

VIRTUES FOR PMI VOLUNTEERS



PRISON MINISTRY INDIA

PMI IS BORN OUT OF LOVE

On 8th December 1981, two Students of a Seminary, in Kerala, named Varghese Karippery and Francis Kodiyan, received a special call within a call, a message that every person should be a **Love-bomb** in order to help others.

The message they heard was put into words in a verse:

*"Be a love Bomb! Let it be exploded
Not to kill, but to heal the broken hearts"*



Jesus is the Founder of Prison Ministry!

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me. I am sent to release the captive”. (Lk: 4:18-19)

“When I was in prison, you visited me”

(Mt: 25: 36)

What is a prison?



In ancient times a prison was considered: A house of Captives and a place of Punishment. Now it is a home of correction and rehabilitation!

WHO IS A PRISONER?



The definition of a prison and also a prisoner who should be punished has to be changed.

- : A prisoner is a human being without a voice.**
- : He has no space of his own.**
- : He is being disciplined in every possible way.**
- : His movements are curtailed.**
- : He is confined in a 40 square feet space.**



: He is kept under close watch.

: No doors, no privacy.

: No provision to safely keep his personal belongings.

: Over-crowding and congestion

: Legal aid and lawyer's fees for the poor not affordable

: In prison life, there is no room for variety.

: It is very tough to pass time in jails.

: There are high walls and several gates, with locks.

: The design of the buildings, the cells and walls!



: They are like fish accidentally caught in the net; and have no chance of escaping.

: Some have no visitors for months together.

: The place earmarked for the family members to meet the inmates is segregated with a glass wall.

: Sometimes, the visitors come from far off places travelling long hours, just for 20 minutes

What do we do actually in the prison?



Prison Ministry is not about doing miraculous works among the inmates or securing their release from the prison. It is not about just doing!

Compassion is the primary PMI Virtue

Compassion is a virtue cannot be explained but it has to be experienced.

Give me a heart of flesh. A person of heart, filled with compassion, mercy, sensitivity, non-judgmental approach and sincere love.

Why should we help the prisoners?



**“You are caught, I'm not”;
that is the difference
between you and me”.**



According to HR Commission, 40% of the undertrials in the prisons are innocent human beings. To love them and to participate in their human agony is a God–experience.



**Who cares for them? Who bothers about them?
Who wants their bright future?**

Sustained interest and perseverance

This is our mission in the prison.

**Counselling and providing
psychological help**

**Attending to their basic needs like
sponsoring a meal and generosity in
contributing your mite for the maintenance
of the rehabilitation centres.**

*** You can get free legal aid from some of your Advocate friends**

*** Organizing free medical camps and providing spectacles etc.**

*** Sharing with them material goods like dress, clothes and writing materials or using our influence getting admission for their children, educating them or arranging for jobs.....**

*** Enhancing reconciliation between families and the inmates**



SKILLS FOR SPIRITUAL ACCOMPANIMENT

**We don't take Jesus there.
We discover Jesus there!**

**They often ask for our prayers. They believe that
the Lord of history can change their destiny.**

OUR PRESENCE



**Prison ministry is primarily
a Ministry of Presence.**

**What they need is our compassionate
presence. Our presence brings them lots of
healing and hope and conversion of hearts.**

With despondency, they will be eagerly looking towards the gate waiting for our arrival.

**Our language is one of compassion and tenderness.
*They crave to listen to your soothing voice.
Only you can do it.***

We need to have patience.....

Their self-esteem is low. They need to be encouraged. They need to be given hope. Enable them to see the good things in themselves.

Some of the inmates teach us how to contextualize the Word of God.

Often Pope Francis appeals to the authorities to take practical measures, which are urgently needed to improve the living conditions in the prisons.

We must be ready to accept lots of inconveniences and we rely on providence of God. Many a times, it is not finance, which is the basic need in this ministry except sometimes when the poor inmates need money to be released. PMI is not like other NGOs.

Let us remember this.....

Jails have got prison manual. We have to read the rules. They have laid down many policies and we need to follow them.



MOTHER INSPIRING

I believe in and I like what Mother Theresa said:
“It is a beautiful gift of God to take care of the people, men and women in jail. It is something beautiful for God and is a real gift”.

I CONCLUDE.....

“A nation is known, not by how it treats its highest citizen but how it treats the prisoners. You will never know a nation unless you are in prison. If we want to measure the civilization of a country, visit a prison”.

Nelson Mandela



**We, should understand the fact that these
brothers and sisters of ours have fallen
“with our silent knowledge,
our indifference to their cry, our faulty
educational system and the selfishness
of Society”.**



Our ministry is to give the inmates a feeling that the world is not bad and there are still people to care for them and are interested in their welfare.

Thus let us try to bring changes in the life of these least, lost and last of our society.

**Then Jesus, our Master will say on the
Last Judgment day:**

**“I was in prison and you visited me”
(Mt.25:36)**

THANK YOU!

GOD BLESS YOU FRIENDS!

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