



Reform to Reintegrate

Lockdown Shall Not Lock Us Down

FULL TIMERS/VOLUNTEERS 2020

ONLINE TRAINING PROGRAM

15 June 2020 – 29 June 2020

~ SOUVENIR ~



PRISON MINISTRY INDIA



LET'S TRAIN ONLINE

**FULL TIME / VOLUNTEER
ONLINE TRAINING**

15th June - 29th June

10 am to 12 pm

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Prisons Can Be the Places of Transformation

My Dear Friends,



Thousands of men and women are caught in a destructive cycle of crime and incarceration. Without knowing God's hope or experiencing Christ's love, the story repeats over and over, shattering families and harming communities. But the cycle can be broken. Prison can be a hopeless place for thousands of prisoners in India. But it can also be a place of transformation.

This has been one of the objectives of the just concluded Training programme for volunteers in the Prison Ministry. This course was well planned by Fr Francis and Sr Lini and a host of other people. I congratulate them. I also congratulate the participants who spent their precious time learning about Prison Ministry and gaining the skills. May God bless you.

Prisoners' families along with their loved ones are also affected. During this pandemic it may be difficult to visit the prisoners but we can also touch the lives of the family members. We can help strengthen family bonds, support children with an incarcerated parent, and prepare families for their loved ones' homecoming.

Once again, Congratulations and may the Spirit strengthen you.

Bishop Allwyn D'Silva
Chairman, Prison Ministry India

Prison Ministry India is a Saga of Divine Providence



Prison Ministry India (PMI) is a saga of divine providence and divine mercy. It's a stream receiving divine providence from the Mount of Calvary and flowing divine mercy to the lost, the least and the last. This eternal saga was inaugurated by Father God by sending his only begotten son to redeem us. "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life" (Jn 3,16). Jesus did this redeeming mission of saving the lost by sacrificing himself on the cross and even unto the last moment of his death. "Today you will be with me in paradise" (Lk 23,43).

To continue this eternal saga of divine providence and divine mercy in 1986 Jesus established Prison Ministry India by making use of two seminarians at St Thomas Apostolic seminary, Kottayam, Br Varghese Karipperry and Br Francis Kodiyan MCBS. Today Jesus out of his unconditional love for you and for the lost calls you to be a member of PMI to continue this epic of divine providence and to flow this divine mercy to the worldwide lost. This call within the call is a sign of Lord's special love for you and at the same time it's a unique and great task. By this special personal vocation, you are blessed and anointed to outreach to the 1412 prisons in India and to lead them to repentance and reconciliation. It's the mission of PMI to release them from their various bondages, to reform, rehabilitate, reintegrate them to the main stream of society and finally to redeem them. We do this not merely by our prayer, fasting and good deeds but by the spiritual assistance of millions of others in collaboration with the Church and her personnel and institutions and above all by the power of the precious blood of Jesus.

PMI 2020 Fulltimers' batch is unique in many ways. It was with you that PMI launched the online training program and it is for the first time that the fulltimers' batch releases a souvenir. My heartiest congratulations and prayerful best wishes to all of you who toil tirelessly for its realization. May Jesus who came to seek and save the lost bless all of you abundantly and protect you from all viruses. Remember "There will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance" (Lk 15,10).

Rev Dr Francis Kodiyan MCBS
Cofounder, PMI National Coordinator and
Secretary to CBCI for Prison Ministry India

Corona Has Helped Us Feel What Prisoners Experience



PMI, a national voluntary organization under the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India (CBCI), has a history of liberating, rehabilitating and redeeming tens and thousands of prisoners and their families through its 20 rehabilitation centers and 8,000 volunteers all over India. Since inception, PMI has grown and is now currently serving 1,412 prisons and 4.5 lakh prisoners across India. "Tell me and I forget, teach me and I may remember, involve me and I learn", was the thirst of PMI volunteers as they immersed themselves into two-week online training program. In a unique initiative, Prison Ministry India (PMI)'s 'Reform to Re-integrate' program held over Google Meet witnessed 60 eager participants taking part from all over India. The topics discussed ranged from the background and overview of PMI to visiting prisons and developing skills for interacting with prisoners and their families.

The training program, conducted every year by the national office in the month of May went online this year due to Coronavirus pandemic as the theme was 'Lockdown shall not lock us down'. In PMI there is only entry and no exit. Although Covid 19 have restricted our entry to the prison, the PMI warriors never give up in their ministry to the last, least and the lost. PMI Special Task Force Angels are Spiritual angels who focus their prayer and fasting efforts for the transformation of specific prisoners in dire need.

The different Task Force Angels are Death Row Commandoes (DRC), Terrorist Saving Squads (TSS), Mafia Redeemers (MR), Antihuman Trafficking Brigadiers (ATB), Serial Killers' Redeemers (SKR) and Habituals' Saving Squadron (HSS). The patron of this new wing of PMI is St Therese of Lisieux, who by offering Holy Mass and mortifications led to the repentance of Pranzini, a hardcore triple murderer. The volunteers/Full-timers 2020 decided to be the Special Task Force Angels to do mortifications and to offer their prayers for the brethren behind the bars. My dear friends, in this ministry you might encounter non encouraging situations; you may not get immediate results and there may not be many people to appreciate you; but remember, the God of lost pours His love on you as your heart seeks out the lost. Prison ministry is a ministry of grace. I wish all the very best for the 2020 batch as they start their new journey with the PMI and for the PMI and seek God's abundant blessings.

Sr Lini Sheeja MSC
National Secretary, PMI

Course Schedule

Day 1: June 15, Monday

- Inaugural Session

Day 2: June 16, Tuesday

- Prison Ministry India – An Overview by Rev Dr Francis Kodiyan MCBS, PMI Co-Founder and PMI National Coordinator
- PMI: A Ministry to Regain the Lost – Sr Lini Sheeja MSC, PMI National Secretary

Day 3: June 17, Wednesday

- Biblical Foundations of PMI – Most Rev Dr. Allwyn D'Silva, PMI Chairman
- PMI: A Historical Introspection – Rev Fr Varghese Karippery, PMI Cofounder.

Day 4: June 18, Thursday

- Prison Ministry: World Scenario – Rev Dr Francis Kodiyan MCBS
- Classification of Prisoners and Prisons – Sr Clara, Director Jeevodaya

Day 5: June 19, Friday

- Human Rights and Prisoners' Rights – Rev Dr PD Mathew

Day 6: June 20, Saturday

- Best Practices of PMI – Sr Lini Sheeja MSC
- Testimony by Mr. Gracian (name changed) an ex-prisoner

Day 7: June 22, Monday

- Prisoners' Reformation Trajectory – Rev Dr Francis Kodiyan MCBS

Day 8: June 23, Tuesday

- PMI Ministry Inside the Prison – Sr Adele SCCG
- PMI Ministry Outside the Prison – Fr Benny Pachanal, Assistant National Coordinator

Day 9: June 24, Wednesday

- Jeevodaya (Rehabilitation center for released women prisoners) – Sr Fidelis
- Kolbe Home (A home for prisoners' children) – Sr Gertrude, Superior
- Van Thuan Home (Home for released men prisoners) - Fr George Kalassery VC, Director RRDC and Van Thuan Home, Bengaluru.
- Snehashramam (Home for released women prisoners) - Sr Beena, Director

Day 10: June 25, Thursday

- PMI State-Level Unit – Fr Shaji Stephen, Kerala State Coordinator
- PMI Diocesan Unit – Mrs Veera Bangalore Diocesan Unit Secretary
- PMI Parish Unit – Fr Wilfred Fernandes, Pune, PMI Central Regional Coordinator
- PMI Seminary Unit – Fr Vincent Nedungat, St Thomas Apostolic Seminary, Kottayam

Day 11: June 26, Friday

- Prisoners' Counselling Skills – Fr Subash, Rector Barnabite Seminary, Bengaluru
- PMI Special Task Force Angels – Rev Dr Francis Kodiyan MCBS
- Role & expectation from NGOs like PMI for the upliftment of prisoners – Shri Sunil Ramanand IPS, Addl. DG of Police & IG of Prisons & Correctional Service

Day 12: June 27, Saturday

- Central, South, Northeast Regional Best Practices
- How Laypeople can collaborate in Prison Ministry – Jesuraja, Chennai, PMI Tamil Nadu Secretary

Day 13: June 28, Sunday

- Getting acquainted – Participants sharing of their backgrounds, their personal testimonies and experience with PMI

Day 14: June 29, Monday

- Valedictory Function

Our Eminent Speakers



**BISHOP
ALLWYN DSILVA**



**FR FRANCIS
KODIYAN**



FR. V. KARIPPERY



**SR. LINI SHEEJA
MSC**



**FR BENNY
PACHANAL CRSP**



SR. ADELE SCCG



SR. FIDELIS



**FR. WILFRED V.
FERNANDES**



FR. SUBASH CRSP



SR. BEENA



**FR GEORGE
KALASSERY VC**



SR. CLARA



SR JOBINA UFS



**FR JOSEPH
MACKOLIL**



FR. P. D. MATHEW



SR GERTRUDE



VEERA PINTO



**SHRI SUNIL RAMANAND
ADDL. DG OF POLICE &
IG OF PRISONS &
CORRECTIONAL SERVICE,
MAHARASHTRA**

Day-wise Session Overview

Day 1: June 15, Monday – Inaugural Session

After the **Opening Prayer** by **Sr Lini Sheeja, Fr Francis Kodiyan MCBS, PMI Cofounder and National Coordinator** enthusiastically welcomed the participants with encouragement. He was happy to enlighten us that PMI has grown since its inception, currently serving 1,412 prisons and 4.5 lakh prisoners across India. He elucidated on the new developments of the Ministry, new office bearers and appointments. *“The goal of fulltimers’ course is to train and equip the new staff and volunteers of PMI so as to transform them into experts in doing prison ministry fruitfully and meaningfully”*, said Fr Francis.

Most Rev Bishop Allwyn D’Silva, Chairman of PMI then addressed the participants. He exhorted us to put on the armour of Scripture found in Luke 4:18 *“The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me...he has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners”*. We need to show the prisoners a window of hope. *“Reintegration is key”* he said. *“There are many layers of reintegration”*. Apart from the prisoners themselves we need to work with their families so that they are more accepting of them upon release. Families too face rejection by Society, so work is required in Society for changes in attitudes. *“Finally, we need to give special attention to parents and spouses of prisoners”* he advised.

Next, **Fr. Varghese Kariperry, Co-Founder of PMI**, felicitated the participants encouraging us to be like Jesus whose last act was to convert a criminal. Just like the Lord proclaimed through Ezekiel in the Valley of Dry Bones (Ez 37:1-14), here too, He will breathe new life to the prisoners through PMI volunteers. Thus, we must forge ahead and *“be **MAD** – we need to **Make A Difference**”*.



**Forge ahead and
be **MAD** – we
need to **Make A
Difference**.**

After the participants’ self-introduction, Sr Lini shared the Course Dynamics for the next few days. This was followed by the release of this month’s issue of Prison Voice “Warriors of PMI” by Most Rev Bishop Allwyn.



**Some journeys
need no roads,
just a willing
heart**

Fr Wilfred V Fernandes, PMI Central Region & Maharashtra Coordinator concluded the inaugural session with words of encouragement for all the participants, *“Success of our life depends on the quality of our thoughts. But the quality of our thoughts depends on the people we meet and interact with in our life... Today is the beginning of that interaction for us PMI Volunteers”* he said.

Fr Wilfred spoke highly of the leadership team at PMI – Founders, the National Coordinator, the National Secretary, the Regional and Unit Coordinators whose love and commitment are what keep the Ministry strong and vibrant. As we begin our new journey, *“some journeys need no roads, just a willing heart and that’s what PMI is all about”* he remarked. Everyone is very enthused and excited to start this new journey together!

Day 2: June 16, Tuesday

All the participants logged in enthusiastically all set for the second day of their online Course.

The first session was a **General Introduction to PMI by Rev Dr Francis Kodiyan MCBS, PMI Cofounder and National Coordinator**. The

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of India

Love Bomb of PMI, Fr. Francis took us through the width and depth of PMI by enlightening the volunteers on the ministry that is grown all over India by the providence of God. Since its inception in 1981, PMI has spread across 175 Diocese of India, Fr Francis was pleased to inform the group. The new focus is parish-level units, thus enabling parishioners to get involved in this meaningful Ministry. Fr Francis took us through our roles and responsibilities as PMI Members, emphasising

that reintegration is the key. *"We will be the rainbows in the lives of the prisoners. Your years of experience have enlightened us. You are a miracle Fr Francis"*, said Libby from Pune.

Sr Lini Sheeja MSC, PMI National Secretary conducted the second session shedding light on **PMI – A Ministry to Regain the Lost**. Drawing inspiration from Jesus who said *"I have come to seek sinners and not the righteous"*, PMI volunteers are called to reach out to the least, the last and the lost. She enlightened us on the three new projects of PMI and introduced us to the first two basic principles of PMI – Prayer Our Power House and Inconvenience Our Convenience. She ignited a fire in the hearts of the volunteers as she explained that the call to be a Christian is a call of love. God's heart reaches out to the sufferings of his children and He has invited His earnest lovers to join hands with Him to reach out to the vulnerable ones. When God heard the cry of the Israelites He called Moses to go and reach out to them. The same God heard the cry of our brethren behind the bars and called you and me to reach out to them in our service". *"Overall, the session was enriching based on deep spiritual values of Jesus Christ. Sr Lini put the fire on all of us"* remarked a happy Sr Justine SJA from Bhubaneswar, Odisha.

The call to be a
Christian is a
call of love

Day 3: June 17, Wednesday

Most Rev. Dr. Allwyn D'Silva, PMI Chairman began the day by enlightening the volunteers on the **Biblical Foundations of Prison Ministry India**. We need to focus on regeneration of prisoners not just rehabilitation. For that, we need to be regenerated. This is possible only if we are deeply rooted in Christ and Scripture. Using Scriptural references, Bishop Allwyn explained the five principles of PMI Volunteers – Redemption, Relationship, Service, Deliverance and Transformation. He opened the eyes and hearts of the volunteers with encouraging Biblical references. Prison Ministry has a direct scriptural mandate – it is a command of the Scripture. References can be found throughout the Bible. In our work we must follow the example of Christ when ministering to prisoners. Every PMI volunteer has the noble task of sharing the unconditional love of God. Through this Ministry we can build a closer relationship with God. *“We were blessed to listen to Bishop Allwyn. It was spiritual and fabulous as you connected PMI biblically. Thank you imparting the biblical perspectives of PMI Your Grace”*, said Josephine from Mumbai.

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Next, **Rev. Fr. Varghese Karippery** led us into the **Historical perspective of PMI**. Quoting Mt 25:36, he said the foundation of PMI is “I was in prison, you visited me”. “Our great leaders too have undergone prison experience including John the Baptist, St Paul, St Peter, St John and Jesus himself. Jesus ministered to the thief while St Paul transformed Onesimus. We should not judge anybody – there are different perspectives of prisoners depending upon who is looking at them. Repentance opens the door of heaven – We should be channels of repentance for prisoners, offering them hope for a renewed life. Some may say that Jesus was a bad mathematician. For Him 1 is greater than 99. PMI has a rich and eventful journey starting in 1985 with its inception till date. Now it's our turn to co-operate and collaborate in this noble venture. *“You are a wonder, thank you for inviting us to attune ourselves to the voice of the Holy Spirit Fr Varghese”*, said by Ashok Kumar from Vijayawada.

Day 4: June 18, Thursday

Rev Dr. Francis Kodiyan MCBS, PMI National Coordinator and Secretary to

CBCI for Prison Ministry India began the day with Spirituality of PMI. He shared his God-Experience of PMI as he quoted Pope Francis who exhorts us to reach out to the marginalized especially those on the periphery/fringes of society. Five dimensions of Prison Ministry Spirituality were explained, Jesus centred spirituality, people oriented spirituality, spirituality of the good shepherd, spirituality of the father of the prodigal son and reformation spirituality. We as PMI volunteers need to

**To renew the
world, I need to
renew myself.**

undergo a spiritual transformation before we can minister to the lost sheep. Stages of reformation begin with self-reformation followed by reformation of prisoners, prisons, churches, society and finally the world. "To renew the world I need to renew myself". Fr Francis shared various tools and guidelines to strengthen our own spirituality and thus hone our personalities into ideal PMI volunteers. He drew the attention of the volunteers to the foundation of Prison Ministry which is love and compassion. Prison Ministry is completely the work of the Holy Spirit as we serve the lost, least and the last. *"Thank you Fr Francis for the words of wisdom and leading an exemplary life. We are blessed to be part of the PMI family. Thank you Fr Francis for the enriching talk"*, exclaimed by Pramila from Delhi.

The second speaker of the day was **Sr. Clara HC, directress of Jeevodaya** – a rehabilitation centre for released women prisoners and any women in distress. She shared the classifications and statistics of Prisons and Prisoners across India based on location, nature of crime, tenure of sentence etc. She then proceeded to talk to us about having a positive and effective volunteer attitude. Our purpose of jail visits is two-fold – we are visiting

**When God calls us, He
qualifies us**

Jesus in the jail and we are also representing Jesus to others. We should aim to release prisoners in their hearts and thus focus on being faithful to them. Do not be worried about one's qualification – When God calls us He qualifies us. We should fully trust in the divine providence of God and we will see miracles unfold. Sr Clara shared two beautiful and recent miracles with us as a result of prayer – a convicted women was acquitted at the last moment and the miraculous donation for a released prisoner's marriage gift. *"It was very informative session and thank you for moving our hearts with the life testimony Sr Clara. We could feel divine providence from your sharing"*, said Patricia from Maharashtra.

Day 5: June 19, Friday

After being enriched with inspiring God experiences and real life stories it was the day for the volunteers to learn about **'Human Rights and Prisoners' Rights'**. The resource person of the day was **Rev. Dr. P. D. Mathew**, the first

*We are all are
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priest lawyer and Supreme Court Judge. The basic principle of Spirituality related to social justice is that we are all are called by God to be ministers/servants of the children of God. We should view the imprisoned as our brothers and sisters in the family of God. Our service to them is service of God. The imprisoned are poor in spirit – we need to make them aware of rights and help them achieve dignity as children of God. Thus, we can liberate them and give sight to the blind.

Part 3 of the Indian Constitution prescribes the fundamental rights of all citizens including prisoners. Despite being imprisoned, prisoners cannot be deprived of certain fundamental rights. There are twenty-four rights that every prisoner is entitled to covering their arrest, trial, incarceration and release. As well, prison authorities are bound to fulfill their duties towards their prisoners. Sixteen duties have been outlined to ensure the physical, emotional and mental well being of the prisoners in their care.

*Prison is a
hospital for the
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transformation of
mind, body and
heart*

As social animators, we are called to view the incarcerated as 'brothers and sisters behind bars' and not prisoners. Using Gandhi's approach we must also view prison as a hospital for the treatment and transformation of mind, body and heart. A few guidelines for approach and activities were provided so that our transforming love can convert their criminal hearts into sacred hearts. *"It was very informative and fruitful session. We gained much*

knowledge. Well explained in detail and in depth Fr. P. D. Mathew", said Sushma Xavier from Gujarat.

*Our transforming love
can convert their
criminal hearts into
sacred hearts*

Day 6: June 20, Saturday

On day six, as the first speaker **Sr Lini Sheeja, Chief Editor of Prison Voice** continued her session on PMI - A Ministry to Regain the Lost'.

The other two basic principles of PMI were explained by her, 'God's Providence our bank balance and Begging is our lifestyle'.

She spoke convincingly with her life experience that, "we leap with faith into the life of a prisoner believing that if we do our best then God will do the rest. Also, by taking a beggar's approach we can empathise and feel the angst and struggles of our brethren behind the bars. Don't be discouraged by three inevitable realities of Prison Ministry – no appreciation guaranteed, non-encouraging situations and no immediate results. Yet, we must keep our eyes on the Lord and forge ahead. Prisoners have a deep sense of brokenness – they live in despair, most have no visitors. They are starved of love and usually have no communication with their families. They are often shunned and ostracized. In them, we see the disfigured face of our crucified Jesus. We reach out to them through the four regions of PMI – Central, North, North East and South. We are strengthened by the Lord's promise to us "When I was in prison you visited me so now enter into the kingdom of my father". *"You spoke from the heart, not from the mouth Sr Lini. Thank you for enlightening us with your life experience"*, said Daisy Mathew from Trivandrum.

**If we do our best
then God will do
the rest**



Best Practices of PMI were presented by **Sr Lini Sheeja MSC**. In the words of Oscar Wilde, "Every saint has a past and every sinner a future". Thus we should not be judgemental but rather offer hope for the hopeless. She explained the guidelines for PMI. To begin with, we need to plan and prepare ourselves before we enter a prison – we need to put on the armour of God and follow the entry procedures. Once inside, we are the guests of the Prison Officials in a highly restricted area. We need to strictly adhere to the prescribed and permitted behaviour guidelines. While Jesus taught in groups, He cared for individuals. Keeping this in mind, we need to offer a listening and compassionate ear to the prisoners while maintaining our objectivity. As volunteers, we need to be united and loving towards each other so we can reach out effectively to prisoners and their families". *"Thank you Sr Lini for the guidelines that we the volunteers need to live"* said Br. Andrew Pereira from Goa



We ended the day with the **powerful testimony** of **Mr Alex Gracian** (name changed), an **ex-prisoner** who shared with tears his life experiences. Alex hailed from a devout Catholic family yet entered into a life of crime as he lacked love. He said “until we feel the grace of God, we can’t be transformed”. A criminal is not born a murderer or rapist. Life’s circumstances drive them there. Deprivation of love leads them to crime. Finally in 2000, he became aware of the Father’s love like the prodigal son. Today, he is a reformed man of deep faith, with a job and a family. *“You moved us with your life experience. It was heart touching testimony and great learning for each one of us. Our prayers for you and your family”*, said by Sheila D’Souza from Goa.



Until we feel the
grace of God, we can't
be transformed

Day 7: June 22, Monday

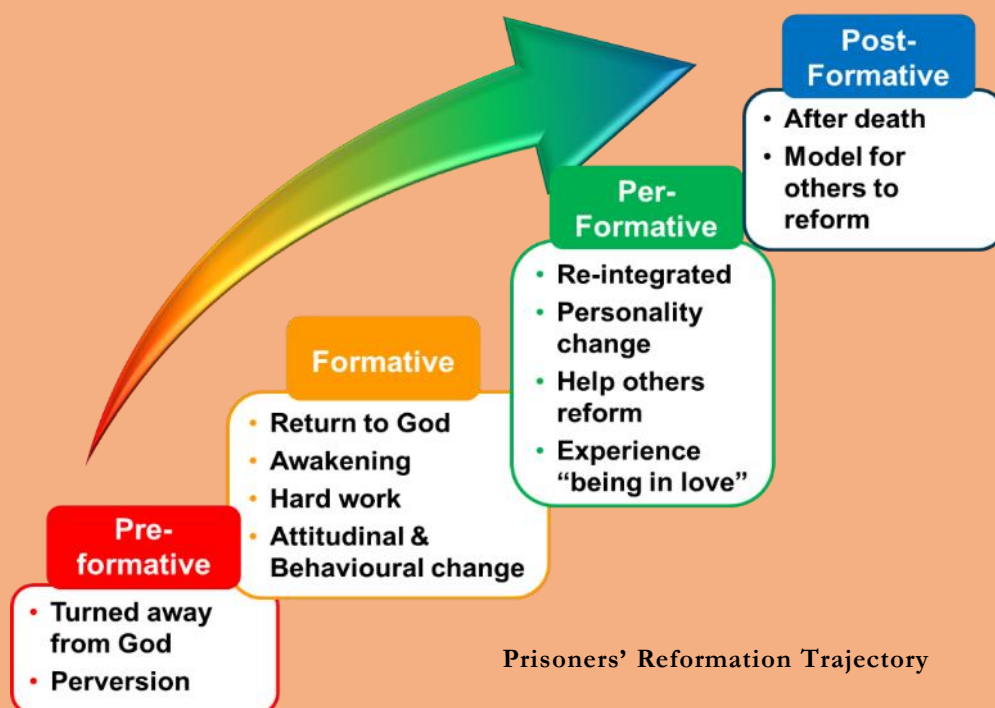
On day 7, **Rev Dr Francis Kodiyan MCBS**, the National Coordinator and Chief Editor of Reformative Explorations motivated the volunteers with **Prisoners' Reformation Trajectory**. He said, "Prisoners' Reform is a process, it follows a pathway and takes time.

**Renew a prisoner
today and better
the world tomorrow**

In this process, prisoners move from Self-Acceptance to Self Transformation to Self Actualization and then Self Transcendence. Renew a prisoner today and better the world tomorrow was the message conveyed by Fr Francis to the volunteers.

A reformed prisoner feels renewed, committed, God-oriented, fully functional, well integrated and victorious. They have deep prayer experiences, realization of dreams and undergo a personality change. They undertake missions and ministries and invite others to reform. They experience "being in love".

"Thank you for introducing us to this novel approach of the Reformation Trajectory. Your presentation was inspiring and thought provoking." Amira Peter from Pune said.



Day 8: June 23, Tuesday

On day 8, we had two speakers, **Fr Benny Pachanal CPRS**, the **Assistant National Coordinator** who detailed of the **Ministries Outside the Prison** followed by the **Ministries Inside the Prison** presented by **Sr Adele SCCG**.

PMI offers them acceptance, a positive environment, a chance to reform and rebuild their lives

Fr. Benny highlighted that prisoners face many challenges upon their release which include, lack of acceptance and support from family and society, temptation from old friends and old habits, inability to get started in a positive direction, inability to find jobs and get settled etc. They are overwhelmed by feelings of despair and helplessness and thus return to their old and familiar ways. PMI offers them acceptance, a positive environment, a chance to reform and rebuild their lives.

"It's lovely to know about the great services you are rendering for the released prisoners and to their families",

exclaimed Angel from Bangalore, a newcomer.

Sr. Adele Korah SCCG, National Executive Member narrated about the ministries inside the prison. PMI's inside services are aimed at healing through prayer and spiritual services, health camps, palliative care and physiotherapy, counseling, celebrations of festivals, skills and trade training, sports and recreational activities, etc. PMI conducts special programs for women, youth and seniors in the prisons.

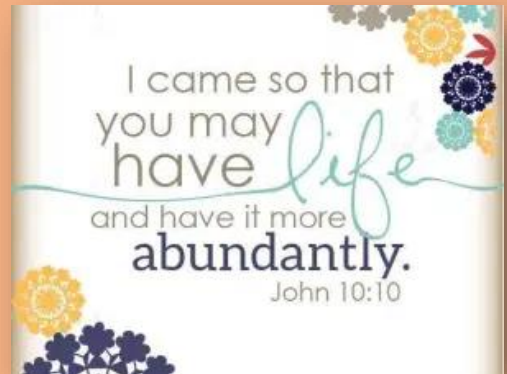
To help with their healing, PMI encourages and supports reconciliation with families and victims and looks after welfare of their children through financial assistance for education and offering a safe and healthy living environment in one of our children's homes. *"Through powerful testimonies and success stories you moved our hearts Sr Adele. Thank you for sharing your years of merciful stories with the brethren behind the bars. We learned that it doesn't take a giant flame to light the wick of another candle",* said Sr Rosily from Bangalore.



It doesn't take a giant flame to light the wick of another candle

Day 9: June 24, Wednesday

On Day 9 we had four speakers enlightening us about **PMI's rehabilitation centers**. PMI has 20 rehabilitation centers which from inception have experienced the Providence of God through tremendous means.



Sr Fidelis, who spoke about **Jeevodaya**, a center for released women prisoners and any women in distress said, “Jeevodaya is home away from home for women drawn into crime due to poverty and despair, those forced to sell their womanhood for survival, women brutally molested in brothels and flesh trading centers and women in any other moral danger. Its located in Bengaluru and the vision of Jeevodaya is to create a society where every woman can freely live and grow with self respect and dignity, away from all abuse. Jeevodaya ia an inspiration from Jesus’ care for the Samaritan women in (Jn 8:11) who said “I do not condemn you either; go, but do not sin again”



Van Thuan Home, a center for released men prisoners located at Carmelaram, Bengaluru under PMI National Office was presented by **Fr George Kalassery VC**, Director Van Thuan Home. Inmates are regenerated through sports activities, counselling, psychotherapy, de-addiction, prayer services, vocational and trade training, seminars etc. Recently, during the lockdown, a paper bag production unit was set up for the inmates. Inspiration to set up the Van Thuan home came to Fr Francis Kodiyan MCBS when he received a relic of Van Thuan from Pope Francis on his visit to the Vatican. Van Thuan Home welcomed many prisoners who were released due to the jail decongestion efforts of the prison officials. Currently the center has 8 inmates.



Kolbe Home, a center for prisoners' children was presented by **Sr Gertude**, Kolbe Home Superior. Inspired by Fr. Sebastian Vadakumpadan (former National Coordinator of PMI) Kolbe Home is for children of prisoners and for children living in extreme poverty/living in broken homes. It is located in Bengaluru, under PMI National Office. The life situation of these children has a deep impact on their psychological, spiritual and intellectual well-being. Kolbe Home strives to enhance their love, intellectual, social, emotional and spiritual quotients so as to regenerate them back into main stream society. Currently, Kolbe Home has 18 children in their care with a plan to extend capacity.



Snehashramam, a rehabilitation & renewal center for released female prisoners and abandoned girls located at Trivandrum, Kerala was presented by **Sr Beena SdP**. The center is under the auspices of Jesus Fraternity. Fr Francis Kodiyan inspired by the Spirit of God and completely trusting in the Lord began this center with nothing. Through its 28 years of service, Snehasharamam has accommodated and trained 554 girls and assisted in the marriages of 49 women. The women who come to Snehashramam are broken, bruised, dejected and despised women. Snehasharamam aims to rehabilitate and re-integrate women into mainstream society through spiritual and psychological healing, reconciliation (with self, society & God) and vocational training.



Day 10: June 25, Thursday

On Day 10, we learned about the various levels of Prison Ministry working for the welfare of our brethren behind the bars. Prison Ministry India has grown like a banyan tree and God has blessed this ministry with committed volunteers.

PMI State-level Ministry was presented by **Fr Shaji Stephen, Kerala State Coordinator**. He shared the roles, responsibilities and pre-requisites of the different office bearers of the Kerala State, PMI. To be more effective, various administrative committees and councils have been created, including units for different seminaries. Outreach teams have been assigned to specific jails.

PMI Diocese-Level Ministry was presented by **Mrs Veera Pinto, PMI Bangalore Unit Secretary**. The structured hierarchy of office bearers, meticulous plans and vibrant volunteers help PMI in Bangalore effectively reach out to the least, the lost and the last. She detailed their inside and outside outreach programs including COVID pandemic activities. Volunteer enrichment and appreciation is integral to their success.

PMI Parish-level Ministry was presented by **Fr Wilfred V. Fernandes, Maharashtra and Pune Coordinator**. PMI Pune Diocese is spread widely across 15 Parishes and 7 congregations. By de-centralization through parish-level units PMI Pune aims to increase awareness, participation, garner talents and funds. He shared guidelines and the roadmap for setting up a parish-level unit, along with roles and responsibilities of the various office bearers. He also shared the parish-level activities with their “adopted” prisons.

*PMI is an
opportunity to
proclaim the Word
of God – it is a
Ministry of HOPE
for the inmates
and the volunteers*

PMI Seminary-level Ministry was presented by **Fr Joseph Mackolil, Parish Priest Vignana Matha Church, Thodupuzha**. Prison Ministry plays a prominent role in the formation of priests at the Seminary and Seminarians play a key role in implementing the mission of PMI. Jesus Fraternity participates actively in PMI through fasting, different forms of prayer, visits to prisons and families of prisoners. They also increase awareness of PMI among the general public through art, music and sports. He said that, “PMI provides an opportunity to proclaim the Word of God – it is a Ministry of HOPE for the inmates and the volunteers”

Solution to any problem of the individual lies largely within that individual

Day 11: June 26, Friday

Day 11 began with **Prisoners' Counseling** presented by **Fr Subash CRPS, the Rector of Barnabite Seminary, Bengaluru**. He said, "Where there is no guidance, a nation falls, but in an abundance of counselors there is safety" (Prov 11:14) is an inspiration behind counseling in the prisons. Solution to any problem of the individual lies largely within that individual. Thus, counseling is an interactive process that aims to bring about change

in behavior, beliefs and levels of emotional distress. There are three stages of counseling – initial disclosure, in-depth exploration and commitment to action.

These stages involve active listening to verbal and non-verbal communication, drawing out the client's feelings with gentle probing, observing signs of trouble/violence/threats, infusion of positive energy, agreeing on client's next steps to change the current situation and scheduling regular follow ups. He also detailed the characteristics of a good counselor. Finally, Fr Subash touched upon depression, its signs and symptoms. Depression is a result of biochemistry, genetics, personality traits and environment and can be treated by support, psychotherapy and medication.



PMI Special Task Force Angels were introduced by **Rev Dr Francis Kodiyan MCBS**, the Cofounder and Chief Editor of Reformative Explorations. After Eucharistic adoration, Fr Francis was inspired to develop a new Spiritual Warfare wing of PMI called Special Task Force Angels. These are Spiritual angels who focus their prayer and fasting efforts for the transformation of specific prisoners in dire need. The different Task Force Angels are Death Row Commandoes (DRC), Terrorist Saving Squads (TSS), Mafia Redeemers (MR), Antihuman Trafficking Brigadiers (ATB), Serial Killers' Redeemers (SKR) and Habituals' Saving Squadron (HSS). Fr Francis described the 40-day warfare program of PMI's Task Force Angels. The patron of this new wing of PMI is St Therese of Lisieux, who by offering Holy Mass and mortifications led to the repentance of Pranzini, a hardcore triple murderer. We need to promote this new wing of PMI in our units. Those interested are required to register by completing the membership form.

Finally to add the color for the day, **Shri Sunil Ramanand, (IPS) Addl. DG of Police & IG of Prisons & Correctional Service, Maharashtra** addressed the participants. Shri Sunil spoke on the **Role & expectation from NGOs like PMI for the upliftment of prisoners'**. Prison management is undergoing a paradigm shift from a penal to a correctional approach. Prison Management in Maharashtra has traditionally been conservative in its approach, but is slowly undergoing a change. He shared four areas in Maharashtra that requires the support of NGOs like PMI. These require a study and recommendations for healthy and effective communication between prisoners and the outside world, kitchens to serve non-vegetarian food and more protein on their menu, effective programs for the Open Prisons and training opportunities for prisoners for gainful employment upon their release. There was a good interaction and appreciation shared between PMI leaders and Shri Sunil. It was wonderful that Most Rev Dr Allwyn D'Silva, PMI Chairman also was present for the interactive session.

Day 12: June 27, Saturday

On Day 12, we had the Regional Coordinators present their activities. There are four regions, south, central, north and north east which works under national office. All the states fall within these regions.

Fr Wilfred V. Fernandes, Central Regional Coordinator began with a presentation on the activities and future programs of Central Region to us. Central region comprises 10 states serving around 580 jails. Various outreach programs are organized both inside and outside the prisons. Through some very powerful testimonies Fr Wilfred shared the positive impact these outreach programs have on the prisoners and their families. Future plans of the Central Region include decentralization (parish units), crime prevention and setting up of rehabilitation centers in each state.

Fr G J Antonyswamy, South Regional Coordinator took us through the activities of the South Region. South Region covers the prisons of 5 states. In keeping with the Prison Manuals of each State, outreach activities are carried out, inside and outside the prison. The South region also has a focus on repatriation of foreign prisoners. Volunteer meetings, training and gatherings help keep the team motivated.

Next, **Sr Jobina UFS, the Northeast Regional Coordinator** presented the activities of the North East Region. There are 14 PMI Northeast units in 8 states serving 77 prisons. PMI Northeast Region conducts inside and outside programs. More recently, COVID awareness programs, distribution of masks and sanitizers have been undertaken. PMI volunteers are constantly in touch with officials so as to reach out as needed. Volunteer training and motivation is regularly conducted. PMI Northeast in collaboration with CRI extends better service for our brethren behind the bars.

Finally, **Mr Jesuraja PMI Tamilnadu State Secretary** enlightened every participant on **How can the laity collaborate with PMI?** Prison Ministry has strong Biblical foundations. Compassion appears 72 times in the Bible and invites us to be with others. Moses, Abraham, Mother Mary all received a call of God and were obedient. Prison Ministry is a special calling and we must humbly respond. "Am I my brother's keeper?" should not be our approach rather, all prisoners are our brothers and sisters. We are responsible for the well-being of our brethren behind the bars. We have a role model in St Paul and can learn from his positive approach despite being in prison himself.



*Prison Ministry is a
special calling and
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Day 13: June 28, Sunday

As the training progressed, the organisers realised that the in-person interaction that the resident program participants usually enjoy was missing. The participants and the organising team were feeling a little disconnected from each other. Sensing the need for this connection, a special session was arranged on Sunday evening from

4 to 6pm for the participants to share a little about themselves...their lives, their experiences, their personal visions and missions.



We were so amazed as the sharing unfolded. Our eyes were opened to the incredibly rich backgrounds of our participants. Increasingly, we became aware of the vast pool of talents present in this virtual training room. The blessings were doubled as we listened to the testimonies and experiences of the seasoned PMI volunteers. There was much learning all around. New volunteers felt reassured and comforted that they had more experienced bretheren to turn to for guidance and support. The session concluded with an overwhelming feeling of the rich pool of volunteers that Prison Ministry India has been blessed with. Armed now with the skills and training from this online programme, the volunteers were feeling enriched and well-supported.



Day 14: June 29, Monday

The **Valedictory Ceremony** of fulltimers'/volunteers 2020 online training program started at 10am with the prayer led by Sr Flory OSF from Delhi. Invoking the Holy Spirit to guide us throughout the ministry, we surrendered all our volunteers and all our brethren behind the bars to the Trinitarian God as we began the valedictory ceremony. Mrs Jennifer from Chennai, then took us through a succinctly prepared revision of the course content over the past 13 days. It was a lovely refresher for all the participants.

Fr Francis Kodiyan MCBS the national coordinator began the Valedictory Function with a warm and joyous address to all the participants. He welcomed Most Rev Dr Peter Machado and thanked him for all his support as our national office is located here in Bangalore. Most Rev Dr Allwyn D'Silva, PMI Chairman was welcomed and he was applauded for being a light as he ignites our minds with new ideas. Sr Lini Sheeja MSC, PMI National Secretary was welcomed and she was thanked for her amazing planning, organizing and day to day coordination and management of the program. Fr Francis Kodiyan MCBS, the love bomb of PMI was welcomed by Sr Lini Sheeja and she thanked him for his vision, commitment and hard work. Fr Francis thanked all the participants for joining the program and for their patience and persistence as we worked our way through the technology glitches. He encouraged us all to continue our commitment to the ministry and to keep reading all the material that has been shared with us. As volunteers, all our guidelines are enclosed in those materials.

Most Rev Dr Peter Machado, Archbishop of Bengaluru

in his valedictory address said, on the feast of Saints Peter and Paul, missionaries of Christ, our valedictory function couldn't have been held on a more fitting day. Bringing context to the current times, he said that COVID 19 has made us all aware of what its like to be a prisoner; to experience isolation and a desperate desire to be connected to the outside world. His Lordship proceeded to add that pioneers like Fr Francis Kodiyan have created a welcoming heart amongst the volunteers of PMI. He applauded PMI for all their works and efforts in reaching out to the least of our brethren. With words of encouragement, he referred to Prison Ministry as a Pastoral Ministry – a Ministry designed to reach out to all. Like Jesus, we too are



Rev. Dr. Peter Machado,
Archbishop of Bengaluru

visiting the prisoners, their families and even the victims. We are doing good work sometimes even with small solutions. He added that he was very proud that PMI is based in Bangalore and happy to always support this Ministry. Finally, on this feast of Saints Peter and Paul he imparted their special blessings upon us all! Most Rev Dr Peter Machado then released and blessed the Souvenir that was designed for this Program.

Most Rev Dr Allwyn D'Silva, PMI Chairman, Auxiliary Bishop of Bombay in his presidential address, addressed the group next with a high appreciation for Fr Francis and Sr Lini for organizing the first-ever online training program for PMI. His Lordship also thanked Bishop Machado for gracing this function with his presence as it reaffirms the support and cooperation of the local church. Bishop Allwyn went on to appreciate the online platform for training as it has increased the participation due to its convenience for the participants. While face to face in-person interaction was not possible, we did have some meaningful one on one interaction. He added that the training program was very topical and will be extremely helpful in developing the skills of the volunteers, equipping them to serve in this Ministry of Love. He was pleased to note that the role and power of prayer has been rightly given a very important emphasis in this Ministry. He also applauded the experienced volunteers for attending this program and sharing their testimonies and learning with the rest of the group. In conclusion, His Lordship blessed this group of Full-Timers and wished us all the very best as we begin our Mission in our own areas.

This was followed by the Awarding of Participants' Certificates. Bishop Allwyn had a kind and encouraging word for each participant as his/her certificate was presented.

Fr Benny Pachanal CRSP, Assistant National Coordinator then released a beautiful collage prepared by Juliet and Sr Lini of all the participants and speakers of this Program.

Sr Lini Sheeja MSC, the National Secretary concluded the Valedictory Function proposing vote of thanks for the dignitaries, resource persons and all the participants.



Participants of the Full Timers/Volunteers Online Training Program 2020



Participants' Feedback

"I feel truly blessed to be part of this ministry...By being available in this noble ministry I feel closer to the God of the lost, it gives me much satisfaction and happiness"
Anthony Jacob, Maharashtra

"I got an opportunity to learn the working of PMI as I was an intern few months back. ... All good-hearted people are serving the common cause, best wishes to everyone"
Anupama, Bangalore

"...What really touched me was the 'Christ-like' attitude of the team members, all of them. ...A Ministry of Jesus, to save the lost..."
Daisy Mathew, Trivandrum

"A very enriching experience. The speakers were very informative and gave us a very good insight into all sections of the PMI...."
Ezilda Saldanha, Goa

"The course gives a newcomer a very good idea about the history of the PMI.... It will take away the wrong impression that convicts deserve to be looked down upon...."
Gerard Delaney, Goa

"Congratulations! It is a Beautiful process. ... Today we are in this Ministry striving to work more harder than before for better tomorrow"
Joyce D'Costa, Mumbai

"...I came to know the depth of PMI after this online Full Timers course... Spiritually, an eye-opening session and excellent"
Jesuraja, Tamilnadu

"... Very well organized under the leadership of Rev Dr Francis Kodiyan and Sr Lini Sheeja for coordinating and making this program successful"
Juliet Crasta, Mumbai

"...It was well presented by all the speakers...based on the values of Jesus Christ..."
Matilda Mascarenhas, Goa

"... Our work to be successful, we should be deeply rooted in Christ with a listening heart...to bring the lost one leaving the 99 behind"
Omana Devasia,
Ernakulam

"Though we are under lock down PMI has not allowed the volunteers to be mentally locked down. ... Overall I feel this course is highly successful, very exciting and educative and touched deeply the hearts of volunteers to involve in this ministry bravely...."
Sr Inigo SSA, Delhi

"It was great pleasure to take part in the PMI. My heart is filled with gratitude and appreciation for this Ministry's marvellous work"
Br. Andrew Pereira, Goa

"Though not much connected with anyone I really enjoyed each day of the training... THANK YOU very much to each and every members of this group ...for your support and encouragement throughout the training sessions...."

**Delson Varghese,
Vishakapatnam**

"A big thanks ... for this great honour and thanks all the participants for your wonderful Cooperation. Looking forward to my journey with the Prison Ministry"

Baijel Alexander, Gwalior

"...A big thank you to all the resource persons for sharing their knowledge and experience, inspiring us in our journey. ...I got to learn so many new things and understand so many new and fresh perspectives."

Sushma Xavier, Gujrat

"Well organised training program. This was a novel and convenient way to learn about PMI. Some of the PMI concepts were new and interesting...we need to plan for their implementation."

Amira Peter, Pune

"...It was an eye opener for me, personally. Appreciate all the hard work behind this. ...Thank you to all the session leaders. Looking forward to my journey with the Prison Ministry"

Sanjay Antony, Bangalore

"Special thanks to all the resource persons for their valuable sessions. Each conference and training program has something new and valuable for us. So glad we could avail of this online opportunity."

Libby Nicholas, Pune

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 inspite of their defects 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 reconcile 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



Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be

Mother Mary, Pray for us

St. Maximillian Kolbe, Pray for us

