroduced by a few states during the “get tough on crime” 1990s, with Alabama being the first state to revive them in 1995.

Origin

The chain gangs originated as part of a massive road development project in the 1890s. Georgia was the first state to begin using chain gangs for work with male felony convicts outside of the prison walls. Chains were wrapped around the ankles of prisoners, shackling five together while they worked, ate, and slept. Chain gangs were groups of convicts forced to labour at tasks such as road construction, ditch digging, or farming while being chained together. Some chain gangs toiled at work sites near the prison, while others were housed in transportable jails such as railroad cars or trucks. The improvements they made to public roadways had significant impact on rural areas, allowing planters to more quickly and more easily transport their crops to market.



Sr Lini Sheeja MSC

Purpose

Various claims as to the purpose of chain gangs have been offered. These include: Punishment; Societal restitution for the cost of housing, feeding, and guarding the inmates. The money earned by the work performed went to offset prison expenses by providing a large workforce at no cost for government projects, and at minimal convict leasing cost for private businesses. A way of perpetuating African-American servitude after the Thirteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution ended slavery outside of the context of punishment for a crime. Chain gangs had the additional purpose of reducing inmates’ idleness; to serve as a deterrent to crime; to satisfy the needs of politicians to appear “tough on crime”; to accomplish undesirable and difficult tasks.

Serious Risks and Infections

Chain gangs minimized the cost of guarding prisoners, but exposed prisoners to painful ulcers and dangerous infections from the heavy shackles around their ankles. The use of chains could be hazardous. Some of the chains used in the Georgia system in the first half of the twentieth century weighed 20 pounds (9 kg). Some prisoners suffered from shackle sores—ulcers where the iron ground against their skin. Gangrene and other infections were serious risks. Falls could imperil several individuals at once.



Miserable Life Situations

Prisoners were restrained at all times with heavy chains that were riveted around their ankles and were only removed (by a chisel) when the convict was released. At night another long chain was run between their legs, so that every man was connected to every other man, and no one was able to go even to the toilet (a hole in the floor) without waking everybody on the chain gang.

Despairing Life

Chain gangs' day began at 6 am. Inmates had to be military perfect, not a hair out of place. They were forced to perform chain gang for a certain period. For any chain gang, losing the chance at a chain gang graduation certificate, cut to the core. For many of them, the goal of just completing something was everything. Most of them were drug users and quitters. They were warned to ensure that they had to improve their marching skills. If they failed, their holiday phone calls would be cut and the officers took one step further. The officers showed zero tolerance for any type of crap. Chain gang would have a leader, responsible for marching practice and setting a model example.

The Mastermind Behind

The mastermind behind it all was the notorious Sheriff Joe Arpaio. They were convicted and they needed to undergo harsh punishment was what the sheriff wanted. He took away their coffee, salt and many more basic facilities. As he was known for the controversial penal program, he brought back the once banned US chain gang in 1996 and to this he added women.



CHAIN GANG

When Did the Chain Gang End?

Once ubiquitous in the South, chain gangs largely disappeared sometime between the Depression and World War II, and their use discontinued after a string of exposes and movies detailed their abuses. The last few chained prisoners were pulled from the roads in the early 1960s, when Georgia abolished the practice. The media contributed significantly to the practice's demise. Films ranging from Meryn LeRoy's graphic expose, *I Am a Fugitive from a Chain Gang* (1932) to Stuart Rosenberg's *Cool Hand Luke* (1967) showed the atrocities of the system. As shameful as the abuses chronicled in the movies were, they could not capture the raw vivid details of everyday life suffered by black convicts on the chain gang.

Conclusion

The most extensive use of chain gangs in North Carolina coincided with the rapid growth of highway construction accompanying the Auto Age, from 1900 to 1950. A number of reforms in the 1920s were intended to end the worst practices of chain gangs. Eventually, the chain gang was operated as a daily road crew that lived in permanent prison facilities nearby. With the advent of more mechanized heavy equipment for road building, the need for labour gangs decreased. After this, contracted paid labourers constructed state roads, and prisoners began working primarily in beautification projects and litter control.




Mercedarians: The Redeemers for Christ

Fr Shaji Stephen O de M

The order of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mercy was a lay order of the active life in common. Its objective was to defend the faith through the redemption or ransom of those Christians at risk of renouncing it due to the circumstances of their captivity under the power of the Saracens or of other enemies of the law of Jesus Christ. The order of Mercy was undoubtedly more like the military religious orders whose purpose was to defend the faith although it had accepted fighting infidels by force of arms through the vow they had taken. Therefore, it should be said that the order of Mercy was born as a redemptive religious order with a military character. The Mercedarians are the agents of redemption and the Order's ideology and principles would subjectively prepare them to accomplish redemptive work successfully in such a way that Mercedarian brothers were always gladly disposed to give up their lives if it became necessary, as Jesus Christ gave up his for us.

Collection of Alms for Redemption

By virtue of his profession every brother became an authentic beggar for redemption. He was assigned the part of the territory close to his house so that designated religious would collect alms in that area. The alms did not only include cash but also goods and other materials means which



made redemption possible. Very early, the order found an original way of encouraging people's help for captives. The redeeming brother along with redeemed captives would travel through cities and towns preaching the next redemption and collecting the alms for the Churches. After this was done, the captives had their beards shaved, their hair cut, and they were provided with clothes, given an allowance for the journey and for their day to day lives and were dismissed to go back to their lands in joy and gladness. Another way of raising money consisted in strategically placing money boxes, poor boxes and bags in churches, cross roads, porches, mills and furnaces. The possessions of the order, as determined by the Founding Father St Peter Nolasco, invested all his own and his companion's assets in redemption of captives who were always at the disposal of the poor who needed redemption. This explains that on more than one occasion, chalices and ciboriums of Mercedarian churches were sold in order to redeem captives in danger of losing their faith.

Works of Mercy

From 1218 on, the Order of Mercy also practiced all the works of mercy for the sick and the poor whom they cared for in their houses known by the generic name of saint Eulalia Hospital. Pope Innocent IV confirmed the existence of the Order's social and hospital work in his bull *Si Juxta Supientis Sententium*: "thus as the beloved sons, master and brothers of the Saint Eulalia Hospital of the Barcelona Diocese, were they devoted themselves to serving God by redeeming captives from pagan hands, at the same time, they work very hard to help

the poor who come from everywhere and the sick in their need..." These words of the supreme pontific make it very clear that "the poor" whom the Mercedarians looked after and cared for in their houses were not only the ransomed captives but also the poor sick and poor pilgrims; in other words, all the marginalized people of the time.

Imitation of Jesus Christ the Redeemer

As redeemer, Jesus Christ is the focus of the Mercedarians spiritual movement. The Mercedarians always held with firm conviction that the Blessed Virgin Mary, mother of the redeemer, had intervened in a direct efficacious way in the foundation of the Order. This is why they call her Mother and Foundress. Considering the need of the faith for eternal salvation, Mercedarians have always understood the redemption of captives as a permanent service for the faith of those Christians who were most in danger of denying Jesus Christ and, as a result, in danger of losing their souls.

St Raiymond Nonnatus

Raymond universally known as the Nonnatus or not born due to his typical birth is a Mercedarian saint who achieved the greatest popularity among Christians in the places where Mercedarians became established. He joined the Order of Mercy at a very early age. Raymond was a redeemer of captives in Moorish lands. In a redemption which took place in Algiers, they had to stay behind as hostages. It was then that he endured the torment of having his lips sealed with an iron padlock to prevent him from addressing consoling words to Christian captives and

from preaching the liberating the good news of the Gospel.

St Serapion

Irish by birth, Serapion was born around 1179. He was at first a soldier and requested and received Mercedarian habit. He carried out several redemptions. In the last one he was held as a hostage for some captives in danger of renouncing their faith. The other redeemer traveled quickly to Barcelona to look for ransom money. But the money for the ransom did not arrive at the stipulated time and the disappointed Moors inflicted an atrocious death on Serapion. They nailed him on an X – shaped cross, like St Andrew's cross and savagely dismembered him.

St Mary Cervellon

The first Mercedarian sister from the noble family of Cervellon, Mary Cervellon was born in Barcelona, on Dec.1 1230. Immersed in the aura of charity created by the brother's redeemers of captives in her native city, young Mary felt attracted by their liberating commitment and she became the consolation of the poor, the sick and the captives in saint Eulalia Hospital. She requested the white Mercedarian habit and she made her religious profession on May 25, 1265. With her, young ladies from prominent families formed a community. Mary died on September 19th 1290. Her mortal remains were buried in the church of the Mercedarian friars of Barcelona, which is today the Mercedarian basilica.

Prison Ministry by Sacred Heart Brothers

Bro Michael SH

Introduction

Prison Ministry of India is doing remarkable service in all the prisons of India under the able leadership of diocesan coordinators. But 100 years back, without any facilities and proper organization, many Sacred Heart Brothers were actively involved in prison ministry at Palayamkottai General Prison. They visited prisoners on Sundays and moved with the prisoners freely. They made them to experience the love and compassion of Jesus. By doing so, they helped many prisoners to feel sorry for their mistakes and able to get rid of their guilt consciousness. This is a brief report of the prison ministry done by Sacred Heart Brothers at Palayamkottai Prison, Tamil Nadu.

Br Masilamani SHJ

Br Masilamani SHJ was born on 1901 at Karuthapillayur, Tamil Nadu. He was brought up in the Catholic Faith by his devout parents. His parents taught him about the providence of Almighty God and his unconditional love throughout his life. His parents fed him not only physical food which nourished his body but also spiritual food like the Eucharist, the Word of God and Catechism which nourished his soul. These were the spiritual practices which helped him to realize his call. Since

he experienced the Call of God, he became a member of the Brothers of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in 1922. He was a good Sacred Heart brother and died in 1941.

Ministry

Br Masilamani SHJ was deeply rooted in the spirituality of the Sacred Heart and humbly followed the footprints of Brother Jesus who sacrificed his life for others. He offered his life for the service of others by doing catering work, tailoring, joining with the parish priest in going to the villages, teaching catechism, preparing the people for confession and Holy Mass. He was also working as hostel warden at St Xavier's School at Palayamkottai. More especially he was looking after the spiritual needs of the students by teaching them good moral values and guided them on the right path.

Thirst for Prison Ministry

Br Masilamani was doing prison ministry along with Fr Lebo SJ. Inside the prison there was a criminal by name Dhanappan. He was working as a cook at CSI School, Palayamkottai. When he went home for holidays he got involved in a social crime and was caught by the police. On account of his crime his parents, relatives and village people ignored him. Nobody was ready to help him to get bail. He was alone in the prison. Since, his crime was proved he was sentenced to death. Br Masilamani SHJ had a special care and concern towards this man. One day Dhanappan was sharing about his bitter experience with Br Masilamani SHJ. Dhanappan was literally crying because his



SACRED HEART BROTHERS

mistakes disturbed him a lot; he felt that he was a great sinner. He often said, “brother I am a great sinner; will God forgive me?”.

Death Row Conversion

Br Masilamani SHJ was consoling him with the word of God, especially by explaining the Gospel of Luke chapter 23 where Jesus prays, “Father forgive them for they do not know what they are doing.” He was explaining about the forgiveness of Jesus. He told him that Jesus forgave all his sins. “If you believe this, salvation is yours.” These words penetrated his heart and soul and brought a tremendous change in his life. Fr Lebo SJ baptized him as Mariadhasan. Br Masilamani SHJ gave him to wear Uthiriyam on his neck. After two days he was supposed to face the death penalty. The whole night he was praying, “O good Lord, have mercy on me”. When the death sentence was carried out, he pronounced the same words. This was testified to brother by the jail warden. Br Masilamani SHJ played a vital role for his conversion according to the gospel of Matthew 25:36 “I was in prison and you came to visit me”.

Prison Ministry of Sacred Heart Brothers

Being inspired by the prison ministry done by Br Masilamani, the Sacred Heart Brothers continued prison ministry fulltime and parttime. Currently 4 brothers are doing this ministry effectively. “I was in prison, and you came to see me.” Moved by these words of Jesus, Sacred Heart Brothers see the prisoners as Jesus meeting them, praying for them, teaching them the word of God,

meeting their families and giving special counseling, creating a good atmosphere among the prisoners and their families. Sacred Heart Brothers educate prisoners’ children in their school. They have been doing this ministry effectively by bringing harmony, peace and joy in the lives of prisoners and their families. Br Masilamani was a great inspiration for the Sacred Heart Brothers who continue to engage themselves in prison ministry even at present.

Prayer for the Synod

We stand before You, Holy Spirit,
as we gather together in Your name.

With You alone to guide us,
make Yourself at home in our hearts;
Teach us the way we must go
and how we are to pursue it.

We are weak and sinful;
do not let us promote disorder.
Do not let ignorance lead us down the
wrong path
nor partiality influence our actions.

Let us find in You our unity
so that we may journey together to
eternal life
and not stray from the way of truth
and what is right.

All this we ask of You,
who are at work in every place and time,
in the communion of the Father and the
Son,
forever and ever.

Amen.





PMI Central Regional Coordinators' Meeting

Ms Amira Peter

The minutes of the PMI Central Region's Coordinators' Meeting held on zoom on 17th August 2021 from 4.30 to 5.30PM is presented here. Fr Wilfred Fernandes, Sr Shanti, Fr Timothy Pinto, Sr Fulmani, Br Sunny, Mr Rajendra Dushing, Fr Alex Ekka, Ms Goretti Martin, and Fr Sergius Kindo were present. Jharkhand, Bihar, West Bengal and Andamans & Nicobar were not represented. The opening prayer was conducted by Mr Rajendra Dushing. Fr Wilfred Fernandes welcomed the participants. The minutes of the previous meeting held on 20/07/2021 were read by Amira. They were proposed by Sr Fulmani and seconded by Rajendra.

Prison Ministry Sunday Activities

Gujarat - Sr Fulmani

PMI Gujarat organized a 9-day online Novena to St Maximilian Kolbe. PMI Sunday was celebrated on 8th August with an inspirational Mass. In Marinagar they held a procession and prayers to St Maximilian Kolbe and also practiced the PMI virtue of "begging" for alms which was an enriching experience. Due to high number of dengue, chikun guniya and Corona cases in Baroda, the celebrations were on a low scale. The prayer for prisoners was recited and a picture of St Maximilian Kolbe was placed in the church to increase awareness. Sr Fulmani also added that PMI Gujarat conducts every Monday at 7PM the Divine Mercy chaplet especially for prisoners.

Odisha - Sr Shanti & Fr Timothy


PMI Odisha conducted a 3-day Triduum prayer instead of a 9-day Novena. The Feast Mass was on the 14th of August. Sr Mercyan and her team from Sambalpur visited the women's jail and conducted games for them on the 14th. They also visited a prisoners' family to further build the reconciliation process with the prisoner's deceased husband's family. On 19th Sr. Shanthi and her team from Berhampur visited the jail carrying toiletries, dried packaged foods and masks. They also provided financial assistance to a prisoner's relative who met with an accident and to a covid victim. Fr Timothy added that their Bishop had advised the celebration of PMI Sunday to be held on 31st October.

Chhattisgarh - Fr Sergius & Fr Alex

PMI Chhattisgarh visited the new jail Superintendent and explained to him the works of PMI. Fr Alex mentioned that as the churches are still strictly closed in Chhattisgarh they were unable to celebrate PMI Sunday Mass nor hold any PMI Sunday celebrations. All were exhorted to pray from their respective parishes and convents.

Maharashtra - Mr Rajendra

PMI Maharashtra in collaboration with PMI Pune conducted a 9-day online Novena to St Maximilian Kolbe, including an inspirational video message from one of the Bishops in Maharashtra and Fr Francis Kodiyan. A volunteer testimonial as well was telecast. Due to strict lockdown rules in place all over Maharashtra, jail visits could not be conducted. But there has been a special focus on strengthening the prayer pillar of PMI with a weekly hour-long online Intercessory Prayers on Sundays from 5 to



6pm, daily rosary and chaplet via telephone besides having online Mass daily.

Goa - Ms Goretti

Due to strict lockdown rules in Goa, jail visits are not permitted as yet. Poor internet connectivity restricts conducting or participating in any online services. Archbishop Phillip did celebrate a special Mass for PMI. The team continues to sell raffle tickets for the education of children, housebuilding etc. Counselling of prisoners and their families continues as and when required.

MP - Bro Sunny MMB

PMI Sunday was held on 15th August in MP. There were no Sunday collections. In commemoration of PMI Sunday, PMI MP was able to release 50 prisoners from Central Jail in Bhopal.

Message from Fr Wilfred

Fr Wilfred advised the group to keep thinking about creative ways to make a difference despite Covid-restrictions. For example, we can consider bail payments. This will facilitate release of more prisoners and thereby reduce over-crowding in jails and also prevent the spread of Corona. He shared about a recent case of a mother, son and daughter who were in jail today because the daughter-in-law committed suicide. PMI Pune facilitated the release of the mother after 14 years of incarceration. The son will be released shortly on bail. PMI is working on helping get their family home operational so that they can move back into it. PMI Pune has also helped the daughter move from the Remand Home to Maher (a home for destitute men, women, and children which helps them build a higher quality of life to

arrive at self-sufficiency). We should try and increase awareness by involving Bishops, priests, religious and seminarians in our Ministry. Invite all for Intercessory Prayer. The Meeting concluded with a recitation of the Prayer for Prisoners by Sr Shanthi and final blessings from Fr Wilfred. The next Central Region Coordinators Meeting will be on Tuesday, 21st September 2021.

St Francis & Sultan Malik-el-Kamil

There is an episode in the life of Saint Francis that shows his openness of heart, which knew no bounds and transcended differences of origin, nationality, colour or religion. It was his visit to Sultan Malik-el-Kamil, in Egypt, which entailed considerable hardship, given Francis' poverty, his scarce resources, the great distances to be traveled and their differences of language, culture and religion. That journey, undertaken at the time of the Crusades, further demonstrated the breadth and grandeur of his love, which sought to embrace everyone. Francis' fidelity to his Lord was commensurate with his love for his brothers and sisters. Unconcerned for the hardships and dangers involved, Francis went to meet the Sultan with the same attitude that he instilled in his disciples: if they found themselves "among the Saracens and other nonbelievers", without renouncing their own identity they were not to "engage in arguments or disputes, but to be subject to every human creature for God's sake".[3] In the context of the times, this was an extraordinary recommendation. We are impressed that some eight hundred years ago Saint Francis urged that all forms of hostility or conflict be avoided and that a humble and fraternal "subjection" be shown to those who did not share his faith. (Fratelli Tutti 3)



From a World behind Walls to a World without Walls


Sr Fidelis HCM

Neelima

I am Neelima (name changed). I was born as the second eldest and the first among girls in a poor Hindu family, in Bangalore rural. But my parents were loving and caring people. My father had a small job but it was not enough to support the big family of seven children and parents. I could study only up to 7th class as I was sent to work and earn some additional income to support the family. But my two younger sisters were able to study and get some job. The family was struggling to make ends meet.

Marriage and Family

As was the custom in the villages of Karnataka in those days when child marriage was prevalent, I was given in marriage at the age of fifteen to a man who was also from the lower strata of society and was illiterate too. I didn't have much idea or knowledge of married life. There were difficulties and struggles in my family life. My husband was not able to support me much. As days went by, we got our first baby – a girl and life went on as usual. In the course of time after two years we got one more child, a baby boy. Children on one side and poverty on the other side, we really didn't know how to continue our life's journey... My husband was not at all efficient in any way to run the show. By that time my elder child had started schooling and was already in 5th class and the 2nd child in 1st standard. Life became



unbearable for me. The irresponsible life of my husband and the treatment from my in-laws, made me think of ending my life with my children. I thought to myself, if I am not there, what will be the future of my children and that made me think of taking them with me and finish our life together.

The Unexpected

Due to the pressure of life, I was fully depressed and couldn't resist the temptation of ending our life. On a fine day without anybody's knowledge, I went with my children to a faraway place and jumped into the lake with both the children tied to my saree. Hearing the cries of the children, some passer-by tried to save us, but the daughter was dead already by the time she was taken out. Since it was an attempted suicide, a case was registered and I was put in jail and the son was given to the care of my husband. I was totally devastated because of the failure of my plan. I was in complete darkness. I was not talking to any one and was in utter confusion, crying all the time.

Turning Point

While in jail I met the Prison Ministry India volunteers, Sr Fidelis and Sr Clara who used to visit the jail every week. They used to keep us together and give us some good thoughts either from the Bible or based on some life stories which would have a positive effect on us. In those days they were allowed to come inside only once a week. We used to long for their arrival to listen to them and to find some consolation. Slowly I started mingling with others and getting friendly with the sisters and other volunteers. I was inside for one and a half years and I could learn something in the meantime about life and got adjusted with it and its problems.



Release and Rehabilitation

When I was released, rather than going back to my in-laws I opted to go to Jeevodaya. Even though I wanted to see my son and have him with me they were not willing to bring the child. Sisters took the initiative to meet my husband and speak to him so that he could be helped to get reconciled with me and the whole situation. Finally, my husband came with my son and I was happy to have him with me. But by evening he went back home with the child. Since I was missing the child, I was willing to let go of the past and get myself adjusted with my husband. But he couldn't take the responsibility of running the family which was a big botheration for me. There used to be moments of friction between us on account of that.

Conclusion

When we started living together, Prison Ministry India bought a piece of land and helped to build a house for us and we could manage our life. Sr Fidelis arranged a job for me in a nearby pipe company which helped me to make-ends-meet. My son completed 12th and started working in a small cement company, bringing additional income to the family. As years went by, he came to marriageable age and was married and in course of time got two cute children- a boy and a girl. Life is not so easy all the time. We do face challenges at times and Sisters are always there to intervene and help us. "Delight yourself in the Lord and he will give you the desire of your heart" (Ps 37/4). "I will take refuge in the shadow of your wings until the disaster has passed" (Ps 57,1).



PMI Madhya Pradesh

Fr Emmanuel Philip

Prayerful greetings from PMI MP State! I am happy to inform you that an emergency State Executive meeting of PMI MP was held by online Google meet at 7PM on 17 September 2021. Most of the Executive Members attended the meeting, PMI National Coordinator Fr Francis Kodiyan MCBS presided over the meeting. Executive meeting began with a prayer led by Sr Olive. Fr Jose MST, the Treasurer welcomed the members and moderated the meeting. Sr Olive the State secretary presented a short report of the prison ministry. Fr Emmanuel explained all activities undertaken by PMI in the last two years in all 9 Dioceses of Madhya Pradesh in nutshell. He presented the financial statement of PMI MP. Fr Emmanuel explained the need and context of the emergency executive meeting of PMI. I will be going to Rome for higher studies soon. Therefore, it was required to elect a new State Coordinator and to hand over the responsibilities to the new Coordinator. Fr Francis Kodiyan the National Coordinator explained the election procedures as per the bylaws of PMI. Thereafter the name of Bro Sunnlyal MMB was proposed for the post of PMI State Coordinator. Unanimously Br Sunnlyal was elected as the PMI State Coordinator.

The outgoing State Coordinator expressed his sentiments and thanked all Bishops of MP, all executive members, diocesan coordinators and all volunteers for their support towards PMI State of MP to carry out the ministry during past two years in Madhya Pradesh in a vibrant way and to do various service for the brethren behind the bars. Bro Sunnlyal expressed the vote of thanks to all executive members and National Coordinator especially he thanked the outgoing State Coordinator for his whole hearted dedication and hard work to bring this ministry in the main stream in M.P. and wished him all the best for his future endeavours. Executive meeting concluded with a prayer.



You Are Not alone - PMI Mangalore

Edmund Frank

To introduce the Prison Ministry India Mangalore unit, we are twenty-one active members and we carry out our prison ministry apostolate at the Mangalore District Prison. Unlike most other prisons, this has acquired a certain degree of notoriety because of the fact that 99 % of the inmates it shelters are all under trials. They are there because they are booked by the police for violating the law or for committing some offense but not convicted yet. Their cases are being pursued by their respective lawyers in the district court. Every time their cases come up for hearing, they are escorted to the court by the prison guards. I enumerate here the work done and services rendered by the members in connection with the Mangalore District Prison.


The prison houses around 380 male inmates and 6 to 8 female inmates on an average during the year. Like most prisons this is badly understaffed and congested. The work that we do is of a very diverse nature, mostly in consultation with the Prison Superintendent and can be broadly classified into four categories: 1. Legal assistance and Counseling, 2. Health care services, 3. Material assistance and 4. Rehabilitation of some of the freed inmates.

1. Legal assistance and counseling involve meeting and speaking to the prison inmates especially when they come for the first time. They are made to relate their case and after listening to their grievances they are counseled and if they are found to be in the wrong, every attempt is made to make them understand their violation of the law. If they are not in a position to hire a lawyer, arrangement is made to provide him or her

with a government lawyer. Our important responsibility is to follow up with the lawyers and make sure that they take interest in their client's cases. It is our experience that if the lawyer's fees are not paid by the inmate's family, the result is delay in their hearing. In deserving cases the PMI members pool in their resources and pay the lawyer's fee and expedite their hearing and get innocent and deserving inmates released. The PMI members also assist in arranging witnesses and the bail money in the case of very poor and helpless inmates.

2. There is a doctor hired by the prison authorities to attend to unwell inmates. His limitation is that he can prescribe only such medication that is in the permitted list. On the Superintendent's request, sometimes medicines are procured by us and given to the sick persons. Medical camps are conducted in consultation with the Jail Superintendent when the need is felt. Services of doctors and support staff from the Government Hospital and private hospitals are taken for medical camps.

3. Material assistance is given in many forms. The number of women inmates though small, approximately 8, some of them have nursing babies and small children as well. Only women members have access to the women's cell. The children are given biscuits and baby foods when needed and asked for. Needle work and embroidery are taught to the women inmates. One of the members has donated a water purifier to the women's cell since the children and babies were getting a rash on their bodies due to the impure drinking water passing through rusty old pipelines. The skin rash menace stopped soon after that. Refreshments are served to the inmates on important festivals. On the feast of Maximilian Kolbe, the prison inmates were given breakfast. On this occasion, the Bishop of Mangalore



Rev. Dr. Peter Paul Saldanha visited the prison with the PMI members. The Bishop Felicitated the Prison Superintendent Mr Chandan Patel who was awarded the Best Jail Superintendent Award by the Karnataka State Government. Indoor games' sets like carom board, chess and ludo, reading material and clothes when requested are provided to the prison inmates.

4. In recent years a male inmate, a tailor by profession, who was released after four years, was rehabilitated by giving him a tailoring shop and tailoring machines. One of the members gave him the shop and another member donated the tailoring machines. The Tailoring shop was inaugurated by the Prison Superintendent Mr Chandan Patel. He (tailor) is doing a lot of charity work and the people in the neighborhood are very happy with him. During the recent months by using his tailoring services our unit supplied 450 face masks to the prison inmates. During the time he was in prison, his first daughter completed her B. Com and secured a good job in Pune. The second one completed graduation and is doing Chartered Accountancy course. Just before the lock down commenced in 2021 a seven day Motivational cum Reformatory camp was conducted within the jail premises for eighty inmates identified and sent by the Jail Superintendent. Persons possessing expertise in the field were brought as resource persons.

Recently the PMI members donated a children's bicycle to a six-year-old child living in the prison with his mother. Although prison visits are curtailed because of the lock down, the PMI members have continued their service to the inmates through the Jail Superintendent. We are all looking forward to the day when things will return to normal and we shall be able to meet the prison inmates in person.



PMI Aurangabad

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Rajendra Dushing

I am happy to share with you a brief report regarding the celebration of St Maximilian Kolbe Feast Day with the superintendent, jailer and other official staff at Central Prison Aurangabad. This was a very solemn moment for the PMI Aurangabad team on the occasion of our patron Saint. We got an opportunity to have a unique kind of celebration in the office of the Superintendent along with the prison official

We offered the entire official staff cakes and snacks. The Jail superintendent shri Jayant Naik cut the cake, in the presence of jailer shri Sunil Sable and Mrs Megha Kadam, sub jailer other jail staff too without ignoring the inmates as well. Two inmates were present on behalf of the prisoners. The official staff felt very happy at this gesture which was evident in the official response they gave. They mentioned that PMI not only thinks and helps prisoners but also cares for us, the entire team of prison officials and their families for whom no one else gives that much attention and care. The Superintendent said that he was very happy with PMI ministry which covers very important aspects of human life. We thanked them for giving this opportunity on such an important day. Sr Leone HSP, Director of Vimala Sadan, Rajendra Dushing and Anand Kulkarni were present for this program.

"Listen to Your Gut Feeling" – Michaella McCollum

Sr Lini Sheeja MSC

'Prison made me who I am now' said Michaella McCollum who was detained at Jorge Chavez International Airport in Lima, Peru for allegedly trying to smuggle cocaine on to a flight to Spain. On 6 August 2013 Michaella McCollum and Melissa Reid's were arrested for carrying cocaine worth £1.5m. Michaella had been convinced to smuggle the drugs from Peru to Spain by a man she met in Ibiza. Michaella and Melissa hadn't known each other prior to being paired up by the criminals arranging the cocaine's journey. Both pleaded guilty to drug smuggling and were sentenced to over six years' imprisonment in the notorious Ancon 2 jail in Peru.

Escape From Family

One might wonder how a regular kid from rural Northern Ireland could wind up in a maximum-security prison in South America. The big question is why that made her to do it? Rural Northern Ireland in 1990s, Michaella was born as the youngest of 10, lived in a terraced house with her parents and siblings in Aughnacloy. One day she decided to escape, and booked her ticket to Ibiza one way.

Serving Drugs

Michaella is very friendly and approachable with good energy. As young chaps she and her friends wanted to have lots of fun. Sooner Michaella understood if she wanted to stay longer in Ibiza, she needs to find


herself a more regular source of income. She got herself a bar job, but it turned out to something as it was not just drinks. She was expected to serve drugs. She didn't know where she gets drugs and the customers said from behind the bars. Then she went to the bar and said to the manager about the man who asked for the drugs. At the age of 19 Michaella didn't feel like it's a big deal to consume drugs. Like in all stories, walked in her life a tall, dark, handsome stranger named Davey. Michaella would describe him as quite cheeky, cocky kind of guy who was just really cool and relaxed and easy going. She liked him. He didn't take drugs at all.

A Fateful Day

One day it was very strange vibe, very shady. She didn't feel relaxed and she couldn't really understand. She was falling deeper into Davey. He asked she would like to go on a trip, an actual trip to Barcelona to pick something up from him. She literally thought like a small package of like of drugs, because he sold drugs and literally thought that it was like some ecstasy tablets and she definitely think that it was going to be anything big. It was 5am in the morning Davey came running to Michaella and said that she needs to go now to pick up the package. She took a huge suitcase. Davey said to her that she is going get lot of money. Davey had arranged their trip in perfect manner, which Michaella will be travelling to Majorca, meet another girl and both, will fly to Lima. Michaella and Reid flew to Peru.

Arrest at Airport

McCollum and Reid were caught with around £1.5 million of cocaine in their



luggage at Jorge Chávez International Airport on August 6, 2013. Security at the airport found 11kg of cocaine and arrested the pair. The gritty prison memoir of Michaella McCollum, the infamous ‘Peru Two’, imprisoned in a Peruvian jail for attempting to smuggle 11kg of cocaine from Peru to Madrid in August 2013. She was just a regular girl, spending the summer working at a bar in Ibiza, until she was approached by a man who asked her if she would like to make some quick, easy money and it would change her life forever. This is the truth of her time in prison, told through her own diaries and letters to her mother, family and friends, recounting tales of vicious guards, psychotic inmates and horrendous prison conditions and the struggles she faced as she attempted to rebuild her life among such scandal and notoriety. A brilliantly affecting tale of a naive young girl who starts out in the Ibiza party scene and comes of age in the dark heart of Peru, before finally emerging into the sun a stronger, more confident, mature young woman. She has written a book of her prison journey as one of the infamous Peru Two, “You’ll Never See the Daylight Again”.

Listen to Your Gut-Feeling

“I was very naive when I was 19. I didn’t think anything bad could happen to me. I didn’t suspect people; I just had this fairytale of an unrealistic world, which is quite different from how I see it now. I grew up thinking I could trust people, I never questioned things, I just believed everything and trusted people way too easily. We shouldn’t be like that, not everybody has

got your best intentions; strangers don’t care about you. You do need to be a bit suspicious of people and have your guard up. It’s about listening to your gut feeling – I had a gut feeling it was wrong, and I ignored it. Your body always knows something is off, listen to it”, Michaella pleads the readers.

In Prison, I Learned to Stand up for Myself!

“It was actually being in prison that made me start to stand up for myself more, but even that took a couple of years there for me to feel secure enough to stand up for myself and not let people take advantage of me. I feel like my experience in prison was over-glamorised by the press – they missed the point of why I wanted to start running a beauty salon there, and become the delegate (the prisoner who liaises with prison authorities). It was to prove to myself that I could stand up for myself, and I wanted to push myself to do that”, says Michaella convincingly.

From Cocaine to Renewed Life

In 2016, both women were granted early release. Since then, Michaella has been vocal about her story, and insist she’s changed since she became known as one half of the Peru Two. Michaella, now 28, is a mother of three-year-old twin boys Rafael and Rio and lives in Northern Ireland. She has tried to reinvent herself as a model, author and celebrity – she even has a management company for ‘business enquiries. “Those three years in prison did so much to make me the person I am now, with the mind-set and morals I have now, said Michaella.

The Church is Built Where Lost Souls are Redeemed

Sr Sagaya Mary MSC

Story of a Soul

Pauline, Therese's sister and Prioress, could only pray and think about something to distract her sister a little. She asked Thérèse to write about her life and during her last weeks of life she wrote the 'Story of a Soul' which is considered Therese's autobiography. It contains the story of her childhood, her love of God and her belief that "what matters in life is not great deeds, but great love." Therese died on September 30, 1897, at the age of 24. Her last words were the story of her life: "My God, I love You!"

Henri Pranzini: A Death Row Prisoner

Henri Pranzini was a notorious and brutal criminal born in 1856 of Italian parents in Alexandria. He was tall, dynamic and charming in appearance but turned into a life-long petty thief who took advantage of vulnerable women in the nineteenth century France, a vice that eventually led him to capital punishment. He was a brilliant student who learned to speak eight languages but at the same time he was a seducer with languorous eyes. He was an adventurer, a soldier who entered the army of the Indies and waged war in Afghanistan. He was a trafficker, a man of action, punter, gambler, lady-killer and a triple murderer. Pranzini's trial opened


on July 9, 1887 and by the middle of August, it was clear Pranzini was to die.

Therese Martin in Redeeming a Soul

Pranzini's crime would have quite likely been forgotten, had it not been for an extraordinary French teenager. Therese Martin, later to become St Therese of Lisieux who was just 14 at the time, felt compelled to intervene in Pranzini's case. From reports Therese came to know that Pranzini was impenitent and was sure of his eternal damnation. To avert that irreparable calamity, she decided to employ all the spiritual means she could think of. As she recounts in her autobiography, *The Story of a Soul*, she stormed Heaven for a man many considered beyond redemption: "Everything led to the belief that he would die impenitent. I wanted at all costs to keep him from falling into hell, and to succeed I employed all the means imaginable, feeling that of myself I could do nothing".

Pranzini Redeemed

As his fate approached Therese increased her prayers and asked her sisters to join in her mission which continued until he was brought before the guillotine on 31 August 1887 at 0430. The next day, Therese read in the newspaper that when he was about to put his head into the device, "he turned, took hold of the crucifix the priest was holding out to him, and kissed the sacred wounds three times! Then his soul went to receive the merciful sentence of him who declares that in heaven there will be more joy over one sinner who does penance than over ninety-nine who have no need of repentance! (Lk 15:7). "I had obtained the




sign I asked for, and to me it was especially sweet. Was it not when I saw the Precious Blood flowing from the Wounds of Jesus that the thirst for souls first took possession of me,” said the Little Flower. The most important weapon Therese Martin made use of for the conversion of Pranzini was the Holy Mass.

Mon Premier Enfant

Pranzini was Therese’s first saved child. Observe her prayer: “My God, I am quite sure that you will pardon this unhappy Pranzini”. Therese was convinced her prayers had helped save the forsaken Pranzini from damnation. He became for her “mon premier enfant-my first child” and the experience strengthened her conviction to become a Carmelite nun, and intercede for others in desperate need of God’s love.

Little Way of the Little Flower

Therese is popularly known in the English-speaking world as “The Little Flower of Jesus”, or simply “The Little Flower,” and in French as la petite Thérèse (little Thérèse). Therese has been a highly influential model of sanctity for Catholics and for others because of the “simplicity and practicality of her approach to the spiritual life”. St Therese had a simple yet powerful message that still resonates in the hearts of millions today. Her “Little Way” of allowing God to work through her life has become a guiding light for the faithful. This is “The Little Way” of St Therese of Lisieux which Saint Mother Teresa also followed: to do everything as an act of love for God, to offer all the little (and big) hardships of life for the conversion of sinners. Imagine St Therese



arriving in heaven after her death at the age of twenty-four. Who do you think was the first person to meet her? Her mother Zélie? Her father Louis? Perhaps the first person to meet her on her arrival in heaven was a man with a big smile on his face who could hardly wait to thank her for the role her prayers and sacrifices played in getting him there, the murderer named Pranzini

Redemption Stories of the Failed Ones

The most important factor in prison ministry is to lead convicts to repentance and reconciliation so as to be redeemed by the Redeemer. Although Pranzini murdered two women and a little girl brutally, a heinous crime that Therese in no way condoned, she did not condemn the man himself. Rather, in the spirit of the Gospel, she prayed for his conversion. Therese found within her heart the willingness to forgive his terrible crime. In this COVID 19 lockdown, as we are unable to enter the prison gates to meet our brethren, PMI volunteers reach out to the dark cells of prisons through the 24 hours Incessant Intercessory Invocation for the Incarcerated and join hands in the work of redemption. The same Little Way of the Little Flower is emulated by our passionate PMI volunteers through our little ways in this pandemic. Jesus not only builds His Church in cities and villages, but does so also behind bars. The Church is built when lost souls are redeemed from the darkest and most forgotten corners. May the redemption stories of the failed ones, criminals, abandoned, lonely and dejected be proclaimed from the roof tops and may Christ our Redeemer be glorified!



PRISON MINISTRY INDIA

13 PMI NATIONAL CONFERENCE SPIRITUAL PREPARATION

PMI DIOCESAN FASTING PRAYER DAYS

Dear PMI Volunteers,

Prayerful greetings from Prison Ministry India National Office, Bangalore! 13th PMI National Conference is scheduled for 25-28 October 2022, Goa. We begin our spiritual preparation for the fruitfulness of the National Conference on 1 October 2021 with Online Annual Retreat. This will be followed by Diocesan Fasting Prayer. Every diocese will be given two days to pray and fast for the fruitfulness of the conference. PMI Special Task Forces, Rehabilitation Centers, Homes for Prisoners' Children and Seminary units also will join in this venture. Please organize relevant programs during the day allotted for you such as Holy Mass, Prayer Gathering, Eucharistic Adoration, Rosary, Divine Mercy, Recitation of 'Thank You Jesus', Prison Visit, Visit to Rehabilitation Centers, etc. so as to reawaken prison ministry and PMI Volunteers. Please join the PMI Incessant Intercessory Invocation for the Incarcerated. Organize in every diocese an intercessory prayer group to daily pray at least half an hour for the reintegration and redemption of prisoners.

Please pray for the fruitfulness of the Conference, reformation of prisoners, and recommitment of PMI Volunteers. Let us remember the teaching of Jesus, "I was in Prison and you visited me" (Mt 25,36). Sharing of your insights, inspirations, corrections, updates and recommendations will highly be appreciated. The complete list of prayer and fasting will be forwarded soon. Let's march forward united in mind and heart.

Yours in Jesus who came to seek and save the Lost,

Fr Francis Kodyan MCBS
PMI National Coordinator

Sr Amala DC
PMI National Secretary

1. PMI SOUTH REGION
Regional Coordinator - Fr Shaji Stephen O de M – 9995577738

1.1 Andhra Pradesh

State Coordinator – Fr Pasala Lahastraya - 9849734425

No	Diocese	PMI Coordinator	Telephone	Prayer Day
01	Eluru	Fr Felix	9440860873	4 October 2021
02	Guntur	Fr P Sagar Sr K Mary JMJ	9581642488 9963397075	5 October 2021
03	Kadapa	Fr Janardhan	9490353385	6 October 2021
04	Kurnool	Fr Bhaskar Sudhakar	8074109286	7 October 2021
05	Nellore	Fr M Hrudaya Raju	9490386744	8 October 2021
06	Srikakulam	Fr Bala Joseph	9494449129	9 October 2021
07	Vijayawada	Fr Pasala Thomas	9849044585	10 October 2021
08	Visakhapatnam	Fr Y Jacob	7382481526	11 October 2021

1.2 Karnataka

State Coordinator – Fr Benny Pachanal CRSP - 7411280074

No	Diocese	Coordinator	Telephone	Prayer Days
09	Ballari	Fr Ponnu Swamy	9901856493	12 October 2021
10	Belagavi	Sr Lavina BS	8861087421	13 October 2021
11	Belthangady	Fr Sunil Poovathikkal		14 October 2021
12	Bengaluru	Fr Clement Deep	9880750545	15 October 2021
13	Bhadravathi			16 October 2021
14	Chikkmangaluru	Mr Pradeep Rebello	9448428274	17 October 2021
15	Kalaburgi	Sr Reena D'Souza	9481208578	18 October 2021
16	Karwara	Fr Michel Pinto	9480674917	19 October 2021
17	Mandya	Fr Jose Kutty	8885432507	20 October 2021
18	Mangaluru	Mr Jerome	9845138660	21 October 2021
19	Mysuru	Sr Joyce Fernandes CSST	9663451298 9449048547	22 October 2021
20	Putturu	Fr John Kunnathettu		23 October 2021
21	Sivamogga	Sr Helen Moras-SCB	8970859472	24 October 2021
22	Udupi	Mr Rosario	9448915044	25 October 2021

Kerala & Lakshadweep**1.3 State Coordinator – Fr Shaji Stephen O de M - 9995577738**

No	Diocese	Coordinator	Phone	Prayer Days
24	Alleppey	Fr Johnson	9497220737	26 October 2021
25	Bathery	Fr Thomas Chaprath	9846698935	27 October 2021
26	Calicut	Fr Jaison Kalathiparambil	8606890088	28 October 2021
27	Changanassery	Fr Sebastian Puthussery	9747923012	29 October 2021
28	Cochin	Fr Sunny Attapparambil	9447475294	30 October 2021
29	Ernakulam-Angamali	Fr Sebastian Thekkanath	8281643573	31 October 2021
30	Idukki	Fr Joice	9497352643	1 November 2021
31	Irinjalakuda	Fr Jaison	8848542295	2 November 2021
32	Kanjirappally	Fr Sebastian Perunilam	7025665214	3 November 2021
33	Kannur	Fr Shaiju Peter	9947662709	4 November 2021
34	Kollam	Fr John Paul	7034294821	5 November 2021
35	Kothamangalam	Fr Varghese Paramel	8547848309	6 November 2021
36	Kottappuram	Fr Alex Elanjikal	9744698744	7 November 2021
37	Kottayam	Fr Jinu Avanikunnel	8281537657	8 November 2021
38	Mananthawady	Fr Shaji Muthedath	9446816883	9 November 2021
39	Mavelikara	Fr Mathew Kuzhuvila	9446188690	10 November 2021
40	Muvattupuzha	Fr Joseph Thazhathel	9747952633	11 November 2021
41	Neyyattinkara	Fr Rahul	9562772262	12 November 2021
42	Pala	Fr Vincent Moongamakal	9447661326	13 November 2021
43	Palakkad	Fr Martin Thattil	9447964663	14 November 2021
44	Pathanamthitta	Fr Mathew Pezhumotil	9539370719	15 November 2021
45	Parassala			16 November 2021
46	Punalur	Fr Christudas	9496013031	17 November 2021
47	Sulthanpet			18 November 2021
48	Thalassery	Fr Joseph Kolluthappally	9895769130	19 November 2021
49	Thamarassery	Fr Thomas Parankulangara	9544285018	20 November 2021
50	Thiruvalla	Fr Joseph Narimattom	9446443749	21 November 2021
51	Trivandrum	Fr Paul G	9447029438	22 November 2021
52	Trivandrum Malanka	Fr John Areekal	9447022347	23 November 2021
53	Thrissur	Fr Thomas Vazhakkala	9447021144	24 November 2021
54	Verapoly	Fr Jomon George	8606907343	25 November 2021
55	Vijayapuram	Fr Thomas Pazhurakattil	9497021935	26 November 2021



HOLY EUCHARIST



INAUGURATION



FELICITATIONS



FELICITATIONS

**Blessing of St Anthony's Home
Kankavali, Sindhudurg**



**PMI Volunteers Convene Medical
Camp in Shimoga Prison**



**PMI Volunteers Distributing Masks
to Viyoor Central Prison**



**PMI Volunteers Distributing
Sanitizers and Sanitary Napkins to
Thane Women Prison**



**PMI Volunteers Felicitating the
New Superintendent, Open Prison,
Yerawada, Pune**



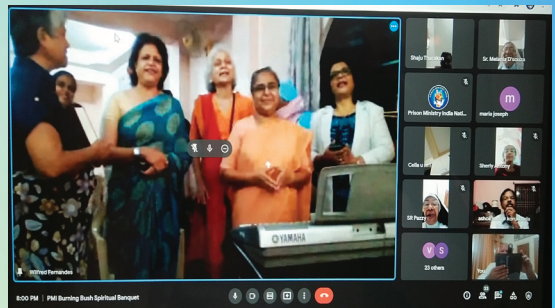
PMI Volunteers Visiting Aurangabad Prison



PMI Volunteers Visiting Gwalior Women Prison



PMI Volunteers Visiting Shimoga Women Prison



PMI Wishing Silver Jubilee Greetings of Religious Profession to Sr Marina, Pune



Rehabilitating a Released Daughter from Viyur Woman Prison to Bethlehem Abhaya Bhavan, Thottuva



SMMI Provincial together with her Sisters who are Going to Serve at Kolbe Home, Patan, Gujarat Visiting PMI National Office



Releasing Popes to Prisoners by Most Rev Allwyn D'ASilva



PMI Volunteers Distributing Medicines to Adharwadi Jail