



PRISON VOICE

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NATIONAL MONTHLY

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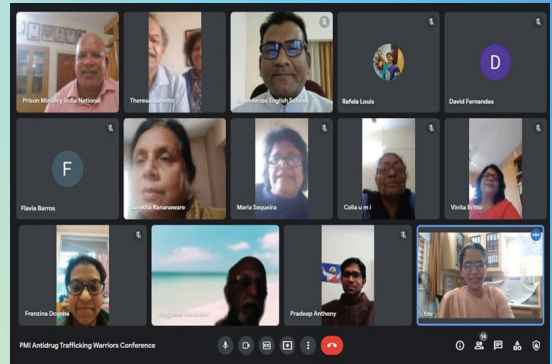
**Burning Bush Spiritual Banquet
Holy Mass**



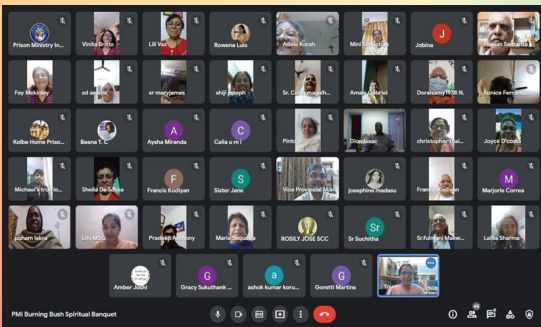
**Christmas Celebration at
Bangalore Central Prison**



**PMI Ambikapur Unit Celebrates
Christmas with Juvenile Home Boys**



**PMI Antidrug Trafficking
Brigadiers Meeting**



**PMI Burning Bush Spiritual
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**PMI Mangalore Unit Distributes
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Recollection Day**



**PMI Volunteers Congratulating the
new Archbishop of Trivandrum**

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PRISON VOICE

NATIONAL MONTHLY



When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (Lk 2,22)

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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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CONSECRATED LIFE TO SEARCH AND SERVE THE LOST

Consecrated Vocation

“Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born, I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations” (Jer 3:15). God had a plan for each one of us for choosing us and entrusting us with a mission. We were set apart and sanctified for this purpose, which is inspired by the Gospel. The basis of consecration for all the baptized is the sharing in the consecration of Jesus, the Son of God and saviour; and the exemplary life of Mother Mary. Through the consecrated are a minority in number, they have a rich presence in the Church and in the world through their wealth of communities and groups. They perform a genuine ministry of salvation of mankind through the celebration of the Eucharist, liturgical prayers, asceticism and contemplation. They are active in evangelization, in works of charity, serving the victims of both old and new forms of poverty; in being close to the sick and the marginalised, in hospitals and dispensaries, in the education field, in schools and universities, in the advancement of culture, for the migrants, in teaching the values of justice and peace, and in the means of social communication. Often the consecrated life is found in the frontlines of the Church’s mission. I personally find the Prison Ministry India’s service to the lost and the least of society, in particular to persons behind the bars, an overwhelming mission.

Commitment of the Consecrated

The consecrated women and men share the joys and hopes and the sorrows and anguish of the men and women of today, especially of the poor and suffering, because nothing that is genuinely human fails to find an echo



Sr Amala DC
Chief Editor

in the hearts of Christ’s disciples. By virtue of their consecration, they are particularly free and willing to leave all things and go to the ends of the earth to preach the Gospel. They are always full of courage for their mission, and their apostolate is often outstanding in its admirable resourcefulness and initiative. They are generous and are often to be found in the remotest mission stations, where they may have to endure great dangers to health and even to life.

The Consecrated in Prison Ministry India

I am indebted to share about our PMI service to the least and the lost even in the midst of the pandemic as truly doing a lot. It is spearheaded by men and women religious, diocesan priests, lay volunteers who are committed and everyone according to their vocation which reminds others to live day by day with the power of hope and faith. For this very reason the brethren behind the bars, the poor, the sick, the little ones and those who have lost life’s meaning are evangelized and instilled the spirit of self-worth to witness around them to the rebirth of hope. We are grateful to Fr Francis and Fr Varghese for their effort in initiating this ministry by reaching out, releasing, reforming, rehabilitating, reintegrating and redeeming prisoners and their families as well as shaping them in order that they live a dignified life through our rehabilitation centres and Kolbe homes for boys and girls. The well begun work of 40 years of PMI service for the lost and the least continue to flourish. I wish you all a happy consecrated life to its fullness.

JIM WAHLBERG'S THE BIG HUSTLE

Jim Wahlberg

Jim Wahlberg, brother of film actor Mark Wahlberg, after he recovered from his tough upbringing in the streets of Dorchester and after his prolonged incarceration and incredible conversion, became producer, writer, and director of films, including *The Circle of Addiction*, *What About the Kids?*, and *The Lookalike*. Jim is the executive director of the Mark Wahlberg Youth Foundation, created to improve the quality of life for inner city youth through a working partnership with other youth organizations.

The Big Hustle

The Big Hustle authored by Jim Wahlberg illustrates the Boston-street kid's story of addiction, detention and redemption. Like a modern-day Augustine's *Confessions*, *The Big Hustle* reveals Wahlberg's gripping conversion story from a violent criminal to a devoted and faithful Christian. It explains the brutal true story of Jim Wahlberg, the fifth of nine kids growing up in a working-class Irish Catholic neighbourhood outside of Boston, hustling for attention any way he could get it, which led him to the biggest hustle of his life. Against all odds he was reformed, reconciled, rehabilitated, reintegrated and redeemed. Jim dedicated his new life as a former addict to working with addicts, and for years has spread the word that recovery is possible.

Incarceration

Wahlberg first entered prison at age 17 and served his five-year sentence at various



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

medium and maximum-security prisons. Most of his sentence was spent in the segregation unit. "It's a nightmare that you can't wake up from" Wahlberg writes in *The Big Hustle*. He found moments of friendship and kindness, but much of his time in maximum-security prison was dehumanizing and torturous. He recalls, "The mental pressure was just so intense. You did not want to fall out of favour with the other prisoners - hardened criminals that could kill you or torture you or make your life a living hell, just for one mistake".

Mother Teresa's Visit

After serving his five-year sentence, Wahlberg was out of prison for six months before he committed another crime and received a six- to nine-year sentence. It was during this second sentence that a brief encounter with Mother Teresa changed his life. On June 4, 1988, Mother Teresa happened to visit the maximum-security prison where Wahlberg was living. Mother Teresa and the sisters from her order came to the prison stayed with the inmates for Mass, kneeling beside them as "brothers and sisters before Christ", Wahlberg recalled. Then Mother Teresa gave a 15-minute address



JIM WAHLBERG

to the prisoners. She told them, "I will not forget you. I have you in the palm of my hand. You are precious to me. I love you." Wahlberg vividly recalls the transformative impact that Mother Teresa's compassion had on him. He writes, "For the first time in my life, I saw the face of Christ, the face of love. Mother Teresa knew that we weren't just inmates, prisoners; the wretched of the earth. We had names, we had stories, we had souls". When asked by the press why she had come, she responded simply, "You must find the face of God on the faces of these prisoners."

Father Jim Fratus

Wahlberg ended up becoming a faithful Catholic in prison, thanks both to Mother Teresa and to the influence of a holy prison chaplain, Father Jim Fratus. He received the Sacrament of Confirmation not long after Mother Teresa's visit, and was released on parole after serving half of the minimum for his sentence. "That moment with Mother Teresa changed my life," he wrote decades later in *The Big Hustle*. Mother Teresa and Father Fratus brought Christ's love to Wahlberg when he was a deeply troubled young man.

Looking at the Face of Christ

The book *The Big Hustle* discusses Wahlberg's faith journey, including his young family life, his drug and alcohol addiction and how he combated it, how a Catholic prison Chaplain 'hustled' him, and how a visit from Mother Teresa in prison changed his life! "I can specifically pick out that day as the

turning point in my life," Wahlberg said of St Teresa of Calcutta's visit to his prison. "I just remember seeing the kindness and the gentleness of her face." "It was time for the Mass we had in her honour, and the Cardinal was there. I was part of the procession, and I remember as we processed into the gym, the Cardinal had this big, fancy chair. He offered a big, fancy chair for Mother Teresa. He beckoned her to come, but she refused to go. Instead, she stayed on the floor with the inmates, on her knees the entire time, until it was time for her to speak. I couldn't take my eyes off her. I was looking at the face of Christ. The time came for her to speak, and she spoke words of love and mercy. Nothing was too big for God. That day absolutely changed my life. I then went to the priest and said, 'Father, I want to know more about God. I want to know more about Jesus Christ'. The next day, I started preparing to make my Confirmation."

Conclusion

Mother Teresa's visit to prison sparked in Jim Wahlberg the reverberation of reformation which was powerful enough to ascend from his criminal culture to Catholic culture; from his bad habits to good habits of love, life, forgiveness and commitment. In order that our visits to prisons become powerful enough to transform our incarcerated brethren we shall be empowered with prior preparations of fasting and prayer. While we do prison visits let other volunteers kneel before the Eucharistic Lord to intercede for the fruitfulness of the visit.



WORLD DAY FOR CONSECRATED LIFE


Br Pradeep Anthony L OFM

Purpose of the Consecrated Day

“To fall in love with God is the greatest romance; to seek him the greatest adventure; to find him, the greatest human achievement,” says St. Augustine of Hippo. Indeed, this statement consists of what religious life is all about. On February 2 all over the world we celebrate the world Day for consecrated life. It was initiated by Pope John Paul II in 1997. The ‘**Consecrated**’ day was intentionally selected on the feast day of the presentation. Although it was intended particularly for religious men and women, it subsequently calls all the entire humanity to universal holiness. It is particularly directed to religious men and women symbolizing, “The One who is lifted up on the Cross is drawing all people to Himself” (Jn 12:32 19:37, 34). It is a free response to being first loved by God (1Jn 4:19). The day of their consecration I would term as Valentine’s Day for the religious. The difference in this Valentine’s Day is that the lovers are not both humans but rather the intimate union is between God and a human person. It is the human being falling in love with the supreme beauty, the exact imprint of God’s very being (Heb 1:3). The religious have to strive to know Christ, and follow him by their total self-giving to Christ. (Mk 1: 16-20, Phil 3:8).

Vita Consecrata on Consecrated Life

The one important post-synodal document that is worth reading again and again is ‘Vita Consecrate.’ This document was written by Pope John Paul II on 25th March 1996.



The Latin words ‘Vita Consecrate’ means ‘The Consecrated Life.’ This document particularly defines the mission of the ‘**Consecrated**’ in the Church and in the world. History proves that consecrated men and women throughout their lives have consecrated themselves to Christ with undivided heart, (1Cor 7:34) in order to follow Christ like him by being obedient, chaste and poor (VC1). The document shows that the more one person becomes aware of the gift of Consecrated Life by God the more they will start thanking God for it. Consecrated life is total fidelity to the Gospel (VC3). The duty of consecrated life is to manifest the Incarnate Son of God; it is this beauty that satisfies human heart (VC16). Charity is the one continuous thread that runs throughout the Vita Consecrata in the Trinitarian dimension, holding aloft the paschal mystery of the birth, death and resurrection of Christ (VC21).

Service of the ‘Consecrated’ Towards the Least, Lost and Last

All over the world there are about more than 7 lakh religious who are ‘set apart’ for the work of Christ. Particularly in India according to the statistical data of CRI (Conference of Religious) about 1,30,610 ‘men and women’ religious are working in India. The major superiors are about 1025 from 399 Religious Congregations excluding all the secular institutes. Religious not only serve the entire nation of 138 crore people with their educational and medical institutions but also reach the peripheries by running leprosaria, orphanages, homes for the dying, HIV AIDS treatment centers and shelters for street kids. The Catholic Church has about 3500 health centres, with 1000 religious doctors and 25,000 religious nurses and 10,000 paramedical professionals. The Church stands outstandingly with

its baptized faithful of about 134 crore people to render a helping hand to all the peripheries.

Contribution of the PMI towards the Redemption of the Prisoners

Prison Ministry India has been serving the least, lost and last for about 40 years. It is a voluntary organization under Justice, Peace and Development commission of the Catholic Bishops Conference of India (CBCI). It has been fruitful in both outside as well as inside ministries. With regard to inside ministry, the pandemic has stopped the frequent visits of PMI volunteers to the prisons; however, PMI continues to reach the prisoners through their 24 hours of prayer and Eucharistic Adoration and it also supports the prisoners to be released by paying the fine that is due by the prisoners. PMI fulfills the needs of the prisoners, like buying bedsheets, sarees and so on. PMI helps the prisoners by its rehabilitation centres for men, women, boys and girls. There are about 20 rehabilitation centres in India. They are namely, for men: Snehashramam in Thrissur, Shantinivas in Ernakulam, Snehateeram in Alleppey, Kolbe Home in Chennai, Van Thuan Home in Bangalore. For women: Snehashramam in Trivandrum, Jeevodaya in Bangalore, and Karunasadan in Kannur. For Boys: Snehadeepam in Kanjirappally, Kolbe home in Bangalore and St Anthony Home in Sindhudurg. For Girls: Asha Sadan in Noida, Karunyashram in Ernakulam, Premodaya in Bangalore, Jeevan Jyothi in Idukki, Ashakiran in Khunti, Marie Pushpan's Home in Ranchi and Kolbe home in Patan. PMI has also helped many prisoners' housing projects, for Prisoners' children education with the help of PMI

volunteers. And in its new venture it is also trying to launch 1000 Rickshaw projects for the prisoners.

The Reasons for the 'Consecrated' to Work for Peripheries

For the '**Consecrated**' the motivation for their service should be their own sanctification. The testament of St Francis of Assisi reveals this mystery. For St. Francis, serving lepers was a nauseating bitter experience but later it turned out to be a sweet experience. He acknowledges in his testament: "When I was in sin the sight of lepers was too bitter for me. And the Lord himself led me among them, and I pitied and helped them. And when I left them, I discovered that what had seemed bitter to me was changed into sweetness in my soul and body." St. Francis had the greatest achievement among humans, that is, he found God and fell in love with Him. This is what should happen to the religious. The person who finds the real treasure, field, pearl will be content, joyful and happy (Mt 13:44-45, 6:21).

The service that the '**Consecrated**' render towards peripheries is not only to uplift them in material prosperity but also to find Christ in them. Christ acknowledges in the Gospel of Mt 25:40 saying: "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me." The mystery in this is God manifests himself in the form of people in the peripheries like the hungry, thirsty, naked, sick person and also as a stranger and prisoner. Therefore, let us take the journey to find God in our lives, especially in the peripheries. Thus let us sell all our possessions to gain the real treasure; let us discard our plans to accept God's plan.



Priest of the Gallows

Fr Leon Cruz SDB¹

St Joseph Cafasso lived in the city of Turin, Italy, in the 19th century, and was known as a model of priestly life. He was given the nickname “the Priest of the Gallows” for his pastoral care of criminals, especially those condemned to death. He stood by their side as they were led to their execution, bringing them to repentance by showing them the mercy and compassion of God. It was particularly for his commitment to prisoners that he is numbered among the “social Saints” of Turin – a group of religious and lay faithful dedicated to addressing the most pressing social issues of the day.

Early Life

Joseph Cafasso was born on the 15th of January, 1811 at Castelnuovo about twenty miles from Turin in Italy. His parents, who were remarkable for their charity to the poor, were small farmers who had to supplement their scanty income by working on neighbouring farms. His mother taught him to give alms to the poor, which he gladly did, and even added the best of his own meals to what his mother gave him. When scarcely ten, he began his spiritual apostolate. He loved to teach catechism to the poor children of the district and on Sunday evenings he would gather the neighbours and standing on a chair because he was of small stature, he would repeat for them the sermon he had heard that morning in church. Seeing such evident signs of a priestly vocation, his parents decided to encourage him to become a priest.



A School for Ordained Young Priests

Fr Cafasso after his ordination went to Turin to attend one of the post-graduate courses at the *Comitto Ecclesiastico* (a resident institute for priests). He selected a course taught by a very learned and virtuous priest named Fr Luigi Guala. The course consisted of Moral and Dogmatic Theology, Sacred Scripture, Patrology, Liturgy and Sacred Eloquence. After he completed the course, he was selected by Fr Guala as an Assistant Professor. Fr Joseph Cafasso was a brilliant lecturer. His fame soon spread over all Piedmont and he attracted students not only from Turin but from the surrounding dioceses. He aimed at making the young priests not only learned in theology but saintly men and efficient ministers of the Gospel.

Soon Fr Joseph Cafasso was appointed as Rector of the *Comitto Ecclesiastico*. There was a church dedicated to St. Francis of Assisi attached to the College, of which the Rector was Pastor. Fr Cafasso spent long hours in the confessional. His fame for learning and sanctity attracted great numbers of penitents there. Besides performing all his duties as Professor and Pastor, never missing a class or being a minute late, he found time for other forms of apostolate in Turin, the chief of which were teaching catechism to poor children, visiting the sick and the various prisons of the city.

Visiting the Prisoners

The prisons during Fr Cafasso’s time were gloomy places infested with vermin. The prisoners were free to communicate with each other and the worst of them had the

¹ Fr Leon Cruz SDB is Director of Don Bosco Youth Services, Mumbai and a Missionary of Mercy.




PRIEST OF THE GALLOWES

greatest influence in the prison. It was among these outcasts of society that Fr Cafasso spent most of his free time. He visited each prison at least once a week, and some of them once a day, and spent long hours there, usually four or five hours at a time. He returned home each night bringing with him the vermin of the prison, which he jokingly called “living silver and moving riches”.

Fr Cafasso when hearing Confession, never gave anything to the prisoners not even a medal. But at other times as it was allowed in the prisons he would distribute various things among the prisoners like fruit, clothes, religious objects etc. He conducted catechesis for the prisoners and also prepared them for the Sacraments. It is said that there is no case on record in which he failed to convert even the hardened sinners. He brought some of the young priests under him to visit the prisons and made it part of their training to help the poor and needy and visit those in prison. He helped to get employment for those prisoners who from time to time were liberated. On one of his visits to the prison he introduced the young priest Fr John Bosco to prison ministry. This visit made a deep impact in the life of St John Bosco.

Priest of the Gallows

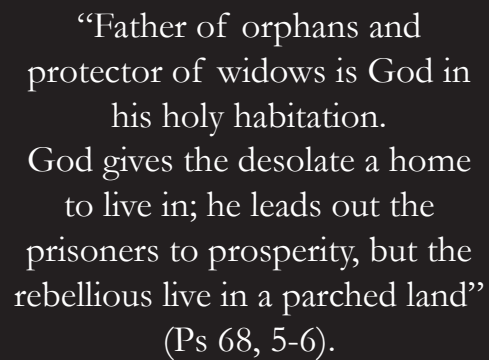
Fr Cafasso is known for his special kindness to criminals especially those condemned to death. He visited them frequently, instructed them and prepared them for death. He accompanied them up to the scaffold before they were executed. He had accompanied



57 death row convicts from Turin prisons and 7 others from other towns before their execution. He succeeded in getting all these prisoners to go to the Sacraments. Fr Cafasso was not satisfied with merely converting them but endeavoured to make them Saints. He exhorted them to accept capital punishment with resignation and told them that if they did so with perfect dispositions, they were in a state to go directly to Heaven. He even gave a task to the prisoner who was on the death row: when they went to Heaven, they were to kneel before the throne of Mary and intercede for him.

Cafasso Squad

Keeping alive the legacy of St Joseph Cafasso, the “Cafasso Squad” was started on 8th December 2021 by Fr Leon Cruz as one of the groups of the Salesian Youth Movement. The Cafasso Squad is all about getting the youth involved in Prison Ministry especially in the remand/observation homes. The youth of “Cafasso Squad” undergo a basic training programme on Prison Ministry and work through Prison Ministry India (PMI).



“Father of orphans and protector of widows is God in his holy habitation. God gives the desolate a home to live in; he leads out the prisoners to prosperity, but the rebellious live in a parched land”
(Ps 68, 5-6).



Persecuted Prisoners in Pakistan


Fr Jaison Dominic MST

Introduction

The origin of Christianity in Pakistan goes back to the first century AD, when St Thomas the Apostle came and preached in Pakistan, and had a community in Taxila. St Thomas Cross which is the heritage of Thomas Christians in the Malabar coast is found in Taxila too. The presence of symbols in the coins of those times also shows the presence of Christianity in Taxila in the first century A.D. Christianity is the third largest religion in Pakistan and according to the 2017 Census, the Christians cover 1.27 percentage of the total population of the country. Among the Christians, they are half Protestant and half Catholics. There are also a small number of Eastern Orthodox Christians and Oriental Orthodox Christians in Pakistan. Around three fourth of Pakistani Christian population are rural Panjabi Christians and the remaining people are Goan Christians and Anglo Indians.

Discriminations on Minorities

While Pakistan was formed, Muhamad Ali Jinnah assured religious freedom and equality in Pakistan. It was a secular country till 1955. The successors of Jinnah did not follow the assurance of Jinnah and declared Pakistan as an Islamic Republic in 1956 and Islam became the religion of the state. The new constitution and law, even if it permitted to follow one's own religion, provided loopholes that there would be preferences for Muslims. In the country only a Muslim



can become a President or Prime Minister even today. Others are being barred from being judges in the Federal Shariat Court, which has the power to strike down any law deemed un-Islamic. The law on Blasphemy is a tool for them to put any other religious people in Prison. Christians, Hindus, Sikh and other minorities are tempted or even threatened to become Muslim.

Christian Persecutions

In November 2005, 3000 militant Islamists attacked Christians in Singla Hill in Pakistan and destroyed Roman Catholic, Salvation Army and United Presbyterian churches. The Attack was over allegations of violation of Blasphemy laws by a Pakistani Christian named Yousaf Masih. In 2019, a Christian journalist quit the channel Dunya News after she was allegedly persecuted for her faith by co-workers and insulted for not converting to Islam. In October 2020, the Pakistani High Court upheld the validity of a forced marriage between 44-year-old Ali Azhar and 13-year-old Christian Arzoo Raja. Raja was abducted by Azhar, forcibly wed to Azhar and then forcibly converted to Islam by Azhar.

Death-row Christians

Hundreds of Christians are persecuted under the blasphemy law, and at least a dozen people were given death penalty. Ayub Masih, a Christian, was convicted of blasphemy and sentenced to death in 1998. He was accused by a neighbour of stating that he supported British writer Salman Rushdie, author of *The Satanic Verses*. Lower courts of appeal upheld the conviction. However, before the Pakistan Supreme Court, his lawyer was able to prove that



PERSECUTED PRISONERS

the accuser had used the conviction to force Masih's family off their land and then acquired control of the property. Masih has been released. On September 22, 2006, a Pakistani Christian named Shahid Masih was arrested and jailed for allegedly violating Islamic "blasphemy laws" in the country of Pakistan. He is at present held in confinement and has expressed fear of reprisals by Islamic fundamentalists. In November 2010, Asia Bibi was sentenced to death by hanging for "blasphemy"; the sentence had to be upheld in higher courts before she could be executed. Bibi was acquitted in 2018. In August 2012, Rimsha Masih, a Christian girl, reportedly 11 or 14 years old, and an illiterate with mental disabilities was accused of blasphemy for burning pages from a book containing Quranic verses. The allegation came from a Muslim cleric who himself has subsequently been accused by the police of framing the girl. The girl, and later the cleric, were both arrested and released on bail. Even there was a case in Pakistan that the life imprisonment of a Christian for Blasphemy was changed to death penalty.

Church in Pakistan Jail

When there is so much of bad news of events of persecutions from Pakistan, there is something to be happy too. There are a lot of changes also happening recently. Forty Christians in jail were sent for court settlement in last November and they are to begin a new life after counselling sessions and guidance. In jails of Pakistan new churches have been built in recent years with the help of NGOs. Two Christians

who were accused of Blasphemy were sent on bail recently. A chapel was inaugurated at Landhi Jail in Pakistan's southern city of Karachi for Christian inmates on 5 August 2016 by Christian social activists and jail authorities jointly. There are currently 100 Christians out of 4,500 inmates in the city jail. They are either awaiting trial or serving sentences for various crimes. Muhammad Hassan, a senior prison official, said all inmates are free to practice their religion.

Church of the King of Kings

The Church of the King of Kings, financed in part by the Christian NGO Angel Welfare Trust, was inaugurated on January 3 in the Malir prison, in the Sindh province in southern Pakistan. "This newly built church will surely make it easier for Christian prisoners to pray and reflect on their lives, repent and change their lives to praise God. I hope the Christian prisoners will come closer to God as every religion teaches to live a good life and to live in peace with others. We pray that the lives of Christian prisoners in this house of prayer will change and that the prisoners in this facility will find peace in their hearts" said Kazi Nazir Ahmed, Inspector General of prisons in the Sindh province.

Conclusion

Even if there are so many instances of persecutions and restrictions on the basis of religion, Prison Ministry has got great hope in Pakistan. It is important to note that the Prison Ministry in countries where Christians are in the minority is very difficult. Still perseverance and prayers can change situations and overcome all hurdles.



Antihuman Trafficking Brigadiers (ATB)

Ashok Kumar Korukonda

Prison Ministry India

Prison Ministry India (PMI) was started as “Jesus Fraternity” at St Thomas Apostolic Seminary in Kottayam on 8th Dec 1981 from a divine call as stated in the Holy Gospel according to Mathew “I was in prison and you came to see me” (Mt 25:36). It was founded by Fr Francis Kodiyan and Fr Varghese Karippery and later re-christened as Prison Ministry India (PMI), with the specific purpose of being a secular front serving all who are incarcerated in prisons, irrespective of caste, creed, race, religion or community. PMI journeyed successfully through prayer and fasting, facing every kind of challenge, reaching out to prisoners across the country. God’s Providence has been blessing Prison ministry in all these forty years and enabled it to grow to every corner of our country, encountering every kind of challenge.

PMI Special Task Forces

On 22 December 2019 Fr Francis Kodiyan, inspired by God’s call, shared another vision to expand this ministry to a new height i.e., through “Special Task Forces” having St Theresa of Lisieux as their patron saint. This was in view of reaching out to the unreachable in prisons such as the terrorists, death-row prisoners, serial killers, mafia dons etc, who are kept in high security prisons.

Antihuman Trafficking Brigadiers

Fr Francis formed 40 PMI Special Task Forces. One among them is Anti- Human

Trafficking Brigadiers (AHTB). In our AHTB task force we have nearly 60 plus members who voluntarily joined and more are to join to serve this cause. The AHTB was formed based on the gospel passage, “For the son of Man has come to save that which was lost” (Mt18,11) and “There will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent (Lk 15,7). Our patron saint for AHTB is St. Josephine Margaret Bakhita.

Methodology

All Special Task Forces including AHTB function primarily following 8 methods to save the lost: Mode of functioning - prayer group; weapon - prayer & fasting; mantra – thank you Jesus; action - search, serve & save the Lost; Bank - Bank of Divine Providence; Style - Maximum Inconvenience; Fund Raising - Begging; Goal - saving the Lost. Members in AHTB have been participating in PMI Burning Bush spiritual Banquet, conducted every first Friday evening 5.30 to 8.30 pm and PMI Incessant, Intercessory Invocation for Incarcerated through 24 Hrs Eucharist Adoration & Intercession prayer for the reform of worldwide prisoners and victims of human trafficking.

We had the inaugural session on 28 November 2020 through PPT presentation depicting the depth of the crime involved in Human Trafficking. We learnt that this crime is second only to illegal drug and arms trading in the world. It was also learnt that nearly 50 million victims are subjected to illegal human trafficking in India. Mostly young girls were traded at Rs 7 to 10 lacs each in India. By illegal human trafficking, individual rights such as: right to life, liberty and dignity were absolutely abused. Despite existing legal measures to prevent



Antihuman Trafficking Brigadiers

and punish the culprits, nothing concrete has been happening due to the prevalence of rampant corruption in the governing system. Authorities are blind to this heinous crime as many of them are acting hand in glove with the criminals. Hence the success rate is very meagre. Only perseverance and pressurising of the authorities could result in the rescue of the victims.

In June 2021 in one of the Special Task Forces sessions we invited Sr Sarita JMJ from Andhra Pradesh to talk about their experiences. Sister and her team have been in the service of rescuing women and children caught up in the heinous crime of Human Trafficking. Since 1990 JMJ sisters have been in these services. Sister Sarita has voiced her consent to cooperate with us in handling the victims of Human trafficking. Similarly, Sr Dhanam from Delhi who was introduced by Mrs Rowena Luis, has also shared her experience and knowledge on rescuing and rehabilitating the victims of Human Trafficking.

We should also acknowledge Fr Michael Francis who has been appointed as the Task force Commander to coordinate and guide the functioning of the Special Task forces, and he has since been extending his services to every team member. Our real hero is Rev Fr Francis Kodyan MCBS, the driving force behind all Special Task Forces. Through the renowned publication, "Reformative Exploration" published by RRDC - Research reformative and documentation centre, he has motivated us and enabled us to get legal, cultural, and socio-political related information of national and international importance to educate and enlighten ourselves on the subject matter.

Anson Thomas

Mr Anson Thomas, a one-time National Hockey team Goal keeper and presently serving in Customs and Excise department, has been doing yeoman service in the field of Anti- Human Trafficking, rescuing women and girl children from the grave crime of human trafficking. It is astounding indeed to learn that he struggled alone to save nearly 800 women and girls from being victims of human trafficking in the state of Maharashtra and elsewhere despite encountering various challenges. Bro Anson Thomas is like a one-man army doing unstinted service following the mission of the disciples of Jesus, who ventured alone to save lost souls. We learnt that he could venture into places of potential threat and danger with utmost faith in Jesus in his heart and the Holy Bible in his hand. Prayer could lead him to surmount any type of challenges that encountered him in reaching to save the lost souls. We appreciate Anson's message that when there is no "Jesus Christ" in the midst of any such services there would be neither success nor complete breakthrough. Though many NGOs have been working for Anti human trafficking, it has been observed that despite being able to raise millions of dollars/ Rupees as funds for this cause, such NGOs could neither be able to eradicate nor prevent such evil deeds from happening in our society. It is therefore given to understand that Jesus centric services alone would give true success rather than depending on money wholly. Any Evil act can be encountered successfully with the Blood of Jesus Christ alone. We pray that God Almighty may continue to be with Bro Anson Thomas, strengthen him and use him mightily to be "like a Salt of the earth and Light of the world, to shine before men that they may see the good works and glorify your Father in heaven" (Mt 5, 14-16).

Antidrug Trafficking Warriors (ATW) - Report

Vinita Britto

Genesis

The first seed for Antidrug Trafficking Warriors was planted on 14 April 2021 by Fr. Francis Kodiyan, co-founder of Prison Ministry India. Fr Sebastian Vechookarott was appointed as the ATW coordinator and Ms Vinita Britto as its secretary. It has now grown into a tree which symbolizes love and friendship. Every tree has a story to tell. Just as the olive tree is one of the most cherished and sacred of trees and is firmly rooted, so are we, as seen from the fruits we bear. This evergreen tree holds strong its branches praying incessantly for addicts to alcohol and drugs worldwide. Prayer is our armor and hope for a better tomorrow.

Motto

The ATW Motto is derived from the holy Bible: “Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore, honour God with your bodies” (1 Cor 6:19-20). Our goal is to inspire people to act against alcohol and drug abuse.

Patron

St Maximilian Maria Kolbe (1894-1941) is the patron of ATW. In the year 1941, during the 2nd World War, Poland was invaded by Germany and Maximilian was taken to the

Auschwitz concentration camp. At the end of July 1941, one prisoner escaped from the camp, prompting the deputy camp commander, to pick ten men to be starved to death in an underground bunker to deter further escape attempts. When one of the men selected, Franciszek Gajowniczek, the man cried out thinking of his family, “My wife! My children!” Kolbe volunteered to take his place.

Prayer – Mode of Action

Prayer is of primary importance for ATW. Prayer is our means to abide in Christ. We develop faith-based relationships through meetings, discussions, worship and prayer. Praying with the group is most powerful, for the Lord himself said: “Where two or three are gathered in my name I am in the midst of them” (Mt 18:20). Through prayer we praise and thank God and make known our request to God, asking Him for deliverance, mercy, healing, and miracles in our lives and those of others.

Incessant Intercessory Invocation for the Incarcerated

“Pray without ceasing” (1 Thess.5:17) and making prayer a priority of the day is the lifestyle of ATW. Antidrug trafficking warriors actively participate in PMI’s Intercessory Prayer. Its warriors join its zoom link on Mondays’ from midnight to 3 am. From 31 May 2021 to 31 January 2022 ATW conducted 36 Intercessory Prayer Night Vigils, which helped to develop empathy and establish team spirit with one another.

Burning Bush Spiritual Banquet

Exodus 3:1-6 explains the meaning of burning bush. It represents Moses’ reverence



ANTIDRUG TRAFFICKING BRIGADIERS

and fear before the divine presence. ATW members regularly attend the First Friday PMI Burning Bush Spiritual Banquet from 5.30-8.00 PM.

International Day against Durg Abuse

On 26 June 2021 ATW commemorated the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking to raise awareness, encourage reflection and pray for people who struggle with alcoholism, drug abuse and illicit trafficking. Anti-Drug Warriors meet on the first Sunday of the month with Holy Mass followed by ATW Family meeting from 4-6 PM on zoom.

Meetings

The first meeting of ATW was held on 02 May 2021 on the Theme: "Transformation of Drug Addicts in Prisons through Prayer: "Devote Yourself to Prayer," exhorted Fr Francis Kodiyan MCBS, cofounder of Prison Ministry India and Fr. Michael Francis shared his insights on antidrug trafficking and Fr Sebastian Vechookarot emphasized on its purpose and direction. The first 40 Days Program was initiated on 02 May-2021 itself and ended on 12 June-2021, the Feast of the Immaculate Heart of the B.V.M. The Second meeting was held on 06 June 2021. Fr Alex Vellapally spoke on the Theme: The Risks: Alcohol & Drug Abuse and factors that contribute to it. In the third meeting held on 04 July 2021, a presentation on International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking was given. On 22 May 2021


ATW members participated in the Pentecost with Prisoners Eucharistic Adoration. On 25 July 2021 we participated in PMI Sunday celebration online quiz competition and on 15 August 2021 participated in PMI Sunday & Kolbe day 2021. We participated in the Jericho prayer and night vigil as well. ATW conducted the Rosary from 01.30AM to 02.00AM.

Prayer Clinic

Anti-Drug Trafficking Warriors will initiate the Prayer Clinic. Its purpose is to encourage all members of the Special Task Forces to submit names of people addicted to Alcohol and Drugs and to pray for them. Stay, until God answers their prayers. This will also give the opportunity to accompany the addicts through the journey. The prescription comes from Scripture. The Bible says that when you pray over specific requests and begin to see those requests answered, faith grows and the ministry of prayer expands.

Prayer to St Maximilian Kolbe

St Maximilian Kolbe, Patron Saint of the addicted and alcoholics, I come before you seeking your assistance and prayers for all those suffering from addictions (especially Name Person). Pray that God will help (Name Person) break the chains of addiction that hold him/her bound and set (Name Person) free to live a life of health, happiness and hope. I ask this prayer through Christ our Lord. Amen




Burning Bush Spiritual Banquet & Memorial Mass for Sr Jemma George

Sr Amala DC

PMI convened an online Memorial Holy Mass in honor of Sr Jemma DHM on 7 January 2022. Fr Francis Kodyan, Co-founder of Prison Ministry India, the main celebrant invited everyone to pray for the repose of the soul of Sr Jemma who embraced eternal bliss on 9th December 2021. Fr Francis Kodyan expressed much appreciation for late Sr Jemma George, DHM who had served as the first Director of Snehashramam, Trivandrum, PMI National Secretary twice and as PMI Suffering Bank Manager too. Father informed that he was saddened by the inability to attend her funeral services as it was the hectic time of Prison Ministry India Ruby Jubilee Celebration in Bangalore. Fr Francis conveyed his condolences to the DHM Provincial, the DHM community sisters and also the relatives of late Sr Jemma George, DHM and welcomed them to the memorial service. He welcomed Fr Joseph Mackolil, Sr Antonietta DHM, Br Reagan Martins, Mrs Lili Vaz and PMI volunteers.

Eulogy

Beginning with the scripture verse Fr Joseph Mackolil in his eulogy to late Sr Jemma George, DHM expressed great appreciation for her work and respect for the person she was. Father narrated a story about how Sr Jemma had shown compassion to an inmate who had run away with money stolen from her. Later, when the woman returned to the



ashram and asked pardon, Sr Jemma quickly forgave her. Father said that wherever Sr. Jemma was appointed, she carried out her duties perfectly well. Sr Jemma kept a close watch on the inmates at Snehashramam and involved them in gardening, farming and other odd jobs at the ashram to keep them occupied. Sr Jemma's qualification, knowledge and biblical understanding enabled her to love the inmates immensely, as even with the help of teachers she compiled jokes to keep the inmates well entertained. Fr Mackolil said, we will fondly remember Sr Jemma in prayer. Father Mackolil thanked Fr Francis Kodyan and PMI Volunteers for the Memorial Service and asked to pray that she may be honoured as a Saint for Jails just as St Mother Theresa. Fr Joseph Mackolil concluded with the Bible verse, 'Whoever eats my flesh, and drinks my blood, has eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day' (Jn 6:54).

Words of Appreciation

After the Mass, Sr Antonietta, DHM, former Provincial Superior of the Daughters of the Heart of Mary on behalf of Sr Maggie, the Provincial, said that Sr Jemma had lived with a passion for Christ and had been zealous in different capacities in India and London. Whenever she was asked, she explained that she believed that it was the Lord's hand in every situation. She worked for PMI for 27 long years for the conversion of prisoners, 'a call within the call'. Owing to her failing health, when in Mumbai she used to recite the 3 O' Clock Divine Mercy Prayer. Her last days were spent on online Prayer, lending a helping hand, attending meetings, online Masses and also received Holy Communion daily. 'I will leave when Jesus will take 100 souls from purgatory', she said.



BURNING BUSH

Her favorite hymn was ALL TO JESUS I SURRENDER. On that fateful day, after the online Mass Sr. Jemma received Holy Communion and passed away peacefully. Sr Antoinetta concluded with the words of James Dowell: Hope uplifts and makes dreams come true. Mr Rajendra Dushing thanked the main celebrant Fr Francis Kodiyan for the memorial service, and the speakers who spoke celebrating the life of Sr. Jemma George, DHM.

Magnificat

Br Reagan, son of Goretti Martins, doing his theological studies at Papal seminary illustrated in depth the Magnificat. Br Martins spoke the emotions behind the Magi and the events that had led to the 'Magnificat' being classified into four sections, viz. God's hand in the History of Israel, Annunciation, Visitation and Mary's Song of Praise. He concluded that the Marian Spirituality was pronounced when HE went down with them and came to Nazareth and was obedient to them. His mother treasured all these things in her heart - Humility, Trust, Justice and Service: ponder, listen and go in service. Synod is a call to recognize the joys and sufferings of our brothers and sisters in darkness and salvation to mankind and to recognize what God does in our lives! Ms Carmin E. Vaz thanked Br Reagan for his enlightening thoughts. Br Reagan Martins in turn thanked Fr Francis Kodiyan for giving him the opportunity to conduct the session, Fr. B. Sansare for his support, the Rector for the internet facilities, the Papal Seminary management, Seminary formation team and staff.

Eucharistic Adoration

At 7.30 p.m. began the Eucharistic Adoration and Ms. Lili Vaz commenced with the hymn "Lord, I Lift Your Name on High". She then praised God for the wonderful deeds and the blessings we have had over the past 2 years of Covid-19. Quoting Scripture from Isaiah 40:8, "The grass withers, the flower fades; but the Word of God will stand forever", the question put forth was, "During this pandemic, did I reach out to the downtrodden, the prisoners? Why did Jesus choose you for this Ministry? To be like Him... seek and save the lost. PMI volunteers are to reach out to the outcasts. Matthew 25:36 mentions, "I was in prison and you visited me".

God has invited us sinners to live a life of holiness. Jesus Lord, God of our universe, heal us all in body and soul. Your love is greater than our sins. Thank you Lord God for Jesus your loving Son you sent to save us. Thy salvation is so rich and free from the womb to the tomb. As the deer thirsts for water, you O Lord can satisfy my spiritual longings. Hear us O Lord as we call on your name. The Eucharistic Adoration concluded with the hymn Tantum Ergo, final blessing by Fr. Francis Kodiyan, National Coordinator and Prayer for Prisoners was recited by Sr. Amala, National Secretary. Ms Ninfa D'Silva thanked Ms. Lili Vaz and all who contributed to the burning bush. The Spiritual Banquet is receptive to the needs of others. Finally, the Recessional hymn, 'Thank you Jesus' was soulfully sung.

Blessed Pole Jozef Kowalski

Prisoner Number - 17,350



Sr Lini Sheeja MSC

Jozef Kowalski was a Polish Roman Catholic priest from the Salesian Society murdered at the Auschwitz Concentration Camp during World War II. Jozef Kowalski was born in Siedliska, Poland a little farming town near Rzeszow on 13 March 1911, to Wojciech and Zofia Borowiec, the seventh of their nine children. His parents, practicing Catholics, were farmers and owners of a modest farm. The family's faith was deep and practical. He was baptized on March 19, feast of St Joseph, in the parish church at Lubenia, about 2½ miles from the town, which at that time did not have a church. From an early age he showed the signs of vocation of dedicating himself to God in a special way.

To Suffer and to be Despised

After his primary schooling, he entered the Salesian College at Oswiecim (Auschwitz). Joseph immediately distinguished himself for his commitment to study and service. He joined the Immaculate Conception Sodality and the Missionary Association and became its President. He fell in love with the Salesian charism and its founder, from whom he sought to take his example in everything: involvement in happy leadership of religious and civic feasts, an apostolic presence amongst his companions and, in particular, the primacy of the spiritual life. As a young student of philosophy in 1930, he had written in blood on a page in his diary, after he had sketched a small cross:

“To suffer and to be despised for you, O Lord.... Fully aware, with a decisive will, and ready for all the consequences, I embrace the sweet cross of Christ's call, and I wish to carry it until the end, until death.”

A Living Young Saint

As a young student he began to keep a diary, from which we learn of his devotion to Mary Help of Christians and the Eucharist, “Oh Mother Mary,” he wrote, “I have to become a saint because this is what I am intended for. Oh Jesus, I offer you my poor heart.... May I never be separated from You and may I remain faithful until death: may I die rather than offend You, not even with the slightest sin. O my good Jesus, give me a will that is persevering, firm, strong, so that I can persevere in my holy resolutions and can attain my lofty ideal: the holiness that has been appointed for me. I can and must be a saint.” The same notebooks document his very personal attachment to Jesus Christ, which continued to mature with the years, in particular after his religious profession: “Jesus, I want to be truly faithful and faithfully to serve you.... I dedicate myself totally to you.... Keep me close to you always and faithful to you until death and maintain my oath. I must become a holy Salesian, like my Father Don Bosco was.”

Arrest

Poland had been occupied, but the Salesians continued on with their educational activity.



JOZEF KOWALSKI

This was why the dramatic arrest came about on May 23, 1941; the Gestapo captured Fr Kowalski along with eleven other Salesians working in Krakow. At first, they were taken to the prison in Montelupich in the same city; and from there, on June 26 they were taken to the Concentration Camp in Auschwitz.

Auschwitz Concentration Camp

Kowalski was sent to Auschwitz Concentration Camp on June 26, 1941 (prisoner number 17,350 or 17,950). There, he ministered secretly to his fellow prisoners in Block 25, and attempted to strengthen their will to survive day-to-day life in the camp. He absolved condemned victims, usually in secret, but at least once in front of everyone at the moment of mass execution. He was known at Auschwitz simply as Father Józef. He heard confessions, celebrated Mass, said the Rosary and gave clandestine conferences, also about Don Bosco, strengthening his prison friends with the will to struggle for survival. He underwent suffering and humiliation.

Letter to His Parents

“Do not worry about me; I am in God’s hands. I want to assure you that I feel His help at every step. Despite the present situation, I am happy and completely at peace. At every step I feel the power of God. Wherever I am, whatever happens to me I am in the hands of Divine Providence which watches over nations and over every individual!” (Written by Blessed Joseph to his parents from the concentration camp)



Incarcerated Brave Martyr

Blessed Joseph underwent in Auschwitz Concentration Camp a year of hard labour and mistreatment in the so-called “hardship corps” where few survived. The prison camp became the field of his Pastoral Ministry. In that death camp where, according to the expression of the commanders, God was absent, he succeeded in bringing God to his fellow prisoners. At a certain moment he turned to his friend and said, ‘Kneel and pray with me for all these men who are killing us.’ They both prayed until the roll-call was done, till late in the evening on the bunk.

Suffering, Humiliation and Death

At one roll call, he was ordered by Blockführer Gerhard Palitzsch to trample upon his rosary when he was discovered with it. Kowalski refused. As punishment, he was assigned to a penal company. On July 3, 1942, he was mocked, ridiculed and severely beaten by the guards for being a priest. The same night, his oppressors pulled him out of his barracks, beat him severely outside and possibly drowned him. Kowalski’s body was found the next day and burned with others. He was 31 years of age.

Beatification

Pope John Paul II had known Father Kowalski personally before the war, when Kowalski lived and served with the Parish of St Stanisław Kostka in Dębniki, Kraków. John Paul II beatified Kowalski in Warsaw at a ceremonial three-hour mass of June 13, 1999, attended by President Aleksander Kwaśniewski, in front of 6,00,000 people.



Prison Pen Pals Ministry


Fr Francis Kodiyan MCBS

Introduction

Catholic Church teaches 7 corporal works of mercy to be practiced in our day-today life. One of them is to visit the imprisoned. But due to the Covid19 pandemic, practicing this work of mercy has become challenging and almost impossible. Prisons across the country have suspended most volunteer activities. In this context PMI proposes to adopt one of the early practices called pen pals to share Christ's love with those in prison. Prison Pen Pals ministry is immensely impactful that makes it easy to visit the imprisoned from our own home. In the initial years of Prison Ministry India, we were practising it with another title called *Tele-counselling*.

Prison Pen Pals

Pen Pals or Penfriends means someone with whom we exchange letters with as a hobby. They are people usually strangers who regularly write to each other, particularly via postal mail. A prison pen pal refers to an inmate who is in regular correspondence with a non-incarcerated person. Unlike us, inmates don't have access to cell-phones or social media so they can't communicate with other people the usual way we do. The only forms of communication they're allowed are the mail and the prison's landline phone. Unfortunately, jail calls can be expensive. That's why many inmates resort to seeking pen pals in the outside world.



Through pen pals, inmates are encouraged to find mentors, legal aid, educational opportunities, employment upon release, counselling, housing options, and so much more. Researches show that both male and female prison pen pals who establish and maintain positive contacts outside of prison walls, pursue educational opportunities, and seek normalization through friendship are less likely to re-offend.

Is Prison Pen Pal Dangerous?

Yes, it could be dangerous. As with everything else in life, there will always be people who will take advantage of you no matter how noble your intentions are. Through the prison pen pal system had many success stories, there were also lots of horrible ones. It's not uncommon for unsuspecting outsiders to get scammed by their pen pals in prison. But you need to remember that, just like the outside world, the prison is filled with all kinds of people. Not everyone in there is out to get you. There are some who are genuinely looking for affection, or at the very least, someone to talk to. When writing to prisoners, don't forget to take some precautions. For one, don't share your real address or any personal information unless you've ascertained that they are not a threat. Avoid sending photos of your loved ones too, especially if you have young kids. It is better not to send money unless you're absolutely sure that they are who they say they are.

Where to Find Inmate Pen Pals

There are many ways to find an inmate pen pal. If you know someone who's already in there, you can ask them for any recommendations. But most people find their inmate pen pals



PRISON PEN PALS MINISTRY

through prison pen pal sites. The most popular ones are: writeaprisoner.com, meet-an-inmate.com, prisoninmates.com, inmate.com, prisonercorrespondenceproject.com, and penacon.com. Most of these sites will require you to sign-up and create a pen pal profile. Some of these sites also have an inmate locator that will tell you where an inmate is incarcerated. Mailing addresses along with a little bit of information about them are usually found on the inmate's profile.

What Good Does Pen Pal to Inmates?

According to one study from the University of Warwick, the prison pen pal relationship has lots of benefits for inmates. It helps the inmates to boost their well-being. It also provides an early warning of potential suicide. Receiving jail mail postcards on a regular basis also improves the chances of successful rehabilitation. In most cases, having a pen pal provides a prisoner with strong emotional support. This is especially helpful if the inmate is suffering from anxiety or depression. Talking with someone who empathizes with them lets them know that there are still people who care; that there are still people who are willing to understand and give them a chance. The aforementioned study also suggests that inmates with pen pals feel less isolated and are less likely to give in to their demons.


Prison Ministry India

Prison Ministry India's Pen Pal Ministry provides a safe and convenient way for our volunteers to answer the call to visit

Christ in prison through correspondence PMI volunteers can write directly to an inmate, offering encouragement for positive growth. With safety in mind, pen pals do not reveal their full names or addresses. The inmate replies to the PMI address and we forward the correspondence to their volunteer pal. Every letter to an inmate is an affirmation of their human dignity and confirmation that they have not been forgotten. A small act of kindness, like receiving a letter, can have a life-changing effect on a person in prison. Anyone participating in the pen pal ministry can bring charity and encouragement to a prisoner. It is a badge of honour for an inmate to hear his name called at a mail call. Our letters bring encouragement, hope and the love of Christ to those who desperately need it. Certainly, your letters will have more impact than you can imagine. In 1986 when we began prison ministry at St Thomas Apostolic Seminary, Kottayam we used to send Christmas cards to prisoners. To our surprise the biggest and most expensive Christmas card we received in our Seminary that year was from a prisoner. He wrote that it was the first Christmas card he received after entering into prison. He was so overjoyed to receive a Christmas card that he purchased a Christmas card with all the money he had and sent it to us as an expression of his immense gratitude and delight.

“I will seek the lost, and I will bring back the strayed, and I will bind up the injured, and I will strengthen the weak, and the fat and the strong I will destroy. I will feed them in justice”

(Ezekiel 34:16)




Combatting Human Trafficking. Walk with Anson Thomas Report

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Br Pradeep Anthony L OFM

Welcome

On 16th January 2022 the webinar on Combatting Human Trafficking – Walk with Mr Anson Thomas began at 4 pm. Sr Amala DC, PMI national secretary was the master of ceremony. Ashwin and Alisha sang the prayer hymn. Mrs Lili Vaz did the opening prayer. Br Pradeep Anthony L OFM presented the program. Rev Dr Francis Kodiyan MCBS, PMI national coordinator, solemnly welcomed the gathering. Quoting International Labour Organization (ILO) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) he said that there are more than 40 million Human Trafficked victims in our world. Quoting Pope Francis, he highlighted that human trafficking is an “atrocious scourge,” and an “abhorrent plague.” The Pontifical Council for Promoting Integral Human Development stands against any exploitation of human beings. Catholic Bishops Conference of India, through its agencies like Caritas India, Prison Ministry India, and Talitha Kum, has been fighting against human trafficking since 1999. Prison Ministry India in particular has rehabilitation centres like Jeevodaya Bengaluru, Karunyashram, Kochi, and Snehashramam Trivandrum,



which are taking care of Human Trafficked Victims. He welcomed Mr Anson Thomas who really has been instrumental in rescuing more than 800 victims of human trafficking. He congratulated Mr Anson for leaving his prestigious job in Customs and the reputed role of Indian Hockey Goal Keeper and working for human trafficked girls.

Anson Thomas

Mr Anson Thomas began his talk on combatting human trafficking by quoting from Acts 16. Working for God is never a comfortable journey. St. Paul and St. Silas sang praises of God in the middle of the night, in the midst of difficulties. Mr Anson’s story of conversion began on 2nd Oct 1991. After meeting a priest, as he confessed his small, dark and all the sins of his past life, he felt being washed by the precious blood of Jesus. He then felt called by Christ to bring Good news to the lost people. One day when he went to Kamathipura, Sunday school, he said to the people who were waiting for prostitutes in Hindi: “Do minute ka mazza ke liye, zindagi bara Kyuon saza.” It means for two minutes of enjoyment why do you bring upon yourself lifelong punishment. Mr Anson with his firm and assertive logical mind was able to face the people, like pimps, brokers who were offering a girl for an amount. His question to them was: Can you offer your sister or mother for a night? Thus, his journey to save the soul began, admits Mr Anson.

Preaching in Brothels

He started playing hockey with the street children, and with all the children who were born to brothels. Being a sportsman, he knew the power of sports; he brought Harbhajan,



COMBATING HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Adam Smith and famous personalities to influence the life of children. Once he ventured into a brothel house paying money for a girl, as the girl was ready to undress, he stopped her saying: "Wait, my sister I have come to pray for you." As soon as he opened his Bible, he found a passage "Who are my mother and my brothers?" And looking at those who sat around him, he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers! Whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother" (Mk3,33-35). Thus, Mr Anson paid money for a girl and preached her God's Goodnews to bring her back to normal life. For Mr Anson the inspiration is from the Gospels, particularly from the Gospel of St Mathew 5:14 which says: "You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid." The word of God gave Mr Anson power to go to G.B. Road, (Garstin Bastion Road), Sonagachi as he said that his inspiration was to cast his net into the deep to get fish (Lk 5:4). Later on, it had become a habit for Mr Anson to rescue the girls who were victimized in brothel houses whether he went to Amsterdam, Dubai or anywhere else. He says the story of each girl is different. For example, in one incident, a Malayali girl nurse who was sold into prostitution was tested positive after several months, carrying Hepatitis and later died as she wasn't able to go back to her family. Then in another incident, a nine-year-old girl was kidnapped from Tamil Nadu and got trapped in Solapur near Mumbai. Fondled by elderly men, in her innocence she complained to the Eunuchs. To her astonishment the Eunuchs tied her


up and allowed her to be raped four times a day. At the age of 12 she was rescued to share her story.

Turn Redlight into Greenlight

Mr Anson Thomas' vision and mission is to change all the red-light areas into green-light all around the world. It was when he got the award of 'real heroes' by CNN News Channel in 2009 that he made this declaration. Later on, he stopped working and started business through sports by printing calendars related to human trafficking. He visited different schools, bringing awareness among students about human trafficking. He shared from his experience that the customers who pay the prostitutes are usually sickly, elderly and already carrying many illnesses with them. It will be wrong from our end to deem them as sex workers as they are not born prostitutes but what society really made them to be. Sometimes parents reject their own children knowing that they are into this field, forgetting the fact that their children were not responsible, as they were forced into it.

Redemption of Human Trafficked Victims

Mr Anson continued to affirm that the brothel networks continue to exist, as his attending the meeting on 'Sex Workers Conferences' in 1996, Ernakulam, made it clear to him. He witnessed a huge number of brothel brokers gathering to resolve their problems in running a brothel house. They discussed among themselves that police are troubling them, and the way of advertising like '100 Rupees for a sexual act.' After this Mr Anson tells how he stood firmly when



Some people were even trying to make these brothel houses legal. He had written personally to these people asking: “Why don’t you start a brothel house by giving your own wife, sister, children or mother?” By asking this question, he tried provoking their conscience. Thus, Mr Anson thanked everybody for listening and invited them to join him towards redeeming the victims of Human Trafficking.

Mighty Hand of God

Sr Lini Sheeja MSC moderated the open floor session. She asked the question: “Do you feel threatened by your ministry?” Mr Anson Thomas replied that Human Trafficking is a big network. On him there were several PIL’s, (Public Interest Litigations) exhortation, and conversion cases were filed by brothel brokers. At times even he was chased by goons, eunuchs, and brothel brokers holding iron rods. Mr Anson had the strong faith that if God was with him who could be against him (Rom 8:31). Therefore, he acknowledged that for thirty years he has been protected by the mighty Hand of God and felt strongly protected by the word of God.

Antihuman Trafficking Brigadiers

Mr Ashok Kumar, the leader of the PMI special task force Anti-human Trafficking Brigadiers briefed. Jesus Fraternity now known as Prison Ministry India was born at St Thomas Apostolic Seminary on 8th Dec 1981. It was founded by Br Francis Kodyan and Br Varghese Kariperiy to reach out to the wider group of people. On 22 December 2019 PMI launched special task forces taking St Theresa of Lisieux as patron



COMBATING HUMAN TRAFFICKING

saint. Anti-human Trafficking Brigadiers (ATB) group comprises of more than sixty members. The main aim of their group is to save the lost (Mt 18:11). St Josephine Bakhita is the patron saint of this group. It is estimated that more than 50 million people have been trafficked as this being the 2nd most criminal illegal activity after drugs & arms trading. He acknowledged that legal measures against human trafficking haven’t been vital to rescue human trafficked victims. Therefore, his group has taken the method through the following 8 steps: 1) Mode of functioning – Prayer group, 2) Weapon – Prayer & Fasting, 3) Mantra – Thank You Jesus, 4) Action – Search, Serve & Save the Lost, 5) Bank – Bank of Divine Providence, 6) Style – Maximum Inconvenience, 7) Fund Raising – Begging, and 8) Goal – Saving the Lost.

PMI Collaboration

Fr Francis Kodyan came up with different proposals of collaboration with Mr Anson Thomas namely: 1) Educating the children who have been trafficked, 2) rehabilitating the girls who have been trafficked to the nearest rehabilitation centres of PMI, 3) helping the rescuable operation of girls from the backend. He suggested that Anson’s team can be in the forefront. 4. Publishing their works in Reformative Explorations and the national magazine, Prison Voice.

Fr Jaison Puthenpurakkal MST, proposed vote of thanks to all. The webinar ended with the Angelus led by Amber Joshi and prayer for Trafficked Victims by Sr Amala DC at 6 PM.




Sex Industry

Anson Thomas

When the present government came to power in India, they came up strongly with the intention of banning pornography on internet. In fact, I was too happy by the step taken by the Government. But alas what happened? The Media, who were expected to support the stand taken by the government, suddenly changed their tune. They should have reported that by watching porn there are so many people who are lost in their married life and indulge in rape etc. But what report did they present? They reported that the government was curtailing freedom of expression. Why was so much of pressure put on the government?

PORN is a multibillion-dollar industry and it is a big business. So media too gets a share of the profits of the business through advertisements and other benefits. Instead of appreciating, why would they go against the government? It is profits that they care about only. They don't see morals, values, etc. They are not bothered if marriages are broken or by watching pornography a guy could go and rape a 4-year-old child and murder her. After the rape or murder the media wakes up reporting it with a big hue and cry. But what was the reason for this rape and murder? Watching porn!

Whether Aids or Covid, for the business world it is money. The word SEX was once upon a time rarely used openly but today sex has become an Industry. As you sell a product you sell sex. Sex is supposed to be



holy, and there is sanctity in it according to God's plan between husband and wife. Today there is wife swapping and what not that goes on in society. Man has fallen so low and degraded himself in the presence of God and man.

The Bible says that 'Money is the root of all evil'. Satan has used money for the downfall of man and through the sex Industry, manipulated the hearts and minds of men and women who are in bondage. Is there a way out of this bondage? YES. It is clear in the Bible. Marriage must be respected by all and Marriage bed kept undefiled. For God will punish all adulterous and immoral people. So by watching porn you are contributing to the sex Industry, playing with fire and finally as the end result, you are burnt in the process.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

- I. I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. You shall not have strange gods before Me.
- II. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.
- III. Remember that you keep holy the Sabbath day.
- IV. Honor your father and your mother.
- V. You shall not kill.
- VI. You shall not commit adultery.
- VII. You shall not steal.
- VIII. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.
- IX. You shall not covet thy neighbor's wife.
- X. You shall not covet your neighbor's house, nor his field, nor his servant, nor his handmaid, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is his.



From Slave to Saint Josephine Bhakita

Sr Lini Sheeja MSC

“If I were to meet those who kidnapped me, and even those who tortured me, I would kneel and kiss their hands. For, if these things had not happened, I would not have been a Christian and a religious today”, said the humble St Bhakita without hesitation to a young student who asked her, “What would you do, if you were to meet your captors?” Josephine Margaret Bakhita, F.D.C.C. (1869-1947) was a Sudanese Italian Canossian religious sister who lived in Italy for 45 years, after having been a slave in Sudan. In 2000 she was declared a Saint by the Roman Catholic Church. On February 8, the Church commemorates the life of St Bakhita, a girl who was kidnapped, sold into slavery in Sudan and who became a gem in God’s hands.

Early life

She was born around 1869 in Darfur (now in western Sudan) in the village of Olgossa, west of Nyala and close to Mount Agilerei. She was of the Daju people; her respected and reasonably prosperous father was brother of the village chief. She was surrounded by a loving family of three brothers and three sisters; as she says in her autobiography: “I lived a very happy and carefree life, without knowing what suffering was”.

Trafficked and Tortured

When Bakhita was nine (1878) Arab slave traders kidnapped her while working in the fields with her family and sold her into slavery. Bakhita was not the name she received from her parents at birth. It is said that the trauma of her abduction caused her to forget her original name; she took one given to her by the slave owners, Bakhita, which in Arabic means lucky or fortunate. In her biography

she notes one particularly terrifying moment when one of her masters cut her 114 times and poured salt in her wounds to ensure that the scars remained. “I felt I was going to die any moment, especially when they rubbed me in with salt,” Bakhita wrote.

Saint’s Life as Slave


In the seven years of being tossed around in the slave markets, the young Bakhita would have encountered different masters. In El-Obeid, Bakhita was bought by a rich Arab who used her as a maid for his two daughters. They treated her relatively well, until she offended one of her owner’s sons, whereupon the son lashed and kicked her so severely that she spent more than a month unable to move from her straw bed. Her fourth owner was a Turkish general, and she had to serve his mother-in-law and his wife, who were cruel to their slaves. Bakhita says: “During all the years I stayed in that house, I do not recall a day that passed without some wound or other. When a wound from the whip began to heal, other blows would pour down on me.”

Bhakita’s Call to the Church

In 1885, Bakhita was purchased by Callisto Legnani, the Italian consul in Khartoum, the capital of Sudan. Two years later, he took Bakhita to Italy to work as a nanny for his colleague, Augusto Michieli. He, in turn, sent Bakhita to accompany his daughter to a school in Venice run by the Canossian Sisters. These different masters were for her bridges that led her to encounter the Master of unconditional love. Bakhita felt called to learn more about the Church, and was baptized with the name “Josephine Margaret.”

Slave to Religious Nun

On 7 December 1893, Josephine Bakhita entered the novitiate of the Canossian Sisters and on 8 December 1896, she took her vows, welcomed by Cardinal Sarto. In 1902 she was assigned to the Canossian convent at Schio, in the northern Italian province of



Vicenza, where she spent the rest of her life. Her only extended time away was between 1935 and 1939, when she stayed at the Missionary Novitiate in Vimercate (Milan), mostly visiting other Canossian communities in Italy, talking about her experiences and helping to prepare young sisters for work in Africa. A strong missionary drive animated her throughout her entire life – “her mind was always on God, and her heart in Africa”.

Slave to Little Brown Sister

During her 42 years in Schio, Bakhita was employed as the cook, sacristan, and portress (doorkeeper) and was in frequent contact with the local community. Her gentleness, calming voice, and the ever-present smile became well known and Vicenzans still refer to her as SorMoretta (“little brown sister”). Her special charisma and reputation for sanctity were noticed by her Order; the first publication of her story (*Storia Meravigliosa* by Ida Zanolini) in 1931, made her famous throughout Italy. During the Second World War (1939–1945) she shared the fears and hopes of the townspeople, who considered her a saint and felt protected by her presence. Bombs did not spare Schio, but the war passed without a single casualty.

Slave to Saint

The petitions for her canonization began immediately, and the process commenced by Pope John XXIII in 1959, twelve years after her death. On 1 December 1978, Pope John Paul II declared Josephine Venerable, the first step towards canonization. On 17 May 1992, she was declared “Blessed” and given 8 February as her feast day. On 1 October 2000, she was canonized as Saint Josephine Bakhita. She is venerated as a modern African saint, and as a statement against the brutal history of slavery. She has been adopted as the patron saint of modern Sudan and human trafficking survivors.

Transformation through Tortures

Bakhita’s legacy is that transformation is possible through suffering. Her story

of deliverance from physical slavery also symbolises all those who find meaning and inspiration in her life for their own deliverance from spiritual slavery. In May 1992, news of her beatification was banned by Khartoum which Pope John Paul II visited nine months later. On 10 February 1993, he solemnly honoured Bakhita on her own soil. “Rejoice, all of Africa! Bakhita has come back to you. The daughter of Sudan sold into slavery as a living piece of merchandise and yet still free. Free with the freedom of the saints.” Pope Benedict XVI, on 30 November 2007, in the beginning of his second encyclical letter *Spe Salvi* (“In Hope We Were Saved”), relates her life story as an outstanding example of Christian hope.

Conclusion

Josephine Bakhita is the Patron Saint of Human Trafficking. She is a shining ray of hope for human trafficking victims and an inspirational demonstration of how a victim can recover from their trauma and become whole again. There are two lessons that can be learned from this great Saint whose feast we celebrate on 8 February. (1) No sufferings will go in vain! The more we endure the more the grace. St Bhakita endured the struggles in her journey and received the crown from her Most Beloved One and Most Holy One, our Lord and Saviour. (2) The suffering humanity needs us to reach out in their struggles and pains by coming out of our comfort zones. The world is crying in pain! As we celebrate the World Consecration Day this month (February), let us become aware at the core of our being and reach out to the peripheries, heeding the call of Pope Francis. When Israelites were in slavery, God called Moses to go and liberate them. Today, when our brothers and sisters are brutally tortured in slavery and in brothel houses, God calls us to reach out to them and to take them by hand. St Bhakita invites us to lift the fallen ones! Festal Blessings of St Bhakita who was lifted from slave to Saint!



PMI Special Task Forces Conference Report

Vinita Britto

PMI Special Task Forces convened an online conference on 29 January 2022. Sr Amala DC, PMI national secretary read out the programme. Sr Jancy Chackyath MPV initiated the opening prayer and invoked the Holy Spirit on speakers and participants. Mrs Lili Vaz beautifully sang the hymn: *Lord, I come to you*. Fr Michael Francis, Commander-in-Chief said that it was a privilege and honour to welcome Fr Francis Kodiyan MCBS, a man with many years of dedication and commitment to God. Fr Michael welcomed Sr Amala, Sr Jancy, Sr Lini, Mrs Lili Vaz, Walter Kamble and Ashok Kumar. The Special Task Forces meet every last Saturday of the month to come together as one great family of God.

Military Prisoners Reformers (MPR)

Mrs Latha Appachan, coordinator of MPR said that Military Prisoners Reformers are similar to Christians with the 10 commandments. Military Prisoners Reformers is not yet formed but will be done soon.

Mafia Redeemers (MR)

Fr Dion Isaac thanked God for enabling him to continue in the Ministry. PMI Hyderabad Unit STF Mafia Redeemers has not been formed as a group yet but will be created by the end of the day.

Anti-Human Trafficking Brigadiers (ATB)

Mr Ashok Kumar spoke at length about the statistics, activities and the most recent Walk

with Anson Thomas, the National Level Hockey Player to Rescuer, Freedom Fighter for Trafficked Victims held on 16th January 2022. A Prayer Walk in Pune Red-light area was led on 8th January 2022 from 12.30 to 1.30PM to intercede for all these people that God touch them in all their sickness and problems and needs. Prison Ministry runs Rehabilitation Centres for trafficked people in Kochi, Trivandrum, Bangalore, Noida (Delhi), Ranchi and Patan in Gujarat.

Methodologies

Fr Francis Kodiyan MCBS invited the participants to follow the methodologies of PMI patrons. St Therese of Lisieux prayed and offered Holy Masses and mortifications for the hardcore criminal and triple murderer Pransini. He repented, got hold of the crucifix and kissed it before his death. St Maximilian Kolbe, sacrificed his life for a coprisoner. Venerable Francis Xavier Van Thuan spent 13.5 years in a Vietnam prison and spiritually guided and enlightened his coprisoners. PMI Special Task Forces is a core group within the PMI volunteers. It can be compared to a mustard seed which provides shade and shelter with spiritual charisms in the real sense.

Purgatory Souls Redeemers (PSR)

Sr Lini Sheeja MSC spoke on the call to holiness referring to 1 Peter 15:16 and spiritual warfare. A 40 days program, followed by 50 days, 67 days and 70 days were held. Whenever we gathered, the Holy Eucharist was celebrated. Prayer to St Gertrude was recited which is believed would release 1000 souls from purgatory each time it is said.

Gangsters Reformers (GR)

Sr Gracy SJL introduced 11 members to the group who were actively involved



SPECIAL TASK FORCES

in personal prayer. When articles appear involving gangsters in the newspapers, prayers are offered for their reformation. Monthly meetings will be held from the month of February onwards. The use of the Word of God is best to sanctify.

Anointed Prisoners Consolers (APC)

Sr Jancy said that a meeting in honour of Fr Stan Swamy SJ was organized. Fr Joe Matthew SJ and Fr Sooraj SJ con-celebrated the Holy Eucharist, on 9th July 2021 from 2.30-04.00 PM. Fr Matthew Pulinthanam delivered the message. The team members regularly offered prayers and sacrifices for the anointed prisoners. Sr Shymala is the Secretary and Sr Jancy is the coordinator. Altogether there are 44 team members.

Prisoners' Children Educators (PCE)

Mrs Veera Pinto said that the group was inaugurated on 6 November 2020. It consists of 30 team members. Its members sponsor/adopt a child, take care of their physical & medical needs, stage performances during Christmas and children's day. They provided clothes and gifts for children with mothers in prisons. T-Shirts and Bermudas were distributed to juvenile home children. Financial aid was provided to families/relatives to pursue their career to complete Masters in Commerce. Fr Francis mentioned that the plan was to educate 400 children.

Political Prisoners' Transformers (PPT)

Mr Raymond Osta, Patna, Bihar, said that according to current estimates there are a million political prisoners around the world. Martin Luther King Jr., Mahatma Gandhi, Nelson Mandela, Benazir Bhutto were imprisoned to name a few. Movements like

J.P. Movement against freedom of thought in the State of Bihar, The Mandal Commission, the Socially and Educationally Backward Classes Commission (SEBC), Amnesty International campaign for Children's Human Rights - Armed Conflict - Death Penalty - Torture, The Unlawful Activities (Prevention) UAPA Act 1967, Bhima Koregaon for inciting violence on January 1, 2018 by organising and participating in the Elgar Parishad event.

Death Row Commandoes (DRC), Lt.

Col. Jennifer James, Chennai, said that this group was launched on 8 October 2020. There are 35 members in the team. They gather for weekly Bible Study Program followed by prayer from 0001 Hours to 0230 Hours. Hebrews 12:1 reminds us that "since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us". DRC participated in other events, namely Pentecost Sunday, PMI Sunday and Jericho's March. DRC celebrated its first anniversary on 6 October 2021. Jennifer ended with the Bible verse Acts 20:24 "But I do not count my life of any value to myself, if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the good news of God's grace". Fr Francis added that thanks to their prayer many death sentences are reduced to life sentences.

Anti-corruption & Anti-bribery Warriors (AAW)

Mr Walter Kamble admitted that not much has been achieved in this respect. However, he is presently meeting with the Prayer Group on Fridays with the Special Vigilance and Staff of the Railways and praying for the intentions.



Prisoners' Releasing Squad (PRS)

Mr Antony Jacob mentioned that he had released prisoners from the Central Prison by paying penalty. Recently, he released one foreign woman & child from the Narcotics Cell by paying INR 75,000. This amount was paid by the accused. 35 cases are still pending. The lawyer fee is high in Pune, Maharashtra. Sr Adele Korah said she has been releasing prisoners at different levels through a) Release from inner bondages – redeem, b) Counselling and prayer c) Bail acquittal d) Providing support in prisons e) Release, rehabilitation and Reintegration, extending support and assistance. The expenses were met by the PMI national office and benefactors. In 2021 we spent Rs 9,66,500 for prisoners' release.

Dacoits Redeemers (DR)

Mrs Rebecca Pinto stated that the team meets thrice a day: 6.30 AM vespers I, 3.00 PM I evening and night vespers to pray for a change of heart. On November 27 they conducted a Night Vigil (candle light) and on January 22 conducted Fiery Nights with reference to 2 Kings 6:16.

Victims Redeemers (VR)

Mr Rajendra Dushing informed that Victims Redeemers was launched on 6th May 2021 but no group has been created so far.

Prison Police Reformers (PPR)

Sr Anisha SD informed that she has transformed a criminals' colony into a Saints' colony by constructing houses for them with a contribution of Rs one crore. At present she has been working relentlessly with the Waynard Panchayat for reformation.



SPECIAL TASK FORCES

Paedophiles Reformers (PR)

Mrs Eunice Fernandes said that she has 3 members in her group so far and will work towards it.

Blackmailing Prisoners' Reformers (BPR)

Sr Beena SDP said that there are 14 participants in the group including Fr John Areekal. They spend 1 hour in adoration before the Blessed Sacrament and recite rosary.

Juvenile Delinquents Reformers (JDR)

Bro Pradeep Anthony OFM informed that Juvenile Delinquents in the age group 10-18 are immature offenders. We assist them by offering prayers, frequent visits and helping with education and training. From 18 December 2021, the 22 members join daily to pray from 6.30 – 07.00 PM.

Mr Water Kamble, in his vote of thanks referred to Zechariah 2:5 "For I will be a wall of fire all around it, says the Lord, and I will be the glory within it." He referred to Fr Francis Kodiyan as the magnet of Special Task Forces, thanked Fr Michael Francis and Sr Amala for their constant support and each of the Special Task Force to walk with the Lord and Praise God. The meeting ended with the Prayer for Prisoners recited by Mr Ashok Kumar.



Human Trafficking Recommendations

Increase investigations, prosecutions, and convictions of all forms of trafficking, including bonded labor.

Vigorously investigate allegations of official complicity in human trafficking and sentence perpetrators to significant prison terms.

- Criminally investigate all reports of bonded labor.
- Develop and immediately implement regular monitoring mechanisms of shelters to ensure adequate care, and promptly disburse funding to shelters that meet official standards for care.
- Improve clarity on central and state government mandates for and implementation of protection programs and compensation schemes for trafficking victims, especially children, to ensure states provide release certificates, compensation, and non-cash benefits to all victims immediately.
- Urge prosecutors to routinely request and judges to award, as appropriate, trafficking victim compensation, and urge legal aid offices to routinely inform trafficking victims of available compensation mechanisms.
- Cease detention of adult trafficking victims in government-run and government-funded shelters.

- Amend the definition of trafficking in Section 370 of the Penal Code to include labor trafficking and ensure that force, fraud, or coercion are not required to prove a child sex trafficking crime.
- Lift bans on female migration through agreements with destination countries that protect Indian workers from human trafficking.
- Update and implement a national action plan to combat trafficking.
- Provide anti-trafficking training for diplomatic personnel.

Precepts of the Church

The Precepts of the Church describe the minimum effort we must make in prayer and in living a moral life. All Catholics are called to move beyond the minimum by growing in love of God and love of neighbor.

The Precepts are as follows:

1. Attendance at Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation
2. Confession of serious sin at least once a year
3. Reception of Holy Communion at least once a year during the Easter season
4. Observance of the days of fast and abstinence
5. Providing for the needs of the Church



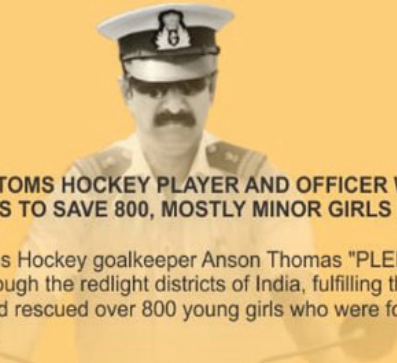
RELEASING SOON

SPORTS MISSION

Presents



A CUSTOM OFFICER OUT TO CHANGE THE REDLIGHT TO GREEN



CHRONICLES OF FORMER CUSTOMS HOCKEY PLAYER AND OFFICER WHO RISKED LIFE AND LIMB AND ALL HIS LIFE SAVINGS TO SAVE 800, MOSTLY MINOR GIRLS FROM THE FLESH TRADE.

A biopic of former Mumbai Customs Hockey goalkeeper Anson Thomas "PLEDGE TO PROTECT" chronicles his 30 years journey through the redlight districts of India, fulfilling the very pledge every State officer swears by on oath, and rescued over 800 young girls who were forced into the flesh trade by unscrupulous human traffickers.

Anson quit his government job as Preventive Officer in 2010 from Mumbai Customs (and active hockey) to turn to full time social engagement on the unsavory streets where young girls are bought and sold for the carnal pleasures provided by depraved human traffickers to inhuman clients.

He has rescued over 800 women and children from brothels across India and was also bestowed the CNN & Reliance Industries "REAL HEROES" award for his work on women's empowerment for the year 2009.

The movie is not limited in scope to Indian brothels but also exposed the organized global prevalence of human traffickers who force women into modern day sex slavery in Amsterdam and Australia.

The movie narrative depicts Anson's almost single crusade against an insensitive and corrupt administration that allows human trafficking to thrive behind closed doors right next to schools religious places of worship in Mumbai's Kamathipura and in suburban Bhandup before his work assumed a pan India footprint.

The close shaves with death this crusader lived through is also depicted in the movie that he financed using all his life's savings with the single minded objective to inspire others to similarly "PLEDGE TO PROTECT" our less fortunate Indian sisters, and women similarly exploited across the world too.

Watch this movie to see if Anson could win his lone battle with law to save the trafficked victims. If he could save himself from the corrupt system and the traffickers. If Anson could really save those victims bound in slavery and rehabilitate them. If Anson is still continuing this fight or has he quit. As our Indian Mens Hockey team won an Olympic medal in Tokyo, what were the challenges this former Hockey player Anson Thomas had to undergo to save the trafficked victims. What he meant by the title of the movie Pledge to Protect. You will get the answers to all these questions by watching this movie "PLEDGE TO PROTECT".

Star Cast :

Anson Thomas, Govind Namdeo, Ganesh Yadav, Mushtaq Khan, Sunil Pal, Anjali Ujawane, Bhakti Chavan Vikrant Anand, Navya Singh, Vaishnavi Macdonald, Arvinder Singh, Mahesh Dada Devkate, Pranita Ghode

Produced By : Anson Thomas

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PMI Employment Scheme



DIG of Uttarpradesh Awarding Certificates of Appreciation to PMI Volunteers



Girl Child Day Celebration in Shimoga Prison



Cybercrime Prisoners Redeemers Meet



PMI Volunteers with Buxar Prison Superintendent



Prison Pilgrimage of Jesus Fraternity Members in 1987



PMI Establishing Library in Pala Prison