



PRISON VOICE

December 2018

Vol. XVI

Issue 4

NATIONAL MONTHLY

₹ 20/-



**JUSTICE
DENIED
WHY?**



SELFLESS SERVICE RENDERED TO THE BRETHREN BEHIND THE BARS BY PMI SAGAR UNIT - MP



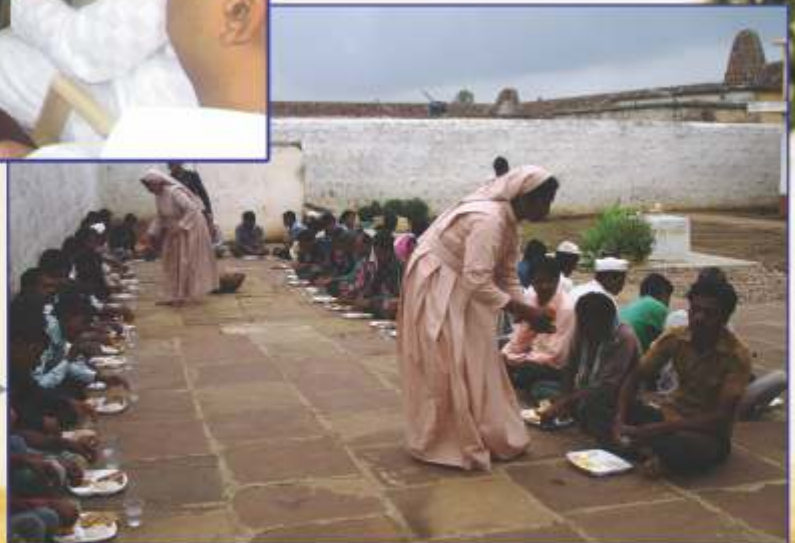
Celebration of Rakhi

Literacy



Medical Camp

One day Meal



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PRISON VOICE

NATIONAL MONTHLY



STAND UP FOR
JUSTICE AND
GOD WILL BE
ON YOUR SIDE
FOREVER

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Are you willing?

"Help a Child of a Prisoner

Prevent a Potential

Criminal"

*80% of the children of
prisoners are potential
criminals unless somebody
takes care of them. Prison
Ministry India has begun
a scheme to educate 1000
children of prisoners, 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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Stand up for Truth

Rock the Boat

"Human progress is neither automatic nor inevitable. Every step towards the goal of justice requires sacrifice, suffering, and struggle; the tireless exertions and passionate concern of dedicated individuals," says Martin Luther King, Jr. Standing for truth and justice requires sacrifices even at the cost of losing one's life. How many of us stand for truth is the question now. How many of us get justice and how many of us are denied justice? Why justice is denied in this large and broken world of ours is a broad topic to be dealt with. From Nelson Mandela to Mahatma Gandhi to Jimmy Carter, these tireless advocates have made the world a better place.

How many innocents are punished, tortured, abused, abandoned, manipulated, with no one to fight for them! Those who have wealth and power are able to fend for themselves due to their influence in society. There are many people who, though truth is on their part, are suppressed, not heard, threatened. Where is justice in such situations? Once you permit yourself to compromise with regards to truth and justice, you fail. Many innocents languish behind the bars as they are denied justice, and they wait for the light of truth and the ray of justice to illuminate them.

Human rights are rights inherent to all human beings, regardless of race, sex, nationality, ethnicity, language, religion, or any other status. Human rights include the right to life and liberty, freedom from slavery and torture,



Sr. Lini Sheeja MSC
Chief Editor

freedom of opinion and expression, the right to work and education, and much more. Everybody has the right to justice. We cannot deprive and deny justice to anybody. Bribery has gained an important foothold in people's lives. Money has

become more valuable than people. Society has become money-oriented and wealth-oriented from people-oriented and service-oriented. Instead of breaking down walls, people build more and more walls which keeps them enclosed.

In history we read about many revolutionary and courageous acts done by ordinary people, who stood by their values, fought for the rights of the innocent, never expecting anything in return. Today, how many of us can be ourselves, take responsibility, keep the commitments that we have made to uphold truth and rock the boat? Nothing should shake us when we stand for a cause. In whatever little way we can bring justice to an individual and to society, let us muster the courage to do it. Courage is what makes one stand up and speak. Let us not be part of an audience who clap sitting in a group, rather let us take our place on the podium to speak, to speak loudly of truth and justice. No matter what, truth will always win. Let our stories be freedom songs of struggle and stories of standing up for truth and justice.

WISH YOU ALL A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND
MAY YOU BE FILLED WITH BLESSINGS & HAPPINESS IN 2019



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

*"Maria forgave you,
Alexander,"*

she said, **"How can I refuse!"**

St. Maria Goretti is unique in that she is the youngest canonized saint in the Church. One of the largest crowds up to that time – 250,000 – assembled for the canonization symbolized the reaction of millions touched by the simple story of Maria Goretti. Maria Goretti was born in Corinaldo, Italy, to Luigi Goretti and Assunta Carlini on October 16, 1890. She was the daughter of a poor Italian tenant farmer, had no chance to go to school, and never learned to read or write.

Born into poverty, her father moved the family when Maria was just six years old from the east side of Italy (near Ancona) to the west side (near Nettuno, about 40 miles south of Rome) in hopes of escaping the grinding poverty that was gripping the area.

Just three years later, when Maria was nine, her father died tragically. It fell to her at that time to raise her five siblings while her mother worked the fields to produce the crops with which they would both pay the rent and feed themselves.

This was a terrible time of trial and suffering for the whole family. For Maria it was especially difficult. Aside from having the responsibility of caring for her family, she had to also cook and clean for her two



next-door neighbours – Giovanni Serenelli and his son, Alexander – who assisted her mother with the farm tasks.

When Maria was eleven, she longed to receive her first Holy Communion. But her mother was too poor to buy her a new

dress and she was not in a school. Finally, for 11 months she walked every Sunday to the church that was 10 kilometres away to learn her catechism.

It was also during this time that Alexander began to develop an impure liking for Maria. On a hot afternoon in July, Maria was sitting at the top of the stairs of her house, mending a shirt. A cart stopped outside, and a neighbour, the 18-year-old Alexander, ran up the stairs. He seized her and pulled her into a bedroom. She struggled and tried to call for help. "No, God does not wish it," she cried out. "It is a sin; you would go to hell for it". She recalled the words of the priest who had prepared her for her First Holy Communion, "Death rather than sin". Alexander began stabbing her blindly with a long dagger.

Maria died the next day because of a horrendous infection brought on by her lacerations. Her last words were, "I forgive Alexander Serenelli ... and I want him with me in heaven forever." On July 6, 1902, she breathed her last.

During his prison life at Regina Coeli, Rome, Maria appeared to Alexander and forgave him. That act of mercy and forgiveness—that act of love—filled Alexander with contrition for his crime. It was also a turning point for him where his heart filled with God's grace. When he was released after 27 years, his first act was to beg forgiveness of Maria's mother. He visited mother Assunta and sought her pardon. "Maria forgave you, Alexander," she said, "How can I refuse?"

The next day, Alexander went to church with Assunta for the Christmas day mass. Before the crowd he declared, "I murdered an innocent girl, who loved virtue more than life. May God forgive me!"

Alexander later entered the monastery at Ascoli as a member of the Third Order and eventually became a Franciscan lay brother.

At her beatification on April 27, 1947, her 82-year-old mother, two sisters, and her brother appeared with Pope Pius XII on the balcony of St. Peter's. Three years later, on June 24, 1950 at Maria's canonization, the 66-year-old Alexander Serenelli knelt among the quarter-million people gathered there and cried tears of joy. It was also for the first time that the perpetrator of a martyr's death was present at the canonization of his victim. As Maria Goretti's portrait was unveiled, her mother wept. Her daughter's last consoling words echoed in her heart; "Mama, why are you crying? Everything will be all right... trust in God". During the historical ceremony Pope Pius XII declared, "Maria Goretti was no pale weakling, but a valiant heroine; she had no fear of the assassin's dagger; the only thing she feared was sin". Maria Goretti was the first martyr of the twentieth century.

On the occasion of Christmas, we shall pray for the conversion of many like Alexander. Let our sacrifices and prayers be for the same. I wish you all, A Merry Christmas and A Happy New Year!

Why am I here?

- Prisoner



Fr. Jesu Amirtham

UP State Coordinator - PMI

Justice is the legal or philosophical theory by which fairness is administered. As with most philosophically-driven disciplines, the concept of justice differs in every culture. Advocates of divine command say that justice issues from God.

There are four types of justice

1. Commutative – based on the principle of equality
2. Distributive – guarantees the common welfare by sharing what God has created
3. Legal – the obligation of the government to its citizen and society
4. Social – everyone has a right to fair say in society.

Justice in the legal system:

Justice, as defined by Webster's Dictionary is the quality of being fair or just. This implies that justice would have something to do with being fair. Legal justice regards laws, their observance on the part of the subjects, and the enacting of just laws on the part of those in authority. The subject of right in legal justice is the community. For the good of the community as a whole, citizens owe observance of the laws. Since the common good takes precedence over private good, legal justice occupies the first place among moral virtues. This virtue is also called general justice, because it regards the general juridical order or the common good of society.

"Where justice is denied, where poverty is enforced, where ignorance prevails, and

where any one class is made to feel that society is an organized conspiracy to oppress, rob and degrade them, neither persons nor property will be safe." - Frederick Douglass.

Everybody will admit that people care most for their personal safety, particularly security of life, liberty and property. Maintenance of peace and order is absolutely essential in any society for human beings to live peacefully and without fear of injury to their lives and property. This is possible only in States where the penal law is effective and strong enough to deal with the violators of law. If we take the provisions of the present Constitution of India viz. Article 21 and 300 A which guarantee protection of one's life, liberty and property, crimes may be said to cover infringements of the rights of individual in relation to their person and property.

When we switch on the TV or read the newspaper most of the news is connected to crime. So, Sir James Fitzjames Stephan defined: "A crime is an act or omission in respect of which legal punishment may be inflicted on the person who is in default either by acting or omitting to act." So, in short, the violators should be punished. But the question arises, how long can the states take time to punish an offender? There is no specified time limit.

Most of the prisons in India are overcrowded. Why? Is it because too many crimes are

committed or omitted? Or is it because we do not have enough judges/magistrates or fewer number of courts than required? If we believe to err is human what is the next solution? Do all the actions have actus reus and mens rea? My contention is life is precious and it has to be respected whether a person is inside the prison or outside.

What we see in our motherland – plenty of laws provided to its citizens. Even after we became a sovereign state new laws have been enacted. Crime rate is increasing day after day, so are violators, whose numbers are also increasing.

The mere fact is everything is slow. When the procedure is slow and lengthy, the maxim rightly applies – JUSTICE DENIED. On one side we have the lengthy procedure and on the other side the laxity of advocates. Day after day hearings are postponed. There are a good number of advocates who do not wish to complete the case on time - so justice is denied.

If the law is made to punish the violators – what about the innocents? A very large number of inmates behind bars are innocent citizens of the country. The question always raised by the inmates is “why am I here?” A large number of innocent people languish behind bars for years and years waiting to hear that they are innocent – do you not think justice is being denied? Often the question is raised by the High Courts and the Supreme Court, “why are so many cases pending?” Why is it that so much time is taken to settle a case? So many directions have been given by the Supreme Court of India; still a case takes minimum ten to fifteen years. Justice too long delayed is justice denied.

The Indian judicial system is in urgent need of reforms if we are to continue to strengthen our society that lives within a framework of fair justice for all. India has the dubious

distinction of having the world’s largest number of pending cases, which by some estimates, exceeds 30 million. The sheer time taken in bringing closure to a case often results in an accused person spending a significant part of his/her life in jail. The issue is not whether he is ultimately found guilty or not, but the time taken to pronounce the final verdict often amounts to denying justice to both the victim and the accused.

Here are some famed cases that have seen extended periods of trial where the victims have felt a strong sense of denial of justice.

1. Uphaar Cinema Fire Case: The most glaring and recent example is the Uphaar cinema verdict that came after 18 years!
2. Bhopal Gas Tragedy Case: Over 5 lakh people were affected – took many years to get a proper verdict.
3. 1984 Anti-Sikh Riot Case: Late Prime Minister Indira Gandhi was assassinated on the morning of 31 October 1984 – the case is still going on.

At present what we need:

1. Adequate number of judges
2. More fast-track courts
3. More Lok Adalat
4. Remove archaic laws and plug loopholes in existing ones
5. Use of technology to improve transparency and reduce corruption
6. Better training of support staff and investigation agencies
7. Educating people on their fundamental rights and the legal system
8. An effective and fair legal system will result in a stronger India

As the population continues to grow and the pace of development increases, so will the number of litigations. The judicial system has to respond rapidly to ensure justice is delivered quickly and fairly to all.



Rev. Dr. Bascaran Lenus MSC
Assistant National Coordinator-PMI

To LOVE is to be JUST

Jesus is the King of Justice. Mic (6:8) says to do justice, and to love kindness and to walk humbly with your God. Dear readers, greetings of the seasons! The king of justice is born for us, let us rejoice! In my congregation (Missionaries of the Sacred Heart) we have a group called JPI (Justice Peace Integration) and I gave a talk on justice and peace years ago. Now, when I was asked to write an article on this topic, I humbly accepted the task.

According to the law of Jesus, to love is to be just. To be just is to love. And when we follow Jesus, we are disciples of justice. The mission of Jesus on earth during his time is our mission on earth in our time. Righteousness and justice are the foundation of your throne; steadfast love and faithfulness go before you, says the Psalm (89:14).

Social Justice

In legal terms, justice means fairness in the way that people are treated. It also means fairness, equity and integrity. Justice is the legal system that a country uses in order to deal with people who break the law.

The government and those who are in power should make sure that all people

from bottom to top, from low to high, poor and rich are treated equally without partiality. A just rule will never divide people on the basis of the haves and the have-nots. We have come across many kings who ruled their people justly. But in the current situation what is happening? Every governmental department favours somebody. Someone with power and money is treated in a different way from someone who has nothing; often the latter is accused and punished without strong evidence. People are searching for justice. One of the most important questions that keeps striking our mind is: WHERE IS JUSTICE?

In court we see the blindfolded statue of "Lady Justice" holding a scale and sword. What does it tell us? Lady justice is an allegorical personification of the moral force in the judicial system. In her right hand, Lady Justice is seen to have a sword that faces downwards. This sword represents punishment. This sword is held below the scales to show that evidence and court are always held before and above punishment. See, even the court is punishable if it goes wrong!

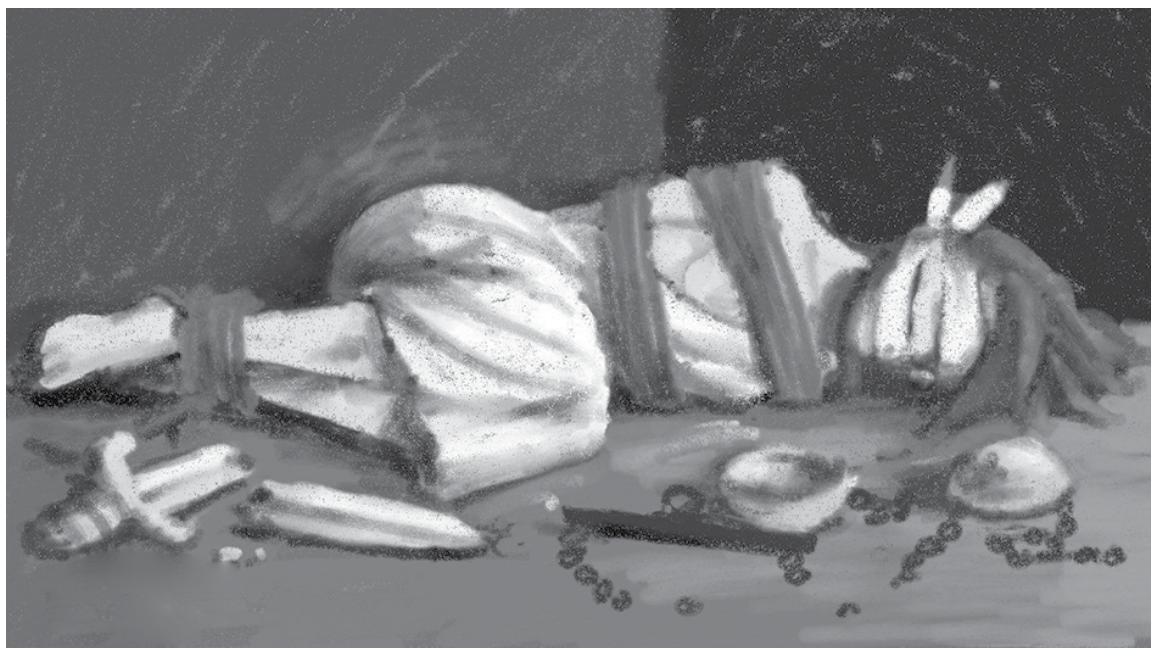
Christmas Message

The blindfold represents objectivity: objectivity uninfluenced by fear, favour, money, wealth, power, or identity; blind justice and impartiality. The scales represent the weighing of evidence and it balances on its own. As a whole, one can take that justice is blind; all evidence will be accepted and treated equally, and from that punishment will be served upon he or she that is deserving of it while the innocent goes free.

Now the question is: Are all these things really happening in our country? As we are going to celebrate the birth of Christ the king of justice, it is time to reflect on why justice is denied to so many people who are behind bars. Why is it that one who is wealthy and in power can escape from punishment so easily? In today's situation many who supposed to be inside prison are walking outside with impunity and innocents are punished. Justice is denied to them. There are so many cases in our country like this.

Jesus and Justice

Jesus' mission can be understood as having two dimensions. His hope for a restored humanity envisions well-being for people who are spiritually poor and people who are socially poor. And in their midst, righteousness and justice mark the events of his days and nights. Jesus lives right and makes life right for others. In Jesus' kingdom there is no place for the question: where is justice? According to Mt (25:31-46) at the Judgement of the Nations, the good people will be rewarded, and the evil ones will be punished. No bribing, no compromising, and no bargaining. We should all aim at nurturing a political and social environment in which justice and love would rule. That is what Jesus dreamt of, fought for and finally lay down his life for. May the king of justice, our Lord Jesus Christ inspire all our leaders and all who are in power to establish justice and peace in the coming days. Merry Christmas and a prosperous new year everyone!



A Story of INJUSTICE

A Story of PAIN

Sr. Laveena Grace
Secretary, Prison Ministry,
Belgaum Unit

This is a real-life story that I want to share with you. A story of injustice, a story of pain, a story of poverty, a story of cheating.....

Guru Prasad from Shiruguppa (name and place have been changed) lived in a small hut along with his parents, 4 younger sisters and 3 younger brothers. He was married and had 2 little girls of his own, who were 3 and 1 years old. He had the responsibility of helping his father with the family finances. His brothers and sisters including him had not gone to school. The whole family was involved in the making of grass-brooms, which was sold house-to-house and in the weekly market. Though their earnings were not much, they led a happy life. As the days went by his sisters also joined him in the selling of the brooms.

Then one fine day the evil eye fell on his sisters. He fought with the boys who teased his sisters. After a few days these boys were caught trying to steal gold. When they were caught they named this man and escaped. Since he had no one to argue for him in court, he was proved guilty. He was sentenced to 4 years of imprisonment and Rs. 4,500 as fine. After the verdict was passed, he was brought to the Central Prison, Hindalaga. He spent 4 years with no visitors. Since his family was far away they did not go to visit him. To him those

4 years were like 40 years. One and a half years into his imprisonment, his wife died in an accident leaving the children behind. He was informed only after 15 days, so he could not even see her one last time. All those 4 years, he says that more than the physical punishment, it was the mental torture that was unbearable – worrying about his family. Since neither he nor his family had the finances to pay the fine, he would have had to undergo another 6 months of imprisonment. At that moment he felt all his hopes being shattered. During that moment of despair, he had occasion to be happy and grateful towards the Belgaum unit of the Prison Ministry because they came forward to pay his fine. His release papers were processed. He thanked the volunteers of Prison ministry, Belgaum and promised to live a good life – taking care of the education of his children and taking care of his brothers and sisters.

We, the members of Prison Ministry, feel happy and satisfied about having reached out to the needy. This year we have helped 4 persons, who needed the fine amount for their release.

Dear Friends, we welcome you to join our hands in reaching out to the many in need - personally, emotionally, financially and with prayerful support, finally fulfilling the mission of Jesus.

“What the open space failed to teach me, The cloistered walls taught me”

Editor: Good afternoon.

Basu: Good afternoon, Sister.

Editor: I am Sr. Lini, from Prison Ministry India, the editor of the magazine called, *Prison Voice*.

Basu: Yeah Sister, Prison Ministry India has influenced my life in a major way; the Sisters come daily to visit us that are languishing here; they tell us not to lose hope, as many of us suffer silently and wait for justice!

Editor: True, I know, and I understand your despair and these words carry a lot of pain and will tell a lot to society; especially to the readers of *Prison Voice* magazine, the volunteers of Prison Ministry India, the authorities in the judiciary system and the brethren behind the bars.

Basu: Yes, dear Sister! I was put behind the bars without any evidence. Every morning I rise with hope believing I will get justice one day. My entire family is waiting for it.

Editor: I hear repeatedly about justice from you which seems to motivate you! What happened to you, Basu? Will you be able to share your experience of denied justice to the readers? Justice is the sum of all moral duty and we are dealing with the theme of “Justice and Justice denied” in the magazine this month.

Basu: Of course, I will. I had completed my MBA from UK and I was a bank manager years ago. Nobody wanted to work in that particular branch. Since my parents were staying in that locality, I

willingly took up the job. Since it was a non-profitable branch, after studying the situation I took all possible measures to make it profitable and it was a success. After that I was promoted for my good work. The third manager who came after me could not succeed in that particular branch; he borrowed a lot of money and he shifted the blame on me.

There are many ways in which people are manipulated. ‘The spirit of truth and the spirit of justice are one,’ and both these have lost their way in our world. All the documents relating to me are clear; I really do not know why I am still here. People can easily cover up their mistakes by manipulating the entire scenario and blaming others.

What the world failed to teach me in 50 years, the prison taught me in three months. A lot of prisoners suffer within this four walls as they are wrongly accused and denied justice. For many of the prisoners there is nobody to fight for them. I am waiting for justice to take over and the truth to come out soon. Hats off to you, the Prison Ministry volunteers who work tirelessly and bring rays of hope into our lives as we languish in bitterness and utter darkness!

Editor: Society has forgotten its values and it is only a few people who stand by their values and stand for truth. Truth will always win!

Sr. Lini MSC
Chief Editor

Sr. Leena

THE LEGEND

Continues.....



Mr. M. D. Vincent
First General Secretary
PMI-Andhra Pradesh

Sr. Leena won several awards: The legend created record after record. Our Sr. Leena Kattokaren FMM is no less than anyone.

- a) Deena Bandu award: Dr Vijaychander of Karunamayudu (Dayadagar fame), who presided over a Christmas programme in jails was impressed with the work of Sr. Leena and organised the Deena Bandu award for Sr. Leena in the Film club at Film City Hyderabad. Over 300 priests, nuns, and lay people transformed the film cultural club into a mini church for a few hours of prayer and worship much to the astonishment of the employees, who for the first time witnessed this kind of prayerful atmosphere in the Film club. A cash award of Rs 50,000/- with a memento was presented to Sr. Leena by Professor Kurian who was the Chairman of Rajya Sabha at that time.
- b) Best Social award: Apart from the District Collector's award given in the Chenchelaguda Jail, the government of Telangana honoured Sr. Leena at Ravinder Bharathi with Rs 50,000/- cash and a memento presented by the Home Minister.
- c) Felicitations by two Chief Ministers: It is again a record that a nun was felicitated by the two Chief Ministers of Telangana and Kerala at the Shilpa Kala Vedika, Hitech City.
- d) Sr. Leena inaugurated an international commercial outlet: We took up a new venture to produce a feature film on Saint Mother Teresa, who had a special interest in the welfare of prisoners. But then to organize the financials for the undertaking was a tremendous task. Sr. Leena managed to communicate the idea to the gold business magnet, Mr Joy Alukkas. One day he arrived at the Rosary Convent to meet Sr. Leena. Over a cup of tea Joy Alukkas said that she was to inaugurate his new gold shop at Hitech City. Sr. Leena laughed aloud and said, "Usually you invite film stars for such events, no? How come you are inviting this old and aged lady? Then Joy Alukkas said more firmly, "Your work for the Prison Ministry is impressive. Serving hands are better than star hands. So, Sister, please do me the honours." Thus, Sr Leena's photo was published

on the front page of all the leading newspapers along with other dignitaries.

- e) The final reward: In recognition of all her mighty contributions to the Prison Ministry, the Hyderabad unit headed by Fr. Dian, Monsignor Dearn's Bernard and the Bishop M.D. Prakasam were pondering over proposing Sr. Leena's name along with Fr. Francis Kodiyan and Fr. Varghese Karipery, the two founders of PMI for a Papal award. In the monthly meeting it was proposed to forward to Vatican these three names, to be bestowed with the "Knights of Faith" award. Having heard this proposal, Sr. Leena's reaction was different. She said, "Dear all, enough of these awards, I am waiting for the Lord's final award." And she fittingly went for it on 13th October 2018 which happened to be her 84th birthday also. Only one in a million gets such an opportunity to die on their birthday. Once again, she proved that she was a legend.

Mr. Narsima Rao IPS, Mr Hameed, the former IG and Mr Sidaiah, the present DIG attended the last rights and offered floral tribute to Sr. Leena. As he was about to leave the DIG said, "Whenever we meet the Home Minister, he tells us only one thing: 'You please take care of Sister. Don't trouble that elderly lady.'" The Home Minister had admonished the prison authorities keeping in mind the new restrictions they had imposed on PMI volunteers in Telangana stating that they will allow only professionals who have done MA in Psychology and Sociology. In this context Sr. Leena, with Fr. Dion Isaac and I went to meet the Principal Secretary of the Home Minister requesting them to relax the latest rules on PMI visits as many IAS officers like Daana Kishore IAS, Mini Mathew IAS, B.P. Acharya IAS, Rajeev Acharya IAS, and Raymond Peter IAS are convinced that PMI

volunteers' visits alone bring down the stress level of prisoners. Hence it was requested that along with specialists, other volunteers be also allowed to visit prisons.

The last days of Sr. Leena: Because of her extraordinary contributions to PMI, Fr. Sebastian Vadakumpadan had invited her to the Assam conference and offered her air tickets when she expressed her inability to travel due to her health and advanced age. She gently refused the offer but prepared 20 volunteers to attend the meeting by motivating the diocesan coordinators on behalf of Fr. Dian. About 2 weeks before she breathed her last, she visited the DG V. K. Sing along with 5 priests and 5 nuns as her last effort to request the DG to ease rules for PMI volunteers. Her last phone call to me was towards the end of September. Her last words were, "Vincent, we visited the DG. His new office is on the second floor. Imagine the hard task: I had to climb so many stairs. The DG said he would allow those who did BA and MA in psychology to counsel and teachers to teach languages and subjects. Where will we get psychologists?" I said, "Let's request all our religious heads to train a few of their candidates in psychology. Let's also propose to our national office to create an educational wing to cater to this special requisition which may slowly spread to other states also." Sister Leena said, "Let's prepare a new list and approach the DG once again." These were the last words I heard from her. As Fr. Dion said, the strain she underwent in climbing so many stairs wrecked her health. Further she got wet on the way to the DG's office that led to pneumonia. She had to be admitted in the ICU where she closed her eyes permanently. Thus, she lived and breathed her last for PMI work. We are sure that she is in heaven praying for all of us in PMI. Eternal rest grant unto her Lord! Let perpetual light shine upon her! May her soul rest in peace!

THANK YOU SISTER FOR VISITING US



Sr. Justina Xavier (SJC)
National Team Member

A woman was sitting in a corner without looking at anybody, depressed and her face down. I saw her as I entered the prison. Immediately I approached her and held her hands. She started crying without uttering a word for half an hour, holding my hands tightly. In due course I asked her name; she started narrating her bitter experience of getting arrested and being put behind the bars. She said that she was arrested with her husband one year ago and no one had visited them ever since. With tears in her heart and eyes she asked, "Are we going to be here till our death? How will we get out as we have no one coming for us?" I was heartbroken, and it was at that moment that I made the commitment to myself that I would take up their case and work for their release.

Since it was time to go, I said my goodbyes to her and rushed to the prison hospital to visit her husband. He was admitted there and to my shock I met a man who was physically challenged and unable to walk. I introduced myself to him and said that I had just visited his wife and I came rushing to meet him. He said nothing except, "Thank you sister for visiting me". He narrated his past: that he was a professional driver who was abandoned by his wife, and then he married another woman with whom he had been staying in a rented house. She had frequent quarrels with a

neighbouring lady. One day the neighbour had a fall during a fight and she died a week later. A case was taken up against couple charging them with her death and they were arrested and put behind bars.

They had no financial source except the advance given to their houseowner. Contacting the lawyer, I worked constantly towards their release and they came out on bail. They had no house to stay in as they were away for a long time. With the help of Fr. Sebastian, we gave them a room in our National Office and took care of their needs till they could get settled in a house. Finally, we found a house for them and placed the woman in a garments factory where she could earn her livelihood. After a few months he fell sick suddenly and was on the point of death. I was informed by the neighbours. Once again, I rushed to his side, and found him on the brink of death. We took him to four hospitals that evening as he required ICU stay. Finally, we got him admitted and stayed with them all through the ordeal as they had no one to care for them or support them. Now, he has been discharged; a man who was struggling between life and death is leading a normal and happy life. God's power and His protection is felt in great measures in this ministry of ours for our brethren behind the bars. The abandoned need care and protection, and the assurance

that they are not alone. "Changing hearts, transforming lives and rehabilitating the prisoners" are very important in our prison ministry. We have to make many sacrifices, need dedication and interest, and provide sincere moral support when we are involved in this ministry. For those who are waiting for their judgment, for those to whom justice is denied, for those poor and destitute prisoners who have no one to raise their voices in support, there is no one except the PMI members.

Let our hearts burn for the suffering humanity, especially for our brothers and sisters behind the bars for whom justice is delayed and denied. God makes a home

for the lonely: "He leads out the prisoners into prosperity" (Ps 68:6). Every saint has a past and every sinner has a future.

During this Christmas let us look at the crib with more than awe and wonder, pondering over the helpless Baby (God Incarnate), look at the parents and contemplate the silence of Mary and Joseph. Let this Christmas not pass by like other years, mostly on external preparations, but stop and look at the manger in silence, adoration and contemplation in order to experience God our creator. May our Christmas be filled with lots of happiness, peace and love! May the Infant Jesus bless your families abundantly!



PMI, SAGAR DIOCESE UNIT REPORT



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

1. **Legal Aid and Release:** Innocent prisoners cry for justice, real culprits seek for mercy. Keeping the 3 R theory of PMI, 'Renew', 'Release', and 'Rehabilitate' in mind, we took the initiative to approach the civil authorities and advocates to get justice for innocent prisoners through legal channels. By our constant visits and meetings we could secure the release of 10 innocent prisoners from various jails.
2. **Prayer Meeting:** Prayer is the power house of every PMI member. To enrich, recharge and revitalize the spirit of our ministry, we gather for prayer meetings. There is now a group of nuns who pray

regularly for the success of this ministry.

3. **Seminars:** 'Men are not prisoners of fate but only prisoners of their mind', says Franklin D. Roosevelt. To free them from the bondage of their negativity, reaction and rivalry, seminars were conducted from time-to-time in various jails on topics such as how to be an optimist, spirituality, forgiveness, values of life, how families are destroyed by crime, etc. This helped the prisoners to come out of the shadow of gloom and to experience the ray of hope. Motivational classes were also given to PMI volunteers to re-kindle their enthusiasm for the ministry.
4. **Physical Fitness-Medical camp and Yoga:** A medical camp was organized in jails under the leadership of Dr Arush Qureshi and nuns. 'Yoga helps to keep the body



healthy; a healthy body accommodates a healthy mind, thus healthy relations'. Assimilating this message we train the inmates of different jails in Yoga to control their mind, body and emotions. This paved the way to transform their lives in myriad ways.

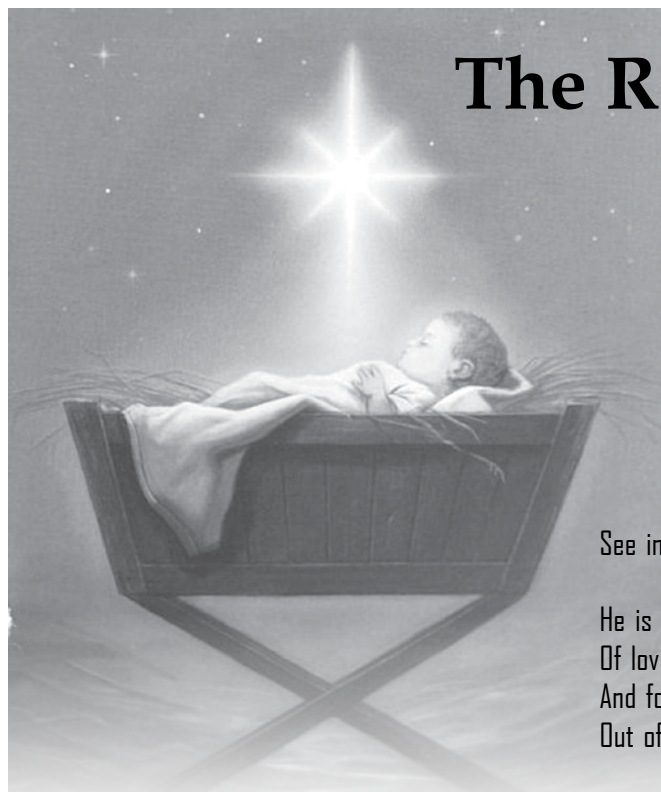
5. **Biblical Drama:** Prison Ministry is not just social work. It is also about teaching prisoners about the innocent prisoner called 'Jesus'. It is as important a part of our mission as evangelization. On the basis of the teachings of Jesus a biblical drama on the 'Prodigal Son' was staged which imprinted on every prisoner's heart the spirit of forgiveness, and God's love and mercy. We have stepped into direct evangelization in prisons, i.e. the Bible is read and explained in the prayer meetings in various prisons.
6. **Education Scheme for Children and Adults:** Education is the door to civilization. Realizing this fact, members of the PMI Sagar Unit helped 13 school-going children of prisoners acquire

school uniforms and study materials. Keen efforts were taken to help the adult inmates to learn to read and write. Special coaching is given in addition to their schooling.

7. **Street Play and Puppet Show:** A puppet show and street play were organized with the co-operation of MVSS of Sagar Diocese in different jails based on different themes like effects of drug & alcohol in society, cleanliness, save the girl child, etc. Such programs help the prisoners to weed out negative attitudes and to reform their lives.
8. **Counselling:** When sorrow is shared, it is lightened. When joy is shared, it is doubled. We do regular counselling for the inmates to lessen their tension and stress, and to overcome their depression and feeling of loneliness.

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.





The Rising Sun

Sr. Marie Ange B. S.
Bethany Convent, Bendoor
Mangalore

Lo! A light in the darkness
Pointing to its source Divine
Spreading its many coloured rays
Has begun to shine & shine!

It is the light of the Rising Sun
Who has come into this world
As a new born babe Divine
Oh! Adore Him! The beloved Son of God!

Heaven and earth to Him belongs
Yet for your sake He gave up His greatness
And came down to this earth, bringing forgiveness
Took the form of an infant so very helpless!

He has come to this sinful world
To redeem it from the bonds of sin
He is the promised Saviour of this mankind

See in Him the tremendous love Divine

He is there to give His heavenly gifts
Of love, joy and lasting peace
And forgiveness to all repentant sinners
Out of His love, mercy and kindness!

He brought good news to the lost and the least
And said that God is a loving Father
Who forgives every repentant sinner
And draws him close to His breast!

He spent His life-time on earth doing good
Drove out demons who tormented mankind
Raised to life who had died
Taught all who listened, the teachings so sound.

He is The Way, The Truth and The Life
He is The Light and The Love
He is the true Wine and Bread from Heaven
So, let us love and follow Him, our Saviour Divine!

Once again it is, "A Happy Christmas!"
The day has dawned to celebrate the birth of Christ
So, to one and all, "A Happy Christmas!
And A Happy New Year, with all its best!"

All are Equal & Precious



Mrs. Goretti Martins

God made man and woman in his Gown image and likeness [cf-gen1:1]. Hence, service to woman is service to God. Unfortunately, from ancient times women have always been side-lined in many societies, but if we look back in history we will realize how woman plays a very important role in the account of creation, where the woman is projected as equal to man in dignity and service. God chose a woman to come into the world as a Saviour of the world. Jesus always gave woman the honour and dignity she deserved. Many of Jesus' followers were women and they played a very important role in the ministry of Jesus. Today, in many places, women are not given this due respect; rather, they are treated like an object which can be used as and when needed. This attitude needs to be changed. Although there are many good-hearted people, including men, who are fighting tirelessly for the betterment of women, still we have a long way to go. What do we see around us in today's society? Many of our sisters are suffering silently in their homes and in society. Some women are harassed for dowry while others for giving birth to a girl child etc. It is

sad to see that sometimes when a girl child is born, both the parents abandon her. We see reports of such actions almost every other day on newspapers and TV channels. It is also sad to see that many innocent children, including one or two-year-old girls are being raped and murdered while others are dragged into prostitution.

If we go through all such cases, many of which go unnoticed, we find that a good number of them are still awaiting justice and many a times they are denied justice. I feel it is high time we learn to love and respect human life as such, no matter what the gender. For this there has to be awareness programmes in parishes, schools, colleges and various associations. This will help every human being to develop and show deep respect to womanhood. It is God's plan that we have mothers and sisters, and it is also God's plan that

a man should join a woman to continue his job of creation. Keeping this in mind, I would like to conclude by saluting all those who are working very hard, day and night, to protect women and the rights of women.



Faguni came alive



Sr. Roselyn Karakattu SCN

Coordinator - Patna Unit

Working with women prisoners in the Central jail of Gaya, Bihar, gives me immense satisfaction. Every time I visit, there are women waiting eagerly to share their problems. Counselling of the prisoners has helped me to understand their problems and make timely interventions, especially when justice is denied or delayed. One such case is of Faguni. On one of those visits in the month of August 2018, I found her crying. She said that she was accused of the theft of a gold chain from a lady on a train. She said that she had not stolen the chain and that the owner had found it stuck on her clothes. Even though the chain was found, the woman had her arrested. She was arrested by the railway police at Gaya junction and put in prison. She was very sad because according to her though "three Tuesdays" (she was not sure of the dates) had passed since her arrest and imprisonment, her family had not been notified. No one had come to visit her. She had no mobile phone or any contact numbers. I was able to sit with her and get the details about her family. I felt justice was denied to Faguni. The other inmates too reported that Faguni had been crying and had been wearing the same clothes for the past three weeks.

The next day I carried some clothes for her. That same afternoon on the 17th of August, I gathered some information on the police

station which is near her village and set out in search of her family. The officers at the police station were very helpful in identifying the village where Faguni lived. A constable was sent with me to identify the house. Eventually we met her family, her mother, and two of her sisters. Her family was very happy to know that Faguni was alive. They had been looking for her in many places for the past three weeks but not having found her, they had performed all the after-death rituals, called in the priest and performed the puja.

The next day Faguni's sister and son-in-law visited her in the prison. Since the family had no idea as to how to go about getting her bailed out, I helped them get a copy of the FIR from the railway police and got them in touch with a lawyer I knew. In a few days time, Faguni was released on bail.

It is sad that the jail authorities do not follow up on cases like that of Faguni and many such innocent victims languish in jail for no reason at all.

I help those prisoners who long to connect with their families by writing letters to the families, making phone calls on their behalf or visiting their families as prison does not have these facilities. In some cases, these visits and letters help to update the families and speed up the bailing out process.

Employees faces injustice, many a times they are denied justice - why?



Mr. Gabriel John

Assistant State Coordinator-Delhi

'Justice delayed is justice denied' is a legal maxim meaning that judicial relief while available for a party that has suffered some form of injury had not been given the same.

Recently, I was speaking to one of my friends, whose daughter works for an MNC. He was narrating to me the ordeal his daughter faced for an entire year at the hands of her manager who worked from the US. The girl had put up with her manager's bullying behaviour for a whole year without any real help. Even though she had informed the head of her department and the HR, nothing was done to stop the harassment, forcing her to resign and raise a formal complaint. The inability of the seniors and decision-makers to stop the harassment had caused the girl emotional and mental distress, and finally cost her a job that she enjoyed.

Definitions and scope of workplace injustice(s) differ according to the discipline and body of literature reviewed. That being said, most countries' regulations aim to protect workers from injustice based on age, disability, gender/sex, genetic information, national origin, pregnancy, race/colour, or religion and some western countries are also seeking to protect

workers from workplace injustice based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

For the purpose of this article and for the benefit of the readers, I define workplace injustice as workplace-related discrimination, harassment, abuse or bullying. Perpetration of workplace injustice can occur at the institutional or interpersonal level. At the individual/interpersonal level, workplace injustice can be intentional or unintentional and encompasses acts of commission and omission.

Workplace harassment differs from discrimination because it involves negative actions toward a worker due to attributes, such as race/ethnicity, gender etc., that lead to a hostile workplace whereas discrimination involves unequal treatment or limiting of opportunities due to these attributes. Workplace bullying or abuse involves actions that offend or socially exclude a worker or group of workers, or actions that have a negative effect on the person or group's work.

I have given much thought to what leads to such situations arising in the first place. This generation that calls itself 'The Millennium Generation' looks like

they are more vulnerable even though some of them are adept at protecting themselves and protesting against such acts of injustice. Coming to think of it, there seems to be numerous reasons behind such acts taking place at one's workplace. Some of these I have outlined below, (but they are not limited to just these):

1. Insecurity of job for both the perpetrator and victim
2. Insufficient/ inefficient employment law
3. Inefficient hiring process which fails to identify suitability of interviewee for the proposed job
4. Inefficient internal process which fails to identify issues of existing or new hires

After speaking to so many different people and reading about instances and numerous cases on workplace injustices, I have noticed the possible reasons why these acts of injustices either go undetected or unreported but are not limited to:

1. Lack or inefficient whistle-blowing channels
2. Failure to protect the complainant from further harassment by the perpetrator/s
3. Lack of faith in available legal regulations/available grievance process of the company
4. Lengthy investigation process during which the victim either just accepts the situation and mentally moves on or resigns from the company

To bring this in perspective in our own country, India; 65 percent of our population

is of employable age. Hence it is important for our legal system to make stricter employment regulations on workplace injustices and create awareness around this subject through radio/news talk shows, hoardings, newspaper articles etc. There should be efficient grievance redressal programmes. Legal guidance should be available to citizens that they can approach the legal system if they do not receive justice through their workplace. As a majority of the new employment is in the urban sector through MNCs, there should be guidance provided to companies to set up redressal programmes in accordance to the employment regulations in India.

Let us hope that ten to twenty years into the future, we are placed in a better position in ensuring that the maximum number of people seeking justice will receive it and citizens will have more faith in the justice system, embrace it and take pride in it.



"Remaining Silent in the face of an Injustice perpetrates more Injustice"



Fr. Edwinraj
Coordinator - Palayamkottai Unit

Injustice is a quality relating to unfairness or undeserved outcome. The term may be applied in reference to a particular event or situation. In Western philosophy and jurisprudence, injustice is very commonly – but not always – defined as either the absence or the opposite of justice. Sense of injustice is a universal human feature, though the exact circumstances considered unjust can vary from culture to culture. While even acts of nature can sometimes arouse one's sense of injustice, the sense is usually felt in relation to human actions such as misuse, abuse, neglect, or malfeasance that is uncorrected or else sanctioned by a legal system or fellow human beings. The sense of injustice can be a powerful motivational condition, causing people to take action, not just to defend themselves but also others who they perceive to be unfairly treated.

A common cause of injustice is human selfishness. As Plato described at length in *The Republic*, people will often commit acts of injustice when they calculate it is in their interests to do so. Plato also adds, "The highest reach of injustice is to be deemed

just when you are not". Human injustice is not always caused by any attempt to gain unfair advantage or malice; it may be simply the result of flawed human decision-making. For example, studies have found that judges sitting on review boards are less likely to reach decisions favourable to applicants depending on how long it had been since the judges had their last food break. Misuse and abuse with regard to a particular case or context may represent a systemic failure to serve the cause of justice.

Social Justice Issues

Social justice issues can occur in relation to practically any aspect of society where inequality can arise as a result of unjust prejudices or policies. Social justice issues can be delineated into two categories, although they are often co-dependent: Inter-Social Treatment and Unequal Government Regulation.

Inter-Social Treatment involves treatment of a group(s) of other people based on personally-held biases and prejudices. These prejudices most often manifest in sociological categories such as:



Types of Injustice

Racial injustice refers to discrimination against individuals on the basis of their race. Policies of racial segregation may formalize it, but it is also often exerted without being legalised and also it means facing injustice. According to the World Values Survey, the second most racist country is India, where people from other countries are treated differently by some Indian people, based both on skin colour and country of origin. African people are especially affected by racism in India, often denied living accommodations and even attacked and killed

Gender injustice refers to health, education, economic and political inequalities between men and women in India. Various international gender inequality indices rank India differently on each of these factors, as well as on a composite basis, and these indices are controversial. Gender inequalities, and their social causes, impact India's sex ratio, women's health over their lifetimes, their educational attainment, and economic conditions. Gender inequality in India is a multifaceted issue that concerns men and women. Some argue that various gender equality indices place men at a disadvantage. However, when India's population is examined as a whole, women are at a disadvantage in several important ways. In India, discriminatory attitudes towards either sex have existed for generations and affect the lives of both sexes. Although the constitution of India grants men and women equal rights, gender disparities remain.

Religious injustice includes the acts of violence by followers of one religious group against followers and institutions of another religious group, often in the form of rioting. Despite the secular and religiously tolerant constitution of India, broad religious representation in various aspects of society including the government, the active role played by autonomous bodies such as National Human Rights Commission of India and National Commission for Minorities, and the ground-level work being done by non-governmental organisations, sporadic and sometimes serious acts of religious injustice tend to occur. This is so because the root causes of religious violence often run deep in history, religious activities, and politics of India.

Unequal Government Regulation involves laws and regulations that purposefully or otherwise create conditions that obstruct, limit, or deny a group(s) access to the same opportunities and resources, relative to the rest of society. These laws can intentionally (explicitly) or unintentionally (implicitly) create the conditions for social injustice. Areas in which government policy often gives rise to social inequality and injustice include:

- Environmental Laws (i.e. clean water and air, industrial waste disposal)
- Health Care Laws (i.e. insurance mandates and coverage eligibility)
- Education Laws (i.e. public school segregation and integration)

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Rev. Dr. G.J. Anthonysamy
State Coordinator,
PMI - Tamil Nadu.

God of justice was denied

Justice

Exodus 23:6 - "Do not deny justice to your poor people in their lawsuits"

God of justice is the "God of judgment". Both his justice and judgment mean 'to pronounce sentence'. God is the ultimate judge who will always administer justice according to his nature. At the same time, he is a God of holiness and righteousness. His justice is always holy and righteous.

This God of justice who took human form two thousand years ago, wanted to bring justice to this world. When he appeared in the person of Jesus, his incarnational event had brought about transformation in society. People who were longing for justice, were given hope by his advent and started praising God and thanking him.

In the words of Martin Luther King Jr: "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere." We see that many innocent people in various prisons experience injustice. They lament so much about the unjust treatment and the denial of true justice to them. No human solution can be given to them. The only right solution is through the God of justice who was denied justice. He is a great example to all

innocent prisoners. He is also the source of justice. Isaiah 1:17 - "Learn to do good. Seek justice. Help the oppressed; defend the cause of orphans; fight for the rights of widows." This is a special call from Yahweh to his people. Everyone must seek justice. The authorities or the rulers must see that justice is being rendered to the innocent. Jesus our saviour was given unjust punishment. Pilate, even knowing fully well that He was innocent, could not provide justice to Jesus, since he was afraid of the multitude.

Real justice is denied today to innocent people due to specific structures prevailing in human society. There is a serious question asked by the innocent people in society: why would God allow bad things to happen to good people and why does not he come now and do something about all this injustice? It is a very critical and challenging question. The only answer is that the God of justice was denied justice.

It is very astonishing to see that the national crime graph is increasing day-by-day.

Everyone knows that crime and justice do not go together. Corruption is found in all areas of human life. The whole society has to be enlightened in order to fight against injustice. Prov. 18:5: "It is not right to acquit the guilty or deny justice to the innocent." The God of justice who became an innocent prisoner for the salvation of humanity becomes the solution for the innocent. He gives the hope that justice will prevail one day.

His second coming will bring about true justice to all. In the meantime, all the innocent prisoners who are struggling and suffering in various prisons can live

with this hope that the God in whom they believe is a God of justice who was denied justice in human history. Therefore, place trust in him that he will establish his justice by his second coming as God of justice.

To conclude, Micah 6:8: "What the lord is requiring from you is to act with justice, to walk humbly in the company of your God". Everyone is invited to listen to his call to establish justice in our modern society. We continue to believe in the God of justice while serving innocent people through our prison ministry.

Remaining Silent in the face of an Injustice perpetrates more Injustice

Contd. on page 24

- Labour Laws (i.e. worker's rights, occupational health and safety)

As the saying goes, 'Life isn't fair.' The world is full of injustice, from international politics, to unfair business practices, to how individuals treat each other in everyday life. However, just because there has always been injustice in the world does not mean there is nothing you can do about it. By taking individual action, and partnering with other like-minded people, and staying informed, you can stand up to injustice and make the world a better place.

Set an example. An important first step in standing up to injustice is making changes in your own life. This can be hard, but to the extent that you can, avoid contributing to things you think are unjust and try to be just in your own behaviour.

Speak out. When you see injustice happening in daily life, do not just let it happen. Speak up and let the person behaving unjustly know that you think what they are doing is wrong.

Talk to people you know. Tell people you know about the injustice you have learned about. Many people probably would not be aware of the issue. Some people may know about it, but not see it in the same way you do. Talking to others is a good way to promote more justice in the world.

Contact people with the power to stop injustice. If you are serious about taking a stand against injustice, you need to make your views known outside your social circle. A great way to start is by contacting those responsible for the injustice.



During the Central Regional Executive Meeting some of the members visited the Rehabilitation plot at Karjat. Water diviner at the plot for a borewell.

Bidding Farewell to Fr. Sanjith Kullu, North Regional Coordinator by the National Coordinator & Team



Christmas Celebration at Government Observation Home, Bangalore .

Welcoming Sr. Celine Soosai to the National Office to render her service to the brethren behind the bars.



***CBCI Secretaries Meeting held at
CBCI Secretariate, Delhi on
16th - 17th November, 2018***



***South Region Executive Meeting held at National Office
Bangalore on 11th December, 2018***