



# PRISON VOICE

August 2021

Vol. XVIII

Issue 8

NATIONAL MONTHLY

₹40/-



## The Love Quotient (LQ)

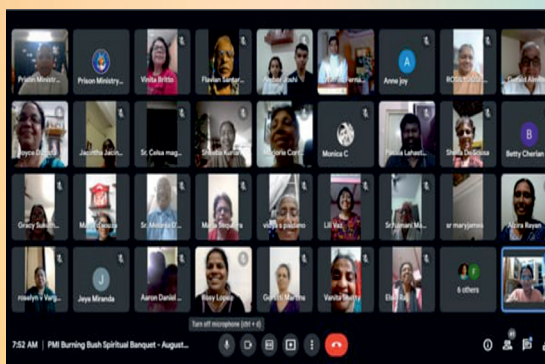




**Book Release Prison Ministry Sunday  
Pastoral Letters 2004-2021**



**PMI Volunteers Visiting Women's Jail  
Pune Distributing Baby Tub**



**Burning Bush Spiritual Banquet  
6 August 2021**



**Inauguration of Drinking Water  
Purifier at Ernakulam District Jail**



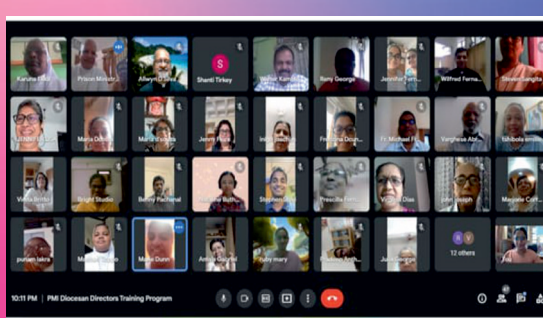
**Golden Jubilee Greetings to Sr Theresina  
and Blessings of First Profession to  
Sr Moksha who Served at Jeevodaya**



**Mathew Albin Celebrating Silver  
Jubilee of Shanti Bhavan**



**Kolbe Boys with New  
Sports Dress**



**Diocesan Directors Training  
Program 2-6 August 2021**

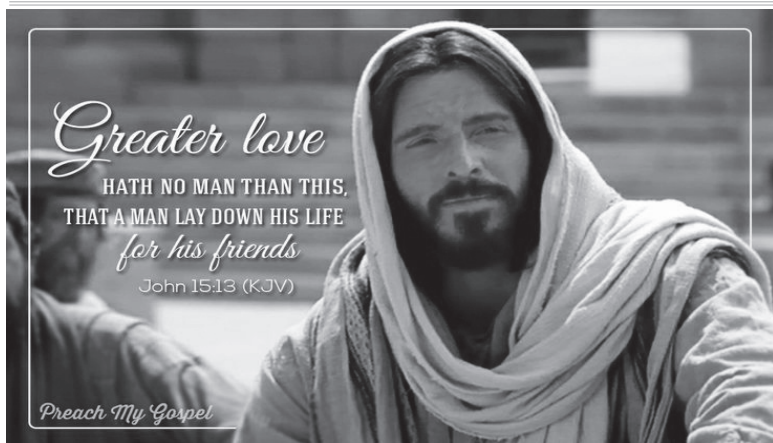


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### Are You Willing?

"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  
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## **PRISON MINISTRY SUNDAY & FEAST OF ST MAXIMILIAN KOLBE**

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“Let us remember that love lives through sacrifice and is nourished by giving. Without sacrifice, there is no love” St Maximilian Kolbe. At the outset, I wish you, dear volunteers, the merciful heavenly Father’s abundant blessings on the solemnity of the Assumption of our Blessed Mother, auspicious 75th Independence Day, enriching celebration of PMI Sunday, and memorable feast of our Patron St Maximilian Kolbe. May these celebrations inspire and motivate us to do great things for the greater glory of God.

### **Prison Ministry Sunday 2021**

Prison Ministry Sunday invites us to live the Gospel by witnessing Christ among prisoners with love, respect, justice, hope and joy and by working to create a more just and compassionate society. Beyond the financial impact, the cycle of crime and incarceration results in broken relationships, victimization, despair; and instability impacting families and communities across the nation. Our gift of time and energy enhances us to share the hope-filled liberative message of the Gospel with prisoners, ex-prisoners and their children; and also, to advocate for second chances. As a result, lives are changed, families are reunited and God is glorified. What a great investment! With such a great help of ours, we can reclaim millions of broken lives today! Thus, we can send men and women who have been transformed by God’s grace back to their communities imbued with the virtues of forgiveness, restoration and new life.

### **St Maximilian Kolbe**

As we are honoured to celebrate the feast St Maximilian Kolbe our patron saint on



**Sr Amala DC**  
Chief Editor

14th, let us reflect on his life of sacrifice to save a family in concentration camp. St Maximilian became a sign of God’s mercy, exposing the tragedy of the concentration camp, the tragedy that there is no love, no communion. So efficiently cruel and so systematically dehumanizing was Nazi exercise of power, that it even involved its victims in the machinations of destruction and ruthless logic of inequity. Nazis enlisted concentration camp inmates as spies, guards, executioners, effectively isolating people from one another in fear, distrust, and anger. St Maximilian disrupted evil’s insidious logic, but not through accusation or revenge. For the saint exposed the lie of evil by breaking the chain of its transmission, not by passing it along. The saint defeated evil risking his own life. Thus, the Saint continues to insist on the logic of creation, the logic of charity, which make space within itself for another.

The sacrifice of his whole life and the manner of his death affirmed the words of the Apostle John, “By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren” (1 Jn 3:16). Dear Volunteers, the pandemic has disturbed the entire universe and the celebration of PMI Sunday as well. May we have recourse to our Patron for the grace to stand up for these unfortunate brethren behind the bars and that our selfless service may instil in them a commitment to live a better life in peace, prosperity, dignity and solidarity. May we have recourse to our heavenly Patron





## Conquering Jericho



“Take up the ark of the covenant, and have seven priests carry seven trumpets of rams’ horns in front of the ark of the LORD.” To the people he said, “Go forward and march around the city; have the armed men pass on before the ark of the LORD” (Joshua 6,1-7).

## Jericho Prayer





prayer for the renewal and redemption of prisoners worldwide.

### **Spiritual Empowerment**

In our lives, we are continually surrounded and bombarded by evil forces and inclinations of the world, the flesh and the devil. As a result, it is often difficult for people to be and do good. When we do Jericho Prayer, we are spiritually cutting off these dark clouds of evil that surround the people or places for whom we pray. At the same time, our prayer replaces the dark spiritual clouds with the Presence of Jesus and the bright Divine Cloud of all His Love and graces, mercy and blessings. We set our people and places apart unto God, so He can then work very directly in their lives. And we surround them with a Divine Shield, thus building a kind of spiritual wall or container around them in which to catch God's Glory. In this way, we are opening the window to heaven above them and their lives and their places so the Lord can pour out His Mercy and blessings and miracles upon them.

### **Prayer Method**

As the Israelites marched around Jericho city PMI warriors march around prisons in India and around the world. We do this either by walking or standing and praying and singing loudly and intensely the following 7 types of prayers: 1) praise and worship, 2) act of reparation or contrition, 3) way of the cross, 4) rosary, 5) divine mercy, 6) Word of God and conclude with 7) Holy Mass. We believe that as the God of Abraham, Isaac

and Jacob helped Joshua to conquer the city of Jericho through our Jericho prayer, Jesus would help to renew and redeem prisoners worldwide.

### **Act of Reparation**

Most Holy Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, I adore You profoundly, and I offer You the most precious Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ, present in all the tabernacles of the world, in reparation for the outrages, sacrileges and indifference with which He Himself is offended. And, through the infinite merits of His most Sacred Heart, and the Immaculate Heart of Mary, I beg of You the conversion of poor sinners and prisoners all over the world. O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended you, and I detest all my sins and the sins of the incarcerated because of your just punishments, but most of all because they offend you, my God, who are all good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve with the help of your grace to sin no more and to avoid the near occasion of sin. Amen.

### **Prayer for Prisoners**

Lord Our Loving Father, we praise and worship you together with Jesus Christ who taught us to visit the incarcerated. We thank and glorify you for sending your only begotten Son Jesus to proclaim liberty to the captives and saving us through His unjust imprisonment and death on the Cross. Merciful Father, give us the grace to see your face in our brethren behind the bars and help us to remember them as though we were in prison with them. Beloved Father, we entrust into your compassionate hands





our imprisoned brethren, sanctify them by your precious blood and anoint them with your Holy Spirit. Illumine their hearts to accept the present traumatic situation, give them the grace of repentance and forgiveness. Inspire their family members and society to accept them in spite of their frailties and failures. Fill us with the fruits, gifts and charisms of the Holy Spirit so that we may be empowered to transmit the unconditional and forgiving love of Jesus to prisoners. Bless the prison staff that they may be kind, gentle and understanding towards those under their care, sanctify and strengthen the victims that they may be reconciled with those who offended them. Mary, Mother of Jesus pray for the reformation and rehabilitation of our brethren behind the bars. We ask this prayer through Christ our Lord. Amen

### **Prayer for the Souls of Prisoners**

Immortal God, Holy Lord, Father and Protector of all You have created, we raise

### **WORLDWIDE PRISONERS**

our hearts to You today for those prisoners who have passed out of this mortal life. In Your loving mercy, Father of all, be pleased to receive them in Your heavenly company, and forgive the failings and faults they may have done from human frailty. Your only Son, Christ, our Saviour, suffered so cruelly that He might deliver them from the second death. By his merits may they share in the glory of His victory over sin and death. For all the faithful who have died we pray, but in particular for those dear to us, parents, relatives and friends, nor do we forget all who did good to us while on earth, who helped us by their prayers, sacrifice and example. We pray also for any who may have done us harm, and stand in special need of Your forgiveness. May the merits and prayers of our Virgin Mother, Mary, and those of all the Angels and Saints, speak for us and assist them now. This we ask in Christ's name. Amen.

### **Jericho Prayer Program**

1200 Praise and Worship	PMI Mumbai Unit
1230 Act of Reparation	Innocent Prisoners & Purgatory Souls Redeemers
0100 Way of the Cross	PMI Pune Unit
0130 Rosary	Antidrug Trafficking Warriors
0200 Divine Mercy	PMI Telangana Unit
0230 Word of God	Death Row Commandoes
0300 Holy Mass	National Office & Kolbe Home
Google Meet Link	<a href="https://meet.google.com/kkm-hibk-zdy">https://meet.google.com/kkm-hibk-zdy</a>







# **ST MAXIMILLIAN KOLBE AND PRISON MINISTRY SUNDAY**

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**Fr Wilfred Fernandes**

## **PMI Patron**

St Maximilian Kolbe is the patron of Prison Ministry India. He demonstrated incredible charity and faith and was highly intelligent and inventive. He started a group called the Knights of Immaculata with the goal of sharing the love of Jesus through Mary. He was arrested by the Nazi invasion in Poland, imprisoned and sent to Auschwitz. He suffered, brought hope and sacraments to his fellow prisoners and finally offered his life to save another inmate who had a family. St Kolbe, with his life and his writings has taught us so many things. I have summarised 6 of his teachings.

## **Mary, Mother of Jesus and our Mother**

St Maximilian lived and died for the Lady whom he loved, the Blessed Virgin Mary. Yet, it is impossible to understand his devotion to Mary without understanding what motivated it. To St Maximilian, devotion to Mary was logical and necessary if one wanted to follow Christ. We all are called to imitate Christ, to be like Christ. He felt, the best way to be like Christ was by entrusting ourselves to Mother Mary who formed Christ in her womb, who taught him as he was growing through his childhood, who was with Him every step of His life right till He died on the Cross for all of us.

## **Essence of Holiness is Obedience**

We read the lives of saints and think that to be holy, we must experience God in a direct and immediate way. But this is simply not the case. One of the most important lessons that St Maximilian taught is that holiness is nothing more than obedience to the will of God in every circumstance of life. “Christian perfection consists in the union of our will with the will of God.” “Not in mortification, not in prayer, not in labour, not in rest, but in obedience is the essence and merit of holiness.”


## **Sin Can Help Us Grow in Holiness**

One of the truths taught by St Maximilian that is most revolutionary to our spiritual life is that sin can actually help us advance on the road to perfection. This is because the foundation of all holiness is humility, and nothing humbles us more than coming face to face with our own weakness. This is not to say that we should sin intentionally, but that we should never be discouraged when we do fall. St Maximilian summarizes this idea as “My beloved, may every fall, even if it is serious and habitual sin, always become for us a small step toward a higher degree of perfection. In fact, the only reason why the Immaculate permits us to fall is to cure us from our self-conceit, from our pride, to make us humble and thus make us docile to the divine graces.”

## **Missionary Zeal**

St Maximilian lived with intensity. There was no lukewarmness or half-heartedness in him. His mission was to liberate as many souls as possible from sin and make them happy by uniting them to God by way of his





Immaculate Mother. He was consumed by this desire and compelled by its urgency, and he inspired the same zeal for the salvation of souls everywhere he went. He says “It is not enough to become the Immaculate’s within some defined limit. In every respect, we must desire to radiate her, so as to draw to her the souls of all others who are, will be, and might be - without restriction.

### **Love Everyone, Even Your Enemies**

It can be very easy to love only those we like, or those who agree with us. It is human nature. As our Lord said, “For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?” Yet, selective love is not true Christian love. We are called to love everyone, no matter how morally wicked or distasteful to us. St Maximilian lived in this way, and his heart was so large it embraced the world. He says “We need to love our neighbour not just because he is pleasant or helpful or rich and influential or even because he shows us gratitude. Genuine love rises above creatures and soars up to God. In him, by him, and through him it loves all men, both good and wicked, friends and enemies. To all it stretches out a hand filled with love; it prays for all, suffers for all, wishes what is best for all, desires happiness for all - because that is what God wants.

### **Never Be Discouraged**

In the Christian life, dark times will inevitably come. We will become weary, we will suffer, and we will feel overwhelmed. Yet, despite the darkness which sometimes envelopes us, St. Maximilian reminds us to never lose heart, to always be courageous,



**ST MAXIMILLIAN KOLBE**

and to entrust everything to Mary, our good mother who is far more capable of helping us than we are of helping ourselves. He says, “Let us give every difficulty, every sorrow to her, and have confidence that she will take care of it better than we could”.

### **Conclusion**

Why do we celebrate PMI Sunday every year? It is to keep reminding us that as PMI members we are called to serve, serve with humility and love. We are called to be Love Bombs – let it be exploded not to kill but to heal the broken hearts. In the Pastoral letter, our Chairperson, Bishop Alwyn D’silva, asks us to consider prisoners as our brethren and do whatever is possible for their integral human development”. As Christians we believe that Jesus - Himself brought to trial, executed, buried, and brought to life again - offers hope, healing, and a new purpose for each life. Our theme for this year is Prisoners’ Reintegration. Let us look on to the incarcerated, be they an adult, youth or child, as a brother and a sister waiting to be released, rather than being abandoned on the lost and forgotten. Let us also, like our patron saint be filled with the fire of love and zeal, to work for those in prisons and help reintegrate them. God Bless you all!

“You shall love the Lord your  
God with all your heart, and  
with all your soul, and with all  
your mind”  
Mt 22,37



# The Coronation of Mary as Queen of Heaven

For every good deed that we do, there is surely going to be a glorious reward. Today, we celebrate a woman whose fear of God brought her great reward; a woman who was not only pure in body, but also pure in heart. She is none other than the Blessed Virgin Mary. When God decided to make her his own mother; a woman whose firm “YES” to God changed the course of human history.

Today’s feast happens to be the last of the five glorious mysteries. On Easter Sunday, we celebrated the first, which is the Resurrection of Jesus from the dead, and then we celebrated his Ascension into heaven about forty days later. On Pentecost day, we celebrated the third glorious mystery which is the Descent of the Holy Spirit on the Apostles. On 15th of August, we celebrated the fourth, which is the Assumption of Mary into heaven and today, we complete the glorious mysteries with the celebration of the Coronation of Mary as Queen of Heaven.

Each of these glorious mysteries are episodes in the history of Christianity which deserve our full attention and meditation. They point to one fact: that after the pain of the Cross, there is something glorious ahead. As St. Paul would say: “What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of



**Fr Allam Sagar Manoj Kumar**

man conceived, what God has prepared for those who love him” (1 Corinthians 2:9).

In other words, the Queenship of Mary is a natural follow-up of her glorious Assumption into heaven and her final reward. That is the fulfilment of the words of Angel Gabriel at the Annunciation: “And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there will be no end” (Luke 1:31-33). At the Visitation, St. Elizabeth calls Mary “Mother of my Lord.” As in all the mysteries of Mary’s life, Mary is closely associated with Jesus. Her queenship is a share in Jesus’ kingship. We can also recall that in the Old Testament the mother of the king had great influence in court.

If Jesus Christ is a king whose reign shall last forever, it follows that Mary his mother is a Queen. Her Queenship is a share in the Kingship of Jesus. Like Mary, we all are somehow going to be partakers of the Glory of our Lord Jesus Christ so far as we endure to the end.





## QUEEN OF HEAVEN

Pope Pius XII established this feast in 1954. If we understand from the tradition of the Church, in the fourth century St. Ephrem called Mary “Lady” and “Queen” and Church Fathers and Doctors continued to use the title. Hymns of the eleventh to thirteenth centuries address Mary as queen: “Hail, Holy Queen,” “Hail, Queen of Heaven,” “Queen of Heaven.” The Dominican rosary and the Franciscan crown as well as numerous invocations in Mary’s litany celebrate her queenship.

The feast is a logical follow-up to the Assumption and is now celebrated on the octave day of that feast. In his encyclical *To the Queen of Heaven*, Pope Pius XII points out that Mary deserves the title because she is Mother of God, because she is closely associated as the New Eve with Jesus’ redemptive work, because of her preeminent perfection and because of her intercessory power.

As St. Paul says in Romans 8:28-30, God has predestined human beings from all eternity to share the image of his Son. All the more Mary was predestined to be the mother of Jesus. As Jesus was to be king of all creation, Mary, in dependence on Jesus, was to be queen. All other titles to queenship derive from this eternal intention of God. As Jesus exercised his kingship on earth by serving his Father and his fellow human beings, so Mary did exercise her queenship. As the glorified Jesus remains with us as our king till the end of time (Matthew 28:20), so does Mary, who was assumed into heaven and crowned queen of heaven and earth.

At this juncture, the second Vatican council says: “Let the entire body of the faithful pour forth persevering prayer to the Mother of God and Mother of men. Let them implore that she who aided the beginnings of the Church by her prayers may now, exalt her as she is in heaven above all the saints and angels, intercede with her Son in the fellowship of all the saints. May she do so until all the peoples of the human family, whether they are honoured with the name of Christian or whether they still do not know their Saviour, are happily gathered together in peace and harmony into the one People of God, for the glory of the Most Holy and Undivided Trinity” (Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, 69).

## A PRISONER’S PRAYER

O Prisoner-Saint of Auschwitz, help me in my plight. Introduce me to Mary, the Immaculata, Mother of God. She prayed for Jesus in a Jerusalem jail. She prayed for you in a Nazi prison camp. Ask her to comfort me in my confinement. May she teach me always to be good. If I am lonely, may she say, “God is here.” If I feel hate, may she say, “God is love.” If I am tempted, may she say, “God is pure.”

If I sin, may she say, “God is mercy.” If I am in darkness, may she say, “God is light.” If I am unjustly condemned, may she say, “God is truth.” If I have pain in soul or body, may she say, “God is peace.” If I lose hope, may she say: “God is with you all days, and so am I.” Amen.





## Imprisoned Innocent Asia Bibi

Asia Noreen - commonly known as Asia Bibi - was accused of blasphemy after an argument she had with a group of women on 14 June 2009. A year later she became the first woman to be sentenced to death under Pakistan's blasphemy laws, causing an international outcry. The death sentence was quashed by the Supreme Court in 2018, triggering violent protests by religious hardliners.

### The Fateful Day

Asia Bibi left the home she shared with her husband and children and headed for the fields. The village of Ittanwala, some 40 miles south-east of Lahore, is surrounded by green fields and fruit orchards. It is one of the most fertile in the Punjab. Like many of the women in the village, Asia worked as a farm labourer. It was June and the women were to spend the day picking berries. After working for hours under the scorching sun, the thirsty, exhausted women stopped for a break. Asia was asked to fetch some water from the nearby well. Asia is a Christian. In Pakistan, many conservative Muslims don't like to eat or drink with people of other faiths. They believe that non-Muslims are impure. Asia's co-workers told her that she was "dirty" and not worthy of drinking from the same cup as them. An argument erupted and fierce words were exchanged on both sides.

### Arrest and Incarceration

Five days later, the police barged their way into Asia's house and accused her of



**Sr Lini Sheeja MSC**

insulting the Prophet Muhammad. Outside was a mob, including the village cleric who had accused her of blasphemy. Asia Bibi was dragged out of her house, beaten, and arrested in front of an angry mob. The mob brazenly began to beat her, right in front of the police. She was arrested and charged with blasphemy.

Accused of blasphemy, she would never return to her village. Heartbroken Asia Bibi in her words narrates to the world, "I kept crying for a week; I kept thinking, what is happening to me? When I think about my days in prison, I'm broken! It was very hard. I suffered a lot. My children's future was badly affected. Their education was disrupted. My elder daughter was in 3rd Std. and the younger daughter was in 1st Std. when I was arrested. Their education suffered a lot because they couldn't go to school. My husband also suffered for me, because he kept running from pillar to post, and I suffered inside the jail.

### Never Gave up

Ashiq and his children had been on the run ever since Asia's arrest. Ashiq, husband of Asia said, "If a loved one is dead, the heart heals after some time. But when a mother is alive, and she gets separated from her children, the way Asia was taken away from us, the agony is endless. We are living in constant fear, there is always a feeling of



anxiety and insecurity, that anything could happen to us. I just let the children go to school - they are not allowed to play outside; we lost our freedom. I lost my livelihood and my home, but I am not ready to give up hope. I will keep struggling for Asia's release." Despite the years of insecurity and uncertainty, Ashiq had never given up on Asia.

### **International Outcry**

In November 2010, a Sheikhpura judge sentenced her to death by hanging which sparked an international outcry. The verdict was upheld by Lahore High Court and received worldwide attention. Various petitions for her release were created by organisations aiding persecuted Christians such as Voice of the Martyrs, including one that received 400,000 signatures; Pope Benedict XVI and Pope Francis called for the charges to be dismissed.

### **Revenge**

She received less sympathy from her neighbours and Islamic religious leaders in the country, some of whom adamantly called for her to be executed. Minorities Minister Shahbaz Bhatti and Punjab Governor Salmaan Taseer were both assassinated for advocating on her behalf and opposing the blasphemy laws. Noreen's family went into hiding after receiving death threats, some of which threatened to kill Noreen if released from prison. Muslim cleric Maulana Yousaf Qureshi announced a bounty of 500,000 Pakistani rupees to anyone who would kill her.

### **Acquittal and Release**

On 31 October 2018, the Supreme Court of Pakistan acquitted Noreen, citing "material contradictions and inconsistent statements of the witnesses" which "cast a shadow of doubt on the prosecution's version of facts." The decision sparked protests headed by Islamist parties in major cities of the country, but was praised by human rights groups and those advocating on behalf of Christian minorities, such as International Christian Concern, Open Doors and Aid to the Church in Need. On 2 November 2018, however, the Government of Pakistan signed an agreement with the Tehreek-e-Labbaik political party (TLP), which was leading the protests; this agreement barred Noreen from leaving the country. On 7 November 2018, she was released from the New Jail for Women in Multan. On 29 January 2019, a petition requesting an appeal against the court's decision to acquit Noreen was rejected, "lifting the last legal hurdle in the case and paving the way for her to leave the country." On 11 April 2019, Prime Minister Imran Khan stated that a "complication" had delayed her departure from the country. On 8 May 2019, she landed in Canada and was reported to be doing well.

### **Message to Pakistan Government**

"This is my message to Prime Minister, Imran Khan, that whenever something happens it should be properly investigated. Innocents shouldn't be punished for no reason and people in prison who are innocents should be freed".





# **International Prisoners' Justice Day**

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**Dr Francis Kodiyan MCBS**

On 17 August 2003, Catholic Bishops' Conference of India (CBCI) announced that a Sunday had been designated as Prison Ministry Sunday to propagate values of love for our brethren behind bars. Henceforth, every year the second Sunday of August is set apart by the Catholic Church in India to remember prisoners, their families, victims and prison staff. Why did CBCI select the Second Sunday of August for Prison Ministry Sunday? This was due to three reasons: firstly, the feast of Saint Maximilian Kolbe, the patron saint of prison ministry comes on 14 August; secondly the International Prisoners' Justice Day come on 10th August; thirdly the Indian Catholic Church celebrates the Justice Sunday on the third Sunday of August. This article briefly illustrates the roots and significance of International Prisoners' Justice Day.

## **The Death of Edward Nalon**

International Prisoners' Justice Day falls on August 10, which marks the anniversary of the 1974 death of Eddie Nalon, a prisoner who bled to death in a solitary confinement unit at Millhaven Maximum Security Prison, Ontario, Canada. He died because the emergency call button in his cell failed to work. The call button in that unit had been deactivated by the guards. On the first anniversary of Eddie's death, August 10, 1975, prisoners at Millhaven refused to work, went on a one-day hunger strike and held a memorial service, even though it would mean a stint in solitary confinement.



## **The Death of Robert Landers**

On May 21, 1976 Robert Landers died in the segregation unit of Millhaven Prison. He was very active in the struggle for Prisoners Rights and had been doing his time at Archambault Maximum Security Prison, near Montreal, Quebec. He was involuntarily transferred to Millhaven just before the strike in January 1976 and thrown into the Hole. On the night before he died, he tried to get medical help, however, the panic buttons in the cells had still not been repaired. He wanted to see the nurse, who could be heard laughing and talking with guards out in the office, at the end of the range. He and three other prisoners all called out for her to come on to the range, but were ignored by both the nurse and the guards. In the morning they found him dead and a scribbled note on his bed that requested medical aid and described symptoms that indicated a heart problem. At the inquest into his death it was determined that he died from a heart attack and a heart specialist confirmed that he should have been in an intensive care unit, not in solitary confinement.

## **Prison Justice Day**

On August 10, 1976 thousands of prisoners across Canada went on a one-day hunger strike. Prison Justice Day Committees were formed in Quebec, Ontario and British Columbia to organize community events to draw attention to prisoners' concerns. In 1983, prisoners in France refused to eat in recognition of August 10th. By the mid 1990's prisoners in parts of Germany, England and the United States would join this day of peaceful protest.

## **International Prisoners' Justice Day**

Slowly, Prison Justice Day became an international day of solidarity with prisoners. International Prisoners' Justice Day was recognized in 2011 in Trout Lake, Canada,





## JUSTICE DAY

with a rally organized by the Vancouver Prison Justice Day Committee. The goal of this celebration is to commemorate the struggle and oppression in the prison system. There are a great many prisoners who were and still are involved in the struggle for prisoners' rights within the walls. This is to honor those who have died unnatural deaths in prison and express solidarity with the millions of people on the inside of prisons who are demanding changes to a criminal justice system that dehumanizes and brutalizes them.

### Significance of Prisoners' Justice Day

International Prisoners' Justice Day invites prisoners worldwide to set aside a day to fast in a show of solidarity to remember those who have died unnecessarily - victims of murder, suicide and neglect. On this day NGOs and organizations hold vigils, worship services and other events in support of prisoners. This day is meant to oppose prison violence, to fight for freedom and equality, to raise public awareness of the economic and social costs of a system of criminal justice which punishes for revenge, to reflect on what it truly means to be incarcerated, to consider how we treat people behind bars, and to remember the goals of incarceration.

### Conclusion

Prison Ministry Sunday and International Prisoners' Justice Day invite our attention to our brethren behind bars who are placed into a situation of powerlessness and dependency, and exposed to possible cruel, inhuman, degrading treatment or punishment and even torture. While the deprivation of liberty may be legal, the deprivation of human dignity is not. International prisoner standards recognize that segregation should not be used except

in the most justifiable circumstances or else it will only unduly aggravate suffering and harm. The goals of incarceration are to protect society and to rehabilitate offenders to prepare for their reintegration into society.

### Prayer to St Maximilian Kolbe

St Maximilian Mary Kolbe, most faithful son of St Francis, the beggar of Assisi, inflamed with love for God you journeyed through life practicing heroic virtues and performing true apostolic deeds.

Turn your gaze on us who honor you and have recourse to you.

Radiating with the light of the Immaculate Virgin, you brought countless souls to holiness and introduced them to various apostolic endeavors for the victory of good over evil and to thereby extend the Kingdom of God throughout the whole world.

Obtain for us the light and the strength we need to do good and to bring many souls to Christ.

Perfectly conformed and united with Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, you achieved such a high degree of love of neighbor that you were able to freely offer your life in exchange for a fellow prisoner in witness of true evangelical charity.

Beg the Lord on our behalf that, filled with the same fire of love, our faith and good example might also bring others to Christ and secure for us the reward of everlasting life, where we shall praise Him together with you in eternal glory. Amen.





# St Maximilian Kolbe - A Love Bomb

**Bro Pradeep Anthony OFM**

## Introduction

“Be a Love Bomb. Let it be exploded. Not to kill but to heal the broken hearted.” This is the statement uttered by one of the co-founders of PMI to another, namely, Fr Varghese Kariperry to Fr Francis Kodiyan forty years ago. Definitely St. Maximilian Kolbe is the perfect example of such a Love Bomb. He really exploded and healed many of the broken hearted. On this PMI Ruby Jubilee year, it's worth learning from this Love Bomb. Probably for this reason on 17th August 2003 CBCI had officially recognized St Maximilian Kolbe as the patron of Prison Ministry India. Martin Luther King Jr. in his book *Strength to Love* states that: “Darkness cannot drive out darkness, only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate, only love can do that.” St Maximilian Kolbe, the patron saint of PMI teaches this reality both through his life and words.

## Militia Immaculatae

St Maximilian Kolbe, born on January 8, 1894, in Poland was brought up with an ardent devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. When he was 13 years of age, the life of St Francis of Assisi, fascinated him to join the Order of Friars Minor Conventuals. He grew in his prayer life in his formation time by sitting long time before the Blessed Sacrament. He later advocated the devotion to consecrate oneself to Sacred Heart of Jesus through the Immaculate Heart of

Our Lady. He realized that primacy of Jesus in one's life could be reached through the Immaculate, and this movement of his gained lots of momentum at that time. The name of this movement was called the “Knights of the Immaculate” or “Militia Immaculatae.” It was founded on the eve of October 16, 1917, a year before Friar Maximilian's ordination along with six Friars. Later, in 1927 he established the city of the Immaculate in Warsaw. It was called city because this movement had grown among 800 Friars. It spread to various places, like Japan and other places. But the Nazis invasion of Poland totally hindered their growth. However, he fostered the value of forgiveness among the people. His apostolic work encouraged love; his message to us is simply that: hatred is destructive and love alone is creative.

## Auschwitz Concentration Camp

As the Lord Jesus says in the Gospel: “Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.” (Jn 12:24). St. Maximilian fell as a grain of wheat in the prison to die and bring forth abundant fruit for the salvation of many people. On February 17, 1941, St Maximilian was arrested by the Nazis and put in the concentration camp, prison cell in Block 11 and was imprisoned in Pawiak prison. As a prisoner his number was 16670. During his time in prison, his profound theological understanding and spiritual insights changed to practical words and actions for his fellow inmates. In a tangible way he showed that there is God, and therefore, love and hope exist even in the midst of horrific genocide in the camps of Auschwitz.





## Self-Offering

In July of 1941, it was reported to the deputy camp commander that a prisoner from St Maximilian's barracks had escaped. In order to prevent further escapes, the standard procedure was to have the commander of the barracks single out ten men for the starvation bunker. St Maximilian, although not among the ten first selected, volunteered, in a heroic act of charity, to be the victim in place of a prisoner Franciszek Gajowniczek, who cried out: "My poor wife; my poor children!" The result of this self-offering was that St Maximilian would be assigned to the infamous starvation bunker where he would slowly but surely die. At this precise moment, the victim Saint attained full conformity with the Victim of the Cross. On 14th of August 1941, Father Maximilian's ordeal of two-weeks was brought to an end by an injection of carbolic acid. He was the last one to die among ten of his co-prisoners. His death on 14th August, just before the feast of Assumption of Our Lady, reveals his close connection with Mother Mary. Pope John Paul II canonized him on 10 October 1982, declaring him as the 'Patron Saint of Our Difficult age.' For this canonization event Gajowniczek, who was saved by St. Maximilian was also present as a guest.

## Apex of Love

Victor Frankl, a contemporary to St Maximilian's days explains in his book of *Man's Search for Meaning*, frequently taking the quote of philosopher Nietzsche which says: "He who has a why to live can bear with almost any how." St Maximilian was very clear on why he lived for he seems to have treasured the word of Jesus which says: "No one has greater love than this, to lay




## A LOVE BOMB

down one's life for one's friends" (Jn 15:13). The action of St Maximilian manifests the apex of love. This is what makes him a saint. Besides all these, he himself had a strong desire to become a saint, and a great saint. St Maximilian was a saint who desired to do astounding things for God! He was a saint who had a magnanimous ambition. He was a saint who stood firm, with constancy and unwavering hope, throughout his life's many difficulties and sufferings. He was a saint who influenced others to do the same. He was a saint who knew that truth and perfect peace is found in God alone. He was a saint for whom difficulties strengthened him. He was a saint who proved love to be greater than hatred!

## Conclusion

The call to become a saint is the universal message that is given by the life of St Maximilian. This is the call that we received through our baptism. This is the call that Pope Francis, the Vicar of Christ, advocates, that 'you can become a saint.' He says: "we are all summoned to be saints and mystics, in virtue of our baptism." He states very differently: "What the world today really needs is mystics and saints, men and women who "believe so deeply in Jesus that they become the image of Christ for the world." "We know love by this, that he laid down his life for us—and we ought to lay down our lives for one another" (1 Jn 3:16). A call for all of us is to take a choice to be a Love Bomb, a saint, by consciously imploring Christ's abundant grace to love our neighbour to the extent of laying down our lives.





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## **A Eucharistic Adoration for all Who Succumbed to Covid-19**

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**Sr Inigo SSA**

### **Exposition**

Jesus the healer... Joyful lips: M. 26; Pitha Parameshwar...

### **Prayer**

Loving Eucharistic Lord, we, the consecrated and anointed ones chosen to continue your mission for your vulnerable and suffering people, have gathered around your sacramental presence, welcoming you in our midst wholeheartedly. We turn to your all-embracing presence seeking your compassionate response and blessings. This month July, 2021, marks 18 months since Covid-19 started ravaging our world with untold anguish, uncertainty, suffering and death. We have lost millions of our dear brothers and sisters and we, in our Christian faith, strongly believe that they have joined your band of holy saints and martyrs and enjoying your company and experiencing your awesome presence. We mourn the loss of all who have died and the millions of lives devastated by this global health crisis that has especially affected the most vulnerable and senior citizens of our society. The death toll continues unabated and the disease has impacted 192 countries. As your chosen children, we turn to you in these times of fear and uncertainty to pray for your love, mercy and grace. We would like to pay homage to the millions of people who have died worldwide of complications related to Covid-19. We grieve with all people who have been challenged by the corona virus

and suffered the dreadful loss of life and livelihood at this time.


As we were recovering from the shock of the first wave of the pandemic of 2020 with a ray of hope, the year 2021 struck with the thunderbolt with a new variant virus. In the height of the devastating second wave of Covid-19, we have lost in our church circle, 4 bishops, 285 priests and 260 nuns more young, vibrant and energetic missionaries due to this pandemic. Working in rural areas having no proper health facilities and infrastructure to take care of themselves, Lord you know that all these your anointed brothers and sisters, risked their lives to fulfill your mission on earth. Lord, in faith we accept this painful and traumatic situation as your will. May they enjoy eternal bliss in your Heavenly Kingdom. Almighty and eternal God, our refuge and stronghold, to you we turn in our distress; in faith, we pray, look with compassion on the afflicted, comfort the mourners, healing the sick, peace to the dying, strength to healthcare workers, wisdom to our leaders and the courage to reach out to all in love. Our dear brothers and sisters! Enjoy the eternal ecstasy with the Lord. Your pain and struggles are over on this earth. You have run the race successfully. The Divine Lord called you to receive your reward which you all deserve for your selfless commitment, your relentless positive response to the mission of Jesus. Our struggle to run the race continues. We invoke you to continue to pray for all of us.

### **Hymn: Abide in me**

**Let us Pray Psalm 130 with Devotion  
Gospel Reading (John 17:24-26)**

### **Reflection :**





This is the prayerful supplication our Loving Jesus made for His loved ones even 2000 years ago. How relevant His prayer for each one of us at this disturbing scenario! Pause for a while and assimilate His message in silence.

### **Fr Stan Swamy**

Our beloved Fr. Stan Swamy, the warrior for human rights, the martyr of the marginalized and the prophet of our times, is no more. No prophet is recognized by the powerful. Prophets are killed because they are a threat to the powerful. Fr. Stan Swamy was bearing witness to it and he left us on 5th July. He died for a cause of justice to the tribal communities. His priority was the rights of the tribal communities in a non-violent way. He demanded the release of and freedom of more than 3000 tribal young persons who are jailed under various laws and finally he laid down his life. Let his memorable saying of this caged bird keep ringing in our ears: "I am not a silent spectator. I am part of the game and I am ready to pay the price".

At 84 and unsteady on his feet with Parkinson disease, he was such a threat to national security that he had to be shut up in a prison. His voice has been silenced. Archbishop Romero said: "You can kill me. But I will rise in El Savadore. My struggle for justice will go on". Fr. Stan will certainly rise in Jharkhand's countless number of tribals, Dalits, poor and voiceless and his struggle for justice will go on". His paying the price in jail will not go in vain. Let us come together and demand a legal system that punishes people to be changed and save innocent people who suffer ...Let us now pause for a moment of silence in remembrance of Fr. Stan Swamy, the great personality of our times, the gift of God



### **EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION**

to us and the God-sent angel to be our conscience. May the rich legacy left behind by him continue to challenge us and inspire us.

Eternal rest grant unto Fr. Stan, O Lord. And let perpetual light shine upon him.

May Fr Stan's soul rest in peace. **Amen.**  
May the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. **Amen.**

**Hymn: The world stands in need of liberation: Joyful Lips: Q.10**

**Litany of Solidarity and Hope During this Pandemic time**

Response: We pray to you O Lord.

For those who are sick...

For those with chronic illnesses and underlying health concerns...

For all those who are suffering...

For those who are lonely...

For those who have no one to check on them...

For families that are separated...

For those who are unemployed...

For those suffering financial hardships...

For those who face an uncertain future...

For those who are suffering from physical or emotional abuse...

For those who are disproportionately suffering because of societal structures and unjust policies...





## EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION

For those who are struggling with physical or mental disabilities...

For those who are overwhelmed by anxiety and stress...

For those who are dying...

For those who have died while saving the lives of others...

For all who have lost their lives...

For those who have survived...

For those who have lost their spouses...

For children who have been orphaned...

For all those who mourn and those who comfort them...

For firefighters, police, and emergency medical workers...

For doctors, nurses, and all health care professionals...

For those who serve in the armed forces...

For public officials...

For business leaders...

For educators...

For innovators and inventors who provide new solutions...

For peace in our city and in our world...

For renewed friendships among neighbors...

For solidarity and unity among all peoples...

For a greater appreciation and love of all humanity...

For patience and perseverance...

For calm in the midst of fear...

For the grace to overcome adversity...

For the generosity of spirit...

For hope in times of despair...

For light in the darkness...

**Hymn to Mother Mary: Namo ye meri Maam**

**Let us bring before the Lord our intercessory prayers for various needs**

**Response: Lord, hear your people's prayer.**


: For Pope Francis and for a deepening dependency of the Church upon his faith and upon his direction. May his words of wisdom and prophetic stance, continue to guide us. We pray for his speedy recovery from the surgery and continued good health. **Res:**

: Lord, strengthen today's prophets to speak boldly — that governments and national leaders may listen so that all the human rights defenders who are unjustly incarcerated in the prisons without any trial for so many years, may soon get released and continue their mission of hope for the helpless people. **Res:**

: For all bishops and priests who have died, who lived in your loving service, preached your word, administered the Sacraments and accompanied their parishioners, we pray. **Res:**

: For all consecrated women and men who have generously devoted themselves in the humanitarian service of others and died by risking their lives, we pray. **Res:**





: For all teachers, educators and school staff who have died, whose devotion to their students and school communities shaped the next generation of those who will steward life on this earth, we pray. **Res:**

: For all migrants, refugees and asylum seekers who have died; for all experiencing homelessness who have died; and for all who were ignored, forgotten and cast out by their own families and even by their loved ones—who have died, we pray. **Res:**

: We remember the sick, the addicted, the dying and grieving. May their faith be strong and may they experience your caring power. Heal their bodies and their spirits. We pray for all who grieve the death of children or young adults. Hold them tenderly. Ease their pain. We pray to you Lord. **Res:**

: Jesus, during your ministry on Earth, you showed your power and caring by healing people of all ages from physical, mental, and spiritual ailments. Be present now to people who need Your loving touch because of COVID-19. May they feel your power of healing through the care of doctors and nurses. Take away the fear, anxiety, and feelings of isolation from people receiving treatment or under quarantine. Give them a sense of purpose in pursuing health and protecting others from exposure to the disease. We pray: **Res:**

: For all frontline workers – doctors, nurses, care-givers who have died, who worked tirelessly and compassionately to give life to others. May their families get needed strength to accept this great loss and with faith may they continue their life, we pray. **Res:**

: Loving Lord, as families adjust to everyone being home as businesses and schools closed,



## EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION

we ask that you guide people in their new realities. Prompt worn-out parents to speak words of kindness and encouragement to their children. Help children find creative ways to experience the beauty of all you have created and continue learning. We pray. **Res:**

: For all those who died of Covid-19 whose names are inscribed in our book of remembrance here, many of whom had dreams and hopes but have died in great fear and depression, we pray. **Res:**

: For all who were unnamed and unclaimed who have died, who do not have others to remember them, and for all those who are sick now and do not have loved ones at their side to accompany them, we pray. **Res:**

### Concluding Prayer

Loving God, our Father and Mother, gently wipe away every tear from our eyes, and lift us from the depths of grief. Save us from the onslaught of the third wave of the Delta plus variant as it is threatening our world. Remove our paralyzing fear. Inspire the scientists to invent the appropriate vaccine to save the lives of our youth and innocent children. Embrace us in your compassionate care and build our faith and trust in your abundant goodness. May we continue to experience your loving presence within us, around us and among us. Walk with us through the darkest night and brightest day. Hold our hands and guide us as we continue our journey. We make our prayer in Jesus' precious name, Amen.

**Final Hymn:** Shepherd me O God!





# George Cardinal Pell – Innocent Prisoner

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**Sr Lini Sheeja MSC**

## **Call to Consecration**

Pell was born on 8 June 1941 in Ballarat, Victoria, to George Arthur and Margaret Lillian Pell. Pell attended Loreto Convent and St Patrick's College in Ballarat. Pell played football and liked it. However, his ambitions later turned to priesthood. Speaking of his decision to become a priest, Pell said, "To put it crudely, I feared and suspected and eventually became convinced that God wanted me to do His work, and I was never able to successfully escape that conviction."

## **Priest**

In 1960 Pell began his studies for the priesthood at Corpus Christi College, Werribee. In 1963 he was assigned to continue his studies at the Pontifical Urban University, Rome. He was ordained to diaconate on 15 August 1966. On 16 December 1966, Pell was ordained a priest by Cardinal Gregorio Pietro Agagianian at St Peter's Basilica. In 1971 he returned to Australia and was assigned to serve as an assistant priest in Swan Hill, where he remained for two years. He served at a parish in Ballarat East from 1973 to 1983. During his tenure in Ballarat East and Bungaree, he also served as Episcopal Vicar for Education (1973–84), director of the Aquinas Campus of the Institute of Catholic Education (1974–84) and principal of the Institute of Catholic

Education (1981–84). He was also editor of *Light*, the newspaper of the Diocese of Ballarat, from 1979 to 1984. From 1985 to 1987 Pell served as seminary rector of his alma mater, Corpus Christi College.

## **Cardinal**

In the consistory of 21 October 2003 Pell was made Cardinal priest of Santa Maria Domenica Mazzarello by Pope John Paul II. Pope Francis named Pell one of eight members to advise the Pope on reform of the Vatican bureaucracy. In February 2014, Pell was appointed to be the first Prefect of the newly created Secretariat for the Economy. In this role, Pell was responsible for the annual budget of the Holy See and the Vatican.

## **Sexual Abuse Charges**

Cardinal George Pell was sentenced to six years in jail after being convicted of sexually abusing two 13-year-old choirboys in 1996 while he was the archbishop of Melbourne. Immediately following Pell's initial conviction for sexual abuse in February 2019, the Holy See's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF) initiated its own investigation of the charges against him, but the Vatican also said the CDF would await a "definitive judgment" from the Australian courts in the case. The Pope reaffirmed at that time that Pell was "forbidden to exercise public ministry and ... from having contact in any way or form with minors", restrictions that had been in place since Pell's return to Australia in July 2017.





## Incarceration

Immediately led off to jail in handcuffs and with shackles binding his ankles following that trial on March 13, 2019, the Australian prelate began a six-year prison sentence for the “historical sex abuse”. After enduring more than 13 months in prison, eight of those in solitary confinement, the original sentence was overturned when Cardinal Pell was vindicated by a unanimous 7-0 decision rendered by the Australian High Court. His victory over an extreme travesty of justice was not just personal, but one for the entire Catholic Church.

## Prison Journal

At times, Cardinal did not understand what God’s providence was doing. But he always believed that God was behind everything that was happening to him. Bearing no ill will to his accuser, judges, prison workers, journalists, and those harbouring and expressing hate for him, the Cardinal used his time in prison as a kind of “extended retreat” and eloquently filled pages with, among other details, his daily activities, personal thoughts, love for his fellow men, and beautiful, moving prayers which he brought out as Prison Journal. The 400-page book collects the notes that make up the Cardinal’s daily diary between 27 February and 13 July 2019.

## Acquittal

Cardinal George Pell after endured a gruelling five years of accusations, trials, conviction, humiliation, character assassination, and finally more than a year of imprisonment on being convicted by an Australian appellate court for a crime he didn’t commit



## INNOCENT PRISONER

from which he was completely acquitted by a High Court ruling on 7 April 2020. The Cardinal has always declared himself innocent, calling the crime he was accused of as a horrible and intolerable crime.

## Forgiveness

Cardinal wrote an Easter message for suffering humanity after his release, “Suffering can be offered to God for good, and that Christians see Christ in the suffering, and are obliged to help them. “It is a mystery; all suffering, but especially the massive number of deaths through plagues and wars. But Christians can cope with suffering better than the atheists can explain the beauty and happiness of life. “I have just spent 13 months in jail for a crime I didn’t commit, one disappointment after another. I knew God was with me, but I didn’t know what He was up to, although I realised, He has left all of us free. But with every blow it was a consolation to know I could offer it to God for some good purpose like turning the mass of suffering into spiritual energy. The only Son of God did not have an easy run and suffered more than his share. Jesus redeemed us and we can redeem our suffering by joining it to His and offering it to God”. Regarding forgiving the accusers Cardinal inspires the audience with his words, “I must admit that sometimes it was difficult. But once I made the decision to forgive, everything else followed. In prison I forgave my accusers, faith kept me alive”. Forgiveness is a recurring theme of his prison journal, and he told reporters that if anyone in the Vatican meant him harm, ‘I will pray for them.’



# PMI Delhi Unit

## Sr Winefred FC

Renewing old jail Pass for the PMI volunteers in Delhi to visit Central Tihar jails is indeed a great ordeal. We had to submit the yearly report, work plan, recommendation of the respective superintendent, police clearance certificate etc. With the approval of the Director General of Prisons, Passes were issued to PMI volunteers to enter the world of incarceration. Prisoners were full of sorrows, sadness, anguish, pain and depression, wounded and broken humans congregated like animals. They are the victims of situations and circumstances. Basically, poverty and crimes are linked. To face them and to be with the inmates we need to gather immense courage, spiritual stamina, passion for this mission, source and resources from the Spirit and be well-wishers. I consider visiting jails as a pilgrimage of time and space to purify my multitude of sins.

Till 2019 the world was competing in a rat race; successes and achievements blinded the senses. Suddenly the unexpected, unseen and unheard of covid19 invaded the world. It was like a biological war, which crippled, shattered and killed millions and made the world topsy turvy. The first wave of the virus that locked down the whole world brought untold suffering on humanity. The Pandemic made everything on line, making life unnatural and destroyed the social fabric. But corona virus was a blessing in disguise for the prisoners. The Supreme Court gave

directive to de-congest the jails and so accordingly, thousands of under trials and convicts who were languishing behind the bars were released on parole or on interim bails.

I kept contact with many boys to whom I had given some small help. Some of these boys were homeless, jobless and cashless. In 2021 when the jails were opened NGOs were allowed to resume our activities inside. I resumed teaching and counseling the boys of jail no 5 in Tihar. Many boys were gentle and surrendered themselves in the class and they appreciated my presence. I took literacy classes teaching them to write their names. It was a great joy to see their faces light up once they knew how to write their names. After a month again the second wave of Corona devastated our Capital Delhi. Lockdown is the only solution to combat the virus and the serpentine queue for vaccination shows how precious is our life. Yet millions died. Once again, the boys are out at the mercy of the judges. I have kept the contacts with a few providing any needed help. I would like to extend my profound gratitude to Rev Father Francis Kodiyan for his support, keen interest and prayers.

### PMI Quiz 2021 Winners

Sr Lini Sheeja MSC      First prize

Sr Siyamala FDCC      Second Prize

Lt Col Jennifer James      Third Prize

**Hearty Congratulations to  
Winners and Participants**



## Women's Jail Chenchalguda, Hyderabad

**Fr Dion Isaac**

18th July 2021 Sunday was a most busy day for Prison Ministry, Hyderabad. With the blessings of its Chairman Archbishop Most Rev. Poola Anthony, the volunteers of Vimcohana handed over 300 hygiene kits to Prison official for 300 inmates of Chenchalguda women's jail under the leadership of Fr Dion Isaac. Prison Ministry India is a 40-year-old National NGO recognized by CBCI which allotted a special bench for PMI in the CBCI office, New Delhi.

Mrs Brigith Michael, Sr Usha Rani and Miss Regina expressed their appreciation to the authorities who were very courteous and received them with great hospitality. The prison officials were happy with the kits and out of gratitude they presented a framed art work done by the inmates to Fr Dion Isaac. It is noteworthy that though the prison authorities stopped all NGOs' visits to Prisons for the past 4 years, God's providence helped Vimochana to reach the prison's gates from December 2020 after a gap of four years! Vimochana visited girls' Juvenile jail in December 2020, Boys Juvenile Jail in January 2021 and Chenchalaguda Women's Central Jail on 18th July 2021. It has planned to visit Chenchalaguda Men's jail with 1000 inmates in August and Cherlapally Central Jail with 2000 inmates in September 2021.

The welfare officer Vijaya Garu shared her experience with the volunteers stating, "We take care of the inmates with utmost care, avoiding shouting or scolding, and treat them gently as they are already undergoing lots of stress and strain." At the beginning of the visit, Sr Usha Rani said a small opening prayer. Mrs Brigith and Regina honored the Welfare Officer and the Jailors with Shawls and bouquet. Fr Dion expressed his gratitude to Mr MD Vincent, who planned the whole event. He thanked Mrs Brigith who partially sponsored the expenses. He also expressed his heartfelt thanks to Mother General Rose Linda CSA who extended major financial support to this event. He said that Rev. Sr. Rose Linda, Superior General, is a very kind and courteous person in contributing for this great cause. The D.G.P and the women's Jail Superintendent were kind enough to give us the permission to reach prison gates. We thank our Chairman of Prison Ministry, Arch Bishop Most Rev. Poola Anthony, for his ever-willing generous support.

We humbly request the Archbishop to inform all Parish priests to kindly celebrate Prison Ministry Sunday on 29th August 2021 (or any other Sunday according to their convenience) to pray for the Prisoners behind the bars, prison authorities and the volunteers of PMI.

"Love is patient; love is kind;  
love is not envious or boastful or  
arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its  
own way; it is not irritable or resentful;  
it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but  
rejoices in the truth. It bears all things,  
believes all things, hopes all things,  
endures all things (1 Cor 13, 4-7).





## Varanasi Diocesan Unit's Contribution to Second Wave Covid 19 Victims

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**Fr Kasper**

Covid 19 is a pandemic that has spread to the whole world. It has brought about a big threat to the life of human beings from 2019 till date. Among all the countries India has been affected very severely. As a matter of fact the scenario is very grim in India. All the States are facing the crises of Covid19 in various ways. In the first week of April 2021, suddenly the second wave of Covid19 spread all over like wildfire in the state of UP. There was very high transmission of the virus in the district of Varanasi and the people had to face the crises of hospital facilities, oxygen shortage and lack of Ambulance services. It resulted in very high rate of death in Varanasi. As per the order of government, there was complete lockdown, and the situation of Varanasi became very critical. Fear of life and anxiety over- shadowed the whole of Varanasi. Many people lost their loved ones and their jobs, and many families were struggling for their livelihood. The pandemic truly affected people physically, mentally, emotionally and economically.

On seeing this painful situation prevailing around, the Varanasi unit of CRI and the diocese of Varanasi Social Welfare Society in the diocese of Varanasi came forward to contribute some help towards the people especially those who were in need. They went around bringing awareness about Covid19 and the importance of using mask

and sanitizers. With their collaboration, Prison Ministry India team members panned out to motivate the prisoners of Central Jail and District Jail of Varanasi to get masks stitched. They were provided materials such as stitching machine, cloth and other requirements. The prisoners in central jail enthusiastically stitched 5200 masks and district jail prisoners stitched around 6000 masks. All the masks were supplied to the diocese of Varanasi, the Varanasi unit of CRI and Diocese of Varanasi Social Welfare Society. They went around and distributed them to the poor people, daily workers, auto drivers, rickshaw pullers, slum people etc.

The prison ministry team with the collaboration of Sr Daisy SHM, the provincial and sisters of SHM motivated the four local village Pradhans to arrange an awareness program in their villages. The people were given the awareness of Covid19, social distancing and the use of mask. Fifty poor people from each village were selected and they were given food material, common medicine, and masks. In this way the prison ministry of the Diocese of Varanasi, motivated and helped the people, prisoners and the jail authority of Varanasi District to help each other during the second wave of Covid19. We are grateful to Rt Rev Eugene Joseph, Bishop of Varanasi, Fr Prakash Louis SJ, Varanasi CRI unit, Fr Julian Fernando, the Director of Varanasi Social Welfare Society, Sr Daisy SHM, the provincial and the sisters of SHM, and the four village pradhans. Thanks also to prison ministry team members for their selfless service to prisoners and poor people in the society.





# PMI Special Task Forces

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**Michael Francis**

## **Duc in Altum**

Duc in Altum is a phrase used by Jesus in Luke 5:4 where Jesus instructs Simon Peter to “launch into the deep” or “put out into deep water”. Inspired by the words of St Paul: “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me” (Phil 4, 13), PMI launched Special Task Force in honour of the Ruby Jubilee and cast its new nets into deep waters by penetrating into the high security prisons to catch big sharks and whales such as terrorists, serial killers, mafia dons, death row prisoners, and so on.

## **Special Task Forces**

We are familiar with the special task forces of the superpowers, for instance, USA’s - Fleet Anti-Terrorism Security Team (FAST), Israel’s Sayeret Matkal, and India’s Commando Battalion for Resolute Action (COBRA). What is common in these special operation forces is their rigorous training, precision in reaching out to their targets and perfection in realizing their goals. PMI, who has so far been serving prisoners such as the innocents, infants, first offenders, undertrials, robbers, rapists, murderers and so on, now puts its net to deep waters through introducing the special task forces for a bigger catch of terrorists, mafia dons, death row prisoners, serial killers, and habitual offenders.

## **Conception**

On 12 December 2019, Rev Dr Francis along with other volunteers was waiting at the inner gate of Tihar Prison at gate number

5 to celebrate Christmas with the prisoners. While he was waiting in prayer, a police bus came near and many police personnel came out of it together with some prisoners chained on their legs, hands and waist. He felt frightened. But soon he understood that they were some hardcore criminals like terrorists or serial killers and within him there sprout the powerful message “PMI is called to seek and save them too”.

## **Inauguration**

On 22 December 2019, Sr Adele Korah, Sr Rose Alexander, Sr Lini Sheeja MSC and Rev. Dr. Francis Kodiyan went to Aradhanankunju at Carmelaram, Bengaluru, a contemplative community, who have perpetual Eucharistic adoration. After spending many hours in Eucharistic contemplation and adoration, they launched the PMI Special Task Force Ministry

## **Patroness**

St Therese of Lisieux (1873-1897) at the age of 14 became a commando of this mission by offering Holy Mass and mortifications for the repentance of Henri Pranzini, a hardcore triple murderer. This unrepentant convict was thankful to St Theresa’s prayer and sacrifices. At the last moment of his death he approached the priest who was carrying the crucifix, took hold of the cross and kissed the wounds of Jesus three times, repented, and shed tears while embracing his capital punishment.

## **PMI Special Task Forces**

PMI developed the following 40 Special Task Forces: 1) Abducted Peoples’ Reformers (APR), 2) Anointed Prisoners’ Consolers (APC), 3) Anticorruption & Antibribery Warriors, (AAW), 4) Antidrug Trafficking Warriors (ATW), 5) Antifascist Prisoners



## PMI SPECIAL TASK FORCES

Emancipators (APE), 6) Antihuman Trafficking Brigadiers (ATB), 7) Blackmailing Prisoners Reformers (BPR), 8) Burglars Transformers (BT), 9) Cybercrime Prisoners Redeemers (CPR), 10) Dacoits Redeemers (DR), 11) Death Row Commandoes (DRC), 12) Espionage Prisoners Reformer (EPR), 13) Foreign Prisoners' Expatriation (FPE), 14) Gangsters Reformers (GR), 15) Genocide Prisoners Redeemers (GPR), 16) Habituals Saving Squadron (HSS), 17) Hackers Transformers (HT), 18) Hired-Killers Liberating Squadron (HLS), 19) Innocent Prisoners' Redeemers (IPR), 20) Juvenile Delinquents Reformers (JDR), 21) Lynchers Reformers (LR), 22) Mafia Redeemers (MR), 23) Military Prisoners' Transformers (MPT), 24) Murderers Transformers (MT), 25) Pedophiles Reformers (PR), 26) Pirates Transformers (PT), 27) Political Prisoners Transformers (PPT), 28) Prisoners' Children Educators (PCE), 29) Prison Police Reformers (PPR), 30) Psychiatrist Prisoners' Comforters (PPC), 31) Prisoners' Releasing Squad (PRS), 32) Purgatory Souls Redeemers (PSR), 33) Serial Killers Reformers (SKR), 34) Sex Offenders Healers (SOH), 35) Sick Prisoners Healers (SPH), 36) Smugglers Transformers (ST), 37) Transgender Prisoners' Reformers (TPR), 38) Terrorists Saving Squad (TSS), 39) Victims Redeemers (VR), and 40) War-crime Prisoners' Reformers (WPR)

### **Death Row Commandoes (DRC) - Lt Col Jennifer James**

According to the National Crime Research Bureau 2019 statistics there are 400 people who are condemned to death in Indian prisons. All over the world, there are more than 20,000 death row prisoners). "Let the

groans of the prisoners come before thee according to thy great power preserve those doomed to die" (Ps 79, 11). PMI has a great role to play in their reformation and redemption. With this intention PMI launched a new mission called DRC - Death Row Commandoes. Their duty is to pray and fast for the reformation of those living in death rows. The most important spiritual weapon for this mission is the Holy Mass - the offering of the Body and blood of Jesus for their transformation.

### **Terrorist Saving Squad (TSS) - Fr Michael Francis**

The number of terrorists and terrorist groups are on rapid growth. Every day there emerge new terrorist groups. We are familiar with Islamic State, Al-Qaida, Boko Haram, Taliban and so on who do heinous crimes by killing innocents and raping women and demolishing Christian monuments and cities. What is more alarming is that there has always been a long queue of youngsters to follow suit. PMI has a vital role to play in their salvation and thus launched Terrorists Saving Squad (TSS) for their transformation and salvation.

### **Transformation Warfare**

Transformation of hard-hearted prisoners is neither an easy task nor an impossible mission. This is a spiritual warfare, a reformation warfare, a warfare between God and Satan, good and evil, virtue and sin. "With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible" (Mt 19, 26). To do this impossible mission we follow 40 days program: 40 Holy Masses and Communion, 40 Chapters of the Gospel: Luke and Mark, 40 Creed, 40 Rosaries, 40 Divine Mercy Rosaries, 40 Mortifications, 4000 Glory be to the Father, and 4000 Thank You Jesus.





**Welcome to Dr Raghunath, the New Chief Superintendent of Central Prison Bengaluru**



**PMI Mangalore Unit Celebrating Prison Ministry Sunday**



**PMI Volunteers Distributing Toiletries to Adharwadi Prison, Kalyan**



**PMI Volunteers Visiting Chanchalguda Prison, Hyderabad**



**PMI Volunteers Visiting Hoshiarpur Jail**



**PMI Volunteers Visiting Women Prison, Hyderabad**



**PMI Volunteers Welcoming New Superintendent of Jashpur Prison**



**T-shirts and Barmudas Distribution to Psychiatric Prisoners, Bengaluru**





**Reform To Reintegrate  
Diocesan Directors Training Program  
2-6 August 2021**

**I was in Prison and you visited me  
( Mt 25/36)**



**St Maximilian Kolbe Novena,  
Gujarat**



**Welcome to Karunya Ashramam Mother  
Sr Anne Maria and Shanti Bhavan  
Superior Fr Jose Kidangayil**