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# REFORMATIVE EXPLORATIONS

A PSYCHO-SPIRITUAL AND CRIMINO-SOCIAL QUARTERLY ON REFORMATION AND REHABILITATION



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A PSYCHO-SPIRITUAL AND CRIMINO-SOCIAL QUARTERLY  
ON REFORMATION AND REHABILITATION

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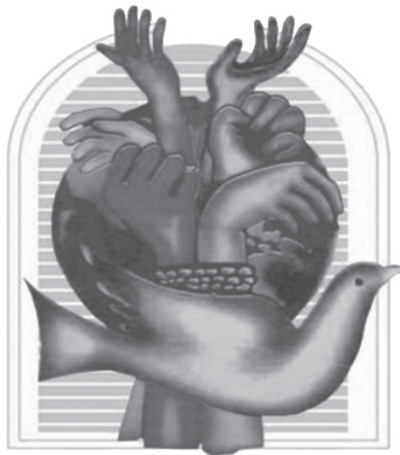
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## **GOOD GOVERNANCE: PRINCIPLES AND COMMITMENTS**

**Dr Francis Kodiyan MCBS**

### **Good Governance?**

Prison Ministry India volunteers, especially its national, regional, state, diocesan and unit coordinators, as well as her directors for rehabilitation centres for released prisoners and homes for prisoners' children are expected to know and practise the norms and principles of good governance. Good governance means how governments, institutions and other social organizations interact, how they relate to one another, and how decisions are taken in a complex world. Governance is a process whereby societies or organizations make their important decisions, determine whom they involve in the process and how they render account. This is a process that recognizes and supports people's real freedoms and enables people's own actions. Governance is 'good' only to the extent that it benefits the social groups who are most impoverished and socially vulnerable. To better understand good governance, we need to focus our attention on the governance *system* or framework upon which the process rests - that is, the agreements, procedures, conventions or policies that define who gets power, how decisions are taken and how accountability is rendered. Good governance is integral to economic growth, the eradication of poverty and hunger, and sustainable development.

### **Biblical Foundations**

According to prophets Isaiah and Jeremiah one who is worthy to rule ought to be endowed with the Lord's Spirit, full of

wisdom and capable of rendering justice to the poor (Is 11,2-5; Jer 23, 5-6). Good governance is to bring peace to the nations (Zech 9, 9-10), to render just judgements and abhor iniquity (Prov 22,11), to serve others, and give one's life as ransom for many so that all may have life in fullness (Mt 20, 28; Mk 10,45).

### **Characteristics**

The major characteristics of good governance as outlined by the United Nations are the following: accountability, effectiveness, efficiency, partnership, transparency, responsibility, consensus-oriented, equality, selflessness, integrity, impartiality, commitment, justice, and peace. The parameters of good governance, according to venerable Francis Xavier van Thuan, are the following:

### **Preferential Option for the Poor**

For John Paul II, the preferential option for the poor is always at the centre of good governance. “The love of preference for the poor, and the decisions it inspires in us, cannot but embrace the immense multitudes of the hungry, the needy, the homeless, those without medical care and, above all, those without hope for a better future” (*Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, 42).

### **Centrality of the Human Person**

This indicates that the person is at the centre of governance, and that good governance must serve the human person and not vice versa. John Paul II in his encyclical *Centesimus Annus*, emphasised the importance of this principle, “today the decisive factor is increasingly man himself, that is, his knowledge, especially his scientific knowledge, his capacity for interrelated and compact organisation, as well as his ability to perceive the needs of others and to satisfy them” (CA 32). In *Redemptoris Hominis* he states, “Man is the primary route that the church must travel in fulfilling her mission” (RH 14). In *Caritas in Veritate*, Pope Benedict XVI asserts, “The principle

of the centrality of the human person, as the subject primarily responsible for development, must be preserved” (CIV 47).

### **The Rights and Dignity of All**

Speaking at the 34<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of the United Nations, Pope John Paul II calls the Universal Declaration, “a true milestone on the path of humanity’s moral progress” (2<sup>nd</sup> October 1979). He affirms that the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights “remains one of the highest expressions of the human conscience of our time” (Address to the 50<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of the UN, 5 October 1995). The challenge to good governance in this context is to help every human person realise all rights and develop fully in all dimensions that make up human existence.

### **The Universal Destination of the Goods of Creation**

This is rooted in the very first pages of the Bible and relates to the harmony that God wishes to see in the whole of God’s creation: within human persons, among people, between people, and the rest of the creation, among generations, and among different peoples and nations. A major challenge to good governance today in this regard is to achieve development with equity, sustainability, participation, dignity and respect for the community of life.

### **Principles of Good Governance**

Following are the eight principles of good governance: 1) Consultation among all, beginning with the lowest possible level, regarding problems, needs, and their solutions. 2) Access of services to all regardless of one’s position. 3) Service standards that ensure and educate the public on the level of service entitled. 4) Courtesy towards all regardless of one’s social or economic standing. 5) Information regarding all rules, programmes, entitlements and their implementation in a manner that is accessible and understandable to all. 6) Openness and transparency at the micro and macro level not



only of the programmes and budgets of the government, but also of NGOs, corporate, and other actors in society. 7) Redressal mechanisms that ensure compensation if promises are breached. 8) Positive discrimination that compensates for historical wrongs of class, caste, or gender.

### **Impacts on the Church**

The Church, a counter cultural community, shall give itself to the development of the whole person and the entire humanity beginning with the least, the lost, and the last in society. The Church ought to manifest the way to the true values of democracy through transparency, accountability, inclusion and democratization of its administrative structures. Dignity and equality of gender, empowerment of women, and lay participation are to be implemented in the structures of the Church, sharing of power, participation and decision making at every level such as parish councils and other church organisations.

### **Practicalities**

As PMI volunteers we hold a prime responsibility to be torchbearers of good governance in our life, mission and administrative structures. In formulating policies, programmes and norms we shall choose that which benefits the most impoverished and vulnerable. We shall devise appropriate ways to ensure the participation of people and accountability to them in the visualisation, planning, implementation and evaluation of all programmes and works. We shall be committed to empower prisoners through our mission of education, healthcare, welfare and other different ways. We shall be models of transparency and accountability with regard to our financial resources and their mobilisation, administration, policy on staff and personnel, and planning and implementation of programmes. We shall pursue necessary measures to educate ourselves in the vision and concepts of human rights, and consciously undertake the

personal and structural transformation necessary to make them an inseparable part of our culture and functioning. We shall resolve to follow the principle of sustainable development of ensuring care for the community of life and the needs of the future generations. We shall restructure our lifestyle, spirituality, exercise of authority and take all other measures to ensure this necessary transformation.

# CRIMINALISTICS: A COMPREHENSIVE EXPLORATION OF FORENSIC SCIENCE

Niranjana T S

## Abstract

The broad area of forensic science is essential to criminal investigations and justice systems around the globe. The definition, history, methods, theories, and contributions of forensic science are all examined in this article. Through an analysis of its historical foundations, a close look at the scientific techniques used, and a focus on important theoretical frameworks, we hope to demonstrate the significant contribution that forensic science makes to investigating and resolving criminal cases. The article's conclusion highlights how forensic science is still developing and how it continues to benefit the field of criminal investigations.

## I. Introduction

Forensic science shines brightly at the interface of science, law, and justice, offering a disciplined way to solve the puzzles concealed in crime scenes. From the painstaking examination of fingerprints to the modern facilities and methods of DNA profiling, forensic science has developed into an essential field that is essential to the pursuit of justice and the solution of crimes (Millen, 2000). The field of forensic science is emerging day by day. These days law enforcement agencies are highly dependent on scientific means and modes to solve crimes. A lot of advanced technologies are arising in this field, the use of advanced methods like digital forensics<sup>1</sup>,

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<sup>1</sup> Digital forensics is a branch of forensic science that involves identifying, acquiring, processing, analysing, and reporting on electronically stored data.

different types of advanced DNA studies, mass spectrometry for drug and toxicology analysis<sup>2</sup> etc., A systematic and thorough approach that directs investigators in gathering, examining, and interpreting evidence is the foundation of forensic science. Investigating a crime scene entails closely examining tangible evidence, such as fingerprints, hair, fibres, and stains. Cutting-edge methods like toxicology, ballistics analysis, and DNA profiling are used to give a thorough picture of the circumstances around a crime. The precision and dependability of forensic studies are improved by the use of cutting-edge technology, which includes sophisticated analytical instruments and state-of-the-art imaging techniques (Hares, 2020).

## II. History and Origin of Forensic Science

The word “forensic” comes from the Latin word *forensis*, which means “of the forum”. In ancient Rome, law courts were held in forums. Forensic science has its origins in ancient civilisations, where basic techniques were utilised to solve crimes and establish guilt or innocence. In ancient China, around the 6th century, forensic entomology was employed to solve cases by studying insect activity on corpses. In ancient Rome, handwriting analysis was used to verify the authenticity of documents. During the 19th century, forensic toxicology emerged as a field of study. Mathieu Orfila, a chemist born in Spain, is widely regarded as the “father of toxicology” for his contributions to this area. Orfila’s research primarily focused on identifying poisonous substances present in the human body and establishing a critical connection between these toxic agents and criminal cases (Smith, 2016). In the late 19th century, French forensic scientist Alphonse Bertillon introduced anthropometry - a system of precise body measurements - for criminal identification. Bertillon’s

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<sup>2</sup> The methods employing MS are used for the identification, and semiquantitative analysis, designated as limit tests.

techniques were widely adopted, marking an important step in standardising forensic procedures. In the early 20th century, Locard used his experience as a medical examiner to create the first forensic crime lab, he is known as the father of Forensic Science. He formulated the famous principle that “every contact leaves a trace”, which is known as Locard’s exchange principle<sup>3</sup>. The history of forensic science is a remarkable testament to human perseverance in the pursuit of truth and justice. From archaic methods to state-of-the-art technologies, forensic science has come a long way, playing a vital role in resolving crimes and ensuring that justice prevails.

### III. Methodology of Forensic Science

Various methodologies and techniques are used in forensic science to investigate and analyse evidence in criminal cases. There are several specific fields in forensic science, and the methodologies are selected based on available tangible evidence<sup>4</sup> collected from the crime scene.

#### **DNA Profiling**

DNA Profiling also known as DNA fingerprinting, is a highly sophisticated forensic technique that has completely revolutionized the field of criminal investigations. It involves analysing specific regions of an individual’s DNA to create a unique genetic profile. The human genome contains regions with different lengths of repeated DNA sequences called short tandem repeats or STRs<sup>5</sup>. This method is incredibly accurate and is widely used for identifying individuals, establishing familial relationships, and linking suspects to crime scenes.

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<sup>3</sup> It was a turning point in crime scene investigation, still, this theory is used in the investigation procedures by the experts.

<sup>4</sup> Tangible evidence is the physical evidence present in a crime scene; it can be hair, nails, fibre anything.

<sup>5</sup> Examining the number of repeats at multiple STR loci, forensic scientists can generate a distinctive genetic profile for each person.

DNA profiling has played a critical role in solving cold cases, exonerating the wrongly accused, and ensuring the accuracy of criminal investigations. (Lynch, 2003) DNA profiling has become a reliable criminal investigation tool thanks to technological advancements. It has a high success rate when a quality sample is available and analysed properly. DNA evidence can link suspects to crime scenes, victims, or others involved in criminal activities.

### **Fingerprint Analysis**

Fingerprint Analysis is a crucial and dependable forensic technique used to identify individuals by analysing the unique patterns present on their fingertips. These patterns, formed by the friction ridges on human fingers, include loops, arches, and whorls which remain constant throughout a person's lifetime. Forensic experts meticulously examine and compare these ridge patterns, taking into account precise details such as ridge endings, bifurcations, and ridge counts. Fingerprint analysis is commonly used in criminal investigations to link suspects to crime scenes, confirm identities, and maintain accurate criminal records (Zabell, 2005). The success rate of fingerprint analysis is often high, and it is a widely accepted forensic technique. However, it's important to note that the accuracy of fingerprint analysis can be influenced by factors such as the quality of the print, the surface on which it is found, and the expertise of the forensic examiner.

### **Serology**

Serology is the process of examining bodily fluids such as blood, saliva, or semen using immunological tests to establish links between suspects and crime scenes. On the other hand, bloodstain pattern analysis involves studying the characteristics and distribution of bloodstains to reconstruct the events that occurred during a crime. These forensic techniques play a crucial role in criminal investigations, helping to understand the sequence of events and providing valuable evidence for

legal proceedings. (Rana, 2023) The success rate of serology in crime investigation has been substantial, as it plays a crucial role in identifying and linking individuals to crime scenes. Serological analysis involves the examination of bodily fluids such as blood, saliva, and semen to determine the presence of specific proteins, enzymes, or DNA markers.

## **Toxicology**

Toxicology is an essential area of forensic science that involves examining drugs, poisons, and other harmful substances in biological samples. Forensic toxicologists use various techniques to detect and measure these substances, which provides critical information in cases of suspicious deaths, drug-related offences, and poisoning incidents.<sup>6</sup> By carefully analysing blood, urine, or tissue samples, toxicology can determine the presence and number of toxic compounds. This information is crucial in establishing the cause of death, identifying potential substances involved in criminal activities, and supporting legal investigations. Toxicology plays a vital role in ensuring the accuracy of forensic investigations and contributes significantly to the overall understanding of the circumstances surrounding incidents (Merves, 2010) Its success rate depends on various factors, including the availability of suitable samples, the timeliness of collection, and the sophistication of analytical techniques. When conducted meticulously, toxicology can provide crucial information about the cause of death or impairment, aiding investigators in establishing links between substances and criminal activities.

## **Forensic Ballistics**

Forensic Ballistics is a specialized field within forensic science that examines firearms and ammunition. Experts use unique characteristics of bullets, cartridge cases<sup>7</sup>, and firearm

<sup>6</sup>Drummer, Olaf H. "Forensic toxicology." (2010)

<sup>7</sup> The cartridge case holds the bullet, primer, and propellant in a single unit.

patterns to link weapons to specific crimes. This helps law enforcement understand the nature of the incident, trace weapons, and contribute to the overall reconstruction of events. Forensic ballistic analysis provides evidence for legal proceedings, aiding in the identification and apprehension of suspects involved in firearm-related crimes (Karger, 2008). Additionally, ballistics analysis can help establish patterns in criminal activity, contributing to the identification and apprehension of perpetrators. Overall, the use of ballistics enhances the effectiveness of crime investigations by providing key forensic evidence that can strengthen cases and contribute to the pursuit of justice.

## **Forensic Anthropology**

Forensic Anthropology is a particular branch of forensic science that deals with the study of human skeletal remains to assist in legal investigations. Forensic anthropologists are experts who use their knowledge to determine vital information about an individual, such as age, sex, ancestry, and height, by analyzing bones. This field plays a crucial role in cases involving unidentified remains, mass disasters, or criminal investigations where skeletal evidence is present. By applying principles of osteology<sup>8</sup> and anatomy, forensic anthropologists provide valuable insights to law enforcement agencies, helping them identify victims, reconstruct events leading to death, and support the overall investigative process (Cattaneo, 2007). Additionally, forensic anthropologists contribute to the reconstruction of events leading to death, helping investigators understand the circumstances surrounding a crime. The effectiveness of forensic anthropology lies in its ability to bridge gaps in traditional forensic techniques, providing essential insights that contribute significantly to solving complex cases and bringing justice to victims and their families.

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<sup>8</sup> Osteology is the study of the skeletal system, or bones, in biology.



## Forensic Odontology

Forensic Odontology is a specialised field of forensic science that focuses on examining dental evidence to assist in legal investigations. Forensic odontologists use their dental expertise to analyse dental records, bite marks<sup>9</sup>, and other oral structures to establish identity or provide insights into crime scenes. This field is particularly useful in cases where traditional methods may be difficult, such as in mass disasters or when other identifying features are not available. Forensic odontology plays a critical role in criminal investigations, contributing to the identification of individuals, determination of post-mortem intervals, and assessment of bite mark evidence, ultimately assisting law enforcement in solving cases and ensuring justice (Senn, 2013). Forensic odontology, the application of dental expertise in legal investigations, proves to be a highly effective tool in crime investigations. Dental records are unique to individuals, offering a reliable means of identification when other methods may be challenging. Forensic odontologists analyse dental remains, such as teeth and bite marks, to establish identity, determine the time of death, and provide crucial evidence in cases of mass disasters, accidents, or criminal activities.

## Digital Forensics<sup>10</sup>

Digital Forensics is a specialised field that falls under forensic science and focuses on investigating and analysing electronic devices and digital data. Experts in digital forensics use advanced techniques to recover, examine, and preserve electronic evidence from various digital devices, including computers and smartphones. This field plays a crucial role in modern criminal investigations, particularly in cases of cybercrime, fraud, and other digital offences. By examining data

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<sup>9</sup> Sometimes the bite marks will be there in the body of victim or even in food items retrieved from the crime scene.

<sup>10</sup> Digital documentation is one of the important steps in the collection of evidence from the scene of the crime.

breaches, analysing electronic communication, and uncovering digital footprints, digital forensics helps law enforcement and cybersecurity professionals understand the extent of cyber incidents and gather evidence for legal proceedings. Roughly 90% of criminal prosecutions use digital evidence, according to a report. Digital examiners protect, recover, and analyse data from suspects' conversations, images, and other digital interactions using specialist software and other methods.

### **Forensic Document Examination**

Forensic Document Examination is a specialised field of forensic science that involves the analysis and scrutiny of documents to determine their authenticity, origin, and authorship. Forensic document examiners use a variety of techniques to study handwriting, signatures, paper, ink, and printing methods to detect forgeries or any changes made to the original document. This field is particularly important in legal investigations where the authenticity of documents, such as contracts or wills, is in question. Forensic document examination helps establish the genuineness of written or printed materials, providing valuable evidence in legal proceedings and assisting law enforcement in cases involving document-related fraud or disputes (Allen, 2015). According to a study, five forensic document examiners (FDEs) achieved a 96.7% absolute accuracy and a 99.3% detection rate over 150 blind tests. Another study found that FDEs had a 0.49% error rate, while laymen had a 6.47% error rate (Koehler, 2016).

### **Forensic Polygraph Examination**

Forensic Polygraph Examination is a process that uses a device called a polygraph or lie detector to assess the honesty of individuals during legal investigations. The polygraph measures physiological responses such as heart rate, blood pressure, and skin conductance while subjects answer questions. Forensic examiners use these indicators to determine the likelihood of deception. While polygraph

results' admissibility varies in court, law enforcement agencies use them to gather additional information, screen suspects, or narrow down leads. Despite its limitations, forensic polygraph examination is a valuable tool that helps investigators assess credibility and provides direction for further inquiries. The accuracy of a polygraph test can range from around chance to near 100 per cent. The accuracy of a polygraph test can be greatly influenced by the intelligence of the examinee and the skill level of the examiner.

These are the main methodologies in forensic science, all these methods are used in crime scene processing according to the nature of evidence. All the evidence at the crime scene will be carefully collected by following proper guidance and manual. Wet samples like blood, semen, and urine will be collected using cotton and packed only after drying in the air. After collecting possible evidence, sharp tools should be covered in cloth and packed in boxes. In the case of hair and fibre particles, they should be collected using tweezers and packed in small plastic envelopes. All the evidence collection should follow proper manuals and be conducted under the supervision of an expert. The collected evidence should be sent to respective labs after creating a log.<sup>11</sup>

#### **IV. Theories in Forensic Science**

The 19<sup>th</sup> century was a milestone in the history of forensic science. It was Edmond Locard who first proposed the revolutionary idea known as the "Locard's Exchange Principle." According to this basic idea, every interaction leaves a trail. In other words, material of any kind, including microscopic particles and fibres, is exchanged whenever two entities come into touch. Experts examine these traces to recreate events and create links between suspects and crime

<sup>11</sup> Logs are created to mention the name of the officer who collected and packed the evidence, date, place and time of the evidence collected and this log should be updated about every officer who comes into contact with the evidence.

scenes, which is the foundation for forensic investigations (Roncace, 2016). Edmond Locard proposed seven principles according to the nature of trace evidence. The most famous and applicable statement in the field of forensic science is ‘Every contact leaves a trace’.<sup>12</sup>

### **Principle of Exchange**

This principle simply states that whenever two entities come into contact, traces are left behind. These traces, whether tangible, such as fibres or hair, or microscopic particles, serve as silent witnesses to events. Forensic investigators leverage this principle to meticulously analyse these traces, unveiling a wealth of information that helps reconstruct the dynamics of a crime and establish connections between individuals and crime scenes. The principle of exchange, in essence, transforms seemingly insignificant remnants into crucial evidence, unravelling the intricate narratives hidden within the traces of human interactions (Skalleberg, 2016). Let’s look into an example for more understanding; in the case of murder there will be a lot of trace pieces of evidence like blood stains, fingerprints, and tool marks if the perpetrator is using any type of tools for committing the crime, hair, fibre, skin tissues of both perpetrator and victim; hence, we can see in a crime wherever the perpetrator and the victim come into contact then there will be any traces can be exchanged like fibres of the cloth, hair, skin tissues, sweat particles etc.

### **Principle of Individuality**

In forensic science, this principle is fundamental to various aspects of investigation, particularly in the analysis of trace evidence. Essentially, it asserts that every object, whether it’s natural or man-made, possesses distinct characteristics that differentiate it from all other objects. This principle is based on the concept of the particular individual traits that humans

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<sup>12</sup> Once a person or an object comes into contact there will be any trace particles exchanged between the person or object.

insist like fingerprints, DNA, currency, coins etc, among that fingerprints exemplify the principle of uniqueness in forensic identification. The ridges, loops, and whorls on each person's fingertips form patterns that are unique to them. Even identical twins, who share the same DNA, have distinct fingerprints. In forensic investigations, experts leverage the principle of uniqueness to establish connections between evidence and individuals or objects. Through meticulous analysis and comparison of these unique characteristics, forensic scientists can determine whether a particular piece of evidence originated from a specific source, such as a suspect or a particular item at a crime scene. (McTaggart, 1912).

### **Principle of Analysis**

This principle states that “The analysis can be no better than the sample analysis.” It involves systematic techniques and methodologies applied by forensic experts to analyse various types of evidence, ranging from biological samples to physical traces left at crime scenes. The forensic analysis encompasses a wide array of specialized disciplines, including DNA analysis, fingerprint examination, ballistics, toxicology, and trace evidence analysis, among others. Each discipline employs specific techniques tailored to the nature of the evidence under investigation. The principle of analysis emphasizes the importance of objectivity, accuracy, and meticulousness in forensic investigations (Mistek, 2018). It requires forensic experts to adhere to standardized protocols, document their findings thoroughly, and draw conclusions based on scientifically valid methods. For example, If the cases like rape we will get evidence like blood stains, semen and other biological traces of the victim. While analysing in the case of seminal stain analysis, the investigation officer collecting the blood-stained clothes will not be of any use.

### **Principle of Probability**

This principle is based on the fact that all identification whether definite may be done based on probability.

Probability is a mathematical concept. It determines the chances of occurrence of a particular event in a particular way out of several ways in which the event can take place. All the conclusions made by the forensic scientists and investigative officers will be derived from probability. They initially reconstructed the entire crime scene based on the available evidence and scenarios, and then they came to a hypothesis which is also considered the probability. For a thorough understanding, let's take an example, in the case of a murder scene there will be a lot of biological and trace samples like hair, blood, body tissues, nails, fibre, urine, tools etc, here the forensic scientist can conclude that the blood can be both victim's or suspect's and also there are a lot of chance for being blood of any other human's or animal's, in some cases the perpetrator intentionally put other blood samples to divert the investigation (McMahon, 1989).

### **Law of Progressive Change**

According to this law, "Everything changes with time. Nothing is permanent – Immutable or invariable"<sup>13</sup>. The rate of change varies with different objects. Here, we can differentiate the crime scene based on place: indoor<sup>14</sup> crime scene and outdoor<sup>15</sup> crime scene. The law of progressive change is highly applicable in the case of outdoor crime scenes because much evidence gets destroyed due to weather conditions like rain, wind and sunlight. In the case of indoor crime scenes, there is only a meagre chance of evidence loss. If a dead body is found after several days of the death, it will be hard to get the fingerprints and other evidence from the body because it will start to be putrefied.

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<sup>13</sup> Everything gets destroyed by change according to time, in forensics also the evidence gets destroyed or corrupted if not collected in time.

<sup>14</sup> Crime scenes like open places it can be in the playground, bus stand, road etc.

<sup>15</sup> Indoor crime scenes are inside the walls, it can be a house, kitchen, office or any other closed area.

## Law of Circumstantial Evidence

“Facts do not lie, men can and do”. This is another one of the prominent principles in forensic science, eyewitnesses in a particular crime may turn hostile<sup>16</sup> but physical evidence will not change. The oral testimony of a witness is modified by external influences (threats, emotional blackmail, influence of money power, muscle power) but the material evidence will be unchanged. According to this principle, if an investigation officer collects relevant and accurate evidence from the crime scene, they can easily link a suspect to the victim. For instance, if the officer finds a person sitting in the corner of the crime scene with a knife, this circumstantial evidence suggests that they might be the suspect. Several factors help to connect the victim with the suspect. When considering circumstantial evidence, the officer will confirm that there is a link between the victim, suspect, crime scene, physical evidence, and objects in the crime scene (Woodhams, 2012).

## V. Contributions in Forensic Science

As noted in the history of forensic science, the field expanded globally following the turn of the 18th century. With several contributions from pioneers, it has developed. Because of their achievements, forensics is now extensively accepted in the legal system. The old customs were eliminated from society with the advent of the scientific technique of inquiry. Currently, the United States follows the finest practices when it comes to the practice of scientific examination worldwide. They adhere to the system of Medical Examiners<sup>17</sup>. The pioneers' contributions laid the foundation for these procedures, and experts in the field are responsible for all

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<sup>16</sup> When a witness speaks against the interests of the party who called him, he becomes hostile. It is claimed that a witness has turned hostile when they refuse to testify in court on behalf of the side they represent.

<sup>17</sup> Medical examiner system is a type of inquest in which the inquest is carried out by a forensic pathologist. It is used to investigate deaths that are sudden, suspicious, or unnatural.

scientific methodologies and approaches. Contemporary research has advanced its theories and contributions to build cutting-edge procedures and technologies for investigative support. Let's take a look at the notable works of the pioneers in forensic science in chronological order.

### **Mathieu Orfila (1757-1853)**

Orfila is considered the father of modern toxicology. He developed a reliable and systematic method to detect poisonous substances in the human body using laboratory experiments, clinical data, and sometimes post-mortem examination. Orfila's groundbreaking work in the early 19th century laid the foundation for modern forensic science. He was instrumental in developing methods for detecting and analysing poisons in biological specimens, pioneering the field of toxicology as it relates to forensic investigations. Orfila's meticulous research and systematic approach led to significant advancements in understanding the effects of various toxins on the human body, as well as establishing protocols for identifying poisons in cases of suspected poisoning (Michaleas, 2022). His seminal work, "Traité des poisons," published in 1814, remains a cornerstone of toxicology literature and solidified his reputation as a leading authority in the field. Orfila's contributions not only revolutionized forensic science but also played a crucial role in shaping the principles and practices of modern toxicology.

### **Alphonse Bertillon (1813-1914)**

Alphonse Bertillon is known as the Father of Anthropometry. He is best known for developing anthropometric identification, a system of physical measurements used to identify individuals. Bertillon's method, known as the Bertillon System, relied on precise measurements of various body parts, such as the head, torso, and limbs, to create a unique profile for each person. This system played a crucial role in criminal identification before the widespread use of fingerprinting. Bertillon's work



laid the groundwork for modern forensic identification techniques and significantly influenced the development of criminal investigation methods (Bertillon, 1896).

### **Francis Galton (1822-1911)**

Francis Galton is known as the father of fingerprints. Galton's work laid the groundwork for modern forensic science, particularly in the realm of fingerprint analysis. He conducted extensive research demonstrating the uniqueness and permanence of fingerprints, which formed the basis for their use as a method of individual identification. Galton developed classification systems<sup>18</sup> and techniques for analysing fingerprints, pioneering the field of dactylography. His meticulous studies paved the way for the widespread adoption of fingerprinting in forensic investigations, revolutionizing criminal identification methods and establishing a cornerstone of forensic science that remains invaluable to this day. Additionally, Galton's broader contributions to the study of human variation, inheritance, and eugenics have left a lasting impact on scientific thought and continue to influence diverse fields of study (Galton, 1892).

### **Henry Faulds (1843-1930)**

In 1860, he was the first trailblazer to propose a technique for fingerprint-based criminal identification. He suggested methods of identifying perpetrators using fingerprints with the help of Galton's classification. In a publication that appeared in the scientific journal *Nature* in 1880, he suggested using fingerprints for criminal identification. His findings were detailed in the essay. Fingerprint analysis became an indispensable instrument in forensic investigations as a result of Faulds' pioneering work, which cleared the path for later developments in fingerprint recognition. Even though he was

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<sup>18</sup> Galton classified the fingerprints into different types based on their characteristics, those are; Arche, Whorls, Loops, Fingerprint with two circular ridgelines, and Patent prints.

regularly overshadowed by other academics, Faulds made a substantial contribution to the field because of his theories that helped establish fingerprinting as a fundamental aspect of forensic science (Tredoux, 2003).

### **Cavin Goddard (1891-1954)**

He is also known as the father of ballistics. He transformed forensic investigations with his innovative work in ballistics and gun identification. Goddard devised the technique of comparison of a fire bullet with that of a test one. It would be possible to get the exact identity of the weapon and the bullet from where it was fired. Later, he established the US Bureau of Forensic Ballistics, where he improved these techniques - such as the comparison microscope - to precisely associate cartridge cases and bullets with certain weapons. Goddard made substantial contributions to the advancement of firearm examination methods. His work has been crucial in several criminal investigations, offering vital evidence and solidifying the area of forensic ballistics as a fundamental component of contemporary forensic science (Steele, 2008).

### **Albert Osborn (1858-1915)**

Albert S. Osborn, who lived from 1858 to 1946, is frequently called the “Father of Questioned Documents.” Osborn had a key role in formulating the fundamental ideas of document analysis as empirical data. His painstaking study and writings most notably his groundbreaking 1910 work “Questioned Documents” established the groundwork for the legal system’s acceptance of documents as scientific evidence. Osborn’s groundbreaking work on the study of handwriting, ink, paper, and other document-related evidence led to the establishment of standards and procedures, which greatly enhanced the dependability and legitimacy of document examination in forensic investigations. The area of forensic document analysis is still being shaped by Osborn’s legacy, which offers practitioners crucial direction and promotes

increased trust in the use of documents as evidence in court cases.

### **Leone Lattes (1887-1954)**

The discipline of forensic science benefited greatly from the work of Leone Lattes, especially in the area of bloodstain analysis. Blood groups (A, B, AB, and O) were identified by Dr. Karl Landsteiner<sup>19</sup>, but Lattes developed a straightforward but incredibly efficient method for identifying blood types from bloodstains. His technique made it possible for forensic investigators to glean important details from even the tiniest bloodstains discovered at murder scenes. Lattes made it possible to identify blood types found in stains by using methods like absorption-elution, which aided in the creation of connections between suspects, victims, and crime scenes. Lattes' ground-breaking methodology transformed forensic serology, giving law enforcement authorities an effective instrument for criminal investigations and greatly boosting the accuracy of bloodstain analysis in legal proceedings (Giusti, 1982)

### **Walter McCrone (1916-2002)**

As the “Father of Microscopic Forensics,” Walter McCrone made important contributions to the science of criminology. McCrone created and used cutting-edge microscopy techniques through his groundbreaking work to evaluate evidence in multiple court cases. Because of his proficiency with microscopy, he was able to precisely and accurately analyse a wide range of materials, including fibres, paints, inks, and medications. Through his painstaking investigations, McCrone was able to establish links between suspects, victims, and crime sites by providing important insights into the nature, provenance, and features of forensic evidence. By offering unbiased and reliable scientific evidence, his

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<sup>19</sup> Landsteiner classified the blood into four groups. In 1901, he published a paper about the discovery of ABO blood groups.

efforts not only improved the field of forensic science but also significantly influenced court cases (McCrone, 1990). McCrone's legacy continues to influence forensic microscopy practices, emphasizing the importance of microscopic analysis in criminal investigations and judicial proceedings.

### **Edmond Locard (1847-1915)**

The principle that Locard introduced is called "Locard's Exchange Principle," and it states that whenever two entities come into touch, particles are exchanged. By highlighting the significance of trace evidence in criminal investigations, this theory transformed the field of forensic science. With scant supplies, Locard opened the first crime laboratory in 1910 in the attic of a Parisian police station. Even with such limited resources, forensic scientists and criminal investigators throughout the world recognized Locard for his rigorous studies and implementation of the Exchange Principle. The Institute of Criminalistics was founded in France as a result of his commitment to furthering forensic science. Because of his seminal contributions, which have shaped the methods and tenets of contemporary forensic science and highlighted the crucial role that traces evidence plays in the investigation of criminal activity, Locard's legacy lives on.

## **VI. Conclusion**

In summary, forensic science provides invaluable instruments for resolving the complex riddles hidden within crime scenes, serving as a beacon at the nexus of science, law, and justice. From its prehistoric beginnings to its contemporary developments, forensic science has developed into a diverse field that is vital to criminal investigations all around the world. The methods and approaches used in forensic science, such as fingerprint analysis and DNA profiling, highlight how crucial it is to determine the truth and guarantee that justice is served. The rich history of forensic science, highlighted by the contributions of trailblazing individuals like Francis Galton,

Alphonse Bertillon, and Mathieu Orfila, is evidence of the resourcefulness and tenacity of humankind in the search for the truth. To meet changing crime trends and difficulties, the field of forensic science must embrace emerging technologies and approaches as it moves forward. Forensic science will continue to be essential in protecting society and guaranteeing that justice is done by encouraging cooperation between scientists, law enforcement, and legal experts. Looking ahead, forensic science's continued advancement and improvement hold promise for enhancing its global contributions to the search for the truth and the settlement of criminal cases.

## LONERGANIAN CONCEPTUALISATION OF CONVERSION

**Dr Francis Kodiyan MCBS**

Bernard Lonergan (1904-1985), the renowned Canadian Catholic theologian, makes conversion a central theme in his writings<sup>1</sup>. He understands conversion as an existential, intensely personal and utterly intimate experience in which a profound transformation of oneself and of one's world takes place. As a consequence, one has a new understanding and a new orientation in life. According to him, conversion is a change of direction for the better, a transformation of the subject and her/his world. It is a reorientation of life<sup>2</sup>. In *Method in Theology*, he states:

<sup>1</sup> See B. LONERGAN, *Grace and Freedom. Operative Grace in the Thought of St Thomas Aquinas*, ed. B.J. Patout, Daton, Longman & Todd, London 1971, 25,39,40. Conversion has been described as the «linchpin of Bernard Lonergan's thought, the key to human self-transcendence in his writings, and the basis for a foundational theology». J.R. PRICE, «Conversion and the Doctrine of Grace in Bernard Lonergan and John Climacus», *Anglican Theological Review*, 62 (1980) 338. B. Lonergan, born in Buckingham, Quebec, formally introduced his notion of conversion in his essay, «Theology in its New Context» of 1967. See B. LONERGAN, *A Second Collection*, ed. F.J. Ryan - B.J. Tyrrell, The Westminster Press, Philadelphia 1974, 65-67. See also J. BOWDEN, *Who's Who in Theology*, SCM Press, London 1990, 78. He developed his notion of conversion in his *Insight* and *Method in Theology*. For a scientific study on the historical thought development of Lonergan's interest in conversion, see J.E. SWIFT, *Bernard Lonergan on Conversion-Faith and Critical Theological Methodology*, Pontificia Studiorum Universitas a S. Thoma Aq. in Urbe, Rome 1988, 86-91.

<sup>2</sup> See B. LONERGAN, *Method in Theology*, 52, 130. E.T. Clark also holds the same view. For him, conversion best signifies a turning about, a definite change of direction, a passing from one state of being to an altogether different, as a definite and specific act. See E.T. CLARK, *The Psychology of*

By conversion is understood a transformation of the subject and his world. Normally it is a prolonged process though its explicit acknowledgement may be concentrated in a few momentous judgements and decisions. Still, it is not just a development or even a series of developments. Rather it is a resultant change of course and direction. It is as if one's eyes were opened and one's former world faded and fell away. There emerges something new that fructifies in interlocking, cumulative sequences of developments of human living<sup>3</sup>.

B. Lonergan, quoting F. Heiler describes seven common features of the seven important world religions such as Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Zoroastrian Mazdeism, Hinduism, Buddhism and Taoism: «That there is a transcendent reality; that he is immanent in human hearts; that he is supreme beauty, truth, righteousness, goodness; that he is love, mercy, compassion; that the way to him is repentance, self-denial, prayer; that the way is love of God, so that bliss is conceived as knowledge of God, union with him, or dissolution into him»<sup>4</sup>.

All religious affirmations of belief and worship are ultimately grounded in the living spiritual consciousness of God. Experience is not the aim of worship, but it is the medium through which God can be found. According to Lonergan, being in love with God, as experienced, is being in love in an unrestricted fashion. All love is self-surrender, but being in love with God is being in love without limits or qualifications

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*Religious Awakening*, Macmillan, New York 1929, 36. See also J.W. CONN, «Conversion in Therese of Lisieux», *Spiritual Life*, 24 (1978) 155.

<sup>3</sup> B. LONERGAN, *Method in Theology*, 130. See also J.E. SWIFT, *Bernard Lonergan on Conversion-Faith*, 92, 94. Already in his lectures on Existentialism of July 15-19, 1957 at Boston College, Lonergan understands conversion as the act of entering into a new horizon, a new world, as a reorientation and reorganisation of mind and life. See T. NAICKAMPARAMBIL, *Through Self-Discovery to Self-Transcendence. A Study of Cognitive Self-Appropriation in B. Lonergan*, PUG, Roma 1996, 230 (Unpublished doctoral thesis).

<sup>4</sup> B. LONERGAN, *Method in Theology*, 109.

or conditions or reservations<sup>5</sup>. B. Lonergan in his *Method in Theology* argues that conversion is the foundation of theology. «It follows that reflection on conversion can supply theology with its foundation and, indeed, with a foundation that is concrete, dynamic, personal, communal, and historical»<sup>6</sup>. Archbishop Bathersby expresses well the characteristics of Lonergan's convert: «the fully converted subject is a fully self-transcendent being whose life is regulated by the transcendental precepts: be attentive, be intelligent, be responsible, and be in love»<sup>7</sup>. B. Lonergan asserts that self-transcendence has to begin with the purification of human desire. Purification of human desire happens by being in love with God. This is the achievement of conscious intentionality, that is, the awareness of experiencing, understanding, judging and deciding. Self-transcendence brings a joy and peace that frees us to love ourselves, others, and God<sup>8</sup>.

<sup>5</sup> See B. LONERGAN, *Method in Theology*, 106.

<sup>6</sup> B. LONERGAN, «Theology in its New Context», in *Conversion*, 14. B. Lonergan defines theology as reflection upon conversion in a culture. As conversion is basic to Christian living, so an objectification of conversion provides theology with its foundations. See ID., *Method in Theology*, 130 ff., 267 ff. See also S. HAPPEL - J.J. WALTER, *Conversion and Discipleship*, 8. J. Strachan points out the importance of distinguishing the theological significance between conversion and regeneration. They are the human and the Divine side of the same experience. Regeneration is the gift of the God's grace and the principle of the new life implanted by His Spirit, while conversion is an act of human freedom, the voluntary turning of the heart to God. The one is a necessity; the other a duty. According to Strachan regeneration occurs but once, conversion may have to be repeated several times as happened to Peter. See J. STRACHAN, «Conversion», 107.

<sup>7</sup> J. BATHERSBY, «Bernard Lonergan and Spirituality», in *Australian Lonergan Workshop*, ed. W.J. Danaher, University Press of America, Boston 1993, 93. Many authors suggest that a deep self-knowledge can lead both to self-transformation, self-actualisation and self-transcendence. See P.V. ROBB, «Conversion as Human Experience», 16-31. See also J.S. MADDUX, «When you Pray... Self-knowledge and Prayer», *The Way*, 17 (1977) 229-338.

<sup>8</sup> See B. LONERGAN, *Method in Theology*, 35, 104-105, 237-44. See also R.M. DORAN, «Jungian Psychology and Christian Spirituality», *Review for Religious*, 38 (1979) 497-510, 742-522, 857-86; ID., «Psychic Conversion», *The Thomist*, 41 (1977) 200-236. ID., *Subject and Psyche. Ricoeur, Jung and the*



With B. Lonergan this new openness reached its apex. He states that there lies within his horizon a region for the divine, a shrine for ultimate holiness. The atheist may pronounce it empty. The agnostic may urge that he finds his investigation has been inconclusive<sup>9</sup>. He states that conversion is a prolonged process though its explicit acknowledgement may be concentrated in a few momentous judgements and decisions. It is something new that later fructifies in a cumulative sequence of developments<sup>10</sup>.

### Intellectual Conversion

B. Lonergan in his *Method in Theology* defines intellectual conversion as a radical clarification and, consequently, the elimination of an exceedingly stubborn and misleading myth concerning reality, objectivity, and human knowledge<sup>11</sup>. Intellectual conversion lies in recognising the difference between the infant's world of immediacy and the adult's world mediated by meaning. He argues that a real conversion

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*Search for Foundations*, University Press of America, Washington, DC 1977; *Conversion*; W.E. CONN, *Christian Conversion*; B.O. McDERMOTT, *What are They Saying about the Grace of Christ*, Paulist Press, New York, 1984, 21-34; A. CALLAHAN, «Conversion in Daily Life», *Studies in Formative Spirituality*, 12 (1991) 336; L.M. RULLA, «The Discernment of Spirits and Christian Anthropology», *Gregorianum*, 59 (1978) 537-569; ID., *Anthropology of the Christian Vocation*, I, Gregorian University Press, Rome 1986.

<sup>9</sup> B. Lonergan understands religion in terms of conversion. For him, religion is «conversion in its preparation, in its occurrence, in its development, in its consequent, and also, alas, in its incompleteness, its failures, its breakdowns, its disintegration». B. LONERGAN, «Theology in its New Context», in *Second Collection*, 233.

<sup>10</sup> See B. LONERGAN, *Method in Theology*, 130. See also J.W. CONN, «Conversion in Therese of Lisieux», 158.

<sup>11</sup> See B. LONERGAN, *Method in Theology*, 238. For an excellent exposition of B. Lonergan's development of the notion of intellectual conversion see, M.L. RENDE, *Lonerger on Conversion*, 89-94, 183-218. R.M. Liddy makes an historical investigation of the origins of Lonergan's thought on intellectual conversion in the writings of Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, Aquinas and Newman. See also R.M. LIDDY, *Transforming Light. Intellectual Conversion in the Early Lonergan*, The Liturgical Press, Minnesota 1993.

is necessary, a transformation of the intellectual horizon permitting differentiation and interrelation of these worlds without reducing one to the other<sup>12</sup>. David Tracy develops further the intellectual conversion of B. Lonergan as:

Intellectual conversion, in its earliest stages, means to turn from what seems to what is. As incidental, it means a turning away from a particular error to a particular truth. As radical or basic, it means nothing less than the self-affirmation of insight for it makes explicit, explanatory and normative the pure desire to know itself as the ground of all intelligent and rational activity, as that peculiar activity which defines a human being as human. The notion of intellectual conversion is not intended to be a new doctrine or technique but rather a means of criticizing and/or developing all intelligent and rational notions and techniques by means of one's conscious and methodical grasp of reason in its basic norms, structures and procedures<sup>13</sup>.

### Moral Conversion

Moral conversion, for B. Lonergan, is the state of self-transcendence in which one becomes motivated primarily by values rather than satisfactions. In *Method in Theology* Lonergan writes: «Moral conversion changes the criterion of one's

<sup>12</sup> B. Lonergan conceives of three worlds and as the subject develops, his world changes. The first world is the world of immediacy, of the child, the world of feeling and of immediate experience. The second world is the world mediated by meaning, that comes through imagination, language and symbols. The third world is not only mediated by meaning but also constituted by meaning. It is the world one makes and is the transformation of man himself. See B. LONERGAN, «*Existenz and Aggiornamentos*» in *Collection. Papers by Bernard Lonergan, S.J.*, ed. F.E. Crowe, Herder and Herder, New York 1967, 243. See also ID., «Dimensions of Meaning», in *Collection*, 254. ID., *Method in Theology*, 237-240; S. HAPPEL - J.J. WALTER, *Conversion and Discipleship*, 21; M. MESTER, *Guilt. Facing its Ambiguities in the Christian Life*, PUG, Rome 1996, 50; J.E. SWIFT, *Bernard Lonergan on Conversion-Faith*, 100-101.

<sup>13</sup> D. TRACY, *The Achievement of Bernard Lonergan*, 143.

decisions and choices from satisfactions to values»<sup>14</sup>. The source of the commitment is the intrinsic value of what is to be done for itself and not simply because it gives pleasure. Moral conversion includes a value perspective of law which steps beyond legalism<sup>15</sup>. As J. Navone states, we move beyond merely personal tastes and interests to become principles of beneficence and benevolence; capable of genuine love or responsibility<sup>16</sup>. This involves a movement from the level of judgement to that of decision: in short, it consists in the question of value, ethics, and self-constitution.

### Religious Conversion

For Bernard Lonergan, religious conversion is most vital, central, common and foundational. It occurs when a person is radically grasped by ultimate concern or love. It is an unconditional and other-worldly falling in love, leading to a surrender to the transcendent, and a gracious being-in-wholeness. It is the state of unconditional being-in-love. Total being-in-love is the efficacious ground of all self-transcendence, whether in the pursuit of truth, or in the

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<sup>14</sup> B. LONERGAN, *Method in Theology*, 240. See also B. O'LEARY, «Prophecy, Refounding, Conversion», 712; M.L. RENDE, *Lonergerian on Conversion*, 94-100, 180-183. J.E. Swift explains the Lonerganian moral conversion: «The turning by which one commits oneself to acting rationally, not by impulse or convenience, creating a consistency between knowing and doing, is at the heart of Lonergan's notion of moral self-transcendence and conversion». J.E. SWIFT, *Bernard Lonergan on Conversion-Faith*, 105.

<sup>15</sup> See P. PURNELL, «The Nature of Conversion», 29. See also J. NAVONE, «Four Complementary Dimensions of Conversion», 27. For the characteristics of moral conversion of St. Therese of Lisieux see J.W. CONN, «Conversion in Therese of Lisieux», 155-157.

<sup>16</sup> See J. NAVONE, *Self-Giving and Sharing*, Liturgical Press, Minnesota 1989, 36. See also J. NAVONE, «Four Complementary Dimensions of Conversion», 27; M. MESTER, *Guilt. Facing its Ambiguities in the Christian Life*, 52-53.

realization of human values, or in the orientation man adopts to the universe. Lonergan writes that religious conversion is a total and permanent self-surrender without conditions, qualifications, reservations. This surrender is not an act, but a dynamic state that is prior to and the principle of subsequent acts<sup>17</sup>.

The Lonerganian conceptualization of religious conversion involves a new understanding of oneself because, fundamentally, conversion brings about a new self to be understood. One puts off the old man and puts on the new. It is not just a development but the beginning of a new mode of developing<sup>18</sup>. Religious conversion is a movement from unauthenticity to authenticity. It is a total surrender to the demands of the human spirit to be attentive, intelligent, reasonable, responsible and in love<sup>19</sup>. It is a radical shift in a person's apprehensions and values, accompanied by a similar radical change in oneself, in one's relations with other persons, and in one's relation to God. D. Tracy, one of the leading disciples of B. Lonergan, adds: «Religious conversion is the transformation of the subject when he is aware of himself as possessing an openness not merely as fact and achievement

<sup>17</sup> J. Navone gives a reason for B. Lonergan's distinction between moral and religious conversions. Lonergan believes in the need to distinguish between nature and grace. We are by nature intelligent and morally oriented. We are not by nature participants in the divine nature of God, and so this comes about only by the free gift of God's love poured out into our hearts through the Spirit that is given to us (II Pt 1,4; Rom 5,5). See J. NAVONE, «Four Complementary Dimensions of Conversion», 27-28. See also J. NAVONE, «Christian Conversion. Suffering out of Love», *Review for Religious*, 44 (1985) 33-38; J.W. CONN, «Conversion in Therese of Lisieux», 155; B. LONERGAN, *Method in Theology*, 240; M.L. RENDE, *Lonergan on Conversion*, 178 ff. For an excellent explanation of Lonergan's notion of being in love see, J.E. SWIFT, *Bernard Lonergan on Conversion-Faith*, 112- 130.

<sup>18</sup> See B. LONERGAN, *A Third Collection.*, 247.

<sup>19</sup> M. MESTER makes a study on the Lonerganian transcendental precepts. See M. MESTER, *Guilt. Facing its Ambiguities in the Christian Life*, 44-52.

but as gift: it is the level of Existence, of the self as gift of the self by God to the self»<sup>20</sup>.

### **Christian Conversion**

Christian conversion in its highest form, as B. Lonergan expresses, and as we have seen above, is a state of being in love manifested through *metanoia*, *kenosis*, *diakonia* and *koinonia*, that is to say, a total being in love with self, world and God. As B. Lonergan elucidates, it is the ability to love God with one's whole heart, whole soul, with all one's mind and strength and the ability to love one's neighbour as oneself<sup>21</sup>. «Christian conversion is to be in love as Jesus Christ is in love; to accept Being-in-love, God himself who is love, and the interpersonal life that is being given to us in the universal story»<sup>22</sup>. As B. Lonergan states, by religious conversion one comes to love God with one's whole heart, whole soul, whole mind and with one's whole strength. As a consequence, one will love one's neighbour as himself/herself and will even be ready to lay down his/her life for his/her friends (Jn 15,14). Christian conversion is the summit of religious conversion which consists in the process of reaching the climax of Jesus' self-surrender on the cross and by having the joy of His resurrection by active participation in paschal mysteries of Jesus Christ.

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<sup>20</sup> D. TRACY, *The Achievement of Bernard Lonergan*, 20.

<sup>21</sup> See B. LONERGAN, *A Third Collection*, 248.

<sup>22</sup> J. NAVONE, «Conversion Expressed in Dialogue and Story», 742.

## A STUDY OF AN OPEN PRISON IN KARNATAKA

R Papa Naik

### Introduction

In olden days, the main objective regarded for incarceration was deterrence and retribution. The change in the concept of punishment with the passage of time has given rise to the idea of reformation. In the nineteenth century, the penal reform movement brought new ideas to deal with prisoners in more humane ways. Indeed, the prison reform movement contributed in such a way that prisoners could be reformed, if while serving the term they are given certain favorable conditions in the form of vocational training and various other forms of experience in the prison. These ideas were implemented in several European countries as open types of institutions for prisoners. However, the open prison, the so-called prison without bars, has been a very late development within the prison system, largely a creation of the last forty years. The first open prison was established at Witzwil in Switzerland in the year 1891. However, Witzwil was not a minimum-security establishment as it had closed sections. Nor did other countries follow the Swiss. Witzwil was the result of the vision of a particular individual, Oho Kellerhals; other countries were more cautious, gradually developing the minimum-security idea programmatically. Thus, in 1916, the Lorton Reformatory in the District of Columbia, U.S.A., was built without a containing wall, and other similar institutions followed.

The real breakthrough came in the 1930s in Britain and the 1940s in the U.S.A. In the *Limited Kingdom*, Sir Alexander Paterson (a member of the prison commission from 1922 to 1947) began to place his liberalizing stamp upon our penal system. In his dictum, 'A man is sent to prison as a punishment and not for punishment' he tried to set limits to the role of retribution in prisons and made room for what he called training?. And having established the viability of such a correctional aim side by side with more traditional objectives, it was natural that he should consider the suitability of existing prisons for such a 'training' role. His second famous aphorism, 'you cannot train a man for freedom under conditions of captivity', led to the opening in 1933 of the first British open prison at New Hall Camp, as a satellite of Wakefield prison. Here there were no walls, and indeed not even a boundary fence - the man sleeping in wooden huts and the bounds designated, if at all, by white wash marks on the trees. But the aim of containment persisted: Sir Lionel Fox, a former Chairman of the Prison Commission, in writing about New Hall Camp, saw as the achievement most worth mentioning that in the first fifteen years of its life only seven prisoners had been imprisoned. Other open institutions followed Leyhill prison in Gloucestershire for about 10 years. Later, in Aldington, near Maidstone, in 1947, there were in 1975 thirteen open prisons of various kinds in Britain.

The Americans also moved forward, beginning at about the same time as Britain, with open farm camps associated with neighbouring closed prisons. Among the most famous American open prisons are the Californian Institution for Men at Chino in Southern California and Seagovice, an open federal prison in Texas. (Open prisons by Jones, Corners, and Stockford). In its origins, the emphasis was on younger offenders and prisoners as they approached the end of their

sentences, but the categories have widened dramatically, as this study demonstrates, and now the concept of the open institution covers a congeries of different types of institutions having in common only the absence of security achieved by bolts and bars and armed guards. At the First United Nations Congress on the prevention of crime and treatment of offenders held in Geneva in 1935, it was agreed that “the open institution marks an important step in the development of modern prison systems and represents one of the more successful applications of the principle of the individualization of penalties with a view to social readjustment,” and a recommendation was unanimously accepted that the open system should be greatly extended throughout the world’s penal systems.

### **The Indian Scene**

Before the prison movement was started in India, the prisoners were employed outside the jail walls for construction of roads, cleaning of drains, and similar occupations. But when the first All India Jail Committee was appointed to review prison administration in 1836–38, the committee condemned the above system of prisoner employment, and it almost disappeared by the time the Second Jail Committee was appointed in 1864. Though the first and second jail committees condemned and stopped prisoners’ employment outside the jail walls, respectively, the 1877 prison conference made the prisoners employed in large public works such as digging canals, and they also said that this system was necessary for the adjustment of jail administration. The last All India Jail Committee of 1919–20 also found that the employment of prisoners outside the jail wall was bad and exposed prisoners to epidemic diseases. They, therefore, recommended that such employment be permitted only where the location and



climatic conditions of the site of work are satisfactory and good arrangements can be made for water supply. And also, they recommended open-air life for the prisoners, where they could live in separate prison barracks, and that would be better for prisoners to maintain good health.

The open prisons in India started with the objective of providing meaningful work under conditions that help restore their self-respect and give them a sense of pride and achievement. Though it was found by the committee that the inmates of open prisons should be given agricultural work where a large number of prisoners are drawn from agricultural backgrounds, in view of difficulties in getting suitable land and the peculiar conditions of this form of employment, which involves the distribution of labour over a very wide area, the committee doubted if this could ever play an important part in the round of jail industries. But later, when the open prisons were established and agricultural work was given to inmates, they found very good success. Presently, most of the open prisons in India have provided agricultural work for inmates. According to the information gathered, there are 20 open prisons in India. The first open prison in India was started in Uttar Pradesh, i.e., Sampurnananda Camp, Mirzapur.

**Table 1.1****Open Prisons in Different States in India and the Year of Establishment**

State	Name of open prisons	Year of establishment
Uttar Pradesh	1. Sampurnananda Agricultural-cum-industrial camp. Sitarganj, Dist. Nainital	1960
	2. Sampurnananda Camp, Ghurma Markhundi, Dist. Mizapur	1952
	3. Open prison attached to model prison, Lucknow	1949
Andhra Pradesh	1. Maul Ali Colony, Hyderabad	1954
	2. Prisoners Agricultural Colony Anandpur	1955
Assam	1. Open Air Agriculture-cum-Industrial Colony, Barbhet, Jorhat	1964
Gujarat	1. Open prison, Amreli	1968
Kerala	1. Open prison, Nettukelthari	1962
Maharashtra	1. Open prison, Yervada	1955
	2. Open prison, Paithan	1968
Karnataka	1. Open Air Jail-Agriculture-cum-Industrial Farm, Koramangala	1971
Rajasthan	1. Prisoners open Air Camp, and Agricultural Research, Durgapur	1955
	2. Shri Sampurnananda Bandishivi Sanganer, Jaipur	1963
	3. Prisoners Open Air Camp, Central Mechanise Farm, Suratgarh	1964

Himachal Pradesh	1. Open Air Jail, Bilaspur	1960
Tamil Nadu	1. Open Air Prison, Singangallur 2. Open Air Prison attached to Central Prison, Salem	1956 1966
Punjab	1. Open Air Agricultural Prison, Nabha	1970
Madhya Pradesh	1. Open Prison, Mogavalli 2. Open Prison, Laxmipura	1972 1972

### **Background of Karnataka Open Prison**

In Karnataka, it was in April 1968 that one open prison was established in Ugargal in the Seudatti Taluk of Belgaum district. The prisoners were engaged in a nation-building program, viz., digging canals. This open prison closed when work was completed. The department was on the lookout for suitable land to start an agricultural farm, and in 1971, an open-air agricultural-industrial farm was established in an area of 144 acres. The object of establishing this open prison is to give extensive training in modern methods of agriculture and horticulture to the inmates. Who have a rural background so that they not only improve their land on their release but also become model agriculturists in the village. In Karnataka state, the department of prisons is headed by the Minister for State for Prisons, Secretary to Government, Home Department at the government level, and Inspector-General of Prisons as head of the department at the departmental level. At the institutional level (open prison), the assistant superintendent shall be the head of the institution.

### **Meaning of 'Prison' and 'Open Prison'**

The words 'prison' and 'gaol' derive from the Latin words meaning, respectively, 'to seize' and 'a cage'. According to Section 3 of the Prisons Act 1894 (India), prison means "any

place or jail used permanently or temporarily under the general or special orders of a state government for the detention of prisoners, and includes all lands and buildings apartment thereto.” According to the United Nations Congress on “Prevention of Crime and Treatment of Offenders held in 1955, “an open institution is characterized by the absence of material and physical precautions against escape, such as walls, locks, bars, armed or other special guards, and a system based on self-discipline and the inmate’s sense of responsibility towards the group in which he lives.”.

### **Present Study**

The development of open prisons in our country has been new in the field of prison reform. A study to look into the physical characteristics of the prisons, the staff, the prisoners, and the facilities and amenities offered to the inmates appears to be in order. Keeping this in mind, the present study has been taken up to study the various aspects of the development of the Karnataka Open Air Jail.

### **Objectives of the Study**

1. To study the physical characteristics of the Karnataka Open Air Jail
2. To study the personal and legal data of inmates
3. To study the programs and facilities offered to inmates and their opinions about them.
4. To study the common problems of inmates
5. To investigate inmates’ experiences in both closed prisons and open-air jails,
6. To study the problems, experiences, and opinions of the staff regarding the open-air jail.

## **Research Methodology**

### **(a) Types of Data**

1. Primary
2. Secondary

### **(b) Sources of Data Collection**

(i) Inmates of the Open-Air Jail; (ii) Staff of the Open-Air Jail; (iii) Records kept in the Open-Air Jail and available books at the Tata Institute of Social Sciences library. (iv) Informal observation by the researcher.

### **(c) Methods of Data Collection**

Primary data was collected with the help of interview schedules. For this purpose, 40 randomly selected inmates and 9 selected members of the staff were used. Secondary data were collected from records maintained in the open-air jail and from literature maintained in the Tata Institute library. Apart from the data collected from the primary and secondary methods, the researcher also collected some information through informal observation. This was done through discussion with the staff, inmates, playing with the inmates, visiting the dining hall, library, education room, and inmate barracks. Relationships maintained between staff and inmates, the type of communication between staff and inmates, and so on were the salient points of observation.

### **(d) Areas of Information**

The data collected by interview schedules includes information in the following areas: identification data; opinions about various programs and facilities given in the institution; areas that required further improvement; problems of inmates and staff; experiences about closed and open prisons; and types of relationships maintained between staff and inmates.

**(e) Sampling Design**

On the inmate side, 40 inmates were selected randomly out of the 65 total institution population as of April 8, 1982. From the staff side, nine members were selected. They are the Superintendent, the Jailer, the Chief Warder, the Head Warder, the First Division Clerk, two guards, the Lorry Driver, and the Mali.

**(f) Time Schedule**

Variables, objectives of the study, sampling design, and framing of the interview schedule were done between the months of December 1981 and April 1982. Data collection was undertaken from April 8th, 1982, to May 2nd, 1982. Processing, analysis, and tabulation were completed by the end of September 1982, and interpretation and report writing were completed by the month of February 1983.

**(g) Data Analysis**

The data were scrutinized from all the filled-up interview schedules, and two codebooks were prepared (for both inmates and staff). Then the dates were entered into the master sheets and processed in either tabular form or descriptive form. Transferring data to the master sheet, analysis, and tabulation of the data were done manually.

**(h) Field Experience**

In order to collect data, the researcher spent nearly a month together at the institution. Before he started the actual interview, he spent some 5-7 days establishing rapport with the staff and inmates. Social casework principles and techniques like acceptance, confidentiality, and non-condemnation were very much used while interviewing the inmates and staff. During the initial stages, the researcher was a good listener, as required by the casework. By sharing with the inmates their feelings and accepting them as they were, the researcher formed a friendly relationship with them. Initially, most of the inmates suspected that the researcher was a story writer or

an agent of a newspaper, and a few inmates expressed directly that the researcher was a secret person, appointed either by the state government or by the Inspector-General of Prisons, to study inmates in the institution. To remove this kind of wrong perception, the researcher took pains to explain them, and he succeeded in conveying his purpose of meeting the inmates and staff.

Some difficulty was raised by a jailor when the researcher attempted to collect information about escape cases in the institution. But this difficulty was removed carefully by postponing the interview, and at the end, during data collection, the researcher collected that information. Another major difficulty the researcher faced was finding time to interview each respondent. Most of the inmates were not easily available during the day because they were sent to the agriculture field for work. Therefore, the researcher had to take the interview at night (7.00 p.m. to 10.00 p.m.) with prior appointment. Hosts of the inmates were interested in sharing their past experiences, such as how they committed murder, why they committed it, and how they were dealt with by the police, court, and prisons. The researcher did not restrict them from sharing their past experiences because he found that the inmates, after revealing such experiences, felt comfortable, especially when the researcher was listening to them patiently and showing sympathy and empathy. This had become very helpful to the researcher in starting the actual interview.

In order to ascertain good information and to attract inmates, especially those who were suspicious and hostile towards the researcher, the researcher took on a bit of an expensive job. He took most of the inmates' photographs at the individual and group level. He also spent most of his time (day and night) with the inmates by playing games, walking around the beautiful green land, and talking about their institution and outside life. The researcher also got the opportunity to meet the Inspector-General of Prisons at the institution. He walked with him around the institution's agriculture land, and this helped him get respect from staff and inmates.

## **CENTRAL PRISONS IN INDIA: THE DARK LIFE OF INMATES**

**Mohnish Ibn Azah**

### **Introduction**

One of the undiscussed topics nowadays is 'life in prison', which even the media has failed to bring up. According to many released prisoners, life in prison is the dark side of another world, which is always dealt with by the legal system. And it is always based on non-violence, mutual respect for each other, and treating other humans with dignity. If a person commits a crime, that does not mean that the person stops, or is barred from being a human being, or becomes a non-human or non-person. He cannot be deprived of personal liberty. Article 21 of the Constitution of India guarantees personal liberty and prohibits all kinds of inhuman, cruel, and degrading treatment towards any person, whether an Indian national or an alien.

### **Meaning and Purpose of Prison**

According to the Oxford English Dictionary, prison means a place in which persons are kept in custody when trial is pending or in which they are confined as punishment after conviction. There are a number of accepted reasons for the use of imprisonment. One approach aims to deter those who would otherwise commit crimes and makes it less likely that those who serve a prison sentence will commit crimes after their release. A second approach focuses on issuing punishment to, or obtaining retribution from, those who



have committed serious crimes. A third approach encourages the personal reform of those who are sent to prison. Finally, in some cases, it is necessary to protect the public from those who commit crimes - particularly from those who do so persistently. In individual cases, all or some of these justifications may apply. Any resulting punishment should be proportional to the offense that was committed. Serious acts, which would usually be classified as criminal, should be dealt with in a more serious manner.

### **Types of Prisons in India**

In India, there are three levels of prison, such as at the taluka level, the district level, and the central level. The prisons at these levels are known as sub-prisons, district prisons, and central prisons, respectively. There are also some other types of prisons, such as women's prisons, borstal schools, open prisons, and special prisons. Most prison systems have different sorts of prisons to contain these different groups. For the most serious criminals, there are high-security prisons where the movement of every prisoner is closely supervised so that they have little chance of escaping. For the majority, there are medium-security prisons where prisoners are expected to work, attend educational programs, or participate in other activities that prepare them for release. Finally, there are prisons that have a very low level of security for those who present no threat to public safety.

### **Central Prisons**

The criteria for establishing a prison as a central prison are different from state to state. The common feature of all state central prisons is that the prisoners in them are confined there for a longer period of time - more than two years. These prisons are made for lifers and for those who commit heinous crimes. In this type of prison, efforts are made to re-establish the morality and integrity of the prisoners. There are a total of 134 central prisons. Delhi has the highest number of central

prisons, which is 16. Madhya Pradesh has 11, Maharashtra 24, Punjab, Rajasthan, and Tamil Nadu each have nine central prisons; Karnataka has eight central prisons; and Gujarat has four central prisons. Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Daman and Diu, and Lakshadweep do not have a single central prison.

### **Admission and Discharge of Prisoners**

Whenever a prisoner is admitted into prison, he shall be searched, and all weapons and prohibited articles shall be taken from him. Every criminal prisoner shall also be examined under the general or special orders of the medical officer for the state of the prisoner's health or any mark on his body, and a result of that is to be entered in a book by the jailer. All money or other articles in respect of the prisoner's use should be authorized by the court and shall be placed in the custody of the jailer. In the case of female prisoners, the search and examination shall be carried out by the matron under the general or special orders of the medical officer. It is the responsibility of prison administrators to ensure that each arriving prisoner understands what type of behaviour is expected and what acts are forbidden (no fighting, stealing, or harmful acts). And the prisoners should be kept according to their categories (convicted or undergoing trial). No prisoner shall be removed from one prison to another unless the medical officer certifies that the prisoner is free from all illness.

### **Prison Populations**

The general rise in prison population has been attributed to a variety of factors. The vast majority of prisoners in India is adult males. Among these, a minority has committed very serious crimes; other prisoners are career criminals who regularly commit burglaries and theft. Also common among prisoners are people on the margins of society who commit minor offenses; they may be drug addicts or alcoholics, or they may be mentally disordered. According to the survey done by

the World Prison Brief in 2022, the total number of prisoners in India is 573,220. And the majority of the prisoners are under trial, which is about 41% of the total. Anyway, most of the central jails are overcrowded beyond their actual capacity because of the delay in judgment.

### **Facility Provided to Prisoners**

The jail authority also provides daily newspapers and television for prisoners on a daily routine schedule, so they can also use the jail library to read and relax mentally. Regularly, they get daily items like soap, tooth paste, hair oil, etc. from stores inside a jail. In prison, the prisoners also get the facility of a telephone to talk to their family and an area where they can work, get money, or send money home. The prisoner can get medical aid on the primary level on the prison premises in case of illness, and if the conditions of the prisoner get bad, the jail authority will shift him/her to the nearest civil hospital on the report of the jail superintendent. They are also treated as humans first, not as criminals.

### **Problems Facing Prisoners in Prisons**

A lot of cases have been pending for many years. This leads to a disruption in the prison administration system. As a result, overcrowding has been one of the grave issues in the Indian prison system. It leads to a poor standard of living. Many times, it also leads to the transmission of many communicable diseases, for example, COVID-19, HIV, TB, etc., among the prisoners as well as the staff. In addition to this, a lot of jails do not have proper medical facilities. This creates neglect towards the prisoners, and most of them remain untreated. Sometimes, death can also happen to prisoners. Jails are actually a place where criminals can reform themselves and come back to society. But due to a lack of communication with the outside world or their family members, they become traumatized. This creates mental illness, and many of them, instead of reforming, turn into grave offenders. Although

third-degree torture by the police is not allowed, it is still prevalent. Women criminals are relatively low in number. They face both physical and mental problems, including a lack of sanitation facilities, a lack of care during pregnancy, and a lack of educational training. Women also face sexual assault, custodial rape, and physical abuse. Their children, who are mostly kept in correctional homes, also face a lot of abuse and undergo psychological trauma.

### **Conclusion**

It is true to say that a man is not a criminal by his birth, but the social and economic conditions make him a criminal. The basic needs of every individual are food, clothing, and shelter; when he lacks these things, he tries to fulfill them through illegal means. These prisoners, when they are in prison, should not be treated inhumanely because the main motive of imprisonment is not to punish but to reform a criminal so that he will be able to live in society normally after the completion of his punishment. There is a need for proper legislation that will reduce the number of under-trial prisoners. In addition to this, more prisons are required because the capacity of all prisons is less than the number of prisoners.

## HOW RESTORATIVE JUSTICE AND SYNODALITY CAN HELP THE CHURCH HEAL?

Krisanne Vaillancourt Murphy<sup>1</sup>

At the beginning of October, a landmark gathering of church leaders sat down at roundtables in a brightly lit hall. The event was diverse as far as ecclesial gatherings have historically gone; the participants spanned generations, genders, ideologies and cultural backgrounds. Many were vowed religious, but some were laypeople. Everyone in attendance knew their purpose. They came to listen, dialogue and discern together how the church might address some of the most pressing issues of our day in more inclusive and healing ways. The gathering wasn't the one you might be thinking of, the groundbreaking synod on synodality in Rome. It was the National Catholic Conference on Restorative Justice, a biennial convening that took place in October at the University of St. Thomas School of Law in Minneapolis. As one of the conference organizers, I can say truthfully that the event wasn't designed to be a "synod in miniature." And yet, it was also unsurprising that the conference mirrored the synod in so many ways, from invoking the Holy Spirit, to the hallmark roundtables, to the overarching vision of "inspiring people to dream about the church we are called to be ... to stimulate trust, to bind up wounds, to weave new and deeper relationships."

Put simply, these two gatherings bore such striking resemblances because their subject matter does also. Both synodality and restorative justice encompass a vision and

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.ncronline.org/opinion/guest-voices/how-restorative-justice-and-synodality-can-help-church-heal>

a process for journeying together amid woundedness and division. Both aim to leverage the power of deep listening, authentic dialogue, and radical truth-telling to illuminate a path toward communion and, ultimately, healing. Now is the time for the church to recognize and embrace the synergistic relationship between synodality and restorative justice, because though the 2023 Rome-based assembly has ended, the work of the synod is far from over. Engaging restorative justice now - putting to use its time-tested principles and practices in our parishes and ministries - can help us become the listening, reconciling church we are called to be.

Though not regularly expressed in these terms, the synod on synodality is fundamentally a response to harm in the church. Injustices like clergy sexual abuse, clericalism, polarization and marginalization loomed large on the docket in Rome. Similarly, the restorative justice conference in Minneapolis looked at four specific areas of harm: injustice in the criminal legal system, clergy sexual abuse, racial injustice, and harms against Native peoples. In all these spheres, the church has been responsible for varying degrees of inflicting harm, perpetuating it, concealing it, or looking the other way.

In the synod's opening Mass, Pope Francis emphasized that wounds like these need to be addressed head-on: "The synod serves to remind us of this: our mother the church is always in need of purification, of being 'repaired.'" Restorative justice is an approach rooted in exactly the kind of repair Pope Francis speaks about. Where more "traditional" notions of justice might focus on a specific law or rule that was broken and how to punish the responsible party, restorative justice seeks to identify the harm, to understand its impact, and to discern what can be done to put things more right.

Restorative justice processes come in various forms, but they all share a common aspect: elevating the voices of those who've been most directly affected. During the restorative justice conference, every plenary session included people

who were impacted by the harm in question. Monique Maddox was one of these courageous witnesses. A lifelong Catholic and a descendant of enslaved individuals who were once owned and sold by the Jesuit order, she now leads a nonprofit representing thousands of these descendants of Jesuit enslavement. “As descendants, we went to the Jesuits,” Monique recalled during a plenary session on racial injustice. “We went to those who harmed our families and we said, ‘You taught us this faith, you taught us this religion. ... We’re not going away. We’re here to stay. We’re here to speak, and we want to be the people who are naming how we’re going to be satisfied.’ “

The conference also underscored the grave repercussions of failing to listen to survivors or silencing them entirely. During one conference panel, Juan Carlos Cruz, a survivor of clergy sexual abuse in the Chilean church and a member of the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors, shared, “People have died waiting for justice. Friends of mine have committed suicide waiting for justice.” Notably, the commission issued an unusually strong statement the week before, demanding greater attention from the synod to the issue of clergy sexual abuse: “No one should have to beg for justice in the Church,” it implored.

The courageous truth-telling at the conference not only embodied the principles of restorative justice, it also served as a tangible expression of synodality in action. Indeed, listening to those on the margins, bearing witness to their pain, their needs, and their God-given dignity, is where the process of becoming a synodal church takes root. But it doesn’t end there. The synthesis report published at the close of the synod captured the necessity of translating listening into meaningful action: “Openness to listening and accompanying all ... has made visible many who have long felt invisible. The long journey toward reconciliation and justice, including addressing the structural conditions that enabled such abuse, remains before us and requires concrete gestures of penitence.”

# THE MARTYR OF CRIME: A VICTIMOLOGICAL OUTLOOK

Niranjana T S

## Abstract

Victimization can result in significant life effects for the victim. It has serious effects on the victim's physical and mental health as well as their financial situation. Victimization can seriously impair a person's capacity to commit to and carry out everyday tasks associated with providing for their family, particularly in the areas of parenting, social interaction, close/marital relationships, spirituality, and employment. It is going to eventually have an impact on their family and cause societal disorder. India's legal system places a greater emphasis on the rights of offenders than it does on victims. The purpose of this article is to present victimology, its concept, and the impact victimization has on the victim.

## Introduction

“Victims” means persons who, individually or collectively, have suffered harm, including physical or mental injury, emotional suffering, economic loss, or substantial impairment of their fundamental rights, through acts or omissions that violate criminal laws operative within Member States, including those laws proscribing criminal abuse of power.<sup>1</sup> In the wide landscape of criminology, victimology remains a unique field that concentrates on matters about victims and those who have experienced harm and injustice. (Rhee,

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<sup>1</sup> Declaration of Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power (1987).



2023) It explores the experiences, challenges, and resilience of people as victims of crimes. “For too long, the law has centered its attention more on the rights of criminals than on victims of the crime. It is high time we reverse the trend and put the highest priority on the victims and potential Victims.” -Gerald R. Ford<sup>2</sup> For a long time now, the legal system has given more attention to offender’s rights than those of victims who were harmed by them (Watkins, 1988). This paradigm needs to be urgently reversed; re-prioritizing around victims’ welfare and rights as well as potential future victims among other priorities. Recognizing how crimes affect individuals or communities calls for recalibration so that justice not only concerns itself with punishing perpetrators but also upholds rights, provides support, and extends protection to both past sufferers and those susceptible to victimization in the future. (AuCoin, 2007)

## History of the Victimology

Throughout history, victims have wielded significant influence in the criminal process. After the fall of the Roman Empire, there wasn’t a formal government structure for prosecuting criminals on the state’s behalf. As a result, victims took on a central role in dealing with crimes, albeit in an informal manner. In the Middle Ages, crimes were viewed primarily as harm against individual victims rather than offences against the state. Justice was often meted out based on the principle of “*an eye for an eye*” (lex talionis) by the victims or their family members. However, as authoritarian states emerged and took control of prosecuting crimes, victims saw a decline in their role within the criminal justice system (Cretney, 1997). They became more like witnesses and individuals reporting the crime, losing the more active role they once had, which proved to be detrimental for many of them.<sup>3</sup> After these

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<sup>2</sup> American President in the American Congress (1975).

<sup>3</sup> In the medieval the offender was determined by the ‘ordeals’ a group of people through rigorous methods like trial by fire or water; and also, they

problematic situations in the justice system in the middle of the 1940s, they started to conduct studies and research related to victims of crimes. In 1947 a criminologist called Benjamin Mendelson presented his first paper on victimology in Romania, the victims' position has changed since then. This shift stemmed mainly from the understanding that the victim was the primary target of the crime and that any harm done to society as a whole was incidental. Later, a lot of victimologists came out and started working for the proper restoration of justice.

### **What is Victimology?**

Victimology is the scientific investigation of crime victims which seeks to know how crime affects individuals. It goes beyond the legal issues into psychological, emotional, and social dimensions of victimization. 'the scientific study of the extent, nature, and causes of criminal victimization, its consequences for the persons involved and the reactions hereto by society, in particular the police and the criminal justice system as well as voluntary workers and professional helpers. <sup>4</sup> The term may not be known by many despite its significance. (Meade, 1979) Do we ever think about what happens in a victim's life after the occurrence of a crime? What are the likely effects on their families' moods or suffering? Even more so urgently, if they were supporting others in their household how does this become an issue to them since they also have mental health or face economic struggles? Victims are not just numbers; they comprise individuals with families and aspirations. How does crime impact family ties? What is it doing to the heads and minds of victims and their families? Again, suppose it is he who provides for his family then what does that mean

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conducted battle field for two parties in dispute fought in single combat; the winner of the fight was proclaimed to be right.

<sup>4</sup> H.J. Schneider, 'Victimological developments in the world during the past few decades I: A study of comparative victimology', *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology* 45(4) 2001, 449-468.

economically or socially? The study of victimology takes us into the abyss of crime acknowledging voices that often go unheard. As we travel through complicated processes of victimhood, seeking justice and an understanding of what it means to be human amidst adversity (Johnson, 399).

Victimization, not only with its immediate physical or material damages, makes an indelible mark on people. The emotional, psychological, and sociological consequences may be wide-ranging for the victims. With various psychological effects such as anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorders (PTSD), deep feelings of susceptibility can remain long after the commission of a crime has occurred. Other challenges that victims face include social isolation that results in stigmatization and a non-trusting attitude toward institutions. (Janssen, 2021) Though victimology also elucidates the realities faced by victims of crime, it also plays a central role in their rehabilitation and support. Policymakers, law enforcement agencies, and support organizations must be aware of the need peculiar to these persons so that they can tailor interventions to address their problems. These endeavors involve efforts at not only recovering physically but healing mentally and rebuilding lives shattered into pieces. (Vasylenko, 2024) We will also provide a short overview of the significant advancements in the area of victims' rights. Over the last few decades, victims who were mostly witnesses or those who reported the crime have evolved into individuals with rights of their own.

## **The Types of Victims**

The degree of suffering endured serves as the fundamental basis for classifying victims. This criterion acknowledges the range of trauma and distress levels experienced by individuals following criminal activities or traumatic situations. It recognizes that being a victim is a spectrum, not a single experience and that each classification

corresponds to a different place along the spectrum. Victimology offers an intricate framework for studying the many effects of trauma and crime by identifying and classifying victims according to the extent of their suffering. This categorization adds to the larger conversation on victim rights and justice in addition to helping to customize assistance and intervention plans.

#### a) **Primary Victims**

Primary Victimization is personal Victimization. In this, an actual person or group of people become first-hand victims of a crime. This can be done because of a personal vendetta against a single person or a specific group of people, such as someone getting revenge for significant other cheating with a person.<sup>5</sup> The people who are the direct targets of a criminal act or other traumatic occurrence, primary victims are individuals who experience the hurt or injustice firsthand. They experience the brunt of the negative effects - financial, emotional, and physical - firsthand<sup>6</sup>. In an assault, for example, the primary victim is the one who is physically harmed. Primary victims experience extreme suffering, which includes both short-term consequences and possible long-term implications on their health.

#### b) **Secondary Victims**

A person who is present at the scene of a violent crime and who is injured as a direct result of witnessing that crime; or a person injured as a direct result of subsequently becoming aware of an act of violence and who is the parent/guardian of the primary victim who was under the age of 18 at the time the criminal act was committed.<sup>7</sup> Conversely, secondary

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<sup>5</sup> Robert J. Meadows, *Understanding Violence and Victimization* (4th Ed. 2007).

<sup>6</sup> Von Hentig, H. (1941). *The Criminal and His Victim: Studies in the Sociobiology of Crime*. Yale University Press.

<sup>7</sup> *Victims of Crime Assistance Act* 1996.

victims are people or things that suffer because of their close connection to the primary victim. This category includes friends, family, and coworkers who may suffer psychologically or monetarily as a result of the injury done to the main sufferer. Violent crime situations can cause trauma that spreads through social circles, affecting others who are related to the main victim.<sup>8</sup>

### c) Tertiary Victims

Tertiary victims are those who experience the effects of a criminal act or a significant traumatic incident at a larger societal or community level. This classification takes into account the unintended repercussions that have an impact on the general well-being of societies or communities. Tertiary victims may be affected by economic downturns, insecurity, or fear as a result of crimes or natural catastrophes.<sup>9</sup>

### Hidden/ invisible Victims

Prisoners' families, particularly their children, are often termed the 'Innocent victims' of crime (and punishment). For a long time, prisoners' families were also referred to as the 'hidden' or 'invisible' victims of punishment or crime, since the hardships they experienced were not immediately obvious.<sup>10</sup> There are a lot of studies regarding the life of family members of the prison members are on-going. When we talk about the victim, we always consider the primary, secondary, and tertiary victims of a crime. The definition of the victim itself is that the victim can be anyone who has suffered physically or mentally during an act of crime. So, here the case of families of prisoners are also suffering because of majority of prisoners are the only

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<sup>8</sup> Miers, D. (1989). *Victimology: The Victim and the Criminal Justice Process*. Palgrave Macmillan.

<sup>9</sup> Christie, N. (1986). *The Ideal Victim*. In E. Fattah (Ed.), *From Crime Policy to Victim Policy: Reorienting the Justice System*. Palgrave Macmillan.

<sup>10</sup> SCCJR-Impact-of-crime-prisoners-families, University of Glasgow. (2015)

breadwinners of their families. Since every family is different (including who is considered to be part of a ‘family’), the impact of imprisonment is different for every family. (The Scottish Centre for Crime & Justice Research, 2015).

It is a well-known fact that a significant number of incarcerated women also happen to be mothers. The circumstances surrounding their imprisonment can vary widely, but their children are often the ones who bear the brunt of their absence. It is crucial to consider the impact of incarceration on families, particularly those headed by single mothers, and to work towards solutions that prioritize the well-being of both mothers and their children.<sup>11</sup> Child antisocial behaviour, criminality, mental health issues, drug misuse, academic failure, and unemployment are all in danger when parents are imprisoned. Still, not much is known about whether these issues are brought on by parental incarceration.<sup>12</sup> Due to social and economic pressure, stigma, or the anguish of parent-child separation, parental imprisonment may harm the child’s outcomes. If a parent is incarcerated for a longer amount of time, in a more punitive social context, or if their mother is incarcerated, the children may react negatively to their parent’s imprisonment. By implementing family-friendly prison policies, including financial help, parenting programs, and less stigmatizing punishments for criminals and their families, it is important to safeguard children from the detrimental impacts of parental incarceration. (Robertson, 2007) The children of prisoners often undergo stigma and labelling<sup>13</sup> from their schools and society.

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<sup>11</sup> After the age of six the children can’t stay inside the prison, they will be handed to several NGO’s.

<sup>12</sup> There are theories in criminology itself that explain the learning of criminal behaviour from peer groups. (Differential Association Theory by Edwin Sutherland and Subculture Theory by Albert Cohen are great examples of children showing antisocial personality because of not getting proper guardianship.)

<sup>13</sup> Labelling a person as a criminal can lead to the commission of crime (Labelling Theory by Howard Becker)

## Restorative Justice and Victimology

What is the restoration of justice? Do you ever hear about that? How does the justice system work in India? What is the relevance of the restoration of justice in India? There are a lot of questions arising related to the concept of restoration of justice. Let's take a look at how justice is restored after a crime. Restorative Justice was introduced in the 1970s as mediation on the settlement between victims and perpetrators. It is a criminal justice system where a meeting is arranged between the victim and the offender or the community at large. This system focuses on the rehabilitation of offenders as well as restoration and curing rather than reckoning and punishment.<sup>14</sup> (Trishla, 2022) The paradigm of restorative justice, which has gained popularity in modern legal discourse, aims to refocus attention away from punitive measures and toward making amends for the harm caused by crimes and reintegrating criminals into society (Vanfraechem, 2015). All parties involved must actively participate in restorative justice, with victims' roles receiving special attention. This is fundamental to the idea of the practice.

The success of restorative justice techniques is greatly dependent on the field of victimology, which is devoted to comprehending the needs and victim's experiences of crime. In addition to addressing victims' demands for healing and reparations, restorative justice also promotes a sense of agency and empowerment by acknowledging victims as active participants in the legal system. This strategy focuses on communication and healing to mend relationships that have been shattered by crime. Certain regulations found in the 1973 Code of Criminal Procedure are grounded in restorative justice. This is why it is suggested that the victim and those who hurt her settle. One of the major parts of restorative justice is victim assistance and victim compensation.<sup>15</sup> (Alok,

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14 Restorative justice about mediation (2022)

15 Restorative Justice: Concept And Scope in India. Legal Service India. (2022)

2022) Restorative Justice works on three basic principles; Repair, Encounter, and Transformation. So, these principles of restorative justice can only be attained through the collaborative and effective work of all the stakeholders in the justice system. Victimology is an integral part of the restoration of justice, In the words of Justice Krishna Iyer “*It is the weakness of our jurisprudence that victims of crime and the distress of the dependents of the victim do not attract the attention of law. The victim reparation is still the vanishing point of our criminal law.*”<sup>16</sup> Still in India, not all the victims are getting equal treatment from the justice system.

### Consequences of Victimization

The term victimology not only symbolizes the study related to victims but also denotes all aspects of victimization. This includes when a person is considered a victim, the process of victimization, causes of victimization, victim precipitation<sup>17</sup>, consequences of victimization, and treatment and compensation plan for victims’ rehabilitation, among other factors (van der Aa, 2014). Three general categories can be used to group these effects: bodily harm, mental health effects, and economic effects.<sup>18</sup> The physical impact can vary from death to minor injuries in the body, and it can also include permanent disfigurement.<sup>19</sup> The mental traumas can range from mild to severe depression, anxiety disorders, and, as a long-term outcome, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).<sup>20</sup> The next aspect is the financial impact. Generally, if

<sup>16</sup> Rattan Singh v. State of Punjab, (1979) 4 SCC 719

<sup>17</sup> Victim precipitation is the term that is used to denote the victim-offender relationships and the contribution of the victim to get victimized, most of the prevailing typologies of the victims by the famous victimologists depend on the degree of the victim’s precipitation.

<sup>18</sup> See Daigle (op.cit.), pages 71-86. The discussion of other consequences, such as costs to society at large, or to vicarious victims falls outside the scope of this introduction.

<sup>19</sup> Mostly it can happen in acid attacks,

<sup>20</sup> Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) can be diagnosed clinically even



the victim sustains serious injuries and cannot continue their job, or if the victim is the breadwinner of the family, it will have serious effects on their economic status. Additionally, they would have to deal with hospital payments (Ward, 2005). Factors can influence the effects of criminal victimization, including the victim's age, sex, past victimization history, the victim's acquaintances' experiences, general views of crime, the kind and severity of the crime experienced, and the victim-offender relationship (AuCoin, 2007).

A study conducted by the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics concluded that a huge number of victims were found with symptoms of depression, insomnia, PTSD, and paranoid behaviours. Criminal victimization may also affect victim's families and friends as well as society as a whole. Moreover, research to date has found that crime witnesses, who may not suffer immediate physical and/or economic consequences as a direct result of a crime incident, may suffer from trauma, anxiety, and heightened levels of stress as a result of their experience (Kilpatrick, 1997). We already discussed the tertiary victims in the types of victims. The consequence of being a tertiary victim is that it will create an unwanted fear among society, it will create some fear of being victimized in society. The level of consequences can vary based on the situation, and the trauma caused by rape and property crime cannot be compared. Both are different categories of crime.

Numerous factors can influence the effects of criminal victimization, including the victim's age, sex, past victimization history, and the victim's acquaintances' experiences, as well as general views about crime, the kind and severity of crimes experienced, and the victim-offender relationship.<sup>21</sup> For instance, studies have shown that although victims of property crimes are not as severely traumatized as victims of violent

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three months after the incident, as individuals may continue to experience anxiety and hallucination events.

<sup>21</sup> The Psychological Consequences of Crime.1997

crimes, they nevertheless suffer from high levels of anxiety, sadness, animosity, and sleep issues that can persist for a long time (Norris, 1997). We can see that the consequences caused by an acid attack could lead to physical injuries, permanent deformation, and emotional distress like depression, anxiety, problematic interpersonal relationships in the future, and fear of attachments, at the same time the impact of crimes like white collar crime or property crime doesn't leave any physical impacts and also the impacts can be only prolonged for a shorter period.

### **Importance of Victim Rehabilitation and Compensation**

Victim support and restorative justice systems depend on the ideas of rehabilitation and recompense. By providing support, tools, and chances for recovery and healing, both seek to meet the needs and rights of criminal victims. (Team, 2023) The process of rehabilitation gives crime victims the tools, counselling and emotional and psychological support they need to move past their trauma and start afresh.<sup>22</sup> After suffering trauma or injury, victims' lives must be restored, and receiving compensation and rehabilitation is essential to this process.<sup>23</sup> In addition to the incident's immediate physical and psychological effects, victims frequently struggle for a long time to return to normalcy (Corbett, 1991). The medical attention, therapy, and counselling that are part of rehabilitation services are crucial in addressing the psychological and physical components of the victim's well-being. (Jolander, 1993). Acknowledging the hurt done and assisting the sufferer in moving on, acts as a sort of justice. Societies show their dedication to helping individuals who have suffered, creating a sense of security, and advancing a fair and caring judicial system by placing a high priority on rehabilitation and compensation. (Cox, 2004).

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<sup>22</sup> (Concept of Compensation and Rehabilitation of Victims of Crimes, 2023)

<sup>23</sup> Archives of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, 1993.

The major aim of the rehabilitation programs for the victims is to reduce their trauma and back them with a better life. Rehabilitation programs provide access to therapeutic therapies, support groups, and counselling services to assist victims in managing the psychological and emotional aftermath of their victimization.<sup>24</sup> Through the provision of tools and resources, rehabilitation helps victims to take back control of their lives and create good changes. Planning for safety and taking precautions to shield victims from abuse or damage in the future are examples of rehabilitation efforts (Gasik, 2023). The goal of compensation is to help victims financially cover costs associated with the crime, such as medical bills, counselling or therapy fees, lost wages, property damage, and other connected expenses. Jurisdiction-specific criteria, including the nature of the offence, cooperation with law enforcement, and timely reporting of the crime, may determine an individual's eligibility for compensation (KOBETS, 2022). As part of their sentencing, criminals may occasionally be required to make direct restitution payments to the victim to make up for the harm that the crime caused. By recognizing the pain and losses endured by the victims, compensation enables them to move past the crime's consequences and begin to rebuild their lives (Sysoeva, 2022). These implications are getting into needed through government schemes and interventions which are handled by the respective non-governmental organization.

### **Governmental Strategies and Tactics to Support the Victims**

In India, the court should ensure the victims are getting the proper assistance from the authorities. Victim assistance is handled by various stakeholders, once the case is registered from the station to the last hearing in the court the victim

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<sup>24</sup> Most of the rehabilitation programs are handled by non-governmental organizations. The government allocate various organizations for this purpose.

should be assisted and every report should be handed to the court. The victim compensation fund is provided by the central government to each state government. Our country follows the United Nations Declaration of Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power (1985). The Declaration of Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power consists of two parts: Part A, on “Victims of Crime”, is subdivided into sections concerning “Access to justice and fair treatment”, “Restitution”, “Compensation”, and “Assistance”; and Part B, on “Victims of abuse of power” (Ivanov, 2022). The compensation part of the rehabilitation of victims of violence including rape is governed by the provision of Section 357A of the Code of Criminal Procedure which states that every State Government in coordination with the Central Government shall prepare a scheme for providing funds for compensation to the victim of crime.<sup>25</sup> With an initial budget of Rs 200 crores, the government has launched the Central Victim Compensation Fund (CVCF) plan to provide relief to victims of human trafficking, rape, acid assaults, and women killed or maimed in cross-border firing. The money comes from the Nirbhaya Fund, which is intended for abused women (Littleton, 2008).

Nirbhaya fund is a non-lapsable corpus fund managed by the Ministry of Finance’s Department of Economic Affairs.<sup>26</sup> The Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD) is the nodal Ministry to review and suggest plans and schemes to be supported under the Nirbhaya Fund, following criteria released by the Ministry of Finance on March 25, 2015. In addition, MWCD is in charge of working with the line Ministries/Departments to evaluate and track the implementation of approved programs. According to Ministry of Women and Child Development data, as of April

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<sup>25</sup> Till now, there has been an absurd disparity in compensation amount paid by state governments varying from Rs 10,000 to Rs 10 lakhs.

<sup>26</sup> Nirbhaya fund is the main capital money for all NGOs who are working for victim assistance and compensation.

28, 2023, around Rs 12,008.5 crore has been appraised under the 'Nirbhaya' project, of which only Rs 4,923 crore has been released and Rs 2,521 crore has been utilised (which is roughly around 21% of the appraised amount and 51% of the released amount).<sup>27</sup>

This money is used to assist and enhance the currently in place victim compensation plans that have been announced by state and local administrations. It also helps to lessen the differences in the amount of compensation that various States and UTs notify victims of comparable crimes.<sup>28</sup> To support States/ UTs in their efforts to successfully implement the Victim Compensation Schemes (VCS) that they have notified under section 357A of the Cr.P.C and to continue providing financial assistance to victims of a variety of crimes, particularly sexual offences like rape, acid attacks, crimes against children, and human trafficking, among others (Wemmers, 1997)

### **Non-Governmental Organizations for Victim Assistance**

As per the reports, almost more than 20 non-governmental organizations<sup>29</sup> are working for victim assistance and also some organizations are specifically working for women and children. Nirbhaya fund has three schematic intervention strategies implemented by the Ministry of Women and Child Development:

#### **One Stop Centre**

The One Stop Centres (OSCs), also referred to as Sakhi Centres, are designed to provide women who have experienced violence - including domestic abuse - with a variety of integrated services under one roof. These services include

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<sup>27</sup> Ministry of Women and Child Development(2023).

<sup>28</sup> This scheme mainly ensures that all states are getting equal amounts to assist the victims under their jurisdiction.

<sup>29</sup> A non-governmental organization (NGO) is any non-profit, voluntary citizens' group, which is organized on a local, national or international level that operates independently from the Government

police support, medical assistance, legal aid and counselling, psycho-social counselling, and temporary housing, among other things (Damayanti, 2022). The one-stop centres are mainly working to provide integral support and assistance to female victims and they also facilitate immediate, emergency and non-emergency access to a range of services including medical, legal, psychological and counselling support under one roof to fight against any forms of violence against women.

### **Survivors Foundation India (ASFI)**

An NGO that helps survivors and prevents acid burn violence. ASFI provides support services through a network of partners and chapters.

### **Women Helpline**

The Women Helpline (WHL) Scheme provides 24-hour emergency and non-emergency response to women affected by violence, both in public and private spaces by linking them with appropriate authorities such as Police, One Stop Centre, Hospital, Legal Services etc. WHL also supports women in distress with rescue vans and counselling services in addition to providing information about women's welfare schemes and programs across the country. Women can dial 181 short code to avail of services from the Women Helpline. (Hretchenko, 2023)

### **Mahila Police Volunteer**

MPVs<sup>30</sup> are viewed as socially conscious, accountable, and powerful women who may develop leadership in local contexts to support police outreach on gender issues. They will serve as a liaison between the police and the community. Raising awareness, serving as an extra intelligence unit, alerting law enforcement, reporting occurrences, organizing

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<sup>30</sup> MPVs are the specially allocated women in each locality to ensure no women in that locality face any kind of violence.

and supporting community-led campaigns to end violence against women, visiting Anganwadi centres, having one-on-one meetings with local women, touring homes, and forming partnerships with Protection Officers (IPV Act) and other VAW stakeholders are just a few of the tasks that will be performed. (Sims, 2003) Two schemes are implemented by the Ministry of Home Affairs:

### **Emergency Response Support System**

An initiative of Govt. of India under the Nirbhaya funds scheme for ensuring the safety of women and children. It is an emergency response system for citizens. The Emergency Response Centre (ERSS)<sup>31</sup> is capable of receiving emergency calls through voice calls to 112, email, panic buttons activated calls and 112 India Mobile App. (Lis, 2020)

### **Central Victim Compensation Fund**

The government has introduced a Central Victim Compensation Fund (CVCF) scheme, with an initial corpus of Rs 200 crores, to enable support to victims of rape, acid attacks, human trafficking and women killed or injured in the cross-border firing. The fund comes from the Nirbhaya Fund meant for women victims of violence. (Poornachandra, 2006). These are the main non-governmental organizations that are working for the assistance of victims but there are a lot of other NGOs running for the welfare of the victims under categories; for the victims of acid attacks Acid Survivors Foundation India (ASFI), Chhanv Foundation. Programme Gauravi and ActionAid are some of the NGOs running for the victims of sexual and domestic violence. VIHAAN is one of the NGOs that is running for the prevention and assist the victims of human trafficking and also there some specific NGOs for the male victims, which are; the Men Welfare Trust, Vaastav Foundation, and ManKind Initiative.

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<sup>31</sup> Emergency Response Support System (ERSS) is a Pan-India single number (112) based emergency response system for citizens in emergencies

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, the multifaceted realm of victimology delves into the profound repercussions of victimization, encompassing physical, emotional, and societal dimensions. As explored in this article, the diverse types of victims highlight the need for a nuanced and empathetic understanding of their experiences. Victimology, both as a field of study and a practical approach, emphasizes the critical importance of rehabilitation, compensation, and assistance for victims. Recognizing the long-lasting impact of trauma, rehabilitation efforts contribute to the holistic healing of individuals, fostering resilience and empowerment. Compensation serves as a vital acknowledgement of the injustices endured, providing not only financial support but also affirming the victim's right to redress. This article underscores the significance of governmental means and strategies, showcasing the pivotal role authorities play in creating a supportive and just environment for victims. Moreover, the presence of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) dedicated to victims' welfare in India exemplifies the collaborative efforts necessary to address the diverse needs of those affected by crime. In the tapestry of victimology, every aspect, from understanding the consequences of victimization to implementing rehabilitation and compensation measures, contributes to the collective goal of fostering a society that values empathy, justice, and support for those who have experienced harm. Through sustained efforts, both at the grassroots and policy levels, we can work towards building a more compassionate and resilient society that recognizes and responds effectively to the needs of victims.



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## FROM SHOCK AND DISBELIEF TO FINDING PURPOSE

Steven Anthony

### **Matt Took a Life. Then he Found Life and Purpose in Jesus**

When Matt felt the unexplainable inner stirring, he had just begun serving 25 years for vehicular manslaughter. He was attending a revival service at his Iowa prison -an event similar to what Prison Fellowship now calls Hope Events. Somewhere amidst the worship and the Gospel message, Matt felt drawn to put his faith in Jesus Christ. Looking back, he now realizes the Holy Spirit was at work inside him.

“Talking about it gives me goosebumps,” he says. “That’s when I was spiritually reborn, and it was a beautiful time in my life despite being in prison.”

### **Depression and Anxiety**

Matt credits his mom and dad for his positive upbringing in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. “I couldn’t ask for better parents,” he says. “They invested a lot into [my] education.” He went to private school where he excelled academically and athletically. Things changed when Matt went to college. He broke up with his girlfriend and lost interest in sports. Matt began experiencing depression and anxiety. These feelings were compounded by a lack of goals and direction for his future. “I didn’t really understand at the time what I was going through,” Matt admits. “I had these negative emotions that

I wasn't really dealing with in the right way, because of my lack of maturity." Matt tried dealing with his emotions by distracting himself with partying and chasing girls. One night, Matt drove home drunk from a bar. He passed out and ran a stop sign, resulting in a bad collision. "I stepped out of the vehicle, and everything was a haze," Matt recalls. "It was a nightmare." He remembers thinking, This isn't real. This isn't really happening. Matt looked into the other car and saw a woman struggling to keep her eyes open. At the police station after the crash, Matt found out she had died. "I fell to my knees and cried," Matt says. "I couldn't believe it. I was in a state of disbelief, a state of shock." Matt made bond, but his attorney told him he could go to prison for 25 years. Matt's deepened depression made it harder for him to see any hope. In March 2003, he was sentenced to the exact term he was warned about - 25 years.

### **Forward Looking**

Upon starting his sentence, Matt endured a difficult four months at an Iowa prison. "I wasn't in any physical danger or anything like that, but it was just a really dark place," Matt says. But then he was transferred to another facility where he got involved in the Prison Fellowship Academy. "I'm really going to make the best of my time," Matt determined. "I want to take advantage of everything, anything that I can do to better myself." After Matt gave his life to Christ at the revival service, it took a mindset shift for him to fully comprehend the new direction of his life. "I never had thought about God as a relationship, as a personal God," Matt says. "I always thought about God as somebody to be feared and revered." Walking alongside like-minded people helped with that shift in his mindset - as did reading the Bible daily. Eventually, Matt's passion for his newfound faith leveled off, and sometimes he battled doubts. He brought these questions into the Academy, where peers and volunteers were understanding and willing to discuss them.

## **Embracing Forgiveness**

Despite his questions, Matt didn't stray from his mission to learn and become a better person. "There were certain moments, these 'aha!' moments, certain revelations that would come to me, where God would speak to me," Matt explains.

Matt specifically credits a study by Prison Fellowship founder Chuck Colson for moving him forward. The subject was shame and carrying past burdens. Matt was struck by his inability to forgive himself for the crash while at the same time realizing he was forgiven by God through Jesus' death on the cross. "That was a huge pivotal turning point where I was able to go forward from that and really forgive myself for what happened," Matt explains. The forgiveness didn't stop there. The mother of the woman who died reached out, and she and Matt communicated through a victim's advocate in the department of corrections. Their correspondence eventually led to the mother visiting Matt in prison. "That was very surreal," Matt admits. He wanted to tell her how sorry he was, but she quickly reassured him that she already knew. Matt says their conversation felt natural and that she simply wanted to get to know him.

## **Starting A New Life**

Matt was released after serving seven years and says he had an easier time than many do adjusting to life on the outside. "I was able to get a job. I had housing secured. I had [the] support of my brothers and my parents," Matt says. Matt was also able to complete the schoolwork he began behind bars. He took liberal arts classes in addition to business classes. He earned a bachelor's degree and entrepreneurial management certificate. He was working as a sales rep but continued his education through a Master of Business Analytics program and got his degree. He's been working in that field ever since and enjoys what he does. Matt's newfound freedom led to him finding something else - love. He was working at a hospital



in the radiology department when a certain woman caught his eye. Allison would eventually become his wife, but getting there was a process. They worked at the same hospital until she went somewhere else. Matt turned to online dating and found her profile. He admits there was some hesitation on her part because he was still rebuilding his life after being released. But she saw beyond his past and they started dating. Matt knew she was the one for him.

They got married and bought a house. They eventually moved to a nearby town. Matt found a church where one of his mentors attended and they began attending, as well. However, Matt and Allison went through a rough patch in their marriage—so rough, that Matt thought they would get divorced. His ongoing battle with depression contributed to their struggles. He looked to the past to help him through it. “I started really going back to everything I had learned,” Matt says. “I had strayed away from my faith, and I was really more consumed with running the race and being successful. I think God really got my attention.” That attention-grabbing moment included a desire to return to prison, this time as an Academy volunteer. Matt connected with a prison ministry manager at Prison Fellowship and completed his training so he could serve the men at the Anamosa State Penitentiary. Matt got to talk with the warden, and it inspired him. “This has been a dark place for a while,” the warden explained. “I’m confident that you guys are bringing the light here.”

### **A New Calling**

As a volunteer, Matt is most excited when it comes time to break off into small groups. “That’s where the magic happens,” he says. “Things are said that really resonate. People are sharing their hearts, and these men don’t hold back.” When he’s at the Academy, Matt encourages the men by telling them to never downplay the impact they can have outside of prison. He adds that the men inside inspire him as well. They give

him motivation in his own life. “It still drives me to this day to join God in His work and to be able to understand what He’s doing spiritually, supernaturally - how He’s orchestrating things,” Matt says. Pouring into and listening to the men has also helped Matt find his purpose. “My calling is through Christ,” he says. “It’s to be able to make disciples of others and just to be able to pour myself into other people and be a servant.” Matt knows he’s not perfect, but he has a clear picture of the goal: helping bring others to Christ. He’s grateful that his own story - as painful as it was at times - is being used to accomplish that mission.

## EMPOWERING WINGS TO LIFE: JEEVODAYA

Niranjana T S

### Introduction

In the heart of Bangalore, nestled away from the bustling cityscape, lies a sanctuary of compassion and empowerment known as Jeevodaya. For the past 30 years, this non-governmental organization, led by a group of dedicated nuns, has been a sanctuary for women and girl children who have endured unimaginable hardships. At Jeevodaya, the mission is clear: to create a society where every individual, regardless of their past traumas, can thrive with self-respect, equality, dignity, and freedom. This noble goal is not just a statement but a guiding principle that permeates every aspect of their work. Jeevodaya's members themselves have weathered storms of adversity, having faced drastic situations, assaults, abandonment, and even being victims of POCSO cases. Despite their past traumas, these resilient women have come together to offer support and solace to those in similar circumstances.

One of the pivotal services Jeevodaya provides is rehabilitation. Through compassionate care and holistic support, they help survivors heal from their past wounds and reclaim their lives with newfound strength and resilience. Additionally, Jeevodaya focuses on providing avenues for employment and skill development, enabling women to regain their independence and contribute meaningfully to society. But Jeevodaya's commitment extends beyond mere rehabilitation; they are proactive in their efforts to prevent further injustices.

Their outreach programs include visiting prisons and juvenile homes, where they offer support to inmates and advocate for their rights. Currently, Jeevodaya provides a nurturing home to 10 children above the age of 18, offering them a haven where they can thrive and pursue their dreams. Moreover, the organization is actively involved in advocating for the release of wrongfully accused individuals, fighting tirelessly for justice and fairness in society. In a world often fraught with darkness and despair, Jeevodaya shines as a beacon of hope, illuminating the path towards a future where every woman and girl child can live with dignity, equality, and freedom. Through their unwavering dedication and compassionate service, they are not just changing lives but transforming communities for the better. Jeevodaya is more than an organization; it is a testament to the power of love, resilience, and solidarity in the face of adversity.

### **Origin and Mission**

Jeevodaya, which means “rise of life” in Sanskrit, was founded by a group of committed nuns to reduce the suffering of marginalized and vulnerable communities. Based on the principles of love, kindness, and social justice, the organization strives to empower individuals and communities regardless of their caste, creed, or religion. Jeevodaya was established on January 2, 1995, by the visionary nuns Sr. Fidelis and Sr. Clara. The administration is run by these sisters, who serve as the core of the organization. Members of Jeevodaya regard these sisters as their mothers, recognizing their pivotal role in guiding and nurturing the organization’s mission. The organization is a symbol of empowerment and compassion. Since its inception, Jeevodaya has been a steadfast ally to the underprivileged, guided by the unwavering principles of love, kindness, and social justice. Sr. Fidelis and Sr. Clara, driven by their deep-rooted commitment to serve humanity, embarked on a journey to alleviate the suffering of the most vulnerable communities. Their selfless dedication and boundless

compassion have shaped Jeevodaya into a sanctuary of hope for countless individuals.

At the core of Jeevodaya's philosophy is the belief that every individual, irrespective of caste, creed, or religion, deserves dignity and respect. Through a myriad of initiatives and programs, the organization seeks to empower communities, enabling them to chart their path towards a brighter future. From providing access to education and healthcare to fostering sustainable livelihoods, Jeevodaya is a catalyst for transformative change.

### **Holistic Approach**

At the core of Jeevodaya's mission is a holistic approach to community development that acknowledges the intricate interplay between social injustices and vulnerabilities, particularly among women and children who are trafficked or at risk of exploitation. Understanding the root causes of trafficking, which often stem from poverty, lack of education, and societal marginalization, Jeevodaya implements a multifaceted strategy to address these issues comprehensively. Through educational initiatives, the organization empowers individuals with knowledge and skills, providing them with the tools to resist exploitation and make informed choices for their futures. In tandem, Jeevodaya's healthcare services not only offer medical assistance but also educate communities on health-related rights and prevention strategies. Additionally, livelihood support programs enable survivors of trafficking and at-risk populations to gain economic independence, reducing their susceptibility to exploitation. Crucially, Jeevodaya advocates for human rights and works tirelessly to raise awareness about the plight of trafficked individuals, advocating for policy changes and societal reforms to combat this grave injustice. By addressing the multifaceted needs of vulnerable communities, Jeevodaya strives to create a more equitable and just society where every individual can live free from the threat of exploitation and oppression.

## **Education and Vocational Training for Empowerment**

At the core of Jeevodaya's ethos lies an unwavering belief in the transformative potential of education and vocational training. Understanding that education serves as a powerful catalyst for breaking the cycle of abuse and poverty, the organization provides a robust array of educational opportunities for its members. Some are engaged in studies ranging from nursing to technical fields, arming themselves with the skills and knowledge essential for establishing secure and fulfilling careers. For those whose interests lie beyond traditional academic realms, Jeevodaya offers tailored vocational training programs. From tailoring to candle making, these initiatives not only impart practical skills but also cultivate confidence and self-reliance among participants.

A standout initiative within Jeevodaya is its candle making unit, which not only generates income for the organization but also serves as a platform for creative expression. Additionally, the organization provides training in handcrafted decoration, further broadening avenues for skill development and entrepreneurship. Through these multifaceted educational and vocational training endeavours, Jeevodaya not only equips its members with practical skills but also nurtures a sense of independence and agency. By investing in education and training, Jeevodaya empowers women and girl children to forge their paths towards a brighter and more promising future. Through this, they are ensuring the proper rehabilitation of every member of their organization.

## **Impact and Reach**

Throughout its journey, Jeevodaya has encountered individuals who have undergone drastic situations, endured assaults, been abandoned, and tragically, become victims of POCSO cases. In response, the organization has tirelessly worked to provide not only shelter but also comprehensive rehabilitation services. Central to Jeevodaya's mission is the empowerment of its members through employment opportunities and skill development programs. Moreover, the organization extends

its support beyond its walls, actively engaging with prisons and juvenile homes to offer assistance and guidance.

The impact of Jeevodaya's work is profound and far-reaching. To date, the organization has sheltered and rehabilitated a staggering 860 members, offering them a chance to rebuild their lives with dignity and purpose. Additionally, Jeevodaya has facilitated the marriages of 76 individuals, ensuring they find suitable matches and embark on a journey towards a brighter future. Currently, Jeevodaya accommodates 10 members, with plans to welcome five more individuals into its caring embrace. Furthermore, the organization's commitment extends to advocating for the release of wrongfully accused individuals, underscoring its dedication to justice and compassion.

To sum up, Jeevodaya is a symbol of compassion, hope, and resiliency in our culture. This non-governmental organization was founded thirty years ago by two extraordinary nuns named Sister Fidelis and Sister Clara. Since then, it has dedicated itself to offering refuge and assistance to women and girls who have suffered unspeakable tragedies. Throughout its journey, Jeevodaya has been a haven for those who have suffered abuse, assault, and abandonment, and have been victims of POCSO cases. But beyond just offering refuge, it has been instrumental in empowering its members, nurturing their self-respect, and promoting equality, dignity, and freedom for all.

The organization's commitment extends far beyond its walls. From rehabilitation and employment to skill development, Jeevodaya ensures that its members not only find solace but also regain their independence and sense of purpose. Through initiatives such as visiting prisons and juvenile homes, they extend their compassion to those who have been forgotten or neglected by society. Moreover, Jeevodaya's efforts in advocating for the release of wrongfully accused individuals exemplify their dedication to justice and fairness. With each success story, they reaffirm their belief in the inherent goodness and potential for redemption in every individual.

## OPEN PRISON - DEVANAHALLI

R Papa Naik

“Correctional institutions have indeed come a long way. Their function, organization, and programs have kept changing with the shifts in ideas relating to crime and punishment. In ancient India, retribution and deterrence used to be the predominant considerations behind the treatment meted out to those who came into conflict with the law. There were several methods in vogue for the disposal of the offenders’ imprisonment; this was one of them. Places of imprisonment or jails used to be small, and their routine was greatly regimented. Although adequate arrangements used to be there for feeding and clothing the inmates, they were inevitably treated as less than humans (Khan, 1982). However, the objectives of present correctional institutions aim at reforming and rehabilitating offenders. The correctional institutional programs have their own objectives; “therefore, food, clothing, shelter, medical services, and maintenance of hygiene and sanitation formed the most essential segment of their services in fulfilling the physical needs of their inmates. Educational and vocational training programs also form an essential component aimed at their intellectual and social development. A recreational program is also considered important as it facilitates physical, emotional, intellectual, and social development. Besides their programs, the correctional institutions also attempt to impart moral and religious training to inmates (Children Aid Society, 1982).



The open prison Karnataka has been established with the objective of providing extensive training in modern methods of agriculture and horticulture. Besides, it attempts to reform and rehabilitate the offenders through various institutional programs. The Institution is located 45 kilometres north of Bangalore city. In the beginning, the institution had no walls. However, looking at the objective of safe custody of inmates, a wall is under construction for the institution. In the institution, there are three barracks for the inmates. The capacity of each barrack is 40–50, 30–40, and 8–10, respectively. The barracks are provided with electric lights and fans. Drinking water is drawn from a well by means of an electric pump and supplied to the barracks. Nevertheless, the barracks do not have toilets and hence the inmates have to go out for nature's calls. The Institution is under the overall control of the Inspector General of Prisons, Karnataka. The staff pattern for administrative purposes and for treatment is as follows:

**Table 2.1 Showing the Sanctioned and Actual Strength of the Staff in Different Categories**

<b>Name of the Posts</b>	<b>Authorised Strength</b>	<b>Actual Strength</b>
Executive Staff		
Superintendent (Asst. Supdt.)	1	1
Asstt. Agricultural Officer	1	1
Jailors	2	2
Gram sevak	1	1
Chief Warden Grade-I	1	1
Head Warders	3	3
Warders	12	9
Administrative Staff		
First division Clerk	1	1

Second division Clerk	1	1
Typist Grade-II	1	1
Technical Staff	1	1
Pharmacist	2	2
Lorry drivers	1	1
Tractor driver-cum-Mechanic	1	1
Cleaner	6	4
Garden Malies		
<b>Total</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>29</b>

### **Admission of Innates**

Selection Committee: For the purpose of selecting prisoners for keeping in any open prison, there shall be a selection committee consisting of the following members: The Deputy Inspector General of Prisons shall be the chairman, the superintendent of the prison from which the prisoners are to be selected for keeping in an open prison, the medical officer of the prison from which the prisoners are to be selected, the factory manager or technical assistant to the superintendent, and a psychiatrist if available at the head of the authorities.

Procedure for Selection: The following procedures have been followed to admit the inmates into the institution (Karnataka Jail Manual, 1963). The superintendents of prisons shall prepare separate lists of prisoners falling under Sub-Rule (1) and Sub-Rule (2) of Rule 988 who are willing to stay in an open prison and then forward such lists together with case histories, including the medical report certifying his fitness for work at an open prison, to the selection committee. The committee shall examine the said lists along with the case histories and files of the prisoners at the respective prisons and also by personal interview. The ease of each prisoner shall be screened, with regard to health, physical and mental to withstand living in an open prison, behaviour and conduct

in prisons, sense of responsibility displayed, progress in work, vocational training education, and other like matters, group adjustability, character, and self-discipline, extent of institutional impacts (whether the prisoner had reached the peak point of training and treatment), and whether he is fit to be trusted for keeping in an open prison. The selection committee shall select such prisoners as are eligible for being admitted to open prison and submit a list of selected prisoners for the approval of the Inspector General of Prisons. On the list being approved, the selected prisoners shall, as soon as possible, be transferred to the open prison.

### **Eligibility for Admission**

The following categories of prisoners may be selected for open prison: Convicted prisoners who are found to be of good behaviour and physically and mentally fit, willing to do hard work and abide by the rules and regulations of the open prison, and who are sentenced to a term of imprisonment of five years or more and have undergone one-fourth (1/4) of their sentence excluding remission, or who are sentenced to imprisonment for life, and who have undergone five years of sentence excluding remission. While on this, a mention may be made to the prisoners not eligible for admission into the institution. They are habituals classified as such by courts, known habituals, prisoners who are awarded three or more major punishments for prison offenders during the last two years prior to the date of selection, prisoners having any case pending in a court, prisoners suffering from medical disease or any other serious disease, prisoners having previous history of serious mental illness, prisoners convicted and sentenced for offences under section 121, 121, 122, 125, 124, 124, 125, 126, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 376, 392 to 402 of the Indian Penal Code escapes and escape risks, hired and probational murderers, prisoners who have been transferred from an open prison to a closed prison, class one prisoners, women prisoners, prisoners convicted under political

movement or special Power Act, and any other prisoners or category of prisoner whom the Inspector-General of prisons considers unfit for being sent to an open prison. The institution has spent a large sum of money on different items needed for the training of the inmates in the prison. The amount spent can be seen in Table 2.2.

**Table 2.2 Showing Amount Spent by Institution**

<b>Particulars</b>	<b>Rs.</b>
Machinery and Equipment	
One Fargo Lorry	45,950
One Motor Van	45,000
One Tractor with Trailer	54,560
Electric Pump-Sets	45,670
One Diesel Pump-set	4,120
Two Air Compressors 1-10 HP & another 7 HP	53,607
Telephone (Lost, not known)	2,48,607
Total	
Live Stock	
Bullocks	6,320
Rams (31)	20,000
Ewes (65) (Not mentioned)	26,320
Total	
Open Wells (8)	3,88,000
Bore Wells (2)	8,500
Total	3,96,500

Buildings	
Hutments of staff	10,000
Hutment proposed for rearing Cocoons (1)	3,000
Barrack for Prisoners (1)	3,500
Building of office and store grains (1)	5,500
Rat proof Godown (1)	56,000
Total	78,000
Pump Houses	
Pump houses with brick walls (9)	9,000
Water storage tanks (7)	2,100
Total	11,100
Grand Total	7,60,841

The institution is in possession of 133 acres of land out of 144 acres of actual land. However, presently, 102.35 acres of land have been used for the purpose of cultivation, and the remaining land has been used for institution building and other purposes. The cultivation land is mainly used for planting coconut trees, mango trees, grapevines, and other crops such as sugar cane, ragi, and miscellaneous crops.

### **Products**

The institution is under the possession of 133 acres of land out of its 144 acres of land, 102.25 acres of land are been used for the purpose of cultivation and the remaining lands have been used for institution building and other purpose. The cultivable land is mainly used for planting coconut trees, mango trees, jackfruit trees, grapevines, and other crops such as sugar cane, ragi, and miscellaneous crops (see table 2.3 for details).

**Table 2.3 Showing the Use of Land for Different Crops**

Particulars	Area Acres Gunta
Coconut seedlings planted (3300 total trees)	20-00
Coconut Seedlings reared in nursery	00-20
Fruit Plants	
Mango grafts	Total-250
Sapota grafts	280
Lemon grafts.	217
Jack fruit plants.	80
Tamarind plants.	20
Others.	<u>453</u>
	Total 1300
	7-00
Grape garden	
Anab-e-Shahie	
Thomson's seedless	4-00
Bangalore blue	1-05
Total area brought under Cultivation	2-00
Area under irrigated ragi	
Area under rain bed ragi (dryland)	12-00
Hybrid Maize (irrigated)	36-00
Other miscellaneous crops	2-00
Sugar Cane irrigated	9-00
HYV paddy IR 20 irrigated	2-00
Aroo under-vegetables	2-00
Mulberry (MS) Crops	3-00
Watermelon	2-00
	Total
	<u>1-00</u>
	102-25
Abstract of the land used	
Area under rainfed crops	
Area under irrigated	36-100
	<u>66-15</u>
	120-25

## **Remission**

The remission system means the system of regulating the award of marks and the consequential shortening of sentences for prisoners in prisons. Remission can be granted to prisoners by the state government, inspector general, or superintendent, subject to withdrawal, forfeiture, or revocation. Remission is an incentive for good behaviour and good work and is not a right for any prisoner (Rule 35 (a) (b) (c) of Karnataka Prison Rules, KPR 1974). The institution provides three types of remission. They are ordinary remission, annual good conduct remission, and special remission. The ordinary remission shall be granted to the inmates at the rate of 10 days per month. The special remission may be granted by the superintendent to an extent not exceeding 30 days in one year, by the Inspector General, or by the superintendent to an extent not exceeding 60 days in one year. Inmates employed on conservancy work and who work on Sundays and holidays may be awarded 20 days of special remission every six months.

## **Temporary Release on Furlough and Parole**

### **Furlough**

A prisoner who desires to get himself released temporarily under Section 55 (release on furlough) of KPA 1963 shall submit an application in the prescribed form to the superintendent of the prison. Such a prisoner would get temporary release for a period not exceeding 10 days in a year, provided he has been sentenced to a term of imprisonment of not less than 3 years.

### **Objectives of Leave**

The objectives of releasing a prisoner on furlough are to enable the inmate to maintain contact with his family and deal with family matters; to save the inmate from the evil effects of continuous prison life; to enable the inmate to maintain and develop his self-confidence; and to enable the inmate to

maintain constructive hope and active interest in life.

### **Parole**

A prisoner may be released on parole under Section 56 of KPA 1963 in the case of serious illness or death of any member of the prisoner's family or his nearest relative, or any other sufficient cause. The prisoner shall execute a bond in the prescribed form with two satisfactory sureties for a sum of Rs. 3,000 each before the superintendent gives an undertaking that he will return to the prison before the expiry of the period of his temporary release and that he shall not associate with bad characters. The superintendent shall ascertain from the Tahasildar and police concerned particulars of the genuineness or otherwise of the purpose for which the prisoner has applied for a grant of parole. It shall be the duty of the concerned Tahasildar and the police to inquire into the matter and send reports expeditiously. The application and surrender reports shall at once be submitted by the superintendent to the Inspector General of Prisons and copies thereof sent to the District Magistrate and the Superintendent of Police concerned.

### **Diet**

There is no difference in the diet prescribed for open and closed prisons in Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Tamil Nadu. In Andhra Pradesh and Kerala, extra cereals weighing between 60 and 120 grams and vegetables are allowed (National Institute of Social Defence, 1973). Every prisoner in the institution shall be entitled to receive an extra ration of 110 grams of java, ragi, or wheat in addition to the usual scale provided in Rule 83 of the Karnataka Prisons Rules, 1974, for the prisoners working in the field. A mention may be made of the diet provided to the sick inmates. The diet of a prisoner in a hospital is entirely under the control of the medical officer, who may, at his discretion, order extra provisions for any prisoner. Such an order shall be fully



entered in the sick register. And medical officer's journal, and there should be an interval of 30 days for the issue of any extra diet. (Rule 84 of the Karnataka Prisons Rules, 1974). For sick inmates, rice, milk, and sugar are given at 460, 1,120, and 30 grams, respectively.

**Table 2.5 Shows the Shoving Scale of Diet Prescribed for Class C Convicted Prisoners under Rule 85 of Karnataka Prisons Rule 1974**

Articles	Ration in grams
Rice	170
Ragi or Jola	515
Dal	140
Vegetable	170
Onions	15
Salt	30
Oil	10
Tamarind	8
Curry Powder	8
Milk	60
Mutton without bone once a week	115
Jaggery	30
Garlic	1
Firewood	900
Beson (Grain flour)	60
Jaggert	60

### **Clothing**

Inmates in open prisons are given the same clothes as in closed prisons in Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra, and Tamil Nadu. In open prisons in Rajasthan, inmates are allowed to use their own clothes at their own cost (National Institute of Social Defence, 1973). In addition to the usual scale of clothing and bedding prescribed under Rule 80(5) of Karnataka Prison Rule for 'C' class prisoners, the open prison inmates are entitled to receive one extra working suit

consisting of one shirt, knicker, pajama, towel, cotton or woollen jacket, and one woollen Blanket.

**Table 2.6 Showing the Clothing, Bedding Equipment of 'C' Class Prisoners**

Articles	Quantities	Duration
Cotton shirts half arm	2	8 months
Shirts up to 2 inches below knee	2	8 months
Caps	2	8 months
Langoties	2	8 months
Towel	1	8 months
Woolen Jacket	1	2 years
Loom Carpet 6/2 feet x 2/2 ft.	1	5 years
Bed sheets	2	8 years
Chaddar or Cambly	1	2 years
Pillow	1	2 years

## Medical

Open jails are provided with regular hospitals with a medical officer, compounders, and convicts or paid orderlies in the states of Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Uttar Pradesh. In Rajasthan, Himachal Pradesh, and Kerala, a compounder is provided at the open prisons, and a part-time medical officer visits the prison regularly. In Tamil Nadu and Assam, prisoners, when sick, are sent to the nearest jail hospital for treatment. In all the states, serious cases are transferred to the nearest jail or civil hospital (National Institute of Social Defence, 1973). As per Section 38 of the Karnataka Prison Act 1963, in every prison a hospital or proper place for the reception of sick prisoners shall be provided, and Section 36 of the same Act provides for arrangements for sick prisoners to see the Medical Officer. The institution has one small dispensary with a full-time pharmacist. The dispensary is equipped with emergency medicines. A visiting doctor (once a week) has also been provided for inmates. In cases of serious sickness, the

inmates are sent to the nearest central jail for treatment.

### **Educational Facilities**

Gujarat, Kerala, Rajasthan, and Tamil Nadu open jails have no educational programs for the inmates. In Assam and Uttar Pradesh, literate inmates teach illiterates in the evening. In Himachal Pradesh, a literate or part-time paid teacher is employed for literacy training. Lectures are also arranged on religious and social matters by superior staff at the open prison. Every convict under the age of 50 years shall be liable to undergo instructions in reading, writing, and arithmetic up to the lower primary standard unless he has been declared mentally or physically unfit by the doctor (see Section 284 (iv) of the Karnataka Prison Manual 1978). The institution has provided an education room and a part-time paid teacher by the District Adult Education Board for illiterate and literate students who wish to attend the classes. The institution's education program aims at elementary education. It also provides slates, books, and writing materials at no cost to the government.

### **Library**

Except in Karnataka, Rajasthan, and Tamil Nadu, all other open prisons in India have provided reading rooms for inmates. In Rajasthan, inmates can purchase their own newspapers, but in Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, inmates are allowed one newspaper per 100 inmates. In Kerala and Maharashtra, the scale is one newspaper for 50 and 20 inmates, respectively (National Institute of Social Defence 73). Section 282(1) of the Karnataka Jail Manual 1978 provides that every jail may be supplied with books in English and the regional languages that have been approved by the superintendent. The Jailor shall allow the use of books, periodicals, and journals to literate inmates, subject to such rules as the superintendent may prescribe. Any book introduced otherwise than in accordance with this rule shall be destroyed. Section (iii) of Section 282

provides that newspapers and periodicals supplied by friends and relatives are allowed for good conduct inmates if they are not objectionable. The institution provides two newspapers, the Deccan Herald and Prajawani, in English and Kannada, respectively. One weekly magazine, Sudha (Kannada), has also been given to inmates. According to a jailor who has been in charge of the library, every month 40–50 books are received from the central jail library and are issued to two inmates per month. The books that they supply are in Kannada, Hindi, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Urdu, and English.

### **Nature of Work**

Most of the open prisons at present provide mainly agricultural work to the prisoners. This also includes horticulture and other activities. In one of the prisons in Rajasthan, cottage industries have been introduced to provide additional income to prisoners. In Uttar Pradesh, prisoners were entirely employed for the construction of dams, bridges, roads, the digging of canals, etc. Presently, there is one prison and an open annexe of a prison, mainly for agricultural work, which includes vegetable and fruit growing. There is also a poultry and dairy farm run by the prisoners themselves. In Kerala, rubber plantations have been taken up on 200 acres of land, besides agriculture and vegetable growing on another 200 acres.

Rule 91 of the Karnataka Prison Rule 1974 provided that all prisoners under sentence shall work in the prison subject to their physical and mental fitness, and work shall not be received as additional punishment but as a means of furthering their rehabilitation and training in work. In the institution under study, mainly agricultural and horticultural work for inmates has been provided. In this sport, the inmates are provided with cooking, sweeping, haircutting, sheep rearing, looking after bullocks, night watch at the agriculture farm, and help in office work. Hours of Work: The hours of work vary

from 7 to 9 hours between one state and another. In one of the open prisons in Rajasthan, no hours of work were prescribed, and the prisoners worked as long as they liked. In Uttar Pradesh, the prisoners sometimes worked at night to complete the work within the prescribed time. According to Rule 92 of Karnataka Prison Rule 1974, no convict sentenced to simple imprisonment who elects to work shall, except in an emergency and by written order of the superintendent, be kept on labour for more than 8 hours in a day. No prisoner shall be required to perform any labour other than such as may be necessary for the conduct of internal management and the domestic economy of the prison or to meet any call of emergency on Sundays and prison holidays.

### **Wages**

The structure of remuneration for prisoners varies from state to state. In Rajasthan, the agricultural farm prisoners were paid Rs. 3 per day plus overtime. In Tamil Nadu, no wages are given in open prisons. In Church, prisoners employed in prison services are paid 50 paise per day, and those working on daily wages on a piecework basis. Rs. 2.12 for an average out-put of 2.4 tons. For extra work, they get a bonus. In Andhra Pradesh, prisoners received 10 paise per day (NISD'73). However, it may be mentioned that in Karnataka, prisoners have no right to wages. Wages are incentives granted to prisoners for the performance of a prescribed quantity of work in the prescribed manner and time satisfactorily. Prisoners may be paid wages in accordance with rates fixed by the government (Section 396, Karnataka Prison Manual 1978). The institution provides ke.2 per day for all types of work under the direction of the state government (told by staff and inmates).

**Table 2.7 Showing Daily Routine of Inmates**

Timings	Types of Work
6.00 to 6.30 a.m.	Morning breakfast
6.30 to 7.00 a.m.	Counting of inmates
7.00 to 11.30 a.m.	Working according to schedule
11.30 to 2.30 p.m.	Lunch (Leisure)
2.30 to 6.00 p.m.	Second shift work
6.00 to 6.30 p.m.	Counting of inmates
6.30 to 9.30 p.m.	Recreations
7.30 to 9.00 p.m.	Night school.

### **Canteen**

There are canteens in the open prisons in Uttar Pradesh, Kerala, Maharashtra, and Gujarat. In Kerala, the canteen is run by inmates; it opens in the evening on working days and in the morning and evening on holidays. Section 992(v) of Karnataka Prison Manual 1978 provides that a canteen shall be opened in the open-air jail for the use of inmates, and all canteen facilities provided in jails should be provided to the inmates working in the open-air jail. As per the above section, the institution has a canteen for inmates under staff control. The canteen goods are brought according to the suggestions of each inmate and are distributed once a month. An inmate can spend 4 percent of his earnings on purchasing canteen goods. The canteen items are beedi, cigarettes, match boxes, tobacco, coffee powder, sugar, ten powder, agarbatti, udbatti, banana, beaten rice, dry coconuts, biscuits, groundnut seeds, washing soaps, bathing soaps, castroil, tooth brush, tooth paste, and tooth powder.

### **Recreational**

Rajasthan has no recreational facilities for inmates in the open prison, except that the inmates have their own radio. Assam

open prisons provide a good regular recreational program in that a radio has been provided and films are occasionally arranged by the Information and Public Health Department (CBCS 75). Section 292 of the Karnataka Prison Manual 1978 provides that the superintendent should provide facilities for physical exercise indoors and outdoor games like chess, draughts, carom, volley ball, tug-of-war, kabaddi, ring tennis, and basketball in the evening on working days and on holidays in a manner that may not disturb the routine prescribed for jails. The institution has provided indoor and outdoor games like carom, kabaddi, kho-kho, and volleyball. It also provides musical instruments like tabla and harmonium for singing bhajans and practicing drama. Besides, the institution conducts film screenings occasionally and has a radio to listen to every day.

### **Religious**

Section 281(iii) provides that no gathering of prisoners for performing any religious function or caste ceremony shall be allowed unless specially permitted by the superintendent. In the same section, sub-section (iv) provides that every prisoner who expresses a desire to keep a religious fast and, in the opinion of the medical officer, is in a fit state of health may be permitted to do so. Prisoners observing fasts may be put on light labour if the fast is of a long duration. For Hindu inmates, the institution has provided a small temple to God Shiva. Most of the inmates do pooja at this temple, and they also do pooja to their own god and goddess photos that they have kept in the barracks. The pooja articles, such as banana, coconut, agarbatti, and udbatti, are also provided from the canteen. The Muslim inmates are allowed to do regular prayers, and they can also go to the mosque on important days with the prior permission of the superintendent.

# CRIMINAL TURNS AS A TORCH BEARER FOR CHRIST

Sr Adele Korah SCCG

## Introduction

Life is a wonderful gift; an opportunity and a privilege to behold. During times of great desperation and hopelessness, one turns to the Creator and receives a ray of hope in one's life. There is a desire in every human being to become good. No one is born a criminal. Give anyone a second chance and see the wonders emerging. Spirituality often becomes more important to us in times of tragedy, loss. Suffering and illness because they connect us to both our higher power and those around us help us to find meaning and purpose, and bring us hope and healing. It was the same with Felix; when he encountered God, the transformation began. He regained the lost beauty of life.

## Rejection and Redirection

Felix was a wonderful gift to his parents as he was the elder and long-awaited child. He was born on 01 June 1974 at Bengaluru, Karnataka. His parents considered him a blessing in the family. The love of family is one of life's greatest blessings. Felix received love and care in abundance from his parents. After a few years, Felix's parents had a second baby and all the attention went to the second one. As both the children grew, Felix's was constantly compared with his younger brother, in matters of studies and other activities. The younger brother excelled in studies and co-curricular activities



at school. This made him to be looked up to in comparison with Felix which aggravated the situation at home. As the days passed, Felix felt ignored and rejected by his mother, who bestowed her affection only on her younger son. Alex saw his younger brother being well cared for, while he was ignored even when sick. He heard his mother telling his father, “When we become old, it will be the younger son who will look after us” and hence, they neglected Felix. He developed severe sibling rivalry and felt unwanted in the family.

### **Felix Turns into Criminal**

After the completion of class 10, he did not want to continue his education. He loitered around for almost 3 years without stepping into school. In his need for acceptance, he went out and joined a gang of dacoits who made him feel wanted in their group. Since Felix had a good physique – tall, hefty and energetic - he was indispensable to the group. To gain their acceptance, he had to get involved in their illegal activities of looting and murder. He jumped headlong into all criminal activities and hence felt affirmed and welcomed by them. But in the long run, he had to pay too heavy a prize for having become a member of the gang. At the age of 21, he got arrested under section 307 and served time for 2 ½ years. Once out on bail, he was arrested for a second time within 10 months. After serving for 2 years, he was granted bail for a second time and within few months was arrested under section 391 for dacoity. As a double murder and dacoit, he was arrested and taken under custody for several years with no hope of being granted bail or release. He spent the first few years of imprisonment in frustration. He was carrying within himself feelings of rejection and non-acceptance, which he had experienced during childhood. When his mother visited him in prison, she turned down his request for help to pay the lawyer’s fees, and so he lost hope of getting out of prison on bail.

Felix lost his father when he was an undertrial prisoner. He could not even attend his father's funeral. The greatest tragedy in Felix's life till then was that he could not see his father's face for the last time. To add to his pain and despair, his mother blamed him saying, "You killed your father!" she accused him of being the cause of his father's death and for his brother becoming an alcoholic. The accusations of his loved ones pierced his heart. He had nowhere to go except to Jesus Christ, who redeemed the world by His Holy Cross and washed the sins of the world by his precious blood.

### **Imprisonment and Redemption**

Felix spent several years in prison and went through a sort of metamorphosis: drastic changes took place during his life in prison. He met me as I was going daily with other PMI volunteers to the prisons. Felix who experienced rejection from his mother at home, started calling me lovingly Mother, because of the care and love he experienced from me during his painful days he spent in prison. Having realized that it was due to absence of love and acceptance from his mother that he dared to run out of his home situation, I started giving him many exercises to meditate and reflect on God's unconditional love. "As a mother comforts her child so I will comfort you, you shall be comforted in Jerusalem." Isaiah 66:13) He started reading and meditating on the unconditional and forgiving love of God who rejects no one. But holds him in His arms covering him with love. With tender love of a Mother and Father Thus he grew stronger in the love and forgiving mercy of God. His transformation impressed everyone: 'formerly the world was my God and now God is my world'. It is between closed walls that people look for a ray of hope. People who are filled with shame and guilt look for ways and means to begin a new life. The lost ones look for their Good Shepherd, who's unconditional, healing touch and forgiving love bring them to a renewed life. Felix started to spend long hours in prayer, recalling the painful incidents and circumstances that made

him move away from home and start a life of crime. When all doors were closed, Felix turned to God in deep prayer.

Changes began to take place in him, as he opened his heart to the healing touch of the Divine Healer. Each prayer meeting brought within him a thirst to read, reflect and dwell deeply in the Word of God. He started meditating on the quotation from Isaiah, “Can a woman forget her nursing child, or show no compassion for the child of her womb? Even these may forget, yet I will not forget you” (Is 49:15) It helped him to experience within him the personal love of a living God, who could fulfill every need of his heart.

### **Felix as an Inspiration**

As Felix grew in his experience of God’s love through prayer and through his contact with me and praying together, he received new insights. Our reading and reflecting together on God’s word helped him to rekindle his lost hope. God’s word illumined his soul. The change in his personality was visible to all. Once a constable asked him on the way to court, “Did you really commit this crime you are accused of? Looking at your face, I don’t feel that you are a criminal”. Every onlooker had the same feeling about him. His transformation was not just external; he had become an inspiration to others through his behavior.

### **Fortified by the Holy Spirit**

Once he was offered a bottle of Rum by his old friends when they came to visit him in prison. They placed a drinking straw in the Rum bottle secretly and passed it through the iron mesh in the visiting area. Felix had the courage and the determination to refuse saying, “I am no longer that Felix who was with you some time ago”. His friends were truly surprised. Though they were disappointed, they recognized the change in their friend. He left his old habits which led him to a crime filled life and started living a spirit filled life

## **Felix Decides to Admit his Crime before the Judge**

Felix experienced closeness with Father God whose love he experienced deeply and he said, “I am a child of God. He taught me to follow him who is the Truth. He even stated that if he was called to the court and was questioned by the judge on whether or not he had committed the crime, he would admit to it. He said, “I am now a child of God and I refuse to tell a lie. I will admit my crime,” many of the inmates would object to accepting such a stand as they feared their punishment would be confirmed for life. We who listened to him were happy to know how committed he has become to be truthful. When I shared with the group my predicament while travelling in a boat when I was shaken with fear of getting drowned. Then I remembered the Word, “We do not live for ourselves ... If we live we live for the Lord, and if we die we die to the Lord, so then whether we live or die we are the Lord’s” (Romans 14:8). Felix then reflected on the word and stated, “If I die or live, I am the Lord’s. What does it matter, if I live in prison all my life or live outside? The only thing I want to live is to live for the Lord”.

The lord was so pleased with his total surrender that miraculously he was acquitted and the release order was issued by the court within a week of his making such a statement. Felix gave his life testimony in the last prayer meeting that he attended in prison. On the day of his release, his friends came to receive him at the prison gate. On his way back home, his friends wanted to celebrate his return at a bar, but he refused. Later he procured a job and lived with his mother, taking good care of her as long as she lived. Felix is now happily married and he uses his spare time in evangelization, sharing God’s word along with his life experience, thus helping others to live a value-based life.

## **Felix Becomes a Man of Fire**

‘Light yourself on fire with passion and people will come from miles around to watch you burn’. We need to burn ourselves

completely for the Lord. Felix is filled with the fire of passion for the Lord who touched him personally and transformed him. The God who has created us is faithful. Felix is ready to do anything for the Lord he carries the Holy Bible wherever he goes. God's Word is not just to be heard and repeated; it is to be breathed, lived and emulated in each action. The man who had heard and repeated the Word of God within the prison walls breathes and lives it every moment of his life. God had intervened in Felix's life and blessed him with a life looking beyond his imperfections. When Felix narrates about the goodness of the Lord, people are moved to tears. Having experienced the personal touch of the lord, Felix is able today to transform many hearts and lead them to the Lord.

## **Conclusion**

I am convinced that the Lord is delighted with people like Felix and several others whom He touched and transformed during their prison life. They have turned over a new leaf in their live after having been touched by God, His values and His word. "for as the rain and snow come down from heaven and do not return there until they have watered the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my Word be that goes out from my mouth. It shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose and succeed in the thing for which I send it" (Is 55:10-11). I believe that the transformation of a person who had lived a life away from God's light and was dragged into a life of darkness and crime can happen, and that they can be brought back to light once again, only by the touch of God and His Word. It is a touch that is loving and saving. We can only be His instruments in reaching out to other in need, with our love and compassion. When God gives us the grace, He does not measure and give; He pours it like rain. My prayer before the Lord is that many more of our brethren behind the bars may receive this rain that the Lord wants to pour.

## A VOICE FROM THE PRISON CELL

Sr Adele Korah SCCG

### Introduction

“If I only knew that I would reach this place and this would be my state!” This was the wailing I heard as I entered the Prison chapel one morning. In surprise I looked around and saw Deepak, a prisoner who had entered the prison some time ago. When I approached him, he got up and came near me. I saw his tear-filled eyes and I perceived that he was in distress and is perturbed. He then started sharing the thoughts parading in his mind. There was an upheaval of mixed feelings, as he remembered the painful events that led him to the present state. As he spent time reviewing his past, he made a serious effort to trace back into what made him land inside the prison. The following lines reveal the findings of Deepak’s sincere soul search and what I came to know of his life. Deepak was the only son of his parents. His mother brought him up with a lot of love and care. When Deepak was a lad of five his father left the family. Added to her pain and loneliness, the burden of meeting all the expenses of running the house, of paying the house rent, meeting all the needs of her son’s education, payment of all the school fees, purchase of his school uniform, books etc. fell on the shoulder of Deepak’s mother, Padma. She was a teacher in a school and so before going to her School, she took care to see son was reached to the school. As a single parent Padma doted on her child, the only hope of her future. Besides, Padma was the only daughter of her parents and so she couldn’t rely on any one’s support.

## **Deepak as an Over Protected Child**

Padma took care to see that Deepak will eat only the food cooked and packed by her and given in his bag. She took all the needed precautions to safe guard her son's health and helped him to reach the school and bring him back home after class. Her sole aim as to see that his son her only treasure, is well educated and grows up safe and sound. As the lad grew up he desired freedom to buy some food stuff which his friends were bringing to School, but he was forbidden to do so as a precaution for his safety. But Deepak felt that his mother had no love for him. His friends are given pocket money and they buy the food of their choice. He started gradually finding his own way of procuring food stuff of his choice without the knowledge of his mother. Since he had grown up as one who was overprotected, he always longed to be free from the control of his mother.

## **Deepak and the New World**

Later his mother helped him to go to college. He graduated himself. But he developed love for driving, so that he could go his way with the help of his friends. He obtained driving license and secured a job in a software company as the company driver who had to pick up the employees and reach them back to their residence. Since he grew up as one who was overprotected, he always longed to be free from the control of his mother. He could never see his mother's love in all the warnings she used to give him. He was in a world of his fantasy and was easily influenced by his friends. In the beginning he used to join his friends for outings. He took part in all the unruly behavior of his gang and found gratification of his heart's longings, when he was away with his worldly friends whose focus was only on a pleasure filled life. He thought that Life is all that. He was unsatisfied and longed for something that will fill his life.

## **Vacuum in the Heart of Deepak**

The friends, parties, outings and parties thrilled his life. Yet there was a vacuum in his heart and nothing satisfied Deepak. Most of his friends had girlfriends and he thought that if he has girlfriends, he would be happy and so he thought of dating and began looking for love and acceptance from the girls who were working in the office where he was employed as a driver. In his efforts to get recognition among his girlfriends, he was sliding in to wrong paths without realizing where it would lead him. His focus was on finding a way to succeed in this materialistic world. In his desire to gain acceptance he started spending fabulous amount every month on expensive clothes, and was finding ways to gain attraction and acceptance of his girlfriends.

## **Mother Becomes Secondary**

When one of the ladies responded to his love he fell for her and thought that was all he wanted and he would be happy in her company. He dated her for some months and he thought of marrying her and living with her for the rest of his life. He never bothered about his mother who spent her life and all that she had for her only son. As the date of her retirement from School was coming close, Padma was not perturbed because, she had cherished the dream of getting a strong support from her son who was employed in a good company. On the contrary Deepak had a different goal of his own. Recalling his youthful days, he said to me, “During those days my craving was to possess what I didn’t have, to own a car and to boost myself to be someone who I was not. I never realized then, that I was fine and worthwhile the way I was. What ruled me was my ego, forgetful of the fact that my mother needed me and she was lonely. I turned a deaf ear to every advice and longed to satisfy my passions. Concentrating only on my selfish passion, I had lost sight of everything and everyone else and went after my pleasure filled life with my girlfriend.”



## **An Unexpected Blow**

Then, there came the unexpected blow, a bolt from the blue. He noticed that his girlfriend Manisha had lost interest in him; developed new relationships with other boyfriends and gradually she betrayed him. That was an unbearable blow to him and he felt all his dreams shattered. Unable to tolerate the betrayal of his trusted friend, he took a hasty, impulsive decision to destroy her so that no one else could have her. Aggravated by the fire of jealousy and possessiveness burning within him, he acted impetuously. With a vicious plan in his mind he had hidden a knife in his vehicle and when they passed through a deserted and uninhabited place, he murdered her inside the vehicle and gave vent to his suppressed anger by cutting her in to pieces and throwing her in to a gutter. For a moment he felt that he had won the battle within himself by destroying his betrayer and taking revenge on her for his unfaithfulness to him. But after these cruel deeds he was filled with fear and started trembling as he drove back. His heart was, pounding and his hands were quaking with fear imagining what would follow. Haunted with fear, unable to proceed further, he decided to surrender himself over to the police station. Consequently, he was taken to the Magistrate and was taken under custody in the Central prison, Bangalore.

## **Deepak before the Crucifix**

During my daily visits to the Central Prison as a volunteer of Prison Ministry India, I watched Deepak prostrating himself before the crucifix in the prison chapel. Tears of pain and remorse were rolling down his cheeks as he lay on the floor motionless. After having emptied his guilt-ridden heart before the crucifix, he rose from the floor with the desire of falling at the feet of his mother and to unburden his heavy heart. When he saw me an elderly sister, he came running to me. As he bent down to touch my feet, I offered him a chair to sit before me. He opened up his heart, sobbing and narrating all

that happened. After sharing his deepest feelings of remorse, shedding tears for a while, I found that he regained his calm.

### **God's Touch and Redemption**

When I listened without judging his actions, but with understanding and offered him my availability to help and support to contact his mother and getting reconciled with her, he looked calm and peaceful. Gradually, he was enabled to accept the events and his present situation. The time I spent listening to him with empathy rekindled hope in him. He was willing to sit in the presence of a living and forgiving God, truly repentant of his impulsiveness and revengeful action. Deepak learned to pray for the first time in his life with true faith in a forgiving God and exclaimed, "If I had known Jesus, my living God, earlier and had known the precious value of true love and forgiveness in my life, I wouldn't have reached this miserable state." He said to me in gratitude, "Thank you sister for helping me to know the God of forgiveness and compassion the living God who loves even sinners and who forgives everyone who comes to him in repentance."

### **A New Realization**

"If I had not come to this jail I would have been worse. I believe now that it was in the plan of a God that I would have to reach here and be touched by Him and be renewed." He wrote in his diary that evening, "All that had happened after my wayward life of unruly behavior, has turned for my own good, because, I could realize this fact only after I reached here. Yes, I landed here because I was in a world of my own fantasy; I never looked into myself nor accepted myself as I am. My focus was on how to succeed in this materialistic world, I paid attention only to trivial things like movies and actors which I understand today as totally irrelevant to attaining success in my life. My craving was to possess what I did not have, I never bothered to look within myself as one loved by an Almighty God, accepted and held precious in

His eyes. I never knew then that I was treading towards my own perdition and finally the unfortunate thing happened.... I committed the most heinous crime of murdering brutally the one I longed to possess for my gratification. It happened all of a sudden when I lost control of myself; consequently I was jailed for the crime.

### **Experience of Loneliness in Dark Moments**

My world changed in seconds. I started experiencing what I never imagined. Though there was food I could not eat. I could never look into a mirror or face the sun. Night daunted me. I cried but no tears dropped, because it was not my old self but the soul within me that wept for my wrong deeds. I was not left alone in gloom. I was privileged because there was Sr. Adele, a motherly sister visiting us within the prison, who listened to me, and soothed my aching heart. She helped me to start repenting and surrendering to God in prayer with deep trust in Him.

### **Deepak Cuddled in God's Arms**

For the first time in many years I bowed on my knees, put my hands together and said "God have mercy on me!" Tears rushed down my cheeks and I felt my heavy heart lighten. I did repent. I regretted, "If only I had done this earlier, The Almighty God would not have let this happen to me. I started to pray and listen to God's word. The parable of the prodigal son who was forgiven by his father gave me hope and faith in God's forgiveness and Mercy. Oh how I felt myself cuddled in God's arms! I slowly and steadily began to change as I felt God's presence enveloping me. There were people who befriended me and helped me in my needs and I felt my faith in God getting stronger. His soul searching began when he sat with me for counselling him. As I was visiting the prison regularly he would sit with me recalling his childhood days. He realized that in his childhood when he lost his father, his mom was taking extra care of health, as he would be her only

support in her life. Thus Deepak grew as an overprotected child. He said, “I turned rebellious, unable to see love in my mother’s care. My struggle for autonomy made me run and fly lose like a bird, and eventually to the ruin of my career and future. I realized for good, what led me away to crime. I never had a reason for the things I did. I was just restless and fickle minded and fluctuating in my plans and decisions with no proper goal. I never took notice of the good things my mother did for me, small gestures which meant great.

Now I realize that nothing on this earth can match the unconditional love of my God. I can give and receive it always beyond measure. Today I have no regret for having come to the jail. I understand that He brought me here to teach me many lessons. “God jailed me that I may understand what freedom is, God took away all that I had that I may be contented with what I have.”

### **Deepak’s New Life - Mother’s Sacrifice**

I informed Deepak that his mother sold all the gold she had and spent the gratuity amount she received on her retirement from School to get her son released from the prison. When he came to know about that he wept and said, “I never knew that my mother loves me so much because I was blind with passion. How much more I should love my mother now.” With a changed attitude in his mind towards his mother and to life itself, he longed to be out to serve his mother during the days to come. He was fortunate to get his bail order passed due to the efforts of his mother. Deepak returned home accompanied by his mother and began a new life as a renewed and redeemed man with great determination to be a source of comfort and support to his mother. “For I am going to create a new heavens and new earth; the former things will not be remembered or come to my mind” (Isaiah 65:17). That was the assurance he got from a forgiving God whom he met during his life in the prison. He kept on saying

to himself, “What I am now is not what I was before, because now I walk with my God of love and forgiveness for the rest of my life.”

## **Conclusion**

As a volunteer of Prison Ministry India, I never cease to thank God for the call he has given me to bring the stray sheep back to him and to their families. Several brethren who are caught up in the thorn bush of crime are waiting for persons who are inspired to enter in to the frontier ministry for the voiceless and the rejected ones in prisons, on the street, in Juvenile homes, state homes and in houses of prostitution. When we are willing to stand by their side and help them to experience the love of God who accepts them just as they are, they will turn from their evil ways. I have quoted the experience of some of the persons whom I met during my service in the prison as a volunteer of Prison Ministry India. They were persons who were touched by God and were renewed during the period of their life in the prison. No one of us can transform another except the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who laid down his life to save us. He will enable all those who come to him with a repented heart to become a new creation. “For I am going to create a new heaven and new earth; for the former things will not be remembered or come to my mind” (Isaiah 65:17).

## STATE/UT-WISE TYPES OF PRISON INMATES AS ON 31ST DECEMBER, 2022

No.	State/UT	Con- victs	Under- trials	De- tenues	Oth- ers	Total
1	ANDHRA PRADESH	1988	5123	134	9	7254
2	ARUNACHAL PRADESH	151	184	0	0	335
3	ASSAM	2802	8608	0	182	11592
4	BIHAR	7375	57537	1	1	64914
5	CHHATTIS- GARH	7631	12820	0	0	20451
6	GOA	109	572	0	0	681
7	GUJARAT	5148	11129	334	0	16611
8	HARYANA	5957	19279	235	0	25471
9	HIMACHAL PRADESH	955	1926	0	0	2881
10	JHARKHAND	4808	14786	21	0	19615
11	KARNATAKA	3556	12605	33	9	16203
12	KERALA	3034	5610	159	80	8883
13	MADHYA PRADESH	21761	26877	28	191	48857
14	MAHARASH- TRA	7998	32883	189	0	41070
15	MANIPUR	177	592	86	0	855
16	MEGHALAYA	308	829	0	0	1137
17	MIZORAM	530	1049	0	1	1580
18	NAGALAND	141	302	26	0	469
19	ODISHA	2878	16058	23	3	18962
20	PUNJAB	6543	24198	0	60	30801
21	RAJASTHAN	5377	19233	6	43	4659
22	SIKKIM	119	268	0	0	387
23	TAMIL NADU	5101	11564	2129	12	18806

24	TELANGANA	2102	4221	174	0	6497
25	TRIPURA	453	735	1	5	1194
26	UTTAR PRADESH	27209	94131	172	97	121609
27	UTTARA- KHAND	2136	4722	0	0	6858
28	WEST BENGAL	4682	23706	2	399	28789
29	A & N ISLANDS	85	173	0	0	258
30	CHANDIGARH	363	832	01195	0	
31	DNH & DAM- AN DIU	10	162	4	0	176
32	DELHI	1637	16759	15	86	18497
33	JAMMU & KASHMIR	180	4587	546	1	5314
34	LADAKH	4	26	0	0	30
35	LAKSHAD- WEEP	0	6	0	0	6
36	PUDUCHERRY	107	210	6	0	323
	TOTAL	133415	434302	4324	1179	573220

## LIGHT THROUGH THE BARS: UNDERSTANDING AND RETHINKING SOUTH AFRICA'S PRISONS

**Fr Babychan Arackathara MSFS**

The book *Light through the Bars: Understanding and Rethinking, South Africa's Prisons*, written by Fr Babychan Arackathara MSFS is 20 years of his lived experience in South African Prisons where he worked as chaplain and where he had a remarkable track record of restorative justice and reintegration interventions. He had trained and empowered prison chaplains and restorative justice facilitators across the African continent.

I received this book on 31 January 2024 from Sr Bertha MSC, during my visit to Mariental, Namibia, Africa where in 1998 Fr Babychen initially started his prison ministry. Many of our MSC sisters served in Mariental prison and their sharing had enriched me during my visit to them. The seed to reach out to the brothers and sisters behind prison walls was sowed in the author of this book in Mariental prison. Mariental prison has 6000 prisoners and is the largest prison in Namibia. After his transfer to South Africa in 1999 his passion grew stronger to reach out to the rejected behind prison walls.

I read this book as I was travelling from Mariental to Windhoek, Namibia on 2 February 2024 and I was emotionally moved as I read some of the real stories presented by the author in his masterpiece. Namibia is known as “the land of the brave”. This book presents his ministry in Namibian Prisons which was extended by 20 years in South African prisons. The first question that came to my mind was, “Did Namibia make this



priest as brave as this book presents his brave deeds and his complete faith in God to be?"

The book contains the messages from Venessa Padayachee, from National Institute for Crime Prevention and the Reintegration of Offenders (NICRO), Archbishop William Slattery OFM, head of prison outreach at the South African Catholic Bishops' Conference, Fr Brian Gowans, president of the International Commission of Catholic Prison Pastoral Care and Peter-John Pearson, Director of the South African Catholic Bishops' Conference Parliamentary Liaison Office.

The book has six chapters and in the first chapter the author looks at where everything begins, with the theme of Family Matters: Understanding the importance of social context, in particular the importance of the family. He says, if these are broken, they will produce broken people who may turn to crime. In second chapter the author takes us inside the prisons in which he has worked, to look more closely how they operate. He talks about Despair vs Hope, defining prison as either a place of self-destruction or of self-discovery and rehabilitation. In third chapter the author presents the right path: assisting prisoners on their journey to rehabilitation with spiritual care and support. In the fourth chapter, he takes us to the principles and practices of restorative justice. In the fifth chapter he talks about giving a second chance and reintegration as a process and in the final chapter he puts forward a list of practical solutions to the main problems he had witnessed in his decades of prison ministry.

In all the chapters, the author shares the painful stories of prisoners and he hopes and prays that this book is useful for all the Spiritual Care Workers and all those involved with prison rehabilitation works, Correctional Officers, others in the justice cluster and Ordinary Citizens, particularly those who have strong faith traditions and who are perplexed by questions of how to think about and relate to prisoners. The

book also portrays some pictures which would move the hearts of the readers. He puts forth a few questions which penetrate the hearts of readers and tell us that as society we are responsible for every child that is born on this earth. He conveys a powerful message that no one is born a criminal and a second chance can make a prisoner a wonderful human being.

**Sr Lini Sheeja MSC, Germany**

## **MY JOURNEY WITH BRETHERN BEHIND BARS**

**Sr Adele Korah SCCG**

**PMI Publications, Bengaluru 2024**

Sr Adele Korah B.Sc. M.Ed belongs to the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity, of the Province of Mangalore. As an educator she was the principal of the Teachers' Training Institute, Mangalore for several years; as an animator of religious communities, a provincial councillor, the secretary of Sisters of Charity Education Society, a missionary in Nepal for 5 years during which she started St. Capitanio School in Tansen, Nepal, she has written a golden and glorious chapter in the history of her religious family. From 2004 she has been serving as a volunteer of Prison Ministry India, assisting the suffering brethren, to be touched by the redeeming love of God; to be transformed and to take a new leaf in their life. Sr Adele is a recipient of National Award: 'Excellence in Teacher Education' in 1975; Karnataka State Award: 'Innovation in Methods of Teaching' in 1978; Karnataka State Award: 'Developing Instructional Materials in Teacher Education' in 1979; 'Namma Bengaluru Award' for Outstanding Service to Bangalore City through the service in the Prison in 2010 from the Governor and Chief Minister of Karnataka; 'Jana Seva Award' by CRI Bangalore in 2013 received from the Archbishop of Bangalore.

*My Journey with Brethren Behind Bars* illustrates God's unconditional and forgiving love stories, the stories of human beings, broken yet loved and redeemed! This is a saga of redeemed prisoners which proves that Jesus continues His mission of seeking and saving the lost through Prison

Ministry India volunteers. Through this book Sr Adele attests that prisoners even hardcore criminals can be reformed, rehabilitated and reintegrated by tender loving care and constant forgiveness, patience and appreciation.

Within the confinements of society's margins there remain tales seldom told, stories veiled in shadows of judgment and misconception. The lives of prisoners, oftentimes overlooked or dismissed, are a testament to the complexities of the human experience. Behind the bars, beyond the shackles, there exists a world teeming with resilience, redemption, and raw humanity. Sr Adele in this book delves into the intricate tapestry of prisoners; lives, weaving together narratives of struggle, survival, and self-discovery. It is not a chronicle of crime, nor a glorification of wrongdoing, but rather an exploration of the profound depths of the human spirit amid adversity. Through these pages, you will encounter individuals whose paths diverged from the mainstream, yet whose stories resonate with universal themes of love, loss, hope, and transformation. Each chapter unveils layers of truth, challenging preconceptions and inviting empathy for those who walk a different path.

While society often relegates prisoners to the margins, this book seeks to bring their voices to the forefront, offering a glimpse into their world - fraught with hardships, yes, but also marked by moments of grace and profound introspection. Here I can see a sister who can see the future in prisoners not in the past. This is exactly the perception of Jesus as the Lord stood before the sinner who was caught in adultery or sat at the feet of Jesus to wash his feet. This is the difference that we have with sister. We see the weakness of others but sister sees the strength of others rather than their weakness. As you embark on this journey through the lives of prisoners in this book, may you be reminded of our shared humanity and the capacity for redemption that lies within us all. We honour a remarkable individual whose dedication and compassion have

touched countless lives over the span of 20 years. As we go through the pages we also acknowledge the milestones of her service and we pay tribute to a sister, a friend, and a tireless advocate for the rehabilitation of prisoners. In a world often clouded by judgment and stigma, she has been a beacon of hope and humanity. Through her unwavering commitment, she has illuminated the path of redemption for those that society deemed lost.

Justin Karukappallil

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## **REFORMATIVE EXPLORATIONS**

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