



PRISON VOICE

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NATIONAL MONTHLY

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Synodal Church



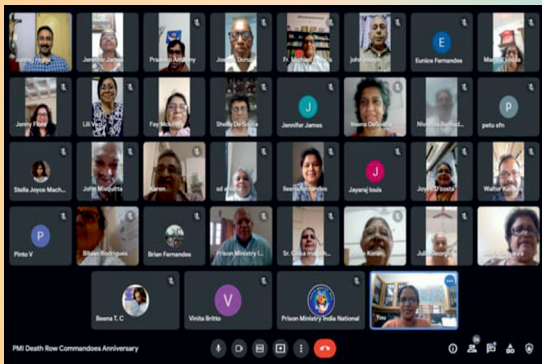
Communion, Participation and Mission



CRI Students and Sisters from Kolbe Home, Patan undergo Training Program at RRDC



CRI Students Visiting Observation Home, Bengaluru



Death Row Commandoes First Anniversary Celebration



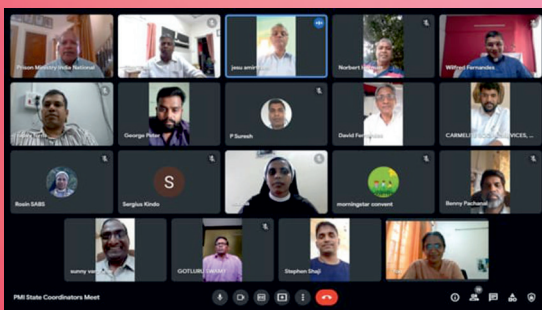
Delhi PMI State Gathering



Golden Jubilee Blessings to Sr Miriam DSS and Team who Meritoriously Served many Years at PMI Snehashramam Trivandrum



Laying of the Foundation Stone for National Office Annex



PMI State Coordinators' Meet



National Coordinator Visiting Most Rev Anil Couto, Archbishop of Delhi

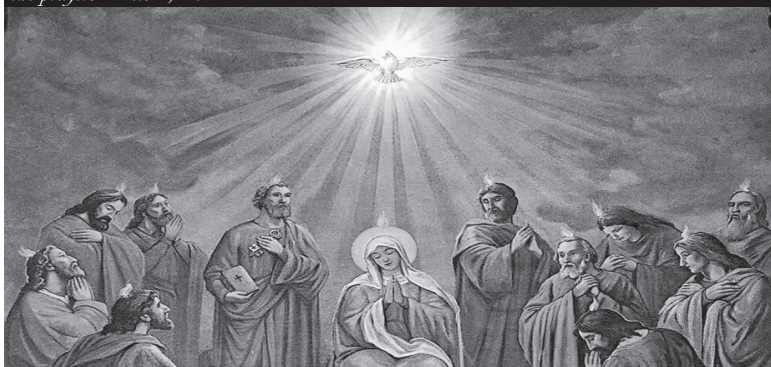
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PRISON VOICE

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Are You Willing?

"Help a Prisoner's Child
Prevent a Potential
Criminal"

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

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ALL SAINTS, ALL SOULS DAY AND THE GREAT CONCLUSION OF PMI RUBY JUBILEE

All Saints Day

I wish you all Happy feast of All Saints' Day, All Souls' Day, and blessings of the concluding celebrations of PMI Ruby Jubilee. All Saints' Day is a solemn holy day celebrated annually on November 1 by Catholics. It is dedicated to those who have died and now live with God in heaven. All Saints' Day reminds us that we are called to holiness and are invited to be saints. Let's pray that PMI may have many saints in heaven to intercede for us and to imitate them. The holy day was formally started by Pope Boniface IV in 609 AD.

All Souls Day

All Soul's Day on November 2 is the day in which we remember the dead. On this day we participate in Holy Mass and visit cemeteries and pray office for those who died from our families, communities and friends. As PMI volunteers it's our responsibility to pray for the repose of prisoners and PMI volunteers. The people in purgatory need our prayers. Prison Ministry India has the special task force Purgatory Souls' Redeemers (PSR) who are in a special way praying for the redemption of souls in purgatory.

Synod on Synodality

Pope Francis invites the whole Church to think on the synodality of the Church. The theme is entitled "For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation and Mission" and discussions on this theme already commenced world wide. With this convocation, Pope Francis invites the entire Church to reflect on a theme that is decisive for its life and mission: "It is precisely this



Sr Amala DC
Chief Editor

theme of synodality which God expects of the Church of the third millennium." This journey, which follows in the wake of the Church's renewal proposed by the Second Vatican Council, is both a gift and a task: by journeying together on the journey that has been made, the Church will be able to learn through Her experience which proposes can help her to live communion, to achieve participation, to open Herself to Mission.

PMI Ruby Jubilee

All memorable journeys begin with small steps. PMI completes its memorable and fruitful journey of 40 years. A 40-year celebration for PMI is a reflection of its core success. When you read a person's success story, it's important to research the background of the persons behind that success and we find plenty of evidence of their hard work. This success could not be possible without our Founder Fathers Fr Francis and Fr Varghese and their great efforts to bring the ministry throughout India for the least and the lost. God placed them as corner stones of Prison Ministry India. As we celebrate the Ruby Jubilee of PMI, I invite you dear PMI Family Members to take part and rejoice with us in the PMI Ruby Jubilee Celebrations. With great joy and honour we shall remember those who laboured hard for the last 40 years and shall pray for them. But all this could not have been achieved without your support dear volunteers and I request you to continue the same to bring forth more harvest for the Lord of the Harvest.

WRESTLING WITH GOD

Nikos Kazantzakis (1883-1957), born in Heraklion, Crete, one of the renowned writers was nominated for Nobel Prize nine times. In 1957 when the Nobel Prize in Literature was awarded to Albert Camus, he lost the coveted prize by one vote only. However, Camus said later that Kazantzakis deserved to win the Nobel Prize a hundred times more than himself. A member of the Greek Orthodox Church, Kazantzakis authored widely-read books like Zorba the Greek, The Last Temptation of Christ, St Francis, and Report to Greco, which is his autobiography.

Wrestling with Devil

In his autobiography, Kazantzakis recalls from his young days a visit with Fr Makarios, an old monk at a monastery on Mount Athos. Since Fr Makarios had a great reputation for holiness, Kazantzakis asked the monk, "Do you still wrestle with the devil?" "Oh, no," Fr Makarios replied, "I used to wrestle with him all the time. But now I've grown old and tired, and the devil has grown old and tired with me. I leave him alone, and he leaves me alone."

Wrestling with God

"Then your life is easy now?" Kazantzakis asked. "Oh, no," Fr Makarios replied, "Life is much harder now. For now, I wrestle with God." Surprised at the answer, Kazantzakis asked, "You wrestle with God and hope to win?" "No," said Fr Makarios, "I wrestle with God and hope to lose!" If we hear



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

about wrestling with the devil, we will not be surprised as we also often wrestle with him in our own lives by way of temptations. However, hearing about wrestling with God makes us also astonished since we can't even think of wrestling with God. Nevertheless, people often wrestle with God, as we see clearly in the Bible.

Abraham Wrestles with God

When God decided to destroy the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah because of the wickedness of the people, Abraham intervened on their behalf and tried to talk God out of destroying them. Abraham's lengthy conversation with God (Gen 18:16-33) was equal to a wrestling match with God in which Abraham had to accept defeat at the end.

Jacob Wrestles with God

Jacob wrestled with God until daybreak. Jacob said, "I will not let you go, unless you bless me." God said to him, "What is your name?" And he said, "Jacob." Then He said, "You shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel, for you have striven with God and with humans, and have prevailed."



WRESTLING WITH GOD

Then Jacob asked him, "Please tell me your name." But he said, "Why is it that you ask my name?" And He blessed him. Jacob called the place Peniel, saying, "For I have seen God face to face, and yet my life is preserved" (Gen 32, 22-32).

Moses Wrestles with God

Moses said to Joshua, "Choose some men for us and go out, fight with Amalek. Tomorrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the staff of God in my hand." Joshua did as Moses told him, and fought with Amalek, while Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill. Whenever Moses held up his hand, Israel prevailed; and whenever he lowered his hand, Amalek prevailed. But Moses' hands grew weary; they took a stone and put it under him, and he sat on it. His hands were steady until the sun set. Joshua defeated Amalek and his people. Moses built an altar and called it, "The LORD is my banner" (Ex 17,9-16). When God chose Moses as the leader of the Israelites to lead them from the slavery of the Egyptians, he protested, saying, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?" (Ex 3:11). Even after God promised his protection and support for his mission, Moses begged God, "If you please, my Lord, send someone else" (Ex 4:13). He had a genuine reason for this request. Moses said, "If you please, my Lord, I have never been eloquent, neither in the past nor now that you have spoken to your servant; but I am slow of speech and tongue" (Ex 4:10). However, God did not relent, and Moses had to accept defeat and abide by God's decision.



Jesus Wrestles with God

Jesus also wrestled with God. When he was confronted with the impending suffering and death on the cross, he prayed, "Father, if you are willing, take this cup away from me" (Lk 22:42). Jesus was wrestling with God to make him change his mind.

PMI Wrestles with God

PMI volunteers are on constant wrestling with God. Our incessant intercessory invocation for the incarcerated worldwide is a wrestle with God. Our spiritual and ascetical practices for prisoners' renewal are wrestling with God. Our Special Task Forces wrestle with God. We are pleading to God for the repentance, reintegration and redemption of hardcore prisoners such as terrorists, death row convicts, serial killers, mafia dons, human traffickers, drug traffickers and so on. Our prayers are often meant to make God change his will for us; we present all kinds of arguments before him to support our cause. It is not easy for us to accept defeat at the hands of God and abide by his will. It is seldom that we say, 'not my will but thy will be done.' There is nothing wrong in wrestling with God and presenting our needs before him. In fact, as children of the heavenly Father, we should always present our needs before him with confidence. However, if our prayers are not answered the way we want, we should not murmur and complain. Instead, we should accept God's will and say, 'not my will but thy will be done,' as Jesus said at the Garden of Gethsemane. It is then that we lose to God and become victorious. We need the grace of God to accept defeat at his hands and say, 'thy will be done.' Therefore, let us always be open to the grace of God when we wrestle with him in prayer.



IN MEETING WITH PRISONERS, FRANCIS SAYS 'WE ALL MAKE MISTAKES'

Elise Ann Allen¹

Pope Francis hosted a group of prisoners and ex-prisoners at the Vatican over the weekend, listening to their stories and offering words of advice, including telling them to always move forward and to ask for help when they need it. Speaking to the group during an Oct. 22 meeting at the Vatican's Saint Martha guesthouse, where he lives, Pope Francis stressed the importance of having the courage to take the first step toward self-improvement, saying, "In life, there must always be a first step."

In a sense, "every step is like the first, so that you renew and are always going forward. To feel the need to take a step means I still feel like I need to improve my life, to organize it better," even if someone else is the one who encouraged that first step, he said. Francis noted that at times, a person might want to take that first step, but they don't know what to do, and in these cases, he said it's important to pray, and to ask God for help "because I don't know how to do it alone." This, he said, is "a true prayer."

What is important is to make small steps every day, he said, insisting that, "the small steps and big steps are important in life. We must have the courage to take them, or to at least ask someone to accompany us in taking them, or to teach us how to take them, because sometimes we don't know

what to do, we don't know on which door to knock." In these moments, when the right door or path seems unclear, "the Lord gives us the opportunity and he makes you take the step," the pope said, adding, "Have trust."

The group of inmates who met with Pope Francis are all serving or have served their sentences in structures run by the community of Don Benzi in Vasto, in the province of Chieti, and in Termoli near Campobasso. These structures, created largely due to an overflow in local prisons, house would-be inmates who serve their time and atone for their crimes in the community as an alternative to prison.

This is not the first time the pope has welcomed prisoners to the Vatican. Over the summer, he hosted a group of a dozen inmates from Rome's Rebibbia prison. He met with them privately at the Saint Martha house, and following that meeting, the group was offered a private tour of the Vatican museums. On that occasion, the prisoners brought a basket of bread they had made. The prisoners had started baking it during the COVID-19 lockdown and were hoping to open a store so they could sell the product.

"For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom 8,38-39).

¹ Curtsey to Elise Ann Allen, Crux, 25 October 2021.



Walking with the 'Left-outs' An Inclusive Synodal Journey with the Prisoners

Fr Beschi Jeyaraj

Synodal Goals

With the solemn Mass in St Peter's Basilica in Rome on 10th October, Pope Francis kicked off a two-year long process in preparation for the 2023 synod of Bishops. The theme of this remarkable event aims at a 'Synodal Church' accentuating more on Communion, Participation and Mission in the Catholic Church. Across the globe various dioceses are launching an avalanche of initiatives to include their people of God in the synodal journey, registering their voices and listening to them apart from mere hearing. The prime purpose of this Synod is not to produce more documents. Rather, it is intended to inspire people to dream about the Church we are called to be, to make people's hopes flourish, to stimulate trust, to bind up wounds, to weave new and deeper relationships, to learn from one another, to build bridges, to enlighten minds, warm hearts, and restore strength to our hands for our common mission (see. Preparatory Documents, 32). The objective of this Synodal Process is not only a series of exercises that start and stop, and that represent tokenism but rather a journey of growing authentically towards the communion and mission that God calls the Church to live out in the third millennium.

Synodal Process

This synodal process is, moreover, intended to ensue on three important phases namely, the listening phase that lasts till April 2022, continental phase that will run from September 2022 to March 2023, and subsequently the final universal phase with the Synod proper that will ultimately culminate in the XVI Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops in the Vatican in October 2023. During these phases various representatives of the ministries and sections of the people are invited to walk together, meeting and listening to one another for a synodal Church.

Inclusion of the Left-outs

In an attempt to listen to people, the ministers involved in Prison ministry are encouraged to walk together with the prisoners leaving none behind. It is imperative that we include prisoners also in the process, because they are most left-outs in the perusal of the Catholic Church as that of the society. They are indeed alienated, vilified, victimised, discriminated, and pushed to the peripheries. In society they have neither vote banks to determine the trajectory of politics nor do they form any union to claim their rights. They are most left out, least bothered about and thinly cared for in society. Along with transgenders and sexual minorities, the prisoners also face discriminatory, derogatory and ignominious remarks in their daily life. The synod is a blissful occasion to include the excluded in the synodal process.



Synodality

As stipulated by Pope Francis, this synod results in building a church that is “more listening, yet more serving and humble, and a Church where all belong to in communion”. This synod wants to reinvigorate the sense among the people of God that synodality is not so much an event or a slogan but a lifestyle of the Catholic Church. It is not only a gift but a task also to alleviate the illness that has affected the Catholic Church in the form of clericalism, discrimination, absence of minor protection, xenophobic attitudes towards the migrants, inadequate concern for environmental crisis and so on. The synodal journey also must be camaraderie with the prisoners, which could bolster the synod.

How to Journey with?

Journeying together is a wonderful experience. The very word synod also implies journeying together. The word ‘synod’ comes from Greek roots that convey “a road walked with others, a shared way.” In other words, synod is a journeying together. A translated write up of Italian poet Gio Evan is an eye-opener to us. It vouchsafes the significance of any Journey. It goes like this. “Try to journey, otherwise you may become racist, and you may end up believing that your skin is the only one to be right, that your language is the most romantic and that you are the first to be the first. Journey, because if you don’t journey, then your thoughts won’t be strengthened, won’t get filled with ideas. Your dreams will be born with fragile legs and then you

end up believing in tv-shows, and in those who invent enemies that fit perfectly with your nightmares to make you live in terror. Journey, because journey teaches to say good morning to everyone regardless of which sun we come from. Journey, because journey teaches to say goodnight to everyone regardless of the darkness that we carry inside Journey, because journeying teaches to resist, not to depend, to accept others, not just for who they are but also for what they can never be. To know what we are capable of, to feel part of a family beyond borders, beyond traditions and culture. Journeying teaches us to be beyond. Journey, otherwise you end up believing that you are made only for a panorama and instead inside you there are wonderful landscapes still to visit”.

Journeying with Prisoners

Journeying together with the prisoners should be an encountering, repairing, functioning, serving and praying. For journeying together, I have carved five dimensions as following from the very process of the synod that can be domesticated in the prison ministry. Those five dimensions would be elaborated in the forthcoming months in prison voice. They are in a nutshell: Listening rather than mere hearing; Inclusion rather than Integration; Subjectification rather Objectification; Sincere Journey rather than tokenism and Synergy rather than walking lonely.



From Ordinary to Extraordinary! All Saints Day



Sr Lini Sheeja MSC

God in His goodness created human beings in His own image and likeness with love and for love. “I have loved you with an everlasting love” (Jer 31:3). The Creator loves every human being with everlasting love as He redeemed us through His only Son and sanctified us by His Spirit. As we are celebrating All Saints Day on 1 November, it’s good to recognize who these saints are. “Saints are only sinners who keep trying,” said St Mother Teresa who responded to the call of holiness. Every man/woman created in God’s image is called to holiness; in other words, sainthood is a call given to everyone as we journey here on earth.

Saints According to the Catholic Church

According to the Catholic Church, a saint is anyone in Heaven. “Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a Great Cloud of Witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders us and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run...” (Heb 12:1). This reminds us that the Church is holy and she can never stop being holy and is called to show the holiness of God by living the life of Christ. In Roman Catholicism, a saint is a holy person who is known for his or her “heroic sanctity” and who is thought to be in heaven. A saint displayed these qualities in a consistent and exceptional way during their life on earth.



Conviction on Connectedness

The Christian festival of All Saints Day comes from the conviction that there is

a spiritual connection between those in Heaven and those on Earth. In Catholic tradition, this holyday honours all those who have passed on to the Kingdom of Heaven. It is a national holiday historically in numerous Catholic countries. All Saints Day annually reminds us of our connectedness as Christians. It’s commemorated on November 1st every year. Perhaps, as children we thought of saints as statues in a church building. But the Bible teaches something completely different (Acts 9:13, 26:10; Rom 8:27; 1Cor 1:2). The 4th century Apostles’ Creed expresses it as belief in the communion of Saints, which certain Christian churches interpret as supporting the intercession of saints. Although millions or even billions of people may already be saints, All Saints Day observances tend to focus on known saints - that is, those recognized in the Canon of the Saints by the Catholic Church.

Origin

While now observed in November, All Saints Day was originally celebrated on May 13. Pope Boniface IV formally started a practice on May 13 in 609 AD which would later be known as All Saints Day when he dedicated the Pantheon in Rome as a church in honour of the Virgin Mary and all Martyrs. The current date of November 1 was established by Pope Gregory III during his reign (731-741 AD) when he dedicated a chapel in Rome’s St Peter’s



Basilica in honour of all Saints. While this celebration was originally limited to Rome, later in 837 Pope Gregory IV ordered the official observance of All Saints Day every November 1 and extended its celebration to the universal Church.

A Holy Obligation

All Saints Day is generally considered a Holy Day of Obligation, meaning all Catholics must attend Mass unless they are prevented by illness or any other sufficient excuse. All Saints Day is a solemn holy day of the Catholic Church celebrated annually on November 1. The day is dedicated to the saints of the Church, that is, all those who have attained heaven. It should not be confused with All Souls Day, which is observed on November 2, and is dedicated to those who have died and have not yet reached heaven.

Live for Heaven, not the World

“If a Christian wants to reach heaven, he or she should ask themselves if they are living for the pleasures of the world, or if they are striving after holiness with all their strength”, said Pope Francis on the feast of All Saints in 2018. “Let us ask ourselves what side we are on: that of heaven or that of the earth? Do we live for the Lord or for ourselves, for eternal happiness or for some fulfilment now?” asked Pope. He continued, “In heaven, the saints cheer for those on earth when they see them choose God, humility, meekness, mercy and purity. The saints understand us, they love us, they know what our true good is, they help us, and they wait for us. They are happy, and they want us to be happy with them in paradise”.

Festal Blessings

“The reason for our existence is to quench the thirst of Jesus. When Jesus asked for water, a soldier gave him vinegar to drink - but His thirst was for love, for souls, for you and me” said the saint of our time, St Mother Teresa, the Saint of the Gutter who realized the call to holiness and the call to sainthood. Jesus on the Cross had thirst for souls and Mother Teresa had the same thirst for souls which made her walk through the slums to share the love of Christ with the dying and the broken. The saints whose feast we celebrate today were ordinary men/women like you and me who lived a normal life here on earth; they saw Jesus in everything and embraced the struggles and crosses that came their way; they placed their little hands in the hands of the Creator and they said yes to His will in all circumstances of their lives. On this Solemnity of All Saints Day, as we look up to them for their powerful witness to holiness, sacrificial lives and charity, let us truly understand our call to holiness. Sainthood is a universal call given to every Baptized Christian.

In his encyclical “Saved by Hope,” Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI writes: “Life is a voyage on the sea of history, often dark and stormy, a voyage in which we watch for the stars that indicate the route. The true stars of our life are the people who have lived good lives.” They are our light of hope, because they point us to Jesus Christ, “the true light, the sun that has risen above all the shadows of history” (#49). The saints have showed us how to love, how to lead and how to live! Let us embrace all that life offers as the saints did and praise God in our moments of darkness as well as brightness.



Synodality for the Missionary Church



Dr Paul Raj SG

1. The Church is a Missionary

The church participates in the mission of God. It continues the mission of Christ, and bears the witness of the Spirit. Often the nature of the church is explained as a continuation of the kingdom mission of the Son. We speak of 'mission as essential to the church' and of mission as the 'essence of the church' and not simply the work. We often affirm that 'the church is mission'. Emil Brunner says 'The Church exists by mission as fire exists by burning'. Many refer to the missionary dimension of the church. We can thus conclude that the church 'participates in' or 'continuing' or 'carrying on' the mission of Christ.

2. A Church without Mission is a Church without Future

When the Church ceases to be a mission, then she ceases to have any reason to use the titles by which she is referred to in the New Testament. When I say that the church with a mission in the world, it means the church is concerned with humankind and its struggles. The Church is not a private organization for the benefit of those who attend mass and do adoration and pray the rosary-that's all. The church is not a *privatus cultus* but a pilgrim, a missionary and a dynamite of the Lord. The church through her efforts brings about justice, freedom, and peace in the world.


3. Mission Changes not only the World but also the Church

All of us in the church have to understand that mission as first of all a work of the Holy Spirit. If the mission is first of all the work of the Spirit, then the mission is an overflow of the Gospel. If the mission is understood this way, it will keep the church from distortions in its understanding of mission: legalistic, triumphalistic, and egoistic distortions. Normally the outsiders define the church by its participation in the mission of God by involvement in the world and all that is created in the world. God is a missionary God and mission is the activity of God to redeem the creation. The church exists because God has this mission to redeem the creation. The source of this mission is God's love.

4. Synodality in the Mission of the Church

By now we are very familiar with the word 'synodality'. I am not going to explain it here but rather I would like to see how this synodality could make the church more missionary and make all of us participate in the missionary journey of the church. This year, Holy Father Pope Francis has called the entire church to Synodality. At the outset it might look a very vague term and a vague call. But actually, synodality is at the service of the Church's mission, in which all her members are called to participate. Since we are all missionary disciples, each Baptized person is called to be playing a lead role in the mission.

In the world and ecclesiological context of today, synodality is the specific way, specific style (*modus vivendi et operandi*) of being the Church, the People of God. Only this



will reveal and give substance to her being as communion when all her members journey together, gather in equality and take an active part in her mission. The reflections by the entire church on synodality must invigorate the church in the coming months. Those of us, members of the body of Christ who for years have got used to the illusion that without us the church is useless and meaningless and incomplete, must climb down-kenosis- to understand the call of synodality. The concept of synodality refers to the involvement and participation of the whole People of God in the life and mission of the Church. I remember one member of a 'hierarchy' few years ago telling in a church gathering: "without us you cannot think of going to heaven". Such arrogant and exaggerated ego must get dissolved in the altar of synodality during this year.

I can say that the declaration of collective reflection on 'synodality' by Pope Francis is really a call to conversion for all the sections of the church. It is also an assault on clericalism; it is an assault on superiority feelings in the church; it is also an assault on egoism and exaggerated individualism and finally an all-around assault on "ontological distinctiveness" that some of us have created for ourselves. Consequently, making the synodal Church a reality is an indispensable precondition for a new equality and new energy that will involve the entire People of God. "All are equal and some are more equal" has to disappear in front of this synodality. The Pope himself says, "...in a synodal Church, greater light can be shed on the exercise of the Petrine primacy. The Pope is not, by himself, above the Church; but within it as one of the baptised, and within the College of Bishops as a Bishop among Bishops, called at the same time - as



SYNODALITY

Successor of Peter - to lead the Church of Rome which presides in charity over all the Churches".

Synodality in the missionary church invites every baptized Christian to work for 'making synodality happen' at all levels in the local Church, in the communion between local Churches, and in the universal Church. The fact that everyone's opinion is sought for, to enhance the quality of discussions and decisions in the Synod 2023, it is the responsibility of the laity, the religious and the secular clergy to take the process of preparation for the synod seriously and make it a real journeying together. We must not forget that the Church is called and qualified as the People of God to set out on her mission. We have to remember ultimately that the principle of synodality is the action of the Spirit in the communion of the Body of Christ and in the missionary journey of the People of God. For we know that the gift of the Holy Spirit, which is one and the same in all who have been baptised, is manifested in many forms: the equal dignity of the baptised; the universal call to holiness. (Lumen Gentium, 49). All of us have a responsibility in contributing to making this synodality happen. The priests must not think that it is only the priests, the religious and the bishops have something to say on this; the laity must not sit idle on this great opportunity. Instead, they must jump at this God-sent moment- Kairos- and make things happen. If they miss this opportunity then they have no reasons in the future to complain and grumble. A synodal Church is a Church of participation and co-responsibility.

Anthony Ray Hinton – Innocent Death Row Prisoner

Sr Lini Sheeja MSC

Anthony Ray Hinton walked out of the Jefferson County Jail in Birmingham, Alabama, a free man for the first time in 30 years at 0930am on Friday, April 3, 2015. “The sun does shine,” he said as he was embraced by family and friends. One of the longest serving death row prisoners in Alabama history and among the longest serving condemned prisoners to be freed after presenting evidence of innocence, Mr Hinton was the 152nd person exonerated from death row since 1983.

Incident, Arrest and Death Sentence

Anthony Ray Hinton born on 1 June 1956 is an American activist, writer, and author who was wrongly convicted of the 1985 murders of two fast food restaurant managers in Birmingham, Alabama. On February 25, 1985, and July 2, 1985, two fast food managers, John Davidson and Thomas Wayne Vason, were killed in separate incidents during armed robberies at their fast-food restaurants in Birmingham. A survivor of a third restaurant robbery picked a photo of Anthony Ray Hinton, then age 29, from a line-up, and the police investigated him. At the time, Hinton worked at a supermarket warehouse and lived with his mother, Buhlar Hinton, at her home in rural Alabama, about half an hour north of Birmingham.

Mistaken witness identification, misleading forensic evidence, and inadequate legal defence caused his imprisonment for a 1985 double robbery-murder that he had not committed. His case was appealed all the way to the Supreme Court of the United States, which paved the way for his exoneration in April 2015. His case rested on shoddy ballistics and mistaken eyewitness testimony, and a polygraph he passed that was not allowed into evidence by the trial judge. In 1986, it took the jury just one hour to convict Anthony of both murders by a vote of 10-2. Alabama is one of three states that do not require a unanimous verdict to send a person to death row. After the murders of Thomas Wayne Vason and John Davidson at two restaurants in Jefferson County in 1985, Anthony was identified as the shooter in a third robbery, which caused the police to search Anthony’s mother’s house, where they found an old, very worn .38 revolver hidden under a mattress. Even though there was no other physical evidence tying him to any of the crimes, state firearms experts claimed that the bullets used in all three robberies came from the same gun.

Racism the Reason

Speaking to the BBC, Mr Hinton said: “I was at work when one of the crimes took place. That wasn’t good enough for them. They didn’t even begin to check my alibi. “They just had a young black man - I was 29 years old - and I didn’t have no money and in the United States, especially in the South that spelled conviction.” This whole case was built around racism and a lie. He said he was told by police the crime would be “put on him” and there were five things that would convict him. “The police said:



DEATH ROW PRISONER

‘First of all you’re black, second of all you’ve been in prison before, third, you’re going to have a white judge, fourth, you’re more than likely to have a white jury, and fifth, when the prosecution gets to putting this case together you know what that spells? Conviction! Conviction! Conviction! Conviction! Conviction!’ He was right and that’s what happened.” He said: “I think if I’d have been white, they would have tested the gun and said it didn’t match and I would have been released, but when you’re poor and black in America you stand a higher chance of going to prison for something you didn’t do.”

30 Years of Faith and Resilience

Hinton was sent to death row, which meant that he was held in solitary confinement for nearly three decades. During his decades in prison, he was supported by his mother’s unwavering faith in his innocence, as well as that of a long-time friend, Lester Bailey, who visited him monthly. Unfortunately, Hinton’s mother died in 2002. While on death row, Hinton spent much of his time reading. He eventually organized a book club that was allowed to meet in the prison’s law library.

No Star and Moon for 30 Years; But Hope Alone

“In my mind, I never did see myself going to the death chamber,” he said. “But what I never lost sight of was I was sentenced to death. And every day I woke up with a death sentence over my head and every night I lay down with a death sentence over my head. And I just had to believe that God would not allow me to die for something I didn’t do.” Instead of spending time worrying, he used

his mind to escape. While sitting in his 5×7 cell, he saw himself marrying actress Halle Berry, playing for the New York Yankees and the New York Knicks and traveling. “Solitary confinement is really designed to break you, to make you crazy,” he said. “But it didn’t for me.”

Forgiveness behind the Bars

During the meeting, Hinton told that he forgave those who put him in prison. “What I learned about forgiveness is that it’s not about the other person. It’s about me,” Hinton said. “I didn’t forgive those people who did this to me because they asked me to or because they called me or wrote me. I didn’t forgive them so that they could sleep well at night. I forgave them so I could sleep well at night.”

Behind the Bars to Frontline

Since his release, Hinton has spoken in various venues about the injustices of the Alabama judicial system and other issues related to his conviction and imprisonment. He completed a memoir entitled *The Sun Does Shine: How I Found Life and Freedom on Death Row* (2018), and has given readings and talks around the country about the book and his experiences. Hinton’s book received extremely positive reviews. Writing for *The Guardian*, Tim Adams described the book as, “A story of forgiveness and struggle” “My liberation just shows you what God can do if you put your faith and trust in Him. More than anything, I’m happy about hope. I want to give young men hope, the hope that has inspired me to do what I am doing.”



My Experience in PMI Mission

Sr Fidelis HCM

When God, the creator, mixes with us humans, great and beautiful and wonderful things begin to happen, sometimes without our knowing it even. This is exactly true of my experience with my involvement in PMI's mission and ministry. PMI stands for a noble cause of untying the fetters of those behind the bars and liberating them to see the sun shine and the ray of hope in their future days. God has promised us to take us step by step.... not all at once, but step by step and... each step will be a miracle... This is what I experienced throughout, especially in the beginning of this ministry in Karnataka. A living faith in the indwelling presence of God in my soul was another aspect of my experience which enabled me to find meaning, purpose and fulfilment in this ministry. I found a new awakening and confidence as I started working for the jail birds. But it was not as easy as we see the ministry today.


PMI Karnataka

The source of inspiration to start the mission in Karnataka was Fr Varghese Karipper, a charismatic priest who initiated prison ministry as a ministry of the Church in India. He often said: "Be a love bomb, let it be exploded, not to kill, but to heal the broken hearts". The first National conference of PMI was conducted in Bangalore from 12 – 14th August 1994, in which Fr Karipper was elected as the 1st National Coordinator. The official inauguration of the National office of PMI was done on 22nd January

1995 along with the rehabilitation centre for the released women prisoners, Jeevodaya Ashram, at Huskur, off Hosur road, in a farm house attached to a cow shed which was repaired and cleansed and functioned as the PMI National office. Those days the prison was in the city of Bangalore at Majestic area. After three months we had to shift from Huskur to Sumanahalli where the then Archbishop, Most Rev Dr Alphonse Mathias allowed us to occupy the place where the leprosy rehab work was going on. We remained there for two years till we bought the land and built the house at Doddakannalli, Carmelaram, Bangalore – 35, and inaugurated the new house on 24th June 1997.

Bangalore Central Prison Visit

In order to get permission to visit the jail Fr Varghese Karipper, Sr Clara and myself prepared ourselves with prayer and went to meet the Inspector General of prisons (IGP) who was kind enough to listen to us as we explained about our mission in the prison. After hearing everything he responded saying that the work we would be doing was ok, provided there was no conversion. He was happy and gave us permission to visit the prison once a week. On our way back Fr Karipper carried a small packet of sand from the jail campus and brought it home. In the evening when we came together for prayer, he opened it and spread it on the floor and all the three of us knelt down on the sand, prayed and it continued for days. Before entering the prison when it was in the city, all the volunteers together would go to St Martha's hospital chapel and spend one hour in prayer and then proceeded to the jail and coming out of the prison too we stood outside the prison and thanked the



Lord before returning to our homes. We used to help the poor prisoners who had no one to help or no means to pay the fine, with free legal aid and financial support to pay their fine. Prisoners were very happy to welcome us and would wait for us and if we missed one day, they used to ask us, “why sisters, you did not come last week, we were waiting for you and we missed you.” When we were with them holding group or individual sessions using passages from the Bible or Bhagavatgeeta or any good quotes, it enabled them to cope up with their life situations, to forgive and to let go of the past hurts and wounds and thus be healed. It was truly an enriching time for them.

Deep Realizations

On another occasion we were restricted to say the name of Jesus inside the prison. When we had the meeting with Mr Sangliana, the then IGP, a Christian from North East, he told us that we should never be afraid of pronouncing the name of Jesus as we are his followers and encouraged us to go on with our mission in the prison. I believe and am convinced that this mission is inspired by the lifestyle and mission of Jesus, well reflected in the Gospel passages. This mission is built on the conviction that there are no born criminals or prostitutes, but are made so by society, and all human beings are loved by God their creator, as it is well expressed in the Gospel passages. “Give me a drink of water” (Jn: 4/7). I realized that when we begin to live for the least, lost and the last, the low caste and the marginalized, we become powerful and effective instruments in the hand of God and become part of His wonderful, redemptive master plan. Yes, I am convinced through the experiences of my involvement in PMI’s mission, that we



PMI MISSION

are all here to give ‘that water, the water of love, the water of forgiveness, the water of compassion and the water of acceptance’ to those lost in the maze of life.

In Jeevodaya Ashram we could give ‘that water’ which could save so many who would have been otherwise lost in the darkness of the world. I am happy to bring to your notice that we could settle in life about seventy-five women in marriage having their own families which would otherwise be impossible if they were not in Jeevodaya. Even though we have no big bank balances, all the marriages were conducted well with the support and collaboration and contribution of many generous hearts. Now people have started asking for girls from Jeevodaya for marriage saying that they would be well formed as they are with the sisters.

Conclusion

I am happy to see the growth of PMI as a Banyan tree which sends its roots to the ground spreading far and wide. PMI has extended its service all throughout our country, training the volunteers and forming units and rehabilitation centres, conducting programmes for the prisoners etc. In this Ruby Jubilee year of PMI, I’m grateful to God for the many chances and opportunities afforded to me to walk with the people who are oppressed, uprooted, homeless, marginalized, abused, imprisoned, undocumented and so on. It is something beautiful, a gift of God to take care of people - the men and women in jail. It is something beautiful for God and a great gift of God” (St Mother Teresa of Calcutta).



Can Prison become a Place of Redemption?


Sr Adele Korah SCCG

During my ministry in the prison, the Lord granted me the opportunity to witness the changes and transformation in the hearts of several criminals. The lost sheep who had turned away from the right path and were caught up in the thorn bush of crimes were touched by their loving God and were able to take a U turn in their life. I was convinced of the fact that no human being can transform a hard-core criminal, but the grace of God and the touch of a living God can give them a new heart and a new spirit. My faith and trust in God was rewarded as I witnessed the change in the hearts of double murderers, thieves, adulterers, hired armed robbers and serial killers who murdered people for a petty sum of money given as quotations. Some of them who were renewed have become catalysts among the brethren to assist other brothers in turning to the right values of God. When these brothers notice that some among them are disappointed, dejected and are in distress, they assist them and also bring them for counseling and prayer. All those who were transformed are those who were touched by the Almighty and All Loving God who is ever merciful and accepts every repented sinner in His arms with forgiving love.

Reconciliation an Integral Part of the Ministry

When I meet certain inmates in prison

who are very sad and lonely because of the rejection of their own parents and dear ones, we visit their families whenever possible to bring reconciliation between those inside the prison and their families outside along with Fr Sony C.P from Snehajyothi Rehabilitation Center or with other volunteers. Once a prisoner by name Mohith told me that he had not received a single letter from his parents in the past six years that he was in prison. Since no one had visited him from outside the prison, I asked some of my friends to visit him with some toilet articles and snacks. I contacted his parents requesting them to write a letter to him. They ignored my request. Hence I took him to his house on parole with the assistance of Fr Pascal Cutinha C.P. When they entered the house of the prisoner, they did not show any sign to their son of their acceptance. But when we started a prayer of reconciliation, and prayed for the family, Mohith fell at the feet of his parents asking forgiveness for his past life. There were reasons for the indifference shown by the parents towards him. He was a prodigal who had disobeyed his parents and run away from home. He had lived as a drug addict away from his parents, married a girl of his choice, and become an alcoholic. He was also the cause of his wife's death. He got arrested and had become a convicted prisoner. As the prayer was conducted standing below a crucifix referring to the forgiveness taught by Jesus on the cross, the family experienced the Lord's touch and were in tears. The prayer was followed by moments of exchange of forgiveness among all the members of the family. All rejoiced in the acceptance of the prodigal in the family. I had many similar experiences



of bringing reconciliation between the brethren in prison and their relatives.

A Full Time Ministry

I consider myself as a full-time volunteer of Prison Ministry chosen by Christ to assist people in need at any time all through the week, or at any hour of the day. Once at 8pm when I had just finished dinner, I received a call from a released prisoner that he was in trouble as he and his brother are in danger of being arrested and put in prison because his brother, an alcoholic, had quarreled with a person on the street and a group had called the police to arrest him. I contacted Fr Sony C.P for help and he willingly accompanied me to the spot to assist those who had called for help. I met the police who were preparing to take him to the Police Station. I pleaded with the police not to send the man to prison but to permit me to admit him in a Rehabilitation Center for his reformation rather than imprisoning him. The Police replied to me, "If you plead like a mother begging help for her son, how can I refuse you. Please take him and do what you think is best." I was greatly relieved when Fr Sony accepted to take him to his Rehabilitation center immediately, though it was in the night. The accused was taken to the Rehabilitation Center instead of the Central prison. The greatest joy I felt during my ministry was when a criminal was touched by God's forgiving love and was transformed, giving up his life of crime and choosing to walk in the right path. I felt greater joy on such occasions, than when I received awards from 'Namma Bengaluru' or 'Janaseva Award' from C.R.I Bangalore, for my services in the prison.



PLACE OF REDEMPTION

Preparing to Receive Sacraments

During my ministry in prison, I met several inmates, who were baptized Christians in their childhood, but had never read the Bible nor received any other Sacraments. Some of them who had fallen into a life of crime were gradually transformed during their life in prison by the touch of God. They received the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Holy Eucharist and Confirmation for the first time in the prison. I recall the life of some among them who were murderers, drug addicts and alcoholics before entering the prison. When they experienced God's love and healing touch, they started responding to the call of God to walk on a new path according to the living WORD of God which was broken to them in the prayer meetings. After their release some of them have returned to the society as torch bearers of the light of God. Such persons are living a renewed life in their family and society. I remember a person, who was a member of a gang of thieves, going about with an iron rod in his hand as he was involved in criminal activities of looting houses, shops and banks, was arrested and brought to the prison. Though he was a Christian, he had never entered the prison chapel for prayer. A Christian volunteer brought him for prayer meeting. Later he was prepared for receiving the Sacraments and was totally transformed by the touch of God during his prison life. Today he is living an exemplary life earning his living from a modest job and supporting his family. What greater joy can one desire in the life of a volunteer of Prison Ministry?

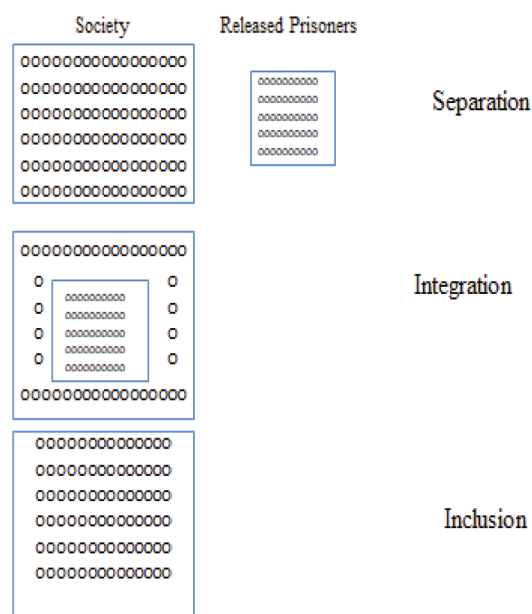
Integration or Inclusion?

Sr Udaya CIC

Integration is bringing people together who were formerly separated, whereas Inclusion is being part of a group which gives the sense of belongingness.

Separation- Integration - Inclusion

The released prisoners are received into society under 3 categories. Some are separated, others are integrated and still others are included in the society. Those that are separated are inside the society but still they are not considered equal to other members in the society. Those who are integrated are also inside the society but still they are labeled and they don't feel the sense of belongingness and love from the society. But those who are included get equal rights, consideration and respect from society. The diagram below explains it well.




Importance of Inclusion

The released prisoners in our society/ country need more inclusion than integration. They expect a healthy and friendly society / community which can accept them and make them feel welcomed, respected, represented, supported and valued. Once they are released, they are in a confused state of not knowing from where to begin their life and find a new job. Strain from family and psychological problems also become agents fueling this confused and pathetic situation and disturb their mental health. When they are released, they are with depression, anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder. Since they are unable to get the professional and technical licenses for job opportunities, they feel like they are reoffended. When they are refused inclusion in the society, there are possibilities that they can start criminal activities and end up in prison again. They need to be accepted in society and experience belongingness and love. Starting from the family, the society and the world at large should accept them and include them as others in the society. Social inclusion, reconciliation and equality are the ones they are most in need of.

Jesus's View on Inclusiveness

The way Jesus looked at sinners, prostitutes, destitute and marginalized is different from that of others in the society. He was always found among these people and He wanted them to be considered as any other person in the society. Jesus taught us to pray, "Our father who art in heaven". It reminds us that we all are members of the universal family, having God our father. Whether we are a sinner, criminal or convict, we still belong to that same family as brothers and sisters.



Following Jesus, every one of us needs to have the guts to accept the world as one family (Vasudhaiva kutumbakam- Sanskrit)

Preparation for the Inclusion of Prisoners inside the Prison:

- It is recommended that prisoners be educated with vocational and marketable job skills to practice in the society once they are released.
- Various Literacy schemes can be introduced to the prisoners to prepare them for gainful employment after the release.
- Motivational sessions and orientation programs can be arranged for them to boost their self-esteem, which will play an important role in developing their confidence and in balancing their mental health.
- The government should show interest in the wellbeing of the released convicts in placing them back into the society.
- Questions for Personal Reflection?
- Am I ready to welcome the released prisoners back to the society with love and respect?
- Is there anything that I can do for the inclusiveness of the released prisoners in the society?
- What more could be done for the proper settlement of released prisoners?

One Body with Many Members

For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body-Jews or Greeks, slaves or free-and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many. If the foot would say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. And if the ear would say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. If all were a single member, where would the body be? As it is, there are many members, yet one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you," nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." On the contrary, the members of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and those members of the body that we think less honorable we clothe with greater honor, and our less respectable members are treated with greater respect; whereas our more respectable members do not need this. But God has so arranged the body, giving the greater honor to the inferior member, that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it.

Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers; then deeds of power, then gifts of healing, forms of assistance, forms of leadership, various kinds of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret? But strive for the greater gifts. And I will show you a still more excellent way (1Cor 12,12-31).



Prison Ministry India- A Call to Reach out to the Periphery


Br Pradeep Anthony L OFM

Priorities of PMI and Franciscans

Seeing Christ in the wounded society is the call of Prison Ministry India. The mission is not only seeing but also reaching out, restoring, reintegrating and redeeming the peripheries. Being a Franciscan, reaching out to the peripheries to me is a call within my call. Prison Ministry India clearly is in line with the charisms of the Franciscans. As the first priority of the Franciscan Order is the Spirit of Prayer and Devotion followed by Fraternity, so also in my place of regency the first priority is given to prayer life. Only from prayer life all the source of energy is derived. There is chain fasting done in groups, rosaries recited, divine mercy chaplets said, Adorations conducted and Masses offered in fraternity. All these are done in community with particular intentions to transform the prisoners. Secondly, helping each other in all the works that we do and by becoming interdependent we make our works more effective and efficient.

Mission of Christ - to Reach-out to the Periphery

The whole of my day is packed with several works like going to banks, post office, marketing, teaching children, Adoration, Mass, and counselling children. However, a new kind of activity has been added to the routine tasks i.e., reaching out through survey, the real peripheries of covid victims. After signing a Memorandum of Understanding with Child Welfare Centre,



Prison Ministry India has taken a call to reach out to these victims. The Government in return is planning to provide some schemes to these families in the near future. As a regent I am having the opportunity to visit the families affected by covid and do social investigation report and collect all the required documents from them for the government schemes. My study of Masters in Sociology didn't die only in theory but rather is presently practised on the ground. It is really a moving experience to meet the family members of those who died out of Black Fungus, meeting the children who have lost both their parents, listening to the agony of a single parent and hearing their cries about their helpless situation.

The mission of Christ continues till we continue to reach out to the peripheries. Our call is to join in the salvific plan of God to save all of them; that is what God the Father wills (1Tim 2:4). As I started doing this social investigation report another task was added to this. From Juvenile Court there came a request to Prison Ministry India to make a social investigation report of the children who have committed crimes before the age of 18. They gave a list to do the social investigation report. Thus, as the word of God rightly tells those who have more, more will be given (Mt 25:29). And this has come true to me through the Prison Ministry India. Thanks to God for he knows what our heart really wants and thanks to the fraternity which has given this opportunity to work with Prison Ministry India. We are also reaching out to the peripheries by visiting the observation home, open prison, educating many prisoner's children, providing them home, releasing many prisoners by paying their fines, forming the lives of prisoners' children and much more.



I remember the day when I was asked, 'where do you like to do your ministry?' I first opted for doing something for the covid victims. My plea was rejected outright, the reason I presume was the demise of 3 precious gems of Indian Friars and also many friars who tested positive. Now in some way or the other my heart's desire is getting fulfilled. I knew we have lost 3 of our gems. I believe that their life manifested the words of the Gospel, as there is no greater love than to lay down one's life for his friends. (Jn 15:13)

All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day

As the Church celebrates All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day it's really worth reflecting on these two days. Speaking on All Saints' Day, Pope Francis in his book 'Rebuking the Devil' brings out the aspect of how important it is to guard our heart. He claims very strongly that hatred and thoughts of division are planted in our hearts by the evil one. He goes on to explain the saints are those who focused on God, who is love. The secret of being a saint is in carrying love in our hearts and reaching out to the peripheries. If we carry hatred in our hearts instead of love and reach out to the peripheries, then the fruit that we bring out will definitely be the kingdom of the devil instead of the kingdom of God. St. Paul explains precisely the characteristics of love. He writes that love is patient, kind; it rejoices in the truth, bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things and endures all things. St. Paul also explains what love is not. Love doesn't rejoice in wrong doing, it will not envy or boast, it isn't rude, arrogant, or insist on its own, love is not irritable, resentful. (1Cor 13) In the present world people have lots of chances to label their feelings as love

when really it isn't. The need of St Paul to enumerate the characteristics of love significantly indicates the misunderstanding of the concept of love by the people of those times as now. I acknowledge that it is easy to write and preach what love is but it is very difficult to practise love in reality. As it demands lot from you, namely your time, efforts, energy, commitment, and hard work in a particular way. A way taught by God, to seek, serve, and save the lost without expecting any reward from them. At times love demands even your own life that is why so many saints renounced and gave their own lives. Therefore, in my understanding I would define a saint as one who carries love in his or her heart to the peripheries.

Secondly, reflecting on All Souls' Day, it is very inappropriate to think that our life ends here with our body when in reality, our soul doesn't die with our body. The church teaches its faithful about the three states that a soul can enter into after its death: they are heaven, hell and purgatory. In heaven the soul enjoys bliss and union with God eternally. In hell the soul is condemned to eternal death with the demons who out of their own will, choose this place. Purgatory is the place where many souls are in need to be purified in order to reach the eternal abode of God. They could be purified by the prayers of the faithful, the Church reminds us of the importance of praying for these souls in purgatory. Hence, the mission of Prison Ministry India is the mission of Christ and His Church, which is not only to seek and serve the peripheries but also to save them.





PRISON MINISTRY INDIA
13TH PMI NATIONAL CONFERENCE SPIRITUAL PREPARATION
PMI DIOCESAN FASTING PRAYER DAYS

CONTINUED...

1. PMI SOUTH REGION

Regional Coordinator - Fr Shaji Stephen O de M – 9995577738

1.4 Telangana

State Coordinator – Fr Dion Isaac - 9949158988

No	Diocese	PMI Coordinator	Telephone	Prayer Days
56	Adilabad	Fr Raja Ratnam	8639539299	27 November 2021
57	Hyderabad	Fr Dion Isaac	9949158988	28 November 2021
58	Khammam	K Joseph	9441779899	29 November 2021
59	Nalgonda	Sr Jessy KV Sr Rose Mary	9440542119 7036416255	30 November 2021
60	Shamshabad			1 December 2021
61	Warangal	TB Jose Sebastian Philip Lazarus	9390100711	2 December 2021

1.5 Tamilnadu & Puducherry

State Coordinator – Msgr Anthony Samy – 944420959

No	Diocese	Coordinator	Telephone	Prayer Days
62	Chengleput	Fr Sahayaraj	9585205060	3 December 2021
63	Coimbatore	Fr Valsas Edward Vimal	8015015459	4 December 2021
64	Cuddalore-Pondicherry	Fr Joseph Arumai Selvam	9597555211	5 December 2021
65	Dharmapuri	Fr Amalanathan	9976890390	6 December 2021
66	Dindigul	Fr Maria Arputham	9894019657	7 December 2021
67	Hosur			8 December 2021
68	Kottar	Fr Sahaya Glacin	9943961099	9 December 2021
69	Kumbakonam	Fr David Rajesh	8056893904	10 December 2021
70	Kuzhithurai	Fr Shine S	9952862474	11 December 2021
71	Madras-Mylapore	Fr Varghese Rosario	9884598808	12 December 2021
72	Ooty	Fr Amirtharaj Dominic	8754822440	13 December 2021
73	Madurai	Sr Fatima	9940964029	14 December 2021
74	Marthandom			15 December 2021
75	Palayamkottai	Fr Antony Raj VS	9443451996	16 December 2021
76	Ramanathapuram	Fr Geo Kunnathuparambil	8248747920	17 December 2021
77	Salem			18 December 2021
78	Sivagangai	Fr Amalan	9488080640	19 December 2021



79	Thanjavur			20 December 2021
80	Thiruchirapalli	Fr MS Antony Samy	9489644777	21 December 2021
81	Thuckalay			22 December 2021
82	Tuticorin	Fr John Suresh	9688370335	23 December 2021
83	Vellore			24 December 2021

2. CENTRAL REGION

Central Regional Coordinator – Fr Wilfred Fernandes – 9822066675

2.1 Bihar

State Coordinator – Fr Arogyaswamy - 9572098335

No	Diocese	Coordinator	Telephone	Prayer Days
84	Bettiah	Fr Cludis	9482256669	25 December 2021
85	Bhagalpur	Fr Joachim	9631946569	26 December 2021
86	Buxar	Fr Arogyaswamy	7903679707	27 December 2021
87	Muzaffarpur	Fr Joseph Maran	8969757337	28 December 2021
88	Patna	Fr Susai	9430037085	29 December 2021
89	Purnea	Fr Rajendra Beck	9430687434	30 December 2021

2.2 Chhattisgarh

State Coordinator - Fr Alexander Ekka SJ - 9685858115

No	Diocese	Coordinator	Telephone	Prayer Days
90	Ambikapur	Fr Anurenjan	7772062818	31 December 2021
91	Jagadapur	Fr Thomas Muppathilchira Fr Dilp Minj	9110201208 9479288516	1 January 2022
92	Jashpur	Fr Sergius Kindo	7748960428	2 January 2022
93	Raigarh	Sr Jwala C T C	9406035409	3 January 2022
94	Raipur			4 January 2022

2.3 Goa, Daman and Diu

State Coordinator - Mr David Fernandes – 9922701071

No	Diocese	Coordinator	Telephone	Prayer Days
95	Goa	David Fernandes	9922701071	5 January 2022

2.4 Gujarat

State Coordinator - Sr Fulmani LDSFX – 8999889922, 9638454172

No	Diocese	Coordinator	Telephone	Prayer Days
96	Ahmedabad			6 January 2022
97	Baroda	Sr Fulmani LDSFX	8999889922	7 January 2022
98	Gandhinagar	Fr Dominic Savio	9428269903	8 January 2022
99	Rajkot			9 January 2022



Make Someone Smile in Prison

Fr Sebastian Vadakumpadan

This is my vision. Little from my side, little help, little sacrifice, little adjustment, little hardship, little care, little time for others, little by little; This is my whole life. This is what I was trying to do with my life in prison ministry. Jesus tells us to love your neighbor rather than the whole world. You may not be able to see the entire world. You don't know the end of everything and the lives of everyone. You may not cloth everyone and feed all the hungry people. You cannot quench the thirst of everyone but you can do something for someone next to you. You make a difference to that one though you may not be able to transform the whole world. If hundreds of the people think in this way, it may not take much time to build a better world. If everybody cleans the path in front of his house, the whole of India would be clean and tidy.

Two Mothers

As I was attending an international conference in Thailand, there were two mothers one was the mother of the victim and the other of the offender of a murder case. Both were in tears as they shared the experience. One lost her son forever. The hope of the family was taken away. The other mother suffered the shame from the family members and society. No one would come to her home, no visitors and they were fully forsaken by the society. They felt to

leave the locality. The identity was normally a credit to anyone but here the identity was a burden. She bore the son for ten months but now pregnant with the shame of the son for the remaining life. Both were profusely crying and hugged each other. We were in tears to watch over their expression with fully remorse hearts. It was a terrible reality to be faced by both parties of the crimewhether you are on the victim's side or offender's side. How can I understand all the following expressions of my life such as a silent prayer, a silent expectation, a little whisper from my heart, a little waiting, a little mortification, a sacrifice of taking away a piece of waste paper from veranda to dust bin for a conversion of a soul. All these are not trumpeting of our lives but a silent action which takes no notice but works wonders. St Theresa of Child Jesus had a prayer of this sort for Pranzini, who had taken the lives of three people at a stretch. It bore the fruit at the time of this hard-core criminal's execution. He embraced the same cross and received the mercy of God from a priest. A silent prayer and little mortification and a wish to be a missionary had made the saint, the patron of missionaries who had not gone on any expedition with the gospel and it was the positive prayer that the saint offered for others. It could travel miles. Life is not often much of activities and programs alone but active in prayer.

Effective Volunteer

You may not be a full-time volunteer but can become an effective volunteer. I prefer to be an effective volunteer and that is the mission of prison ministry. You may be a hidden volunteer but an effective volunteer.



Let the big walls of prison be bullet proof but not prayer proof. Your prayer can break the bullet proof thick wall. Your prayer breaks the bullet-proof hardcore lives for whom the society and family lost hope. Prisoners must feel that still they are wanted because someone is coming in search of him. He finds solace telling himself that “there is still someone who asks me about my health and family; even though my own family doesn’t want me;” The society doesn’t expect him again at home. Even his own daughter dims his hope. It was a heartbreaking experience to hear the words of a prisoner, “my daughter does not want my presence even for her marriage though my special parole is sanctioned and made all the last moment preparation to be out for the marriage of my daughter”. He was broken by those words of her daughter. When the attitude of people is like this, it matters a lot in their lives by your visit to the prison. No one does anything without expecting anything in return in the prison but they feel and appreciate the sincere love you give without expecting anything in return. We must go not only once but many times to see them. We must not forget their names and must keep their aspirations alive. It is very much important to keep their hope and aspiration alive. There is no one in the prison to ask them in their lives, when are you coming out of prison? You may not value the joy of being outside if you have not been in prison at any time. You may not feel the value of friendship, the value of food, and the value of being in your own little space and so on. Here everything is common. They may not belong to anyone amidst of thousand of prisoners. They are

surrounded by many but no one belongs to them. Their wish has no value in the prison.

You Are not Alone

You are not alone in your journey. Mission is always with another. You are not alone in your suffering. Mother Mary had Elizabeth and Elizabeth had Mary to console each other. Many had stopped the journey of prison ministry because you don’t support them. They felt that they are alone. Jesus sent the disciples two by two to support each other. That is the style of God’s ministry. Prison ministry is not an exception to it. We are not alone in our prayer. Our united prayer shall overcome the heap of shame and agony to a better world of myriads of hope. They remember not because you gave them the money but you stood with them. Once a prison fight arose in Luringancho prison. Many were killed and others got injured. To overcome the situation the bishop of that diocese went and did the needful. Many were taken to the hospital and others were supported to calm the turmoil. Many rounds of discussions took place. Finally, after a week, there was a peace settlement. They wanted to hand over the guns and weapons. They didn’t want to hand it over to anyone else but to the bishop. The prisoners wanted his lordship as he stood with them in the situation of commotion. It is not your money rather yourself who should stand with them in their hopelessness, helplessness and lovelessness. Our presence is very much important for them. The year of Jubilee is the work of many; some are very effective in their ministry yet are silent. My sincere congratulations for being part of this great mission of Jesus.



Reconciliation with Oneself

Br Arun Arockyaraj SG

When a person is able to be reconciled with God, that person reconciles with oneself and others. By committing sin, a person cuts off relation with oneself and he/she begins to lead a life of their own, which actually they do not want. When a person misuses his/her own choice of freedom, he/she goes away from himself/herself, others and from God. Hence, he/she is completely isolated, therefore, he/she needs to establish a personal relationship with God, with others (society) and within himself/herself.

Today we are living in an individualistic world, where each one lives in one's own world; people do not know how to relate with others and with God. Only a sense of sin can lead a person to reconciliation and thereby he/she is able to build up a relationship with his/her creator and the people around. When there is no sense of sin, a person loses his/her moral consciousness. In the sacrament of reconciliation, he/she forms his/her conscience and become aware of his/her own weakness and he/she tries to strengthen one's character. Our brokenness and the wounded state of our heart require reconciliation and healing in many areas of our life. "God's own peace, which is beyond all understanding, will stand guard over your hearts and minds, in Christ Jesus" (Phil 4: 7).

Every Christian has the responsibility to touch the prisoners' heart through the act of reconciliation, as the prisoners are our brothers and sisters. Today prisoners are in

need of reconciliation with God and others. Prisoners almost forget the love of God and love of neighbor and lead a kind of self-oriented life. To bring them back to God is to make prisoners understand the value and richness of the sacrament of reconciliation. It is a must for them to convert themselves and restore peace of mind in their spiritual life.

All our guilt of sin will totally be forgiven through the sacrament of reconciliation. Finally, we should not forget that it is reconciliation which heals our bitter memories and re-unites us with God and with each other.

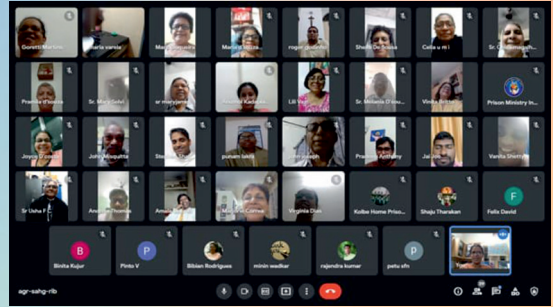
LOVE

Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does 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.

Love never ends. But as for prophecies, they will come to an end; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will come to an end. For we know only in part, and we prophesy only in part; but when the complete comes, the partial will come to an end. When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became an adult, I put an end to childish ways. For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known. And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love (1 Cor 13,4-13).



PMI Alapuzha Unit Meeting



**PMI Burning Bush Spiritual Banquet
November 2021**



**PMI Delhi Team Meeting His
Eminence Oswald Cardinal Gracias**



**PMI in Collaboration with Rotary Club
Kochi Distributes Covid Kit to Inmates in
Ernakulam District Jail**



**PMI Volunteers Convenes Dental
Camp at Dongri Prison**



**PMI Volunteers Convenes Medical
Camp at Raison Subjail**



**PMI Volunteers Convenes Medical
Camp in Central Prison, Shimoga**



**PMI Volunteers Convenes Medical
Camp in Sagar Prison**



**PMI Volunteers Distributing
Clothes to Adharwadi Prison**



**PMI Volunteers Distributing
Clothes to Saigand Prison**



**PMI Volunteers Visiting Guwahati
Prison**



**PMI Volunteers Visiting Patan
Prison**



**PMI Volunteers Visiting Women
Prison, Thane**



**Ummachan Chackupurackal Receiving
Award for his Commitment against Death
Penalty**



PMI Delhi Team Visiting Most Rev Leopoldo Girelli, Apostolic Nuncio