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PRISON VOICE

NATIONAL MONTHLY



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Are you willing?

"Help a Child of a Prisoner

Prevent a Potential

Criminal"

80% of the children of prisoners are definite potential criminals unless somebody takes care of them.

Prison Ministry India has begun a scheme to educate 1000 children of prisoners, by giving

Rs. 3,000/- per child in a year. Your contribution is a help to mend a life.

Please send your valuable contribution.

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*All children are artists.
The problem is how to retain
the inner artist once he/she grows up.*

Every child is gifted and God rejoices at every new birth, for we are created in his own image and likeness. Every child born on this earth is holy because he/she is created and born innocent. As we have taken the theme of "Juvenile—A Journey", I thought of charting the journey of a child—a child who could turn out to be a hero or villain, empowered or suppressed, who is looked up to by society for noble qualities or who are in observational homes for correctional behaviour. On the one hand, due to poverty children are deprived of education and forced to work at a very young age and shoulder responsibilities beyond their age and capacity. On the other hand, children from well-to-do strata of society have access to money and opportunities, and live in the lap of luxury with nothing denied to them. Some children are deprived of their basic needs while others are given more than they need.

The overarching theme of this issue is how does the children land in observational homes? Children are not things to be moulded, but people to be unfolded. They have a lot of potential within. They are gifted and they must be helped and guided to un-wrap their packages at different and opportune times. I remember some of the parents saying to me, 'We find it hard with our children, because they never listen to us'. Children will listen to you after they feel that they are being listened to. How you speak to your children becomes their inner voice. Children learn more from what you are than what you teach.

Hard punishments and strict discipline are no more beneficial to children as are too much pampering and providing all that they want. Homes, institutions and the society should be balanced for the children's future, for we are dealing with a vulnerable group. I recall an



Sr. Lini Sheeja MSC
Chief Editor

ex-prisoner sharing, "If my mother had loved me, as she loved my brother I would have not been here. I never asked for anything from my mother; I only asked for her love, her listening ear, time spent with me. I did not receive any of these. I fell into the trap of my friends and they became my world. Whatever they did was right to me and today I'm behind the bars. I was never taught about the physical and psychological changes that I as an adolescent went through."

All children are artists. The problem is how to retain the inner artist once he/she grows up. There are two things that we can give our children. One is roots and the other is wings. Our children are taught to aim high. We teach our children to look up, but we fail to teach them to look down. When we look up and walk, we do not notice the potholes and ditches and we may fall. That is why first, we have to give our children roots and then wings. As children are physically fed, they also need to be fed emotionally, psychologically, mentally, spiritually and socially. Every child is a different kind of flower and all together they make this world a beautiful garden. Let us sacrifice our today, so that our children can have a better tomorrow.



Gone are the days when parents used to wait for their children to come back from the school



Fr. Sebastian Vadakumpadan LLM,
National Coordinator & Secretary to C.B.C.I
for Prison Ministry India

One day I was walking by the road close to our house around 6 pm. I passed near a house where I noticed a 6-years-old child sitting on the portico step. I asked the boy, "Why are you sitting here?" He told me with a sad tone, "I am waiting for mom to come home. Mom has not yet come from her job." It was very painful to see the child sitting there, sad and waiting for his mom's arrival from office. It took me back to my childhood days. Mother used to wait for us to return from school. There would be some snacks for us. It was really a wonderful experience. Today children are waiting for the mother to return. They may have many things to tell the mother; may be worries, may be difficult experiences at school, and so on. Even if mother returns, she may not have time to listen to her children as she may be busy in the kitchen or may be tired after work. It can affect them and they may do the same thing when the parents become old. They may have to wait for a long time to see their children in the future. They may not visit them. Waiting for someone was part of our culture. The mother waits for the father, to eat food together. Similarly, parents wait for the children. Though we are in a world full of responsibilities, these simple

sacrifices can make someone feel important and cherished. It may even motivate the other person to return/come early. You may climb up the job ladder, but if you are not there to take little steps alongside your children, you may miss them in future.

I would like to share another experience with you. One day I had just celebrated holy mass in the rehabilitation centre and was coming out of the chapel. There was one girl who was looking very sad, standing outside the chapel. I asked her, "Why are you sad today?" She, with a heavy heart asked me a few questions, "Have you got a father? Have you got a mother? Have you got a brother? I have no one in this world to call father, mother or brother. Then how can I be happy? Here everybody has a father, a mother and a brother!" She was crying profusely after asking these questions. I could not console her effectively. It was a touching experience for me to realize that we are privileged to have everyone with us. The agony and pain orphans undergo is tremendous. Nothing can replace our parents and relatives. We shall thank God for those people who bring home to us the value of our parents and relatives.



The Role of the Parents in bringing up their **CHILDREN....**



Rajendra Dushing
PMI Aurangabad

Parents are usually the most important people in their children's lives. Their views and behaviour can have a good or bad influence on their children's behaviour including offending behaviour. Children are much less likely to get into trouble if their parents are concerned about them.

1. Role of Fathers

Adolescents who have a positive relationship with their fathers are less likely to be arrested, belong to a gang, damage property, steal, or run away compared to their peers with less positive relationships with their fathers. Along with the increased probability of family poverty and heightened risk of delinquency, a father's absence is associated with a host of other social problems. The three most prominent effects are lower intellectual development, higher levels of illegitimate parenting in the teenage years, and higher levels of welfare dependency.

2. Role of Mothers

The early experience of intense maternal affection is the basis for the development

of a conscience and moral compassion for others. According to child development expert, "as a child grows and matures, the mother—whether biological or a stepmother—plays an important role in her child's development, character and



attitudes." If a child's emotional attachment to her/his mother is disrupted during the first few years, permanent harm can be done to the child's capacity for emotional

attachment to others. The child will be less able to trust others and throughout his or her life will stay emotionally distant from others. Having many different caretakers during the first few years can lead to a loss of this sense of attachment and lead to antisocial behaviour. Separation from the mother, especially between six months and three years of age, can lead to long-lasting negative effects on behaviour and emotional development. Severe maternal deprivation is a critical ingredient of juvenile delinquency.

3. Effects of Parental Fighting

Empirical evidence shows that, for a growing child, the happiest, safest, and

most tranquil family situation is the intact primary marriage. But even within intact two-parent families, serious parental conflict has bad effects. As this and other studies have shown, the lack of emotional attachment to parents is more strongly related to delinquency than is an intact home. Conflict between parents hurts the child. The more frequent or intense the conflict, the more the child is hurt emotionally.

4. Effects of Parental Breakup

The breakup of a child's parents' marriage during the first five years of her/his life places a child at high risk of becoming a juvenile delinquent. This breakup – through either divorce or separation – is most likely to occur three to four years after marriage. Therefore, a large proportion of very young children experience the emotional pain of the early and final stages of marital dissolution at a time when they are most vulnerable to disruptions in their emotional attachment to their parents. This instability continues to impact adolescents as they mature. Teens in blended or divorced families tend to have more behavioural problems, like using tobacco, liquor drinking, weapon carrying, physical fighting, or sexual activity.

5. Influence of Criminal Parents

Violent youth often come from violent parents. Children who has a father or a mother in prison, they become violent and these youth are the most likely to have witnessed conflict and violence between their parents. They are also the most likely to commit a serious violent crime and to become "versatile" criminals – those engaged in a variety of crimes, including, theft, fraud, and drugs. Among these youths, physically or sexually abused boys commit the most violent offences.

6. Quality of Parenting

As a child's emotional attachment to her/his parents ensures a well-adjusted adult, so parental rejection of the child has powerful opposite effects. Rejection by the family, which is the child's first and fundamental "community," sets the stage for another social tragedy. Rejected children tend gradually to drop out of normal community life.

CONGRATULATIONS

The Sagar Unit Prison Ministry Volunteers have visited all 13 Jails and reached out to the brethren behind the bars providing light and hope. Hats off to the Sagar Unit (Madhya Pradesh) coordinators and the volunteers for completing the assigned task gracefully!

List of Jails in Sagar Diocese-
Visited by Sagar PMI Volunteers

1. Sagar Central Jail
2. Banda (Sub Jail)
3. Rehali (Sub Jail)
4. Khurai (Sub Jail)
5. Basoda (Sub Jail)
6. Vidisha (Sub Jail)
7. Guna (Sub Jail)
8. Ashoknagar (Sub Jail)
9. Begumganj (Sub Jail)
10. Bareilly (Sub Jail)
11. Gogarganj (Sub Jail)
12. Raisen (Sub Jail)
13. Lateri (Sub Jail)

The Importance of Adolescence: *Growing up in India in the Present and the Past*

Ms Teena Antonv. PhD

A few months ago I asked my pre-teen son to get me a dupatta from my room. He did not know what a dupatta was. So I was trying to explain to him about the kameez and the salwar, but nothing seemed to ring a bell. Finally he said, "Is it the dress that shows your stomach?" I did not know whether to laugh or whack him on the head. But what the incident brought home to me was kids who grow up without siblings of the opposite sex have to be educated on quite a number of things.

When we were growing up, my mother would buy books specifically on teenage and the issues teenagers face – physical, mental, social and cultural – for us to read. Some of these books were written by secular writers, and some were written with an underlying Christian ethos. In India, arranged marriages are the norm, and so female-male relationships are conducted socially and culturally on a different plane to what is the norm in the West or even certain Asian countries. For us growing teens, these books provided ethical and spiritual guidelines on how to deal with hormonal changes, changes in the body, the developing attraction towards the opposite sex, our place in society and so on. My mother was probably shy about speaking openly to us about many of the bodily functions, but she made sure we were not ignorant, and our knowledge came from a reliable source. Such books are available even now: *A to Z Tips for Parents* by Teresa Aranha, *10 Things Your Teen will Thank You for Someday* by William L.

Coleman, and *8 Things Not to Say to Your Teen* by William L. Coleman are some in circulation currently.

Today information is easy to come by. Our children are connected to the internet through computers, mobile phones and tablets. During adolescence, everyone is curious about their bodies, about the opposite sex, about the changes they go through. And the Net and friends become an easy source to turn to for information. However, what current statistics show is that a large number of kids are getting the wrong kind of information, getting addicted to porn, becoming subjects of cyber bullying, or indulging in cyber bullying, etc. As parents we need to be vigilant about the internet and mobile phone use of our kids; and be open about discussing what our kids are going through physically, mentally, emotionally and socially. Parenting styles and gender relations have changed from the time of our parents and grandparents. For example, in the 1980s and 1990s, you buy a sanitary napkin from a shop, the shopkeeper would cover it up in such a way that people would not notice what it was. In fact, it was considered very embarrassing to buy just sanitary napkins, so as students, we would buy other stuff from the shop before mustering up the courage to ask the shopkeeper to add this item to the list. Therefore it should, in theory, be easy for us to discuss with our children, our nieces, our nephews, our students, and other kids under our care about adolescence and related issues.

I studied in a school where a sizeable proportion of the students came from broken homes. These kids were often the troublemakers in the school. They would not only disrupt the class, but a few of them even indulged in activities that could be termed mildly criminal - bursting crackers in the premises, throwing tomatoes and eggs inside the classrooms, forcing the weaker or younger students to remove their clothing when the teachers were not around; and all these were 'normal' incidents in my school. Thankfully most of these students are now settled and leading exemplary and happy lives. Some of the teachers were really patient with these students, took them aside, took time out of their lives to guide them, and gave them a purpose in life.

It was not just the children from broken homes that caused mischief. Kids from what is considered 'ideal' homes would also join in for the fun of it. Peer pressure was the real motivator when/for instigating trouble. A certain amount of disruptive behaviour is normal for teenagers. The school management used to mete out corporal punishment for many of these deviant behavioural activities. But, it was the love and concern shown by those specific teachers and the intervention of God that marked a turning point for a significant number of troublemakers in my class.

I was packed off to attend a retreat after I completed my tenth. I was accompanied by a cousin, who was teaching in my school. As providence would have it, a few of my classmates were also present at the retreat venue. Day one of the retreat passed, day two passed, day three passed. On day four was the prayer for internal healing. My ex-classmates waited for me to go out from the venue, they approached my cousin and asked her forgiveness for bursting crackers outside her class. She did not know it was them that had burst the crackers. And I too did not know,

though I was in the same class. But, the prayer session changed something in them that they repented, confessed and asked for forgiveness!

Girls and boys develop at different rates as everyone knows. Even among girls and boys, some hit puberty a few years ahead of their peers. Those who develop well before their peers are often under intense scrutiny by peers and those in authoritative positions. The attention, in certain cases, takes on negative aspects. Add to this mix, their raging hormones, attraction to the opposite sex, and sudden taboos on intermingling that were not present before. I remember the girls who developed physically much before the rest of us were often the target of suggestive jokes, had to ward off (unwanted) attention from the boys and were subjected to strict disciplining regarding their clothes by the teachers. Some of them learned to roll with the flow while others closed up and kept to themselves. The former were branded as being of loose morals. With hindsight I realize they were acting normally for their age, in a society that tended to disapprove of any kind of interaction between teenagers of opposite sexes.

We had a get-together of our classmates around five to six years ago. Everyone agreed not to have it on the school premises. There is still a certain amount of reservation or dislike towards the very disciplinarian and almost military-like atmosphere that prevailed in our school. But, much to my surprise, the boys (or men now) had invited many of our favourite teachers including my cousin for this gathering. Therefore, from experience I learned that love, compassion, affection, and persuasion work better in guiding troubled teenagers than military-like discipline. Discipline is obviously needed, but without the underlying emotion or element of love, it does not really work.

I, myself, am short-tempered. So, it is my constant prayer that the Holy Spirit may guide me to parent my kids well, especially during their adolescence.

Various Causes - Delinquency

Every single life, every single child, is a reward and blessing. Children are a heritage from the Lord. Positive parent-child relationships are important for all areas of children's development. By being in the moment, spending quality time and showing warmth, care and respect, parents can strengthen the relationship with their children. The absence of this can create a gap between parents and children which has drastic consequences leading to a child becoming a juvenile.

Delinquent and criminal behaviour may spike among young people as they negotiate the transition from childhood to adulthood in an increasingly complex and confusing world. Young people who are at the risk of becoming delinquent usually live in difficult circumstances.

Anecdotal evidence showing a spurt in crimes committed by juveniles in the past few years is backed by data collected by the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) which shows a substantial rise in the crime rate for juveniles. Poverty has always bred resentment, a root-cause of many crimes.

There are other factors too such as a minor whose intelligence level is low and is devoid of proper education is more prone to becoming involved in delinquent conduct. Other risk factors include impulsive behaviour, uncontrolled aggression etc. Family traits such as poor parenting skills, family size, home discord, child maltreatment and antisocial parents are also factors linked to juvenile delinquency.

Substance abuse is another important cause of delinquency. Substance abuse, like



Fr. Wilfred V. Fernandes

Maharashtra State Co-ordinator (PMI)

consumption of drugs and alcohol, encourage young people to commit crimes to obtain money to buy these substances.

When Rakesh first walked into the psychiatrist clinic, he was nervous, fidgety and angry. This was a result of his drug addiction. Two years earlier, the 18-year-old had been taken from the small town in UP where he grew up and lodged with an aunt and uncle in Navi Mumbai while his parents moved to the Gulf to work. In his new, unfamiliar surroundings, Rakesh was largely unsupervised, since his guardians worked long hours as accountants. His parents called occasionally, on the weekends.

Desperate to fit in, Rakesh fell in with the wrong crowd and began experimenting with drugs. From marijuana, he migrated to heroin and began stealing money from his uncle, filching and pawning his aunt's jewellery, even robbing small items from neighbour's homes and conning people into contributing money for fake neighbourhood celebrations, in order to fund his habit.

The young man was finally brought in to see a doctor after his uncle discovered a letter from his college stating that he would not be allowed to take his year-end exams because he had not attended classes all year. "He had developed a veneer of indifference by this time, downplaying everything, seeming unconcerned." By this time, Rakesh had gone from a muscular teen to a skinny young man. He had missed crucial years of love and affection. He felt orphaned, in a way. (Sourced

from the Delhi Commission for Protection of Child Rights 2015 Report "Why Children Commit Crimes")

Over the years, a fast-changing and developing society has introduced other insecurities.

In lower middle class families, for instance, where both parents are working, children grow up in a vacuum. In middle class families, parents have multiple expectations from the child, including high grades in school. This often makes the school environment a threatening one for the child. When children fail to cope, depression may lead to substance abuse, and then crime. In high-income families, almost every amenity is provided to the child either from a desire by parents to maintain their own status in society or to satisfy the ego of the child. Such parents are often insensitive to the moral pitfalls of over-indulgence.

Children are also quick to pick up on friction between adults. In cases of marital discord or domestic violence, kids do not reach out to their parents. They consult their friends who may not give the best advice. Or worse, the child finds refuge in the virtual world where there is an information overdose. Constant exposure to aggression – verbal and physical – on television news, videos and games, works on an already heightened imagination, making it seem 'cool' to the child at an age when he or she is seeking role models or patterns of behaviour to emulate. It either makes the child desensitized to violence or creates a curiosity to experiment with it. There have been reports of juvenile offenders confessing that they indulged in violence because they wanted to see what it felt like.

Often, juvenile crime can emerge out of sheer ignorance. Sixteen-year-old Sathya's parents have a large family of four sons and one daughter. Originally from Uttar Pradesh, the family migrated to Delhi for a better life. Both his parents had had no formal education. His father worked as a casual labourer, but being

an alcohol addict, spent most of his money on drink. "Our parents never bothered about us. Poverty made them focus more on earning a livelihood. When the financial condition of the family worsened, I was forced to start working at the age of 10," says Sathya. Initially he worked with his father, but later got a job in a real estate office where he earned ₹ 7000 per month. "I never went to school. I don't know how to write but I can read a little," he says.

The office where he worked was about a kilometre away from his house. "On the way I had to cross a park which was used as a hang-out by many of the anti-social people from the neighbourhood. On my way back home, an acquaintance, who was always under the influence of drugs, would often stop me and demand money. Most days, I used to give him small amounts to avoid a fight. One day I had about ₹ 300 with me which I had kept to give to my mother for buying provisions. I refused to give him the money. This made him angry and he started beating me. When I couldn't take his blows any more, I picked up a stone, hit him and ran away. Later, I came to know that he succumbed to the injury," says Sathya.

He was caught by the police four days later. Initially he was sent to Tihar jail. Later, after confirming his age, he was produced before the Juvenile Justice Board and transferred to an observation home.

(Sourced From the Delhi Commission for Protection of Child Rights 2015 Report "Why Children Commit Crimes")

The Prison Ministry India inculcates in the volunteers a desire to Renew, Reform and Rehabilitate lives of such juveniles – for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these. We help and guide released-prisoners with re-settlement; and extend services that are useful for the welfare and rehabilitation of prisoners, prisoners' families and victims' families.

Children are the priceless gift from God and are the treasure of each family. The family and the community have the primal role in shaping the personality of children. Sadly, many children are forced to work from a young age.



Sr. Sahaya Lazar AMS
*Member of National Domestic
Workers Movement*



considered in some cases a worst form of child labour. Some of the most common risks children face in domestic service includes:

- Long and tiring working days
- Use of toxic chemicals
- Carrying heavy loads
- Handling dangerous items such as knives, axes and hot pans
- Insufficient or inadequate food and accommodation
- Humiliating or degrading treatment including physical and verbal violence
- **Sexual abuse.**

The risks are compounded when a child lives in the household where he or she works as a domestic worker. These hazards need to be seen in association with the denial of fundamental rights of the child.

Change of Behaviour Pattern

These children's behavioural patterns will change gradually and may lead them to delinquency. It happens mostly with

Causes

There are many root causes for the emergence of child domestic workers, but in broad terms we can state a few factors. Among the first, there is poverty and its effects; then social exclusion, lack of education, gender and ethnic discrimination, violence suffered by children in their own homes, displacement, rural-urban migration and the loss of parents due to conflict and/or disease.

Hazards

The hazards linked to child domestic work are a matter of serious concern. The ILO has identified a number of hazards to which domestic workers are particularly vulnerable and the reason it may be

slum-dwelling and migrant child domestic workers. It is because of the denial of fundamental rights of the child, such as, for example, access to education and health care, the right to rest, leisure, play and recreation, and the right to be cared for and to have regular contact with their parents and peers. These factors can have an irreversible physical, psychological and moral impact on the development, health and wellbeing of a child.

Due to all these they may get in to bad habits such as: smoking, drinking, abuse of drugs, theft. They may sometimes run away from the work place and from the families. The peer group is a very strong force that can compound delinquent behaviour in the adolescent. When friends commit crimes, adolescents often learn to do it and they do not often understand the consequences of the crime. Peer group rejection can also be the cause of juvenile delinquency. At the end many of these children are found in Observation Homes.

Solution to end child labour in domestic work and avoid children from turning into juvenile delinquents

There is no magic recipe; the problems posed by child labour in domestic work and to protect young workers of legal working age require a complementary approach in different domains and at different levels, including:

- Promoting awareness among parents to educate their children and to not force them to go for work.
- Developing statistical visibility and further enhancing knowledge on child domestic work to better capture child

labour and youth employment in domestic work.

- Taking legislative and policy action to end child labour and to protect young workers in domestic work.
- Paying attention to child migrants' vulnerability to abusive working conditions in domestic work.
- Providing support to child domestic workers against child labour and for decent youth employment.
- Supporting the worldwide movement against child labour.
- Engaging with child domestic workers as agents for change.

AURANGABAD UNIT REPORT

The Aurangabad diocese PMI unit takes the initiative to distribute sewing machines and clothes to women prisoner's and their children

The PMI unit organized the distribution of sewing machines and clothes to women prisoners and their children. The distribution was done by Shri. Bapurao Ramrao More, Superintendent of Harsul Central Jail, Aurangabad. These sewing machines will benefit the women by enabling them to earn their livelihood and become self-reliant. There will be training given to the women every day in the prison and will be useful to them once they are released from jail.

Director Fr. Michael Francis, Coordinator Sr. Swarnlata, Sr. Maria Desuza and Rajendra Dushing were present on the occasion.

The cultural program was performed by the mentally-challenged children of Assisi Asha Niketan, special school for the mentally handicapped. The function was well attended by senior officials of jail and the PMI Team.

Role of Media

Media of today plays a significant role in the creation and shaping of public opinion and the strengthening of society. Media is the sword arm of democracy and acts as a watchdog that protects public interest against malpractice and creates public awareness.

As the fourth pillar of democracy along with judiciary, executive and legislature, media of today has the role of acting against injustice, oppression, misdeed and partiality at work in our society. Media has always been an integral part of human civilization. The media helps in

fighting against corruption, nepotism, cronyism within institutional machinery and carry out relentless campaigns against them. Who can forget the crusade taken up by the Indian media in the Nirbhaya rape case and the shaping of the public opinion in one of the most heinous crimes the world had ever witnessed. Without media, the news of government schemes and benefits would have never reached the target group.

Media is considered as the best source to know the happenings in the world around us. Newspaper, magazine, radio, television, mobile and internet are the different types of media that impact our lives because media has the power to influence our thoughts. This influence can be sometimes positive and sometimes negative.

Positive Effects:

Since the introduction of television in our country in the late 1970s, visual media has become a very potent tool in bringing the current news to society, entertaining people and the shaping up of public opinion. Earth has become a global village due to

Sr. Fidelis

*Jeevodaya Ashram
Sisters of the Holy Cross*



Role of Media in the Life of Children

media. We can gain information about any topic, be it art, science or politics within minutes through television and the internet. Media is the best way to spread

knowledge, information and news from one part of the world to the other. Media educates the people about their basic rights and how to use them. It is also a link between the government and the people. Educational programmes help the people to learn a number of things through the internet, television and radio. Children can develop their skills and intellect by watching these programmes. In reaching the Millennium Development Goal with respect to literacy, the role of media is substantial.

Negative Effects:

Media is the most influential one when it comes to instigating people to resort to violence. Studies have suggested that the exposure to violence on television, movies and video games make children more aggressive, fearful, less trusting and more accepting of violence. What they see on screen they want to imitate, and become villains/heroes before their peer group. We have had so many such examples from society where youngsters who are addicted to TV, mobile games and movies, take

the wrong path and despoil their lives. How many children have lost their lives after watching the “spider man”, playing the “blue whale” etc.? We have even heard news about students attacking their teachers and sometimes even killing them. Misunderstanding in friendships turns violent and students attack one another as they see in the ‘reel life’. The stunning lifestyle of villains depicted on the silver screen encourages many of our youth to resort to the same evil methods. In their quest for such glamorous lives, they often come in contact with anti-national and anti-human elements who recruit them to be ‘sleeping cells’ to act against society and the nation. And thus, instead of being an asset to society, they themselves are lost in darkness causing immense loss of human resource to the nation. The kids that tend to follow their super heroes’ actions in real life end up causing permanent damage to their lives. Can anybody count the number of children who tried to imitate the way Shaktiman jumped or the way Krish somersaulted?

Sex and violence in media also leads towards increase in sexual crimes in society. It traumatizes youngsters and results in abuse in homes, streets, towards children etc. Scenes of indecency, gruesome killings and vulgar dialogues in the cinemas cause a serious degeneration of the ethical and moral values of our society. Some of our advertisements try to influence people through beautiful quotes and words by speaking to them about the importance of branded items. As a result children and youngsters become status conscious and think that by using these items they can show their high status in society. To fulfil their needs or to impress others they may turn violent to get money from their parents.

They will never learn any discipline in life or assimilate any valuable lessons. There is always a tendency among people, especially among the impressionable children and youth, to follow the negatives, to find pleasure in fulfilling their desires through either ‘hook or crook’. In today’s society many parents have no control over their children. With the norm of one child or two children, they are pampered and finally they become so selfish, arrogant and turn against even their own parents and society. Why is it that some of our youngsters join terror groups? Why do they drop out from school after so much pampering? Most of today’s children, as soon as they start walking, they will have the remote control of the TV in their hands, or when the children cry and throw temper tantrums, they are given the mobile phone to play with or whatever they ask for they are provided with. They are not taught to control their emotions or to learn discipline.

As every coin has two sides, the media also has two sides – positive and negative. If children are guided at a young age on how to use the media rightly, we will surely have a long-term positive impact. It is only positivism that can instil a spirit of optimism in our country. Only then will the society as a whole be able to face challenges more successfully to build up a developed nation.

In order to effectively combat the negatives, India should set up a Public Broadcasting Organisation along the lines of the BBC of the UK or the Public Broadcasting service in the USA with wider and effective outreach than the current government-owned TV and radio stations. It is important to expose the corrupt and the evil, and it is equally important to highlight the achievement and the success of the nation.

The Importance of *Spirituality in Adolescence*

The meaning of spirituality has developed and expanded over time and various meanings can be found alongside each other. Spirituality is the quality of being concerned with the human spirit or soul as opposed to material or physical things.

How important is the spiritual life during adolescence? Adolescence is the period following the onset of puberty during which a young person develops from a child into an adult. The experiences of a recent visit to the juvenile home in Bangalore where I saw many youngsters are brought to bear here for perusal. Why do so many teenagers end up in juvenile homes? This article tries to answer this question. During the adolescent period a young person should develop and nurture her/his relationship with God strongly. For guidance for an example of an ideal person they look up to their parents, teachers, elders and when they fail to find suitable people they go astray; fall into bad company and learn bad behaviour. The final result of this is that they commit crimes and end up in correctional settings.

Adolescence is a very important stage of life. During this period youngsters try to distinguish between the good and the bad. They need guidance and support. What they learn at this time becomes the deciding factor in their life. They need to learn good manners, character and habits. They should gain sufficient knowledge about good and bad. They should know to do good and avoid evil; and how spirituality plays a vital role towards this end.

When they learn to build a relationship with the higher power, they gain wisdom and knowledge to choose to do good and avoid evil. Parents, teachers and church leaders should help them to learn and understand that when they are good they are appreciated, and punished or corrected when evil activities are committed.



Fr. Bascaran Lenus MSC
Assistant National Coordinator-PMI

Many teenagers who end up in juvenile homes feel that they are not taught moral values at that age; sufficient knowledge about good and the value of prayer are not taught to them. So they are led astray, fall into bad companionships and commit crimes.

Sustained attention to spiritual development during childhood and adolescence has the potential to significantly enrich and strengthen human development. The importance of prayer life at this stage will help them to lay the good foundation to become a future good citizen. Not knowing the importance of moral values leads them to commit mistakes.

To prevent teenagers from entering situations where they have to be lodged in juvenile homes parents, teachers, elders and church leaders have a vital role to play. We should teach them good values such as prayer, and reading the Bible and spiritual books should be encouraged. The aim of this article is to reduce the number of young persons being sent to juvenile homes. For that spirituality should be taught to them.

During adolescence a teen begins to question the absolute authority of parents, schools, government and other traditional institutions. Their questions should be answered properly and doubts should be cleared.

No one is born a criminal. These young persons should be guided towards the right formation and taught the importance of spirituality. Those close to God always love to do good and will think twice before doing anything bad; so spirituality is very important during adolescence. And we are all responsible for that.

POWERS AND FUNCTIONS OF THE CHILD WELFARE COMMITTEE (CWC)

(Constituted by the State Government under section 27 of the Juvenile Justice Act, 2015).



Sr. Annie Fernandes PSOL
*Former CWC member
Thane Dist. Maharashtra*

The Child Welfare Committee is appointed by the state government on the recommendation of the section committee set up under rule 119 of these rules.

Powers of the CWC:

- The same powers as a Metropolitan/Judicial Magistrate of the first class (as under the Cr.P.C.1973) [Section 27(9) first class]
- CWC has the authority to dispose of cases for the care, protection, treatment, development and rehabilitation of children in need of care and protection, as well as to provide for their basic needs and protection [Section 29(1)]
- Power to deal with all cases relating to children in need of care and protection under the Juvenile Justice (care and protection of children) Act 2015 [Section 29(2)]
- Taking Cognisance [Section 30]: The primary function of the CWC is to take cognisance of and receive child produced before it
- Protection [Section 31]: The CWC can act in the interest of any child on its own or on a report from the following:
 - Any police officer /SJPU/ child welfare police officer/DCPU
 - Any public servant
 - Childline services or any voluntary or non-governmental organisation, or agency recognised by the government
- Child Welfare Officer or probation officer
- Any social worker or a public-spirited citizen
- By the child himself or herself
- Any nurse, doctor or management of a nursing home, hospital or maternity home
- Restoration [Section 40]: The CWC has the power to give directions regarding the child's welfare. Any child in need of care and protection may be placed with
 - Parents
 - Adoptive parents
 - Fit person
 - Guardian
 - Foster parents

CWC functions as per JJ act 2015.

Inquiry:

- The CWC shall conduct an inquiry on protection of the child on all issues relating to and affecting the safety and wellbeing of the child [section 30(ii) and 36 (i)]
- Direct CWO /probation officer / DCPU/ NGO to conduct social investigation report within 15 days from the date of production of the child [section 30(iii) and 36(2)]

- Conduct an inquiry for declaring fit person for care of children in need of care and protection [section 30(iv)]
- In case of doubt regarding age, the CWC shall verify the date of birth certificate from school, birth certificate from corporation/ municipal authority/ panchayat or ossification test [section 94]
- The CWC shall conduct inquiry in case of a complaint by a child in any childcare institution [section 30(xvi)]
- The CWC shall conduct an inquiry into cases referred by the JJB [section 30 (xiv)]

Rehabilitation:

- Direct placement / rehabilitation of child based on social investigation report, child's wishes and the best interest of the child [section 37]
- Determine registered fit institution / fit person for placement of child, and ensure appropriate care/fit facility is provided to the child [section 37(1)(c)]
- Shall declare orphan, abandoned and surrendered child as legally free for adoption after due inquiry [section 38(1)]
- Shall take action for rehabilitation of sexually abused children under the POCSO Act 2012 [section 30(xiii)]
- Provide time to parents to reconsider surrender deed before certifying and executing the deed [section 30 (ix)]

Inspection:

- Shall conduct at least two inspection visits in the residential facilities for child in need of care and protection [Section 30 (viii)]
- Shall recommend improvement in quality of such institutions to DCPU and state government [section 30 (viii)]

Reports relating to child [section 99]

- The CWC shall treat all reports related to the child as confidential keeping in mind the best interest of the child [section 99(1)]

Childline

Childline responds to emergency needs of children but also links to services for their long term care and protection. Childline in each city operates through a structured network of street and community youth, non-profit organisations, institutions and concerned individuals. The calls coming in are attended to 24 hours a day and can be reached out to by any child. The number to call is 1098.

This is the information I would like to share with you, dear friends, about the powers and functions of the Child Welfare Committee.

Having worked as a CWC member for Thane district from 8 June 2008 to 9 Feb 2014, it was a great joy to touch the lives of thousands of children who needed care and protection during my tenure.

It was quite a journey, to walk with the children, to give them home and happiness. Every child that came to me was precious, unique and special. I had the opportunity to talk with them and understand the pain they experienced at an early age. The journey is tough for children when rejected by family, sold by family, left on the streets by family, abused by family, treated in an inhuman way by their families, and so they become tough at an early age with all these negativeness in life. The pain of a juvenile is too deep at times that leads them to depression and they find life difficult to live.

We need to be instrumental in helping the juveniles find the ray of hope and light in their lives.

Children in Conflict with Law: Role of the Stakeholders



Fr. Edward Thomas SDB
Former Member of Karnataka State
Commission for Protection of Child Rights

The term 'children in conflict with law' refers to anyone less than 18 years of age who comes into contact with the justice system as a result of being suspected or accused of committing an offence. The General Assembly on 29 November 1985 adopted the United Nations' Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice, and for the first time the word "juvenile" was coined. This change in terminology was then reflected in domestic law with the passing of the JJA 1986. The Act was further amended in 2006 and 2011, and is now known as the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection) Act 2000. The Act was later amended in 2015 and is known as the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act 2015.

Offences covered under Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act 2015

Petty offences

As per the section 2 of Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act 2015 petty offence includes the offences for which the maximum punishment under the IPC or any other law for the time being is

imprisonment up to 3 years. For example, theft or if the child participated in riots

Serious offences

As per the section 2 of Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act 2015 serious offences includes the offences for which the punishment under the IPC or any other law for time being in force, is imprisonment between three to seven years. For example, house trespass with intention to hurt or assault

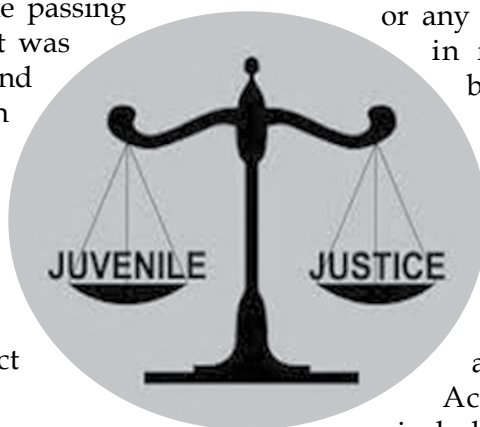
Heinous offences

As per the section 2 of Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act 2015 heinous offence includes the offences for which the minimum punishment under the IPC or any other law for the time being is imprisonment up to 7 years. For example, rape and murder.

Role of the stakeholders

Police

- Apprehend the Child in Conflict with Law and immediately handover the case to Special Juvenile Police Unit.



Special Juvenile Police Unit

- Filing FIR/DDR, informing probation officer & parents, and medical examination of child
- Prepare social background report and produce case before Juvenile Justice Board
- Upload information in the 'track child portal', and investigation of the case
- Coordination and support to probation officer while conducting SIR

District Child Protection Unit

- Provide legal assistance to the children in conflict with law.
- Arrange community services and provide sponsorship to the children in conflict with law
- Maintain data base related to children in conflict with law at district level
- Provide needed help in conducting follow-up of children in conflict with law
- Provide need-based training on various acts, procedures to the staff of observation home and other stakeholders

Juvenile Justice Board

- Production of child before JJB as per the provision under JJ Act 2015
- Production of child before any member to get safe custody orders during non-availability of Principal Magistrate of JJB and ensure child-friendly procedure
- Ensure best interest of the child and marked social investigation enquiry
- Ensure safety of child and give bail orders

- Pass orders for placing child in appropriate childcare institutions and orders for rehabilitation of the child

State Legal Service Authority

- Provide free legal aid to the children in conflict with law, ensure speedy processing of cases, and training for the staff of JJ Home
- Assist superintendent or probation officer in legal help on needed basis

Health Department

- Emergency care to children, medical examination report and age determination, if required

Education Department

- Provide educational facilities (formal / non-formal) to the children in conflict with law and report cases
- Provide assistance through SSA in rehabilitation or reintegration of child in conflict with law and provide academic information of juvenile to probation officer

Probation Officer

- Conduct social investigation report and individual care plan as per the orders of Principal Magistrate
- Place the child under the supervision of probation officer as per the orders of JJB
- Conduct follow-up and attend the proceedings of juveniles cases

The role of the civil society organization is to make sure these roles are respected and followed up as per the law.

True Story - Rehabilitation



A. Jesu Raja
Secretary - PMI Tamil Nadu

There was a couple who did not have any children for a long time. They adopted a girl child. They showered love and affection on the girl. God blessed their family and gave them a boy child. Once the boy was born everything changed. The couple forsook the girl and their affection and love was diverted to their own son. The girl grew up. At the age of 15, she was married off. She gave birth to a boy. Since there was no support from her family, she was under the mercy of the husband who constantly tortured her in many ways. She complained to her parents. But they did not take it seriously, and send her away saying that since she was already married she should not come back. She went back to her husband's house. The torture by the husband continued as he knew that there was nobody to support her. She went to the local police station and lodged a complaint. The policemen called the husband and advised him to take care of the wife. He assured them that he will do the same. But once he came home, he turned furious and treated her very badly. Her cry was not answered by any one.

At this juncture a lady came along with the offer of help. She assured her a good salary and a good job in Chennai. She started her journey from Andhra to the capital city of Tamilnadu. When she came with the lady to Chennai she was

sold for Rs 80,000/ to another lady. She was pushed into the flesh trade. Since she was not willing she was not cooperating with the customers. So the owner started torturing the girl. Every day the owner would push her towards this dirty trade. One day the owner convinced her to go along with a customer on a two-wheeler. A fight ensued between the girl and the customer. On the way they met with an accident and she was injured on the head. So she was sent back to Andhra. Since the lady had taken money, the girl was sent back again after treatment without full recovery. The usual practice of being forced to entertain customers without her will continued. Her rescue came in a different form. The police came and arrested her and put her in a vigilance home.

Three years she was there, but no one came to take her out while other girls were rescued within a few days. Our volunteers heard the entreaties of that girl and started their search for her family. We found her mother in a remote village with the help of a Capuchin priest in the area. But the mother refused to take her back. And she added that the girl was already married and they did not know where she was for so



many years. She was telling us to approach her husband.

When we went to her husband's village we found him with another woman. He told us that since he was unable to trace his wife he got married to another lady in the village and the child was calling her mother. He also refused to come and take her because if he came he would have been excommunicated from the village.

We went back to Chennai and filed a case in the High Court for the release of the girl. During the hearing, the Justice heard the story of the victim, shouted at the police as to why the victim was there for the last three years and what had happened to the accused. The police replied that the accused was released. He was shedding tears on hearing the pathetic situation of the girl. He ordered the police department to produce her mother before the court. We went along with the police to the village in Andhra. With the help of our congregation members in the village and the local police we approached the mother to come to Chennai and get the girl released. Even though she refused to come initially, later she came due to the influence of the local police and the priest. But it was on one condition, that she would not take back the girl to her village. We accepted that and she came to Chennai. We produced her before the court. The Judge ordered the girl to be released from the Home. He also ordered that the police must accompany her to her native village. The mother did not want to take her back. The police accompanied the girl to her village and handed her over to her mother. We brought her back to Chennai.

On hearing the story of the girl everybody wanted her for domestic work. There was

a lot of demand for her. Many of the religious congregations also wanted to give her a place in the convents as a domestic worker. But we decided to place her as a staff in a school or in a hospital. We put our trust in the Lord as is the usual custom of our ministry. She stayed in one of the convents. After two months we were able to find her a job in a hospital, working in the staff hostel. The nuns were kind enough to give her a job and pay a good salary. She has applied for a Voter ID and she has her own bank account. A man at her workplace liked her and wanted to marry her. With the permission of their parents, she got married. God blessed her with another boy. We had put up a small hut for her in her husband's village with the help of well-wishers. The boy is three years old now and she is six months pregnant. Her blood count is low and she is being given treatment. The Prison Ministry salutes with gratitude the nuns and dedicated volunteers who had taken care of her as their own child. We request your prayers and blessings for this girl. She was treated as a mental patient in the girls' home for nearly three years. When the superintendent of the home heard that she has a child and she is happy they were unable to believe it. They are saying that it is a miracle. We are also sure that only with the blessings of the Lord almighty have we been able to do this. It is not on our merit but because of His grace.

This is one among many; there are a lot of girls waiting for such rehabilitation. The harvest is plenty and the labourers are few. As our Master said let us not condemn the sinner and try to be on their side and walk with them so that they may lead a good life.

Good Rehabilitation Centre's Role in the Life of Abandoned Children

1) Center is an alternative family:

Undisputedly no institution can replace the natural family for the children. But unfortunately the institutions for the children are unavoidable. As it is said when horses are not there, manage with donkeys. Same way when the families are not there for the children to meet their needs, institutions are to take care of them. Thus in this sense the centers are alternative families for the abandoned children.

2) Basic needs (food, clothing, shelter) are taken care:

Every center surely makes sure of providing food, clothing and shelter for the children who are there. The children in the centers have better food, clothing and shelter. Some times better than the normal families could provide.

3) Centers provide dignified life style for children:

Imagine the children on the streets with dirty clothes, begging and being scolded by the people. Such incidents don't give for sure dignity for themselves. But the children in the centers have an identity and respect for them. The society that is in contact to the center respects and contributes for their wellbeing.

4) Centers protect them from social evils and society from them:

Usually when the children disconnected from families and come on to streets; are misused, exploited, and manipulated. When they grow up they give back to society through their anti-social activities. Because they were exploited they also exploit the society through their robbery, murders, kidnaps, goondaism,



Fr Joseph Ravi Bandhanadam
*Director of Suryodaya boys center,
Somascan fathers*

rowdism and even to the extent of terrorist activities. Thus the centers protect children and society from possible dangers.

5) Children in the centers are blessed than child in a family:

Though the single child is blessed with a family, is deprived of many aspects of his personality development. Whereas the children in centers are exposed, to many realities of life that enhances their personality. Children in centers given opportunity, to development skill in intellectual, physical, spiritual, emotional, cultural, social, political etc.

6) Makes them responsible to oneself and for the others:

After many years of fostered growth in these centers with the above mentioned situations finally the child comes out as a complete product, useful for oneself and for society.



Sagar Unit - PMI

Report

Introduction: The PMI Sagar Unit is the mirror of the pulsating life of the prisoners. It helps the inmates to accomplish self-realization. Convinced and guided by the words of Jesus, 'Whatever you did for one of the least brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me' (Mt. 25:40), the volunteers of PMI Sagar Unit help convicted people in the 13 jails (Sagar Central Jail, Banda, Rehli, Khurai, Basoda, Vidisha, Guna, Ashoknagar, Begumganj, Bareilly, Goharganj, Raisen and Lateri sub jails) spread over the 5 districts of Sagar diocese. We reach out to all the jails with our various activities. The members of PMI are dedicated to moulding and motivating our brethren behind the bars. They spare their time and energy towards enriching the life of the prisoners. We serve as a group, consisting of 50 members including priests, nuns and lay-missionaries from different parishes. The unity and cohesiveness (of the group) have been the source of spiritual and physical strength to the group, fully committed and devoted to the Prison Ministry.

Every little change in our life can make a great difference in society. Various programmes held on different occasions were a morale booster for our brothers and

sisters in prison giving them a different outlook about life. The vibrant activities have really made a difference in their lives.

We are extremely happy and blessed to present the report of the various activities held in the 13 prisons of the PMI Unit in Sagar.

Competition: Exploring the talents of prisoners we organized various competitions in different jails on categories such as Solo Singing, Speech, Rangoli, Drawing, Group Song and Dance Competitions. It encouraged them to develop self-confidence, and they were awarded attractive prizes. To sow the seeds of empathy and love in young hearts towards prisoners and to bring about awareness on PMI, we organized essay writing competitions among school children on different themes. The winners were awarded with cash awards of ₹ 3,000/-, 2000/-, 1000/- as 1st, 2nd and 3rd prizes respectively.

2. Volley Ball and Cricket Tournaments: To inculcate the spirit of unity and sportsman spirit, volley ball and cricket tournaments were conducted between the inmates of the Sagar Central Jail and the Sagar diocesan family. The Sagar diocese won the prize for volley ball and was awarded with ₹ 10,000/- whereas the prisoners were given the award of ₹ 11,001/- for their stupendous victory in the cricket match.

3. Celebrations: Celebrations of different religious festivals bring all under the roof of universal brotherhood. It was an occasion for prisoners to experience the spirit of their own religious festivals even behind the bars, when we celebrated Holi, Raksha bandhan, Diwali, Christmas, etc.

Women's & Children's Day: To lift up the drooping spirits of the women prisoners and to empower them to live their life with courage and optimism, motivational classes were given on women's day. We celebrated it grandly. In view of helping prisoner's children to achieve positivity in their life, we celebrated Children's Day with a refreshing one-day outing for them.

4. Vocational Training: To equip the prisoners with life skills and to explore their creative talents we encouraged them to join vocational training courses offered such as computer classes, motor winding, diesel engine repairing, automobiles, handloom training, papad making, paper bowl making and tailoring. Those who completed their course were conferred certificates. Some of these trained people earn more than ₹ 10,000/- per month.

5. Prison Ministry in School: "Remember those in prison as if you were their fellow prisoners" (Heb 13:3). To feel one with the prisoners and to create awareness about the Prison Ministry, seminars were conducted for government and private school children. It was hoped that this would impact their little minds and motivate them to work for prisoners and to support the PMI. Our volunteers organized different sessions to conscientize students about preventing crime and to contribute their part in the effort for the release of innocent prisoners.

6 One Day Meal with Prisoners. Every human being wants to feel at home and long to be happy wherever they are. As part of making them feel at home with one another we arranged one day meal in different jails on different occasions thus creating a family atmosphere to overcome

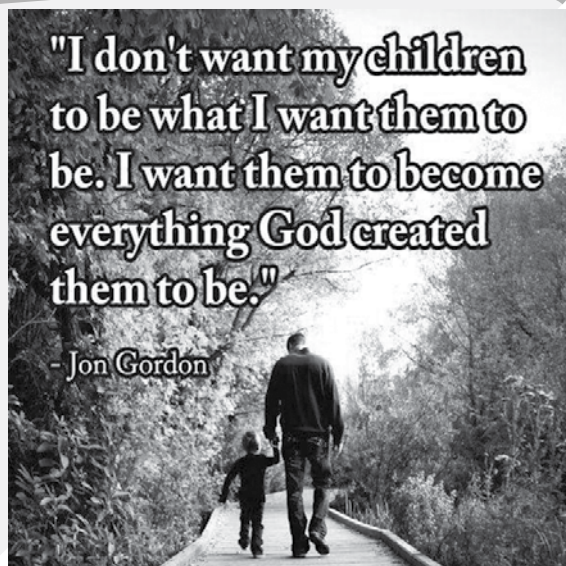
their loneliness and to temporarily forget their punishment.

7. Family Visits. Volunteers of the Sagar PMI Unit went the extra mile and visited the families of the accused as well as the victims. Prayers conducted in their houses have influenced their families to improve their living conditions and standing in society. It demands long and tiresome travel, but we feel satisfied when they are consoled and comforted.

Conclusion: The PMI Sagar unit does not confine its programs to only seasonal celebrations, but we concentrate more on the holistic development of prisoners. We try to bring them out from a world of darkness to a world of light; from a world of tears to a world of joy and smiles. St. Augustine says 'Every sinner has a bright future'; so also with every prisoner. With all these activities we want to make them feel, 'YOU ARE NOT ALONE'. There is someone who loves them, cares for them and prays for them.

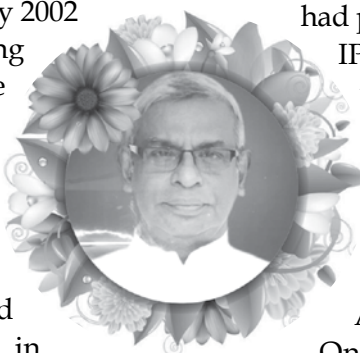
"I don't want my children to be what I want them to be. I want them to become everything God created them to be."

- Jon Gordon



A Silent WORKER

Rev Fr. J. Anthony Raj was a priest from the Archdiocese of Madras-Mylapore, who served as the state coordinator of Prison Ministry India, Tamil Nadu from 1999 to 2002. He had conducted three state gatherings: April 2000 in Trichy, April 2001 in Yercaud, Salem and February 2002 in Palayamkottai. The meeting held in 2001 was remarkable and ever memorable since we had the concluding session inside the Central Prison Salem. He participated in the Fifth National Conference held in Calcutta in 1999 and in 2000. He also participated in the sixth national conference held in Hyderabad. He boldly took the step to conduct the seventh national conference in Chennai. The national team was also in agreement with him. In 2002, the 7th National Conference in Chennai was



organised from October 12 to October 15. Nearly 450 volunteers participated from all over the country. Most Rev Cyril Mar Baselius, President of the CBCI participated and inaugurated the conference. This is the only conference that the CBCI president had participated in. Smt. Kiran Bedi

IPS came for the conference all the way from New Delhi and enlightened the participants.

The Honourable Justice Packiaraj also participated. Prison Ministry India Tamil Nadu is indebted to Fr. J. Anthony Raj for his services.

On 13 September 2018 he was called to rest. We are very thankful to Fr. Sebastian Vadakkumbadan, the national coordinator, who took part in the Funeral Mass held on 14 September 2018 in Santhome Cathedral.

PRAYER FOR YOUNG PEOPLE DURING THE WORLD SYNOD OF BISHOPS 2018



Lord Jesus, in journeying towards the Synod, your Church turns her attention to all the young people of the world. We pray that they might boldly take charge of their lives, aim for the most beautiful and profound things of life and always keep their hearts unencumbered. Accompanied by wise and generous guides, help them respond to the call you make to each of them, to realize a proper plan of life and achieve happiness.

Keep their hearts open to dreaming great dreams and make them concerned for the good of others. Like the Beloved Disciple, may they stand at the foot of the Cross, to receive your Mother as a gift from you. May they be witnesses to your Resurrection and be aware that you are at their side as they joyously proclaim you as Lord. Amen.