

Are You Willing?

*“Help a Prisoner’s Child
Prevent a Potential Criminal”*

*80% of prisoners’ children are potential
criminals unless somebody takes care of
them. Prison Ministry India has begun a
scheme to educate 1000 children of
prisoners:*

*Kindly contribute
Rs. 5,000/- for the Education of a child,*

BANK DETAILS

A/c Name : Prison Ministry India
Bank : South Indian Bank
Branch : Sarjapura Road
A/c No : 0416053000001419
IFSC Code : SIBL0000518

REFORMATIVE EXPLORATIONS

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



REFORMATIVE EXPLORATIONS

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

PATRON

His Eminence Oswald Cardinal Gracias
CBCI President

CHIEF EDITOR

Dr Francis Kodiyan MCBS

BOOK REVIEW EDITOR

Dr Jaison Kunnell MCBS

BOARD OF CONSULTANTS

Most Rev Dr Allwyn D'Silva, CBCI Chairman for PMI, Most Rev Dr Jose Pulickal, JPDC Chairman of KCBC, Rev Fr Varghese Karipery, PMI Cofounder, Rev Fr Brian Gowans, ICCPPC President, and Rev Dr Kunjumon Chacko, Founder Prison Fellowship India, Dr Antony Sebastian O.Pream, Chairperson, Karnataka State Commission for Protection of Child Rights.

EDITORIAL BOARD

Dr Paul Raj, Dr George Therukattil, Dr Jolly John Pulickal, Dr John Ponnore, Dr MA Nathan MMI, Dr Shibi Kattikulakkat, Dr Geetha Jose, John Thomas Kottukappilly, Dr Lisieux Therese CMC, Dr Joseph Pandiappallil, Dr Yuju Francis SG and Dr Alphonse Arockiaswamy MSFS.

CIRCULATION MANAGER

Fr Benny Plachanl CRSP

JOURNAL SECRETARIES

Sr Amala DC, Sr Joanna SCS, Mrs Marjorie Grecian

Editorial correspondence is to be addressed to the Editor, Reformative Explorations, Prison Ministry India, 52 Thomas Layout, Sarjapura Road, Carmelaram, Bangalore - 560 035, Karnataka, India; Tel.: +91 9447710488; E-Mail: frandiyan@live.in; www.prisonministryindia.org

ISSN 0972-7701

REFORMATIVE EXPLORATIONS

A Psycho-Spiritual and Crimino-Social
Quarterly on Correction and Rehabilitation

Reformative Explorations is an initiative of the Reformative Research and Documentation Centre (RRDC) of Prison Ministry India (PMI), which works under the Justice, Peace and Development Commission (JPDC) of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India (CBCI).

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Per Copy	Inland	Rs. 50
Annual Subscription	Inland	Rs. 200
Life Subscription	Inland	Rs. 5000
Life Subscription	Foreign	Euro/US\$ 500
Foreign Per Copy		Euro/US\$ 20
Foreign Annual		Euro/US\$ 80

ADDRESS

The Circulation Manager
Reformative Explorations
52 Thomas Layout, Sarjapura Road
Carmelaram PO, Bangaluru - 560 035
Karnataka, India
Tel. 9447710488
E-Mail: nationalpmi2015@gmail.com
Website: www.prisonministryindia.org

Reformative Explorations, a quarterly in English, is owned, published and edited by Dr Francis Kodiyan for the Reformative Research and Documentation Centre at 52 Thomas Layout, Sarjapura Road, Carmelaram PO, Bangaluru - 560 035, Karnataka and printed at the Sevasadan Press, Koramangala, Bangalore - Karnataka.

REFORMATIVE EXPLORATIONS

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



Volume 7

01 September 2021

Number 3

REFORMATIVE EXPLORATIONS

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

Volume 7

01 September 2021

Number 3

Contents

Editorial

- Prisoners' Reintegration: An Eightfold Path 7
Dr Francis Kодиан MCBS

Articles

- Psychological Factors and Theories behind Persons
Becoming Criminals and Reformative
Steps for Prisons 25
Bro Yuju Francis SG
- Service to the Least Ones around Us 39
Dr Pauly Maniyattu
- Prison Ministry India Special Task Forces 48
Michael Francis
- Psychology of Reintegration 64
Nikita D'Souza
- A Student Perspective on Prisons in India 71
Aditi Pathak, Anshika Mary Mathews

Reformation & Reintegration

- Kolbe Home - 'Transforming Lives' 75
Bro Pradeep Anthony OFM

- From Kamathipura to New York - Shwetha Katti's Remarkable Journey 79
Sr Lini Sheeja MSC

Reports

- PMI Diocesan Directors' Training Program 2021: Reform to Reintegrate 83
Sr Amala DC
- Pentecost with Prisoners: Life in the Spirit Conference 90
Vinita J Britto

Documentation

- Prison Ministry Sunday Pastoral Letter 2021: Prisoners' Reintegration and Redemption 101
Bishop Allwyn D'Silva
- Prison: A Home of Awakening: A Christian Concept of Incarceration 106
Dr Francis Kodiyan MCBS

Book Reviews

- Martin Mosebach, *The 21: A Journey into the Land of Coptic Martyrs* 192
Dr Jaison Kunnel MCBS
- Dr Francis Kodiyan MCBS, *Prison Ministry Sunday Pastoral Letters 2004-2021* 199
Bro Pradeep Anthony OFM
- Dr Francis Kodiyan MCBS, *Popes to Prisoners* 205
Sr Lini Sheeja MSC

PRISONERS' REINTEGRATION: AN EIGHTFOLD PATH

Dr Francis Kodiyan MCBS

1. THE LOST

The first parents disobeyed God's commandment and committed sin. When Eve, the first woman saw the fruit of the tree was good, pleasing to the eye, and desirable for gaining wisdom, she took and ate it. She also gave it to her husband, and he also ate it. Then their eyes were opened, and they realized they were naked; (Gen 3, 6-7). Thus, Adam and Eve became the first lost couple. They have billions of followers even today. The number of sinners and criminals such as terrorists, hired killers, murderers, rapists, prostitutes, robbers, cheaters, deceivers, is multiplying every day. Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold (Mt 24,12).

1.1 THE PROMISE

Though God punished the first parents he assured them a redeemer. He said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, 'cursed are you above all livestock and all wild animals! You will crawl on your belly and you will eat dust all the days of your life. I will put enmity between you and the woman, between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel'" (Gen 3,14-15).

1.2 SEEK AND SAVE THE LOST

Jesus, the redeemer of the lost succinctly declared that he came to seek and save the lost. One day He was passing through Jericho. Zacchaeus, a chief tax collector wanted to see who Jesus was, but because he was short, he could not see over the crowd. He ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree to see him, since Jesus was coming that way. When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, “Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today. He came down at once and welcomed him gladly. All the people saw this and began to mutter, “He has gone to be the guest of a sinner. But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, “Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount. Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost (Lk 19,1-10).

1.3 LOST AND FOUND

After squandering his wealth in wild living and longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, and when no one gave him anything, the prodigal son came to his senses and said, ‘How many of my father’s hired servants have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants.’ He got up and went to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him. The son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ But the father said to his servants, ‘Quick! Bring the best robe and

put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate. For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' They began to celebrate (Lk 15,11-24).

2. REACHOUT

Jesus' style of action was to go out to the peripheries and outreach the lost, the least, and the last such as the marginalized, the oppressed, the neglected and rejected of the society. He went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness (Mt 9,35). Following the footprints of Jesus PMI volunteers go out to the peripheries in search of the lost to places like prisons, rescue homes, juvenile homes, observation homes and so on.

2.1 REACHING OUT SINNERS

One day Jesus went to the tax booth. He saw Levi, son of Alphaeus sitting at the tax collector's booth. "Follow me," Jesus told him, and Levi got up and followed him. While Jesus was having dinner at Levi's house, many tax collectors and sinners were eating with him and his disciples, for there were many who followed him. When the teachers of the law who were Pharisees saw him eating with the sinners and tax collectors, they asked his disciples: "Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?" On hearing this, Jesus said to them, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners." (Mk, 2, 13-17).

2.2 TO CARRY THE BURDENS OF THE LOST

Outreaching the lost, Jesus expresses readiness to carry their burdens. "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn

from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls” (Mt 11,28).

2.3 GIVE ME A DRINK

Jesus was going through Samaria. He came to a town in Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of Jacob. Jacob’s well was there, and Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about noon. When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, “Will you give me a drink?”. The conversation began with this begging led to her conversion and the conversion of her village (Jn 4, 1-15).

2.4 CARING LOVE FOR THE LOST

Criticizing the irresponsible behavior of the shepherds of the time, God speaks through prophet Ezekiel “I will search for the lost and bring back the strays. I will bind up the injured and strengthen the weak. I will shepherd the flock with justice” (Ezk 34, 16).

2.5 PMI MINISTRIES INSIDE THE PRISON

- Celebrating Sacraments to Catholic Prisoners
- Conducting Spiritual Discourses and Moral Instructions
- Organizing Cultural and Entertainment Programs
- Arranging Counseling and Spiritual Directions
- Writing Letters of Personal Concern and Healing the Broken Hearts
- Setting-up of a Good Library for Mental Growth
- Establishing Job-oriented Training Programs
- Providing Vocational Training Facilities
- Steering Literary, Arts and Sports Competitions

- Preparing Prisoners to Write School and University Exams
- Conducting Medical Camps
- Providing Free Legal Aid
- Releasing Prisoners

3. RELEASE

Jesus outreached many of the lost sheep and set them free from their bondages. He went to the tax booth of Levi and made him his disciple. He went to Zacchaeus' family and liberated him from his bondages. PMI volunteers visit prisons and release them by means of legal aid, legal clinics and through government agencies and financial assistance.

3.1 LIBERTY TO CAPTIVES

Jesus was very clear and convinced about the purpose of His birth. Going to the Synagogue of Nazareth opening the Book of Isaiah he proclaimed publicly that He came to liberate the captives: "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor" (Lk 4, 18-19).

3.2 LAMB OF GOD

John the Baptist testified this by announcing that Jesus is the lamb of God who takes away the sins of mankind. "The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world" (Jn 2,29).

3.3 LIBERATION FROM PRISON

King Herod arrested Peter and put him in prison. The church was earnestly praying to God for him. The night before Herod

was to bring him to trial, Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains, and sentries stood guard at the entrance. Suddenly an angel of the Lord appeared and a light shone in the cell. He struck Peter on the side and woke him up. “Quick, get up!” he said, and the chains fell off Peter’s wrists. Then the angel said to him, “Put on your clothes and sandals.” And Peter did so. “Wrap your cloak around you and follow me,” the angel told him. Peter followed him out of the prison, but he had no idea that what the angel was doing was really happening; he thought he was seeing a vision. They passed the first and second guards and came to the iron gate leading to the city. It opened for them by itself, and they went through it. When they had walked the length of one street, suddenly the angel left him (Acts 12, 1-10).

3.4 RELEASE OF PAUL

It was midnight. Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them. Suddenly there was such a violent earthquake that the foundations of the prison were shaken. At once all the prison doors flew open, and everyone’s chains came loose. The jailer woke up, and when he saw the prison doors open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself because he thought the prisoners had escaped. But Paul shouted, “Don’t harm yourself! We are all here!” The jailer called for lights, rushed in and fell trembling before Paul and Silas. He then brought them out and asked, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” They replied, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved - you and your household.” Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all the others in his house. At that hour of the night the jailer took them and washed their wounds; then immediately he and all his household were baptized. The jailer brought them into his house and set a meal before them; he

was filled with joy because he had come to believe in God - he and his whole household (Acts 16,25-34).

3.5 PRISON TO PALACE

The Lord God always had a special concern for those who are imprisoned. This is evident from the story of Joseph whom He liberated from dungeon and elevated to the Governor of Egypt. Joseph's brothers sold him and his master put him into the jail, the place where the king's prisoners were confined. But the LORD was with Joseph and extended kindness to him, and gave him favor in the sight of the chief jailer (Gen 39:20-23). The hands of the Lord were with Joseph and He blessed Joseph and made him the Governor of Egypt. Pharaoh said to Joseph, "You shall be in charge of my palace, and all my people are to submit to your orders. I hereby put you in charge of the whole land of Egypt" Then Pharaoh took his signet ring from his finger and put it on Joseph's finger. He dressed him in robes of fine linen and put a gold chain around his neck. He had him ride in a chariot as his second-in-command, and people shouted before him, "Make way". He put him in charge of the whole land of Egypt. (Gen 41,39-43).

3.6 LIBERATION FROM INCARCERATION

Jeremiah was put into the cistern of Malchijah the king's son, which was in the court of the guardhouse; and they let Jeremiah down with ropes. In the cistern there was no water but only mud, and Jeremiah sank into the mud. But God inspired Ebed-melech the Ethiopian and sent him to the king. He spoke to the king, saying, "My lord the king, these men have acted wickedly in all that they have done to Jeremiah the prophet whom they have cast into the cistern; and he will die right where he is because of the famine, for there is no more bread in the city" (Jer 38:6-28).

3.7 PMI MINISTRIES OUTSIDE PRISON

- Establishing Rehabilitation Centers for Released Male and Female Prisoners
- Establishing Homes and Educational Assistance for Prisoners' Children
- Establishing Research and Documentation Centers
- Organizing Volunteers' Training Programs
- Counseling and Moral Instructions in Rehabilitation Centers
- Contacting Families for Reconciliation and Forgiveness
- Treatment to the Sick
- Reconciliation of Prisoners with Victims and their Families
- Helping the Children of Prisoners with their Education
- Marriage Settlement
- Vocational Training and Job Settlement
- Conducting Awareness Programs for the General Public
- Printing Literature like Books, Magazines, brochures, etc.

4. REPENT

Jesus began his public life preaching the message of conversion and repentance. "The time has come; the kingdom of God has come near Repent and believe the good news!" (Mk,1,15). The most difficult and important task in prison ministry is to lead prisoners to repentance and forgiveness.

4.1 DELIGHT OF REPENTANCE

The tax collectors and sinners were gathering around to hear Jesus. The Pharisees and the teachers of the law muttered, "This man welcomes sinners and eats with them. Then Jesus told them this parable: Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Doesn't he leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together and says, 'Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.' I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent (Lk 15, 1-7).

4.2 REJOICE OVER REPENTANCE

A woman has ten silver coins and loses one. Doesn't she light a lamp, sweep the house and search carefully until she finds it? And when she finds it, she calls her friends and neighbors together and says, 'Rejoice with me; I have found my lost coin.' In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents" (Lk 15, 8-10).

4.3 BOOK OF REVELATION

Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken the love you had at first. Consider how far you have fallen! Repent and do the things you did at first. If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place (Rev 2, 4-5).

5. RECONCILIATION

True repentance will lead reconciliation, which is the restoration of lost relations that involves a change in the relationship between God and man or man and man. It assumes that there

has been a breakdown in the relationship, but there has been a change from a state of enmity and fragmentation to one of harmony and fellowship. Jesus gives great significance to reconciliation: “If you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift (Mt 5,23).

5.1 ST PAUL

St Paul teaches us that reconciliation is a ministry and we all shall be its ambassadors. All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people’s sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ’s behalf: Be reconciled to God. God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God (2 Cor 5, 18-21).

5.2 NEITHER DO I CONDEMN YOU

One day while Jesus was preaching the teachers of the law and the Pharisees brought in a woman caught in adultery. They made her stand before the group and said to Jesus, “Teacher, this woman was caught in the act of adultery. In the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?” They were using this question as a trap, in order to have a basis for accusing him. But Jesus bent down and started to write on the ground with his finger. When they kept on questioning him, he straightened up and said to them, “Let any one of you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.” He stooped down and wrote on the ground. At this, those who

heard began to go away one at a time, the older ones first, until only Jesus was left, with the woman still standing there. Jesus straightened up and asked her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?" "No one, sir," she said. "Then neither do I condemn you," Jesus declared, "Go now and leave your life of sin." (Jn 8,1-10).

6. REFORMATION

Release, repentance, and reconciliation shall lead to the reformation of a prisoner. The word reformation meant restoring to the normally straight condition that which is crooked or bent. This is a process of bringing back to the normal behavior and lifestyle or the rectification of conditions or setting things to rights. Most important mystery in the reformation of a released prisoner is the unconditional and forgiving love of Jesus. The released prisoner has to experience this through the PMI volunteer. As Prophet Isaiah tells us released prisoner shall be convinced that God's love for us is far greater than that of our mother: "Eve if your mother forgets you, I will not forget you "Can a mother forget the baby at her breast and have no compassion on the child she has borne? Though she may forget, I will not forget you! See, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands" (Is 49, 15-16). The release, repentance, reconciliation shall lead the prisoner to awaken from sleep and to respond to salvation (Rom 13,11). "Awake, sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you (Eph 5,14). When you walk about, they will guide you; when you sleep, they will watch over you; and when you awake, they will talk to you (Proverbs 6,22). PMI has many means to reform prisoners such as sacramental and liturgical celebrations, retreat, prayer services. When they come to rehabilitation centers, they are taken to different retreat centers to attend indifferent types of retreats according to their needs.

7. REHABILITATION

One of the major goals of Prison Ministry India is the rehabilitation of released prisoners. PMI has many such centers in different Indian states. Find below some of the PMI rehabilitation centers for released prisoners.

7.1 THE PMI REHABILITATION CENTERS FOR MEN

- 1) Snehashramam, Vettukad PO, Thrissur 680 014, Kerala; Director – Fr Sunil, Congregation of the Priests of the Sacred Heart of Jesus (SCJ), Tel. 7558914919; Estd 1 October 1991.
- 2) Santhinivas, Pathadipalam, Changampuzha PO, Edappally - 682033 Kerala; Director – Fr Binoy, Claretian Congregation (CMF) Tel. 9961272928; Estd 6 August 1995.
- 3) Snehatheeram, Market Road, YMCA, Alappuzha – 688 001, Kerala; Director - Fr Thobias, Tel 9526389005.
- 4) Kolbe Home, KG Kandigai, Tirutanni 631205, Tamilnadu, Director - Fr Thomas, Society of St Eugene De Mazenod (SDM), Tel 894 080 3689, Estd 2017.
- 5) Van Thuan Home, 52 Thomas Layout, Sarjapur Road, Carmelaram PO, 560035 Bangalore, Karnataka; Director - Fr Francis Kodiyan MCBS, Tel 9447710488; Estd 2020.

7.2 THE PMI REHABILITATION CENTERS FOR WOMEN

- 1) Snehashramam, Monvila, Kulathoor PO, Thiruvananthapuram 695583, Kerala; Director – Sr Beena, Sisters of the Poor of St Catherine of Sienna (SDP) Tel 8078818239; Estd 11 October 1992.
- 2) Ashadeepam, Vettukad PO, Thrissur 680014, Kerala; Director - Sr Ajita, John the Baptist Sisters (SJB) Tel 994320488, Estd 16 February 1993.

- 3) Jeevodaya Ashram for Women, Daddakannalli, Janatha Colony, Carmelaram PO, Bangalore 560035, Karnataka, Director – Sr Clara, Holy Cross Congregation, Tel. 0802 843 9926; Estd 22 January 1995.
- 4) Karunasadan, Kannur, Kerala, Ursulines Mary Immaculate (UMI), Estd 2004.

7.3 PMI HOMES FOR PRISONERS' CHILDREN - BOYS

- 1) Snehadeepam, Inchiyani, Kanjirappilly Kottayam 686512, Kerala. Director – Sr Beena, Holy Spirit Congregation, Tel. 94479 33675, Estd 3 July 1994.
- 2) Kolbe Home, 52 Thomas Layout, Sarjapur Road, Carmelaram, Bangalore -560035, Karnataka. Director – Sr Gertrude, Satya Seva Catechist Sisters (SCS) Tel 8296304931, Estd 2016.
- 3) St Antony's Home, Phanaswadi, Sindhudurg, Maharashtra; Director - Sr Phillipine, Holy Cross Sisters, Tel 9764692996 , Estd 2021
- 4) Kolbe Home, Patan, Gandhinagar, Gujarat, SMMI Sisters, Est 2021

7.4 PMI HOMES FOR PRISONERS' CHILDREN - GIRLS

- 1) Asha Sadan, A 43, Sector 33, Noida, UP 201 303, Franciscan Clarist Congregation, Estd 3 May 1977.
- 2) Karunyashram, Thoppil, Thrikkakkara PO, Kochi 682021, Kerala, Director – Sr Anne Maria from Sisters of the Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament (SABS) Tel. 04842 425270; Estd 8 January 1999.
- 3) Premodaya, St Francis Xavier's Cathedral, St John's Church Road, Bangalore 560 005, Karnataka; Director – Sr Raji, Sisters of St Anne's, Tel. 080 555 4683.
- 4) Jeevan Jyothy, St Joseph's Convent, Anavilasam PO, Idukki – 685535, Kerala, Director – Sr Savio, Augustinian Congregation, Tel 9747627889.

- 5) Bonal Bhavan, Kadumeni PO, Kasargod – 670511, Kerala, Director – Sr Tresa Chacko, Sisters of Charity of St Anne, Tel 8606350100.
- 6) Marie Pushpan's Home, Ranchi, Jharkand, Director – Sr Jini, Order of Dominicans (OP), Tel 7254043957, Estd 2017.

8. REINTEGRATION

Reclamation aims at regaining the lost image, esteem, personality, and property and thereby return to the mainstream of the society by living like a responsible citizen. When Abram heard that his relative had been taken captive, he called out the 318 trained men born in his household and went in pursuit as far as Dan. During the night Abram divided his men to attack them and he routed them, pursuing them as far as Hobah, north of Damascus. He recovered all the goods and brought back his relative Lot and his possessions, together with the women and the other people (Gen 14,14-16). The released prisoner after going through the different stages of reformation such as release, repentance, reconciliation, reawakening and rehabilitation will come back with renewed vigor and vitality to lead a powerful life witnessing Christ.

8.1 SINNER TO SAINT

It was to Mary Magdalene who was a great sinner but converted that Jesus first appeared after his resurrection. On the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came early to the tomb, while it was still dark, and saw the stone already taken away from the tomb. Now after He had risen early on the first day of the week, He first appeared to Mary Magdalene, from whom He had cast out seven demons. Mary Magdalene came, announcing to the disciples, "I have seen the Lord," and that He had said these things to her (John 20:1-5). Paul the great missionary

wrote to Timothy that the Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom he is chief. For a righteous man one would scarcely die, if you are truly a good man some might dare to die for you, but God commended His love towards us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for the ungodly.

9. REDEMPTION

9.1 FULFILMENT OF PROMISE

The promise given in the garden of Eden was fulfilled in the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem. Jesus was born to give us the knowledge of salvation through the forgiveness of our sins and through the tender mercy of our God. Jesus the rising sun incarnated to shine on those living in darkness and in the shadow of death to guide our feet into the path of peace (Lk 1,77-79). Before Jesus was ever born the angel told Joseph that the child conceived by the Holy Spirit would save His people from their sins.

9.2 REGAINING PARADISE

The last stage of prisoners' reformation trajectory is Redemption. The prisoner returns to God and paradise from where he came to this world. The good thief on the cross can be the best example for this. One of the criminals who hung there hurled insults at him: "Aren't you the Messiah? Save yourself and us!" But the other criminal rebuked him. "Don't you fear God," he said, "since you are under the same sentence? We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong." Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom. Jesus answered him, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise." (Lk 23, 39-43).

9.3 CRUCIFIXION OF CHRIST

This redemption comes to us through Jesus Christ who willingly became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross (Phil 2:7-8). He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world (1 John 2:2). At Calvary the old serpent, the Devil (Rev 12:9) inflicted a painful wound on the woman's Seed and must have rejoiced greatly as His body was laid in the tomb. But having suffered for our sins, the promise made in the Garden of Eden was fulfilled by the Spirit (1 Peter 3:18) inflicting a mortal wound on the serpent by rising on the third day! Conquering both sin and death, the Jesus fulfilled the prophecy first promised by God in the garden of Eden.

9.4 PRISON VISIT

In the last judgement the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me... Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.' (Mt 25,34-38).

9.5 REMEMBER PRISONERS

Letter to the Hebrews exhorts us to keep on loving one another as brothers and sisters. Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it. Continue to remember those in prison as if you were together with them in prison, and those

who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering (Heb 13,1-3).

10. JESUS, THE REDEEMER

If anybody does sin, we have an advocate with the Father - Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world (1 John 2, 1-2). Saul, breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest and asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any belonging to the Way, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. As he approached Damascus suddenly a light from heaven shone around him. And falling to the ground, he heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" "Who are you, Lord?" Saul asked. "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting," he replied (Acts 9,4-5). By committing sins and crime we persecute Jesus who came to seek and save the lost. But Jesus still loves us. He died for us on the cross to save us. He shed His blood to sanctify us. As promised in the garden of Eden God sent His Son Jesus Christ to us. He so loved the world, to the extent that He gave His Son to save those lives ruined by sin, to restore them again to His original intent, to give them a life full of meaning and purpose and thereby to redeem them. Jesus came to call the sinners to change from their empty futile lives to a life that was rich and fulfilling. He came to restore man back to the image of God so that the original intent of his existence might be fulfilled.

10.1 MARY, MEDIATRIX OF SINNERS

Mary, Mother of Jesus is a mediatrix between God and sinners. She finds peace for enemies, salvation for the lost, mercy for those who are in despair. Mary has no other ministry in heaven than that of peace and pardon. Hence St Andrew Avellino

calls her the pleader of Paradise. She stands in the presence of her Son, praying unceasingly for sinners. Where ever and whenever she appeared, she asked to pray rosary for the conversion of sinners. Together with Mary PMI volunteers pray rosary for the release, reformation and rehabilitation of prisoners.

PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS AND THEORIES BEHIND PERSONS BECOMING CRIMINALS AND REFORMATIVE STEPS FOR PRISONS

Bro Yuju Francis SG

The Merriam Webster Dictionary defines ‘crime’ as a serious offense against the public law. The most often-quoted definition is that of Paul Tappan (1947), who defined crime as “an intentional act in violation of the criminal law committed without defense or excuse, and penalized by the state” (p. 100). A crime is an act of violation of a *criminal law* for which a *punishment* is given. The person committing a criminal act must have *intended* to do so without legally acceptable *defense* or *justification* (Hollin, 1989).

There are a few important things to be kept in mind before one could conclude an act as a crime (Hollin, 1989). First and foremost, there has to be an act committed before a crime can be claimed to have occurred. A thought leading to no action is not a crime. Further, the act must be legally prohibited; ‘anti-social’ behaviour in itself is not a crime unless specifically and explicitly forbidden by law (*actus reus*). In keeping with this, in majority of cases the alleged offender must also have had criminal intent in committing the act (*mens rea*).

Hollin (1989) sees an interesting incongruity between what might seem *morally* wrong, as opposed to ‘wrong’ in the legal sense. Racism and sexism, for example, may raise great moral concerns, but are not well recognized in criminal law.

EARLIER VIEWS ON CRIME

The three major approaches to defining crime (Hollin, 1989) and they are as follows:

CONSENSUAL VIEW

When we see criminal law from a consensual framework, the function of the law is to protect individual from harm and destruction of their property. Laws also come to defend the government and help prevent public from engaging in corrupt practices and deprivation. Hollin (1989) argues that if crimes reflect the consensual views of the society, then the punishment it metes out also should reflect the consensual view of the seriousness of different types of crime.

CONFLICT VIEW

This conflict view of crime came into existence mostly after the introduction of the Marxist theory which viewed crime as something operational in a capitalist system which produces the deep divide between the *haves and have nots*. Here the type of crime is dictated by the system. For example, the poor may commit crimes such as theft or burglary; the middle class may evade the tax and steal from the employees; while the rich and wealthy and powerful upper class may indulge in activities such as exploitation, profiteering and environmental pollution and types of damage which are not accorded the status of crime.

In Marxist terms, the ‘justice’ system exists in order to protect the capitalist interests- ensuring that the power remains with the wealthy and not the working class. Thus inequalities in sentencing can be used to support the position of conflict theory. This view has attracted much criticism.

The Interactionist View

The interactionist view takes a middle ground in relation to the above two views mentioned. There are some important assumptions that underlie this theory. At first the theory assumes that each individual's behaviour is guided by their understanding of reality and the meanings held by them. Secondly, the theory assumes that the learning of meaning, is a process perceived as resulting from the manner in which other people react, either positively or negatively, towards any given individual or a situation. Finally, it assumes that the individual evaluates his or her behaviour according to the meaning learned and acquired from other people.

THEORIES OF CRIME

The following section briefly examines how the three views noted above have been translated into theories of crime (Hollin, 1989).

CLASSICAL THEORIES

The consensus view of crime is linked to two schools of thought within criminology: the classical theory and positivist's theory. The **classical theories** holds the view of free will in explaining crime. According to them when there is an opportunity for crime the individual has a free choice between committing and not committing a crime. Usually when the payoffs are greater than the retribution the crime brings, the probability of crime increases. Hence they suggests that severe punishment will deter people from any criminal act.

POSITIVIST THEORIES

This theory grew from the argument that influences outside the realm of one's free will are most important in determining

one's behavior. These influences have ranged from genetic determinisms, one's personality traits, and learning, moral development. The social process theories emphasize upon the effects of education, family and peer relationships. Positivists are generally seen as more liberal in orientation.

RADICAL CRIMINOLOGY

Taylor et al. (1973) popularized the radical criminology. They proposed that no act in itself is naturally immoral or criminal; how we define crime is socially determined, reflecting current social values. Those who espouse a radical view is of the opinion that within classical framework, criminal law is designed to suit the purpose of the dominant ruling class, those within society who holds wealth and power. Crime therefore is created by poverty, committed by the poor and the deprived in a capitalist system. The rich also commits crime to gain wealth and power. However as the rich controls the means of regulating crime their legal system discriminate against the poor. In terms of solution to crime radical theorists suggests that changes must occur at economic, political and social levels. Then there will not be crime. Any crime committed may come from individual psychopathology.

LABELLING THEORY

Here the behavior is seen as deviant which a judgment by certain sections of society towards certain classes of behaviour. The main thrust of labelling theory has been to examine the negative impact of labelling-namely stigma and change of self-image. The term *stigma* refers to the public attitude of condemnation of the aberrant and the associated exclusion of the labelled individual from some parts of society. The force of these social pressures can lead to the second major consequence of the label: the individual comes to believe society's judgment and

so modifies his or her self-image to match the label. The prophecy becomes self-fulfilling: the individual becomes the person described by the label (Hollins, 1989). While these theories offer explanations for crime, they do not inform us as to the numbers of crimes committed in order to know more about the criminal and the criminal behaviour.

PSYCHOLOGICAL THEORIES

Theories of crime are largely determined by the discipline the theorist is well versed in. The three major theories are namely: Psychoanalytical theory; Learning theory; and Cognitive theory. In addition to these, there is also the theory of Genetic transmission.

GENETIC TRANSMISSION THEORY

In its purest form this theory would posit that crime is a direct product of heredity—a criminal is born not made. One of the earliest proponents of this theory was the 19th century Italian physician by name Lombroso. He however later admitted that influence of other variables such as insanity and alcoholism among people as well as poor educational background (Hollin, 1989). Even though the modern theories have moved well away from the idea of a ‘criminal gene’, that sets the criminal apart from the non-criminal, the researchers have shown much interest in studying families, twins and adoptees (Hollin, 1989).

PSYCHOANALYTICAL THEORY

This theory in general holds on to the view that there is some inner dynamic that are accountable for human behavior. Aichborn (1925/1955) strongly influenced by Freud at that time, even went on to argue that in addition to certain environmental factors, there are also some underlying predispositions which he termed it as latent delinquency that

prepares a child for crime. As an infant grows up it begins to learn socialization driven by the pleasure principle. However, in some children this socialization goes off track, allowing the latent delinquency to dominant- a state which Aichhorn describes it as 'Dissocial', thereby allowing the underlying, latent delinquency to govern the behavior.

Applying the reality principle propounded by Freud, a criminal is someone who failed to progress from the pleasure principle to the reality principle. Another psychoanalytic concept is applied is sublimation to the explanation of crime. The criminal act therefore can be construed as something that arise from the failure in meeting the childhood desires and satisfying emotional ties with the parents. Other psychoanalytic explanation of crime focuses on poor impulse control and pleasure-seeking drive as result of poorly developed super ego.

Some studies assert that self-concept plays a vital role in the development of criminal behavior (Reckless & Dintz, 1967). Psychoanalytic and psychodynamic theories are concerned to stress the role of inner processes and conflicts as determinants of behavior as opposed to the role played by social and environmental factors. Thus the psychoanalytic model incorporates unresolved inner conflict, a lack of emotional stability, a childhood events in seeking to explain criminal behavior. Bowlby's theory of maternal deprivation can play significant role in future behaviour.

SOCIAL LEARNING THEORY

Social Psychologist Albert Bandura devised a theory of learning called Social Learning Theory. According to Bandura's theory, learning happens through: 1) *Direct* experience/s of the learner and 2) Observing the behaviour of others (*modelling*). Bandura's theory explained how humans learn. This theory maintains that

criminal behaviors are learned and more likely to occur in individuals who are exposed to delinquent models and individuals who differentially associate with people who are criminally involved.

COGNITIVE BEHAVIOURAL THEORY

The cognitive theory argues that criminals don't make proper choices and decision like normal people. The theory shows how people do not make the best judgment of the information gathered. Cognitive theory is built around the process of a criminal's actions, thoughts, personality, and to some degree the circumstances around them. A criminal who is prone to commit crimes is said to have some sort of cognitive decline related to the cognitive part of their brain. The cognitive deficit keeps people from making the right decisions. The portion of the brain that controls the cognitive part doesn't allow a criminal to view or make correct decisions, because they can't process information correctly. They may view committing a crime for their own personal satisfaction or personal needs. They don't process emotion well.

EARLY MALTREATMENT

From the data collected from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (Add Health) the effect of early child maltreatment both child abuse and child neglect can approximately double the probability of engaging in many types of crimes. From the data it's been also observed that children from low SES are at higher risk of maltreatment (Currie et al., 2006). The negative effects of victimization after a violent crime are fairly robust across the numerous mental well-being measures. The largest negative impact is on the social functioning (Cornaglia, Feldman & Leigh, 2014).

ANTI-SOCIAL PERSONALITY DISORDER (ASPD) AND FRONTAL LOBE INJURY

Recent studies by Brower and Price (2001) revealed that clinically significant frontal lobe dysfunction is associated with aggressive behavior. Among aggressive, antisocial personality disordered subjects there have been both traumatic and neurodegenerative disorders in the prefrontal cortex. Using different tools such as neuropsychological testing, neurological examination, EEC, and Neuroimaging have given rise to evidences to support the view that there is increased rate of prefrontal network dysfunction among aggressive and antisocial subjects. Although such a claim is made as a result of lack of prospective data, small sample size, and lack of adequate controls for known risk factors, the methodology used for the study is questioned for its scientific rigour.

CAUSES OF CRIME

There are many causes of crime. Avariciousness-the inclination for amass wealth, to satisfy one's insatiable wants and perhaps even to boost one's ego. Bad habit formation during early developmental years could be another reason. For example, early introduction into gangsterism, cultism, substance abuse, early exposure to violence. Children brought up in unfortunate circumstances such as broken homes, brought up on streets, early experience of maltreatment such as early physical and emotional abuse are more likely to develop criminal behaviours. The values promoted by a nation through its education system can directly or indirectly either promote crime rate.

Distorted value orientation, confused belief system can aggravate crime. Lack of parenting models at home, decline in the morale of the teaching community and increased lack of focus on imparting values also can be reason for crime.

Industrialization causes sometimes mass displacement of a village or a rural area, edging them to fend for themselves, leading to poverty and deprivation. Social media also is promoting violence particularly against women through the violent display of pornographic material for people consumption (Brower and Price, 2001).

FACTORS THAT CAN PREVENT CRIME

Strict enforcement and adherence to the law of the land, building awareness and sensitization among common mass, education, probity and accountability from the part of the elected leaders, government officials, ministers and all people holding positions of authority and power. Home training and community outreach program by NGO's also can prevent crime

PRISON REFORMS IN INDIA

The real purpose of sending criminals to prison is to transform them into honest and law-abiding citizens by helping them shun violence and criminality. This is possible if only the prison system follows a holistic approach to reformation. A few suggestions gleaned from reflections of Rote on prison reforms in India are follows: (i) Reduce the period of custody for the inmates so that they are able to return to their loved ones early enough (ii) women prisoners should be given permission to meet up with children and so that they are allowed the opportunity for reconnecting with their dear ones emotionally (iii) Greater emphasis need to be given on vocational training of inmates in order to help them get a job after their incarceration (iv) Provide the inmates opportunities to take up higher studies, (v) On completion of jail term the inmates should be placed in an intensive 'After Care' center, where they are helped to overcome their fear of being stigmatized and ostracized from their society vi) The society need to be educated

about Indian prison system so that there will be a change in the attitude of people about the prison system and management. Perhaps it is obvious that radical change in prison system can come about only through radical change in society.

The Supreme Court, in its landmark decision in *Ramamurthy v. State of Karnataka*, has identified nine major problems which need immediate attention for implementing prison reforms. Some of the observations made by the court regarding the present prison system include: the problems of, a) Overcrowding b) Delay in trial c) Torture and ill treatment d) Neglect of health and hygiene e) Insufficient food and inadequate clothing f) Prison vices g) Deficiency in communication h) Streamlining of jail visits and i) Management of open-air prisons.

THE FIVE-STEP REFORMATION MODEL FOR PRISON SYSTEM IN AMERICA

Borger (2010) observed that the prison system in the United States do not act as an efficient correctional system; instead, they act as detention centers that seem to house offenders between crimes. Borger, believes that the high rate of recidivism is attributed to mental illness among the offenders. The prison term in these cases seem to increase the mental illness and cause psychological pains to the prisoners and once again when they are back to the society their capacity to positively contribute to the society is significantly reduced (Borger, 2010). Hence once an offender is released from the prison, the tendency to go back to the former deviant behavior is high. Borger gives five-step plan for reformation:

STEP 1) USING PSYCHOLOGICAL TOOLS TO ASSESS AND DIAGNOSE PSYCHOLOGICAL PROBLEMS

Since the criminal justice system seem to look at abnormality as a legal one, and not a clinical one, it's perhaps imperative that the criminal justice system broaden its definition of abnormality to one that includes mental illness, so that reformation can be formulated and implemented during their incarceration. It can be surmised that changes can happen in offenders of crime when the reformation system adopts more therapeutic oriented approaches. The study proposes that as in most offenders there is the existence of psychopathy-the most common being the ASPD, it is important for them to go through the psychological evaluations, and after sharing with them the report, they need to be given the option to receive psychotherapy. If psychiatric evaluations were provided upon entry, with follow ups throughout the stay, the prison systems would get a better handle on the amount of mental illness they are actually dealing with. By knowing who needs psychiatric care, the prison system will be better equipped to handle mental health cases. Once an offender is educated in terms of any mental illness they may have, for those who are willing to seek help, the benefits of treatment for mental illness will begin prior to release. Borger adds here that although the usage of psychology during imprisonment may lead to a more therapeutic incarceration, services must also be available to offenders after they are released, even if they are not under supervision. Prior to release, the offenders will receive another evaluation, or series of evaluations depending on the case.

STEP TWO: THE ADDITION OF VOCATIONAL AND JOB TRAINING PROGRAMS

Borger also is of the opinion that creating job training and vocational programs will be the best method to diminish the

criminal mindset. If this such opportunities are given to the prisoners in the during the incarceration period, the post-release employment is secured for these individuals and help them make a contribution to the society. Although not many studies have been done on the post-release success rate among these individuals, whether or not an offender recidivates is largely impacted by their ability to maintain employment after release.

STEP THREE: EDUCATION PROGRAM

Prison education programs are important, in that they are often incorporated with other normalizing programs that serve to increase prison safety, and decrease recidivism.

STEP FOUR: CREATING A BUDGET FOR PAROLE OFFICERS AND COMMUNITY TREATMENT CENTERS

What is suggested here is that, upon post-release opportunity be given for continuation of treatment that was started in the prison. Leaving prison can be a traumatic experience for the offender as he is no more in a structured environment where in his needs are taken care of. Continuing with the treatment in the Community treatment centers reduce the recidivism

STEP FIVE: CREATION OF AN EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY COMMUNITY

Perhaps the most important step in reinventing the state prison system is creating an opportunity for released offenders to put to use their skills and learning in the post-release environment. Borger suggests that this opportunity would be in the form of an Employment Opportunity Community. An opportunity such as this, would give them the option to be responsible and independent.

CONCLUSION

It is a well-known fact that the spectrum of crime objects is much broader and includes a specific category of persons, the civilian population, and the damage done to biosphere, the air, the water, illegal mining, forced eviction of native dwellers of forest land, and wanton poaching of endangered animals, deforestation etc. The author has made a humble attempt to explain different theories of crime and the causes, and dwelt upon some concrete proposals gleaned from different sources for reinventing the reformatory system in prisons. Recidivism has been a major concern particularly in the American prisons and the five-step reformation model explained could as well be adapted to our Indian prison system.

REFERENCES

1. Aichhorn, A. (1955) *Wayward Youth* (trans.), New York: Meridian Books (original work published in 1925).
2. Bandura (1977) *Social Learning Theory*, New York: Prentice-Hall
3. Borger, N. (2010). A five-step plan and evidence of community support (Thesis). Submitted to Pace University Pforzheimer Honors College.
4. Brower, M.C & Price, B.H. (2001). Neuropsychiatry of frontal lobe dysfunction in violent and criminal behavior: A critical review. *J. Neural Neurosurg Psychiatry* 7 (71); 720-726.
5. Cognitive Theories of Crime: Overview and Features. (2019, Sep 06). Retrieved from <https://phdessay.com/cognitive-theories-of-crime-features/>
6. Cornaglia, F, Feldman, N.E., Leigh. A. (2014). Crime and Mental Well-being (Discussion paper no. 8014), IZA.

7. Currie, Janet; Tekin, & Erdal (2006): Does child abuse cause crime? IZA Discussion Papers, No. 2063, Institute for the Study of Labor (IZA), Bonn
8. Hollins R. (1989). Psychology and Crime: An introduction to criminological psychology by Routledge-London.
9. Reckless, W.C., & Dintz, S. (1967) 'Pioneering with self-concept as a vulnerability factor in delinquency', *Journal of Criminal Law, Criminology and Police Science* 58:515–23.
10. Rote, K. (n.d). Prison Reforms and social change in India.
11. Tappan P.W. (1947). What is crime? American Sociological review, 12(10), 96-102.

SERVICE TO THE LEAST ONES AROUND US

Dr Pauly Maniyattu

Visiting the prisoners is a ministry directly originating from the teaching of Jesus. Mt 25: 34-45 presents the prison ministry as one of the most essential requirements for the eternal reward. At the last judgement the King offers the heavenly reward to those at his right hand: “Come, O blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world”. The principal reason for their worthiness to inherit the eternal kingdom is their service to the Lord by means of their service to the hungry, the thirsty, the naked, the sick, strangers and the prisoners. Those blessed ones would be astonished to hear from the King that they served him in various ways. “And when did we see thee a stranger and welcome thee, or naked and clothe thee? And when did we see thee sick or in prison and visit thee?” (Mt 25: 39). Then the King asserts that their readiness to serve the least ones was indeed the readiness to serve the King himself. “Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me.” (Mt 25:40). The King again asserts that their lack of readiness to serve the least ones was indeed the lack of readiness to serve the King himself. “Truly, I say to you, as you did it not to one of the least of these, you did it not to me. (Mt 25: 45).

1. WHERE CAN WE FIND THE LEAST ONES?

If it is extremely urgent to serve the least ones for our eternal reward, we all would be very much concerned about all possible

means to serve the least ones. However, there arise the pertinent questions like ‘where can we find the least ones?’, ‘what are the essential requirements for such a service?’ The least ones need not be confined to the conventional places. They are just around us, only that we fail to notice them. They are in our families; there are suffering ones in our families. Often such a suffering goes unnoticed. Ironically, we may become instruments causing them more suffering. The least ones are in our work places. There are such persons, on the one hand, overloaded with work and on the other, deprived of their just wages. We can indeed meet such unfortunate persons in our own parish churches, convents and other religious institutions. The least ones are anywhere and everywhere.

2. SERVICE OF THE LEAST ONES DEMANDS US TO BE DIFFERENT

Caring about the least ones involves a risky option. It demands us to be different. Unless and otherwise we are courageous enough to be extra-ordinary, we will not be able to go out to serve the least ones around us. For example, to go to the prisons is something extra ordinary. I remember the humble beginning of the Jesus Fraternity and Prison Ministry at St. Thomas Apostolic Seminary, Vadavathoor. Once introduced in the seminary, the Prison Ministry was a totally new experience. In the past years of the seminary, the Prison Ministry was not considered as something urgent for the formation of the seminarians. When the pioneers of Jesus Fraternity, Bro. Francis Kodiyann and Bro. Varghese Karipperry, both of them students of philosophy at Vadavathoor seminary, came to us the senior students of theology with the proposal of Prison Ministry, we were literally surprised. At first, we thought that it was nothing but an eccentric proposal. But when we were informed about the details of the project, I was happy to join the team, not out

of any sincere concern for serving the unfortunate ones in the prisons, but out of a picnic interest and curiosity to encounter the strange things during the long journey from one end of Kerala to the other. However, soon we could recognize the difference in the whole proposal.

The Prison Ministry required an entirely different group of people. Bro. Francis and Bro. Varghese were truly different seminarians. Now it was the question of making the members of the entire group as people with a difference. It was indeed a tedious task. It was through a long period of preparation of prayer and fasting that our perspectives could be changed. Each and every member had to go through something like a metamorphosis. Gradually we ourselves and our friends could feel the difference of the group. We could realize that to care about the least ones is a revolutionary decision. We could sense the beginning of a revolution with the slogan “last, least and the lost”. We started talking about a bomb, not a bomb to kill people, but a bomb to build them in love. Thus, love bomb became an essential part of the slogan of the Jesus Fraternity group.

3. SERVICE TO THE WOUNDED BRETHREN ON THE WAYSIDE

In the story told by Jesus about the man attacked by the robbers and the good Samaritan (Lk 10: 30-37) Jesus insists on the need of being different and extra ordinary. Only when we think and act out of the way we would be able to serve the wounded brethren on the wayside. The priest and the Levite in the story seem to give us a scandal. But if we think from their perspectives there are enough reasons to justify them. Perhaps, we may retell the same story with some modification. Though the priest passed the wounded man, as if ignoring him altogether, there is some steady disturbance in his heart. If he is to come back to the wounded man what would be consequences? In fact,

the priest may not be able to render any substantial help. He does not have any provision for dressing the wounds of the suffering man; he does not have any special medicine with him to alleviate the pain the miserable man. If the priest wants to carry the wounded man to an inn or some similar place he should naturally require some animal. For the time being the priest would be at a loss. Only thing possible would be to wait till someone else comes. The arrival of the Levite is indeed a great consolation for the priest. Both of them together carry the wounded person to a nearby inn. He could very well entrust the inn keeper to supervise the treatment of the wounded man. But on the other side of the story there is a big problem. People waiting for the priest go away disappointed, thinking that the priest would not come any more. Thus the sacrifice in the temple would be suspended, and because of the irresponsible behaviour of the priest, he would be removed from his priestly duties. Our imaginative version of the story is, in fact, pointing to the practical difficulties encountered by the priests and religious in their pursuit of serving the little ones around us.

4. DECISION TO LEAVE THE 99 ASIDE AND TO GO AFTER THE LOST ONE

“What do you think? If a shepherd has a hundred sheep, and one of them has gone astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine on the mountains and go in search of the one that went astray?” (Mt 18:12). Jesus makes it clear that a good pastor ought to be that much concerned about the lost ones of his flock, to the extent of going out of the way in search of the lost ones. It is indeed a challenge to ignore and keep aside the conventions and comforts of the system and to venture out into the insecurities, discomforts and dangers; perhaps, to make a leap into the darkness.

Often we find our pastors very happy with the good sheep, the good ones clinging to the shepherd. I have heard priests boasting about their parishioners. For all the Masses churches are full. Their churches are full even on week days. The people are having wonderful participation in the liturgy, singing and praying together. The pastors are extremely happy about their so-called vibrant liturgical community. But such pastors seem to forget that there are some lost sheep in their parishes, people who never bother to come to the churches, nor to come to the mainstream life of the society. Why not such pastors realize the concern and pain of the good shepherd about the lost sheep?

5. JESUS, THE MODEL FOR THE SERVICE OF THE LEAST ONES

The model and source of inspiration for the service of the least ones is indeed Jesus himself. Jesus left aside his equality with the Father and came down in search of us, the lost sheep. “Who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness (Phil 2:6-7). He gave up everything, emptied himself; put on the flesh and became a servant. He is the good shepherd who would sacrifice his own life to save the lives of his sheep. It is this kenotic service which is expected of the ministers of Jesus Christ. Every minister of Christ who comes out in search of the least ones, need to be characterized by the self-emptying. Therefore, the most essential requirement for the service of the ‘last, least and lost’ is kenosis along with Jesus Christ. We can commit ourselves sincerely for the least ones only if we get identified with Christ who emptied himself for our sake.

6. IDENTIFICATION WITH CHRIST IS IDENTIFICATION WITH HIS PASCHAL MYSTERY

Identification with the paschal mystery of Christ is the basic condition for the life of the disciple of Christ. “He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, ‘If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.’” (Mk 8:34). Jesus became the bread broken for us. He became our sacrifice, offering himself as the sacrificial victim. He offered himself as a sacrifice for our liberation. It is the same call given to the disciples of Jesus: Be the bread broken for others; be the sacrifice of liberation for others.

A total commitment and surrender to Jesus requires a participation in his paschal mystery. St. Paul could proudly declare that he was crucified with Christ. Paul asserts that it is his participation in Christ’s paschal mystery that made Christ live in Paul. “For through the law I died to the law, so that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me.” (Gal 2:19-20). Participation in the passion and death of Jesus is the inevitable condition for the life of communion with Jesus. “[We are] always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be made visible in our bodies. For while we live, we are always being given up to death for Jesus’ sake, so that the life of Jesus may be made visible in our mortal flesh.” (2 Cor 4:10-11). Paul speaks of death with Christ as a blessing. It is indeed a great gain, because through the death we gain Christ. “For, to me, living is Christ and dying is gain.” (Phil 1:21).

7. EUCHARISTIC CELEBRATION AS PARTICIPATION IN THE PASCHAL MYSTERY

The Church from the early centuries realized Eucharistic celebration as the celebration of the passion, death and resurrection of Christ. This conviction of the early Church was already declared in the words of St. Paul. “For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.” (1 Cor 11:26).

The Magisterium of the Church always underlined the fact that Eucharist is the celebration of the Paschal Mystery. The Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches us that Jesus Christ makes the paschal mystery present in the liturgy, “In the liturgy of the Church, it is principally his own Paschal mystery that Christ signifies and makes present.” (CCC 1085). According to *Ecclesia d’ Eucharistia*, the Encyclical Letter of Pope John Paul II, Eucharist is “the perennial making present of the paschal mystery.” (EE 5).

In the East Syriac Eucharist there are explicit references to the participation in the paschal mystery. The common expression found in the Taksa (Missal) is “communion with the body and blood of Christ.” This expression means participation in the body and blood of Christ, that is, participation in the passion, death and resurrection of Christ.

Through the participation in the body and blood of Christ, a person gets identified with the mystery of Christ. St. Augustine speaks about this identification: “What lies on the altar is your mystery”. What is actually on the altar is the mystery of the body and blood of Christ, the mystery of the death and resurrection of Christ. Augustine tells us that we should participate in the death and resurrection of Christ such a way that we get identified with the mystery of Christ on the altar.

‘Sacramentum Caritatis’, the Post Synodal Apostolic Exhortation of Pope Benedict XVI, highlights the need of our participation in the paschal mystery of Christ. “The Eucharist draws us into Jesus’ act of self-oblation. More than just statically receiving the incarnate *Logos*, we enter into the very dynamic of his self-giving.” (Sacramentum Caritatis 11). This documents emphatically tells us that receiving Communion is, in fact, entering into the death of Christ. In various liturgical traditions, when communion is distributed, we find expressions like ‘Body of Christ’ and ‘Blood of Christ’. These expressions point to the need of participation in the passion, death and resurrection of Christ.

8. EUCHARIST, THE POWERHOUSE FOR THE SERVICE OF THE LEAST ONES

The Church teaches on the utmost significance of Eucharist in the life of the Church. “Eucharist is the source and summit of Christian life.” (LG 11). The success of every activity of the Church is depending very much on the celebration of the Eucharist. The Second Vatican Council’s constitution on liturgy underlines the importance of liturgy in the life of the Church. “Nevertheless the liturgy is the summit toward which the activity of the Church is directed; at the same time it is the font from which all her power flows.” (SC 10).

All Eucharistic liturgies have the rite of Fraction, which points to the sacrifice of the Lord. The body of Christ is broken for us. In the Syro-Malabar Qurbana the broken pieces of the Eucharistic bread are placed such a way that the broken end of one piece is facing the priest and the people. It may be understood as the challenge of the Eucharistic Lord inviting us to be broken for others, just like he was broken for us. Thus Eucharist is the true invitation for the kenotic service to the least ones around us. While interviewing Mother Teresa for

the cover story, Time Magazine asked her the question about the success of her life. Mother answered that the success of her life is the Mass at 6,30 a.m. Mother Teresa was well aware of the great power of Eucharist. She found the Eucharistic Lord who was broken for us as the true source of power for her service.

In the Syro-Malabar and Syro-Malankara Eucharistic celebrations, there is a particular manner prescribed for the exchange of peace. During the rite of peace-giving the people do not turn to each other and give the peace. The peace has to come from the altar. It is Christ's peace which is given to everyone in the church. Christ's peace is coming from mysteries on the altar. It is indeed the death of Christ which brought true peace to the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near in the blood of Christ. "For he is our peace, who has made us both one, and has broken down the dividing wall^[a] of hostility, by abolishing in his flesh the law of commandments and ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby bringing the hostility to an end." (Eph 2: 13-16). The peace and joy shared with the least ones should be the peace and joy from the sacrifice of the Lord. If we have only our love, peace and joy to be shared with the least ones, then it becomes superficial and our ministry degenerates into a ritual action. We should recognize Eucharist as the true powerhouse of our service of the small ones. The Eucharistic Lord who is broken for us should inspire us to be broken for the least ones around us.

PRISON MINISTRY INDIA SPECIAL TASK FORCES

Michael Francis

INTRODUCTION

Duc in Altum is a phrase used by Jesus in Luke 5:4 where Jesus instructs Simon Peter to “launch into the deep” or “put out into deep water”. Inspired by the words of St Paul: “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens” (Phil 4, 13), PMI launched Special Task Force in honour of the Ruby Jubilee and cast its new nets into deep waters by penetrating into the high security prisons to catch big sharks and whales such as terrorists, serial killers, mafia dons, death row prisoners, and so on. We are familiar with the special task forces of the superpowers, for instance, USA’s - Fleet Anti-Terrorism Security Team (FAST), Israel’s Sayeret Matkal, and India’s Commando Battalion for Resolute Action (COBRA). What is common in these special operation forces is their rigorous training, precision in reaching out their targets and perfection in realizing their goals. PMI, who has so far been serving prisoners such as the innocents, infants, first offenders, undertrials, robbers, rapists, murderers and so on now puts its net to deep waters through introducing the special task forces for a bigger catch of terrorists, mafia dons, death row prisoners, serial killers, and habitual.

CONCEPTION

On 12 December 2019, Rev. Dr. Francis along with other volunteers was waiting at the inner gate of Tihar Prison at gate number 5 to celebrate Christmas with the prisoners. While he was waiting in prayer, a police bus came near and many police personnel came out of it together with some prisoners chained on their legs, hands and waist. He felt frightened. But soon he understood that they were some hardcore criminals like terrorists or serial killers and within him there sprout the powerful message “PMI is called to seek and save them too”.

INAUGURATION

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

PATRONESS

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

DEATH ROW COMMANDOES (DRC) - LT. COL. JENNIFER JAMES

According to the National Crime Research Bureau 2019 statistics there are 400 people who are condemned to death in Indian prisons. All over the world, there are more than 20000 death row prisoners). “Let the groans of the prisoners come before thee, according to thy great power preserve those doomed to die” (Ps 79, 11). PMI has a great role to play in their reformation and redemption. With this intention PMI launched a new mission called DRC – Death Row Commandoes. Their duty is to pray and fast for the reformation of those living in death rows. The most important spiritual weapon for this mission is the Holy Mass – the offering of the Body and blood of Jesus for their transformation.

TERRORIST SAVING SQUAD (TSS) – FR MICHAEL FRANCIS

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

MAFIA REDEEMERS (MR) – FR DION ISAAC

There are innumerable mafia gangs who do smuggling, drug trafficking, human trafficking, hawala, money laundering, and all sorts of illegal atrocities. Jesus called us to be members of PMI to work for their spiritual transformation and salvation. PMI launched Mafia Redeemers (MR) to work on the transformation of mafia group.

ANTIHUMAN TRAFFICKING BRIGADIERS (ATB) – MR ASHOK KUMAR

Human Trafficking, the second largest criminal enterprise in the world, is the most barbaric crime and the postmodern slavery. Studies reveal that more than 40 million people are victims of human trafficking. Pope Francis has been giving enormous importance to the plight of millions of men, women and children who are trafficked and enslaved. On 20 January 2019 during his weekly Angelus Prayer at St Peter's Square Pope Francis invited the faithful to pray for those responsible for human trafficking and its victims. PMI is committed to liberate the victims of human trafficking and launched a new battalion of Antihuman Trafficking Brigadiers who in collaboration with other agencies will be committed to search, serve and save human trafficked victims.

SERIAL KILLERS REFORMERS (SKR) – SR FULMANI

Serial killers are typically persons who murder three or more people due to abnormal psychological drives, often sexual gratification, with the murders taking place over more than a month and including a significant period of time. Dr Harold Shipman (1946–2004), a British doctor, is the most prolific serial killer in modern history, who killed more than 250 people. He hung himself in his cell in 2004, a day before his 58th birthday. PMI launched Serial Killers Reformers to reform and regain them through our prayer and fasting for nothing is impossible for Jesus. “For the grace of God has appeared for the salvation of all men.” (Tit 2: 11).

HABITUALS’ SAVING SQUADRON (HSS)

A large number of prisoners are called habituals. They are thieves, rapists, pedophiles who are addicted to these crimes and who continue to do the same and come back again and

again to the prison. They are known as “Once in a prison, always in a prison” and are considered to be the toughest people to be reformed. Jesus on the cross reformed and redeemed a habitual prisoner, the good thief. “Today you will be with me in paradise” (Lk 23:43). Anchoring on Jesus’ last-minute saving action PMI launched Habituals’ Saving Squadron (HSS) to redeem them.

HIRED-KILLERS LIBERATING SQUADRON (HLS) - FR ALEXANDER KUREEKATTIL CMF

Hired or Contract killing is a form of murder in which one party hires another party, often called a hitman to kill a targeted person or multiple people. It involves an illegal agreement between two or more parties in which one party agrees to kill the target in exchange for some form of payment, monetary or otherwise. The total number of US murders in 2010 was 12,996. If we assume 3.2 percent of these crimes were committed on a commercial basis, we get 416 contract hits. That sounds like a lot. PMI formed a squadron called Hired-killers Liberating Squadron (HLS) to liberate and redeem those entangled in contract killings.

DRUG-TRAFFICKERS REDEEMING WING (DRW) - FR SEBASTIAN VECHUKAROTTU

Drug trafficking is a global illicit trade involving the cultivation, manufacture, distribution and sale of substances which are subject to drug prohibition laws. Drug trafficking which ravishes communities, endangers businesses, strains government institutions, and drags down the wider economy, has become a huge business, bringing in a fifth of all profits from organised crime. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime’s World Drug Report 2005 estimates the size of the global illicit drug market at US\$321.6 billion in 2003 alone.

Consumption of illegal drugs is widespread globally and it remains very difficult for local authorities to thwart its popularity. There is a good number of prisoners related to drug trafficking in major central prisons of metropolitan cities. Therefore, PMI formed Drug-traffickers Redeeming Wing (DRW) to liberate and redeem those involved in drug trafficking

PRISONERS RELEASING SQUAD (PRS) – SR ADELE KORAH & MR ANTONY JACOB

PMI has a team to work for the release of prisoners. With the assistance from PMI advocates we release many prisoners by paying their security fine. Every year PMI spends lakhs of money for releasing prisoners under the leadership of Sr Adele Korah in Bangalore and Mr. Antony Jacob in Pune. In almost all central prisons we have PMI volunteers to take care of those prisoners who have no money and nobody to release them.

PRISONERS CHILDREN EDUCATORS (PCE) – MR SANJAY PAUL

PMI has a crew to take care of the education of prisoners' children. Besides the Kolbe Home where we give free accommodation and education to prisoners' children, we help educational scholarships to more than 100 children of prisoners. We visit their homes and help them to provide their school or college fees.

PURGATORY SOULS REDEEMERS (PSR) – SR LINI SHEEJA MSC

Purgatory is the condition, process, or place of purification or temporary punishment in which the souls of those who die in a state of grace are made ready for heaven. "A soul stained by sin cannot present itself to God", Says Pope Benedict XVI. The people in hell and in heaven do not need our payers, but the people in purgatory need. Remember, that our call to PMI is a pure gift of God. We are called by God as PMI volunteers

to render our services in all the ways that we can. The call of PMI volunteers goes further in redeeming souls from purgatory. We surrender and offer up all our brokenness, the little sufferings that come on our way for the sanctification of all the souls in purgatory

FOREIGN PRISONERS EXPATRIATION (FPE) – MR JESU RAJA

There are more than 5000 foreign prisoners in Indian prisons and a good number of Indian citizens are languished in foreign prisons. PMI Foreign Prisoners' Expatriation team works for the expatriation of foreign prisoners in Indian prisons and bring back home Indian citizens from the prisons of foreign countries.

ABDUCTED PEOPLES'S REFORMERS (APR) - MRS ROSILY VARGHESE

We are all familiar with the tragic incident where a 58-year-old priest Fr. Tom Uzhunnalil SDB was kidnapped in March 2016 when terrorist raided his charity house in Aden (Yemen). The raid also killed 16 people, including four Catholic nuns who were from Missionaries of Charity congregation. He was finally released in September 2017. Many prayed for his safe release and finally God set him free. PMI launched Abducted Peoples' Reformers to pray and work for the release of many more abducted people.

ANOINTED PRISONERS CONSOLERS (APC) - SR JANCY CHAKYATH

In the prison we also find our own anointed priests and religious accused for various crimes. PMI launched Anointed Prisoners' Consolers who pray day and night for their consolation and release. We are all humans with many weaknesses. Trusting in

God and surrendering our anointed brethren into His hands we continue to pray and offer our sacrifices.

ANTICORRUPTION AND ANTIBRIBERY WARRIORS (AAW) – MR WALTER KAMBLE

Everyone in our life must have someday or somewhere faced the evil of corruption and bribery. Many good works suffer due to these evil. Many people lose hope and faith in goodness. Thus, PMI launched Anticorruption and Antibribery Warriors to pray for the salvation and redemption of all who are involved in this evil act and also for the victims of such crime.

INNOCENT PRISONERS REDEEMERS (IPR) – SR LINI SHEEJA MSC

There are many prisoners who are innocent and are in the prison for no fault of theirs. These prisoners often lose faith in the judiciary system. They suffer from mild to severe depression. God alone knows the heart of every person. PMI launched Innocent Prisoners' Redeemers to pray for them and to work for their release. In the history of PMI many innocent prisoners were set free.

JUVENILE DELINQUENTS REFORMERS (JDF) - BRO PRADEEP ANTHONY OFM

Juvenile delinquency, also known as “juvenile offending”, is the act of participating in unlawful behavior as a minor or individual younger than the statutory age of majority. For example, in the USA a juvenile delinquent is a person who is typically below 18 years. There are many reasons why minors end up in juvenile home. PMI remembers such minors and thus launched Juvenile Delinquents Reformers to pray for their conversion and release.

PSYCHIATRIC PRISONERS COMFORTERS (PPC) – MR ANTHONY JACOB

In prison there are also prisoners with psychiatric disorder. Psychiatric disorder is a mental illness which greatly disturbs ones thinking, moods, and behavior and seriously increases the risk of disability, pain, death, or loss of freedom. PMI launched Psychiatric Prisoners' Comforters to pray for such prisoners and to provide medical aid and counseling.

VICTIMS REDEEMERS (VR) – MR RAJENDRA DUSHING

PMI not only serves those who are in prison but also is greatly concerned about the victims who suffer unjustly by their offenders. Victims suffer the most and thus find very difficult to forgive their offenders. PMI launched Victims Redeemers to pray for all the victims of different crime all over the world. Especially for their change of heart and mind so that they are able to forgive their offenders and accept them as their brothers and sisters.

WAR-CRIME PRISONERS REFORMERS (WPR) - MR JUSTINE KOTTARAM

A war crime is an act that constitutes a serious violation of the laws of wars that give rise to individual criminal responsibility. For example, intentionally killing civilians or prisoners, torturing, taking hostages, raping, using child solders, etc. PMI launched War- Crime Prisoners' Reformers to pray for the conversion of such prisoners so that they may truly repent and have the courage to accept the judgment.

ANTIFASCIST PRISONERS REFORMERS (APR)

Anti-fascism is a political movement in opposition to fascist ideologies, groups and individuals. Those who follow and

promote such ideology are called antifascist. In prison there are prisoners who are antifascist. PMI launched Antifascist Prisoners Reformers to pray for their renewal and work to bring them in the main stream of society for the greater good of the human society.

BLACKMAILING PRISONERS REFORMERS (BPR)

In our society there are people who earn money, name and fame by blackmailing people and threatening them. There are prisoners who have blackmailed other to earn money or another benefit in return for not revealing, compromising or damaging information about them. PMI launched Blackmailing Prisoners Reformers to pray for such prisoners and bring about a change in their life.

BURGLARS TRANSFORMERS (BT)

Burglar is a person who has committed burglary or robbery. Burglars deprive innocent people of their goods by robbing them. PMI launched Burglars Transformers to pray for the change of life of such prisoners.

CYBERCRIME PRISONERS REDEEMERS (CPR)

Cybercrime knows no borders, either physical or virtual, cause serious harm and pose very real threats to victims worldwide. People who commit cybercrime are called cybercrime prisoners. Most of them are well educated and come from good families. It is the greed for easy and quick money that is attracting many youngsters to such crime. PMI launched Cybercrime Prisoners Redeemers to pray for such prisoners and help them renew their lives.

DACOITS REDEEMERS (DR)

Dacoit is a member of a gang of robbers who are armed with weapons. They rob in a group not only a house but also the whole village. They are known for even attacking vehicles and robbing the passengers. Many are in the prison today facing trial. PMI launched Dacoits Redeemers to pray for dacoits and to help them re-establish their lives.

ESPIONAGE PRISONERS REFORMERS (EPR)

Espionage or spying is the act of obtaining secret or confidential information from non-disclosed sources without the permission of the holder of the information. A person who commits espionage is called espionage agent or spy. In prison there are prisoners who are accused or found guilty of such crime. PMI introduced Espionage Prisoners Reformers to bring about a reformation in the lives of such prisoners by praying and working for them.

SMUGGLERS TRANSFORMERS (ST)

A smuggler is a person who smuggles or transports objects, substances, information or people, such as out of a house or building, into a prison, or across national and international borders. Smuggling is an illegal act in violation of applicable laws and regulations. Usually, monetary. PMI launched Smugglers Transformers to pray and bring about a conversion in the lives of such prisoners.

SICK PRISONERS HEALERS (SPH)

Many prisons do have physically, mentally, and spiritually sick prisoners and the causes of their sickness vary from one to another. Being sick adds more to their grievances leading to feeling of hopelessness. PMI launched Sick Prisoners Healers

to bring hope and healing to suck prisoners through prayer and medication.

SEX OFFENDERS HEALERS (SOH)

A sex offender is a person who has committed a sex crime. A person must have been motivated to commit a sex crime by one or many factors, and the greatest attack comes from the temptation to gratify the desires of flesh from the evil one. Living in the prison with guilt and shame, every offender looks for some compassion. Jesus alone shows true compassion. PMI launched Sex Offenders Healers to bring compassion and healing to our brethren who are accused of or are found guilty of sex crime.

GANGSTERS REFORMERS (GR)

A gangster is a criminal who is a member of an organized crime gang. There are local, regional, national and international gangs operating worldwide. Generally, lust for money, power, sex, name and fame draws a person in the crime world. Joining a gang gives them confidence, sense of security and an open invitation to explore the underworld. For some its too late to return and they end up either being killed by the police or rival gangs. Some end up in prison and some continue to remain safe with their money, power and influence. PMI launched Gangsters Reformers to touch the life of gangsters with the love of God and to help a willing gangster to repent and renew.

HACKERS TRANSFORMERS (HT)

A hacker is a computer expert who uses their technical knowledge for monitory or selfish gain. There are different types of hackers starting from White Hat Hackers to State/ Nation Sponsored Hackers (P). Most of the hackers are young in age. There are hackers in the prison for committing different

cybercrimes. PMI felt the need to launch Hackers Transformers to help the hackers repent and reform their lives.

HOOLIGANS REFORMERS (HR)

A hooligan is a person who is disruptive, unlawful and intentionally makes trouble or breaks law with rowdy and unruly behavior. They are similar to bullies and thugs. In most of the prisons we find hooligans for one crime or the other. PMI launched Hooligans Reformers to pray for their renewal and liberate them from the clutches of the evil one.

GENOCIDE PRISONERS REDEEMERS (GPR)

Genocide is the preplanned intentional action to eliminate a people belonging to a particular ethnic, national, racial, or religious group. Humanity has witnessed much genocide. India too has experienced bloody bath of genocide. PMI launched Genocide Prisoners Redeemers to save the lost through prayer and fasting.

LYNCHERS REFORMERS (LR)

Lynchers are a group of people who take law in their hand by pronouncing judgment on an individual or a group and execute them. There are many cases of mob lynching in India. It is rightly said that mob has no face. Lynching is a inhuman act of crime. Presently there are number of prisoners for lynching case. PMI launched Lynchers Reformers to extend spiritual and legal support for the sanctification of such prisoners.

MILITARY PRISONERS REFORMERS (MPR)

Military prisoners are usually kept in military prisons. Each unit has its own prison and every prisoner is judged guilty or innocent by Court Martial. PMI formed Military Prisoner' to

pray for every military prisoner all over the world. Prayer is the biggest channel to renew and sanctify the lives.

MURDERERS TRANSFORMERS (MT)

Life is a beautiful gift of God to every person. God is the giver of life and He alone has the right to take it back. The one who kills a person deliberately and illegally is a murderer. In every prison we will find persons facing charges of murder. Some have committed the crime and are guilty, and there are also some who are innocent but murder charge is imposed on them or they themselves owned the murder for some monetary or material gain. PMI launched Murderers Transformers to liberate such prisoners from the clutches of the evil one through prayer and support.

PEDOPHILES REFORMERS (PR)

A pedophile is a person who has a sustained sexual orientation towards children. Pedophilia is a psychiatric disorder. The International Classification of Diseases (ICD-11) defines pedophilia as “sustained, focused, and intense pattern of sexual arousal – as manifested by persistent sexual thoughts, fantasies, urges, or behaviors – involving pre-pubertal children.” PMI launched Pedophiles Reformers to help such prisoners overcome their guilt and repent for the crime committed. Through prayer and mortification every impossible mission is accomplished.

PIRATES TRANSFORMERS (PT)

Pirates are sailors who attack other ships and steal property from them. Pirates steal and rob at sea and dacoits steal and rob on land. There are some prisons in which pirates are kept. PMI launched Pirates Transformers to pray for such prisoners and bring a mighty conversion in their lives.

POLITICAL PRISONERS TRANSFORMERS (PPT)

A political prisoner is someone imprisoned for their political activity. A political prisoner is imprisoned because that person's actions or beliefs are contrary to those of his or her government. There are many political prisoners in the world. PMI launched Political Prisoners Transformers to pray for their renewal. A renewed political prisoner may bring about a positive change in the society by witnessing.

PRISON POLICE REFORMERS (PPR)

Prison Ministry India is concerned with everyone who is directly or indirectly involved with prisoners. With Prison Police who are day and night with them. Many of them are very kind and gentle with the prisoners. There are some who ill-treat them in a very inhuman way and disrespect their dignity as human persons. PMI launched Prison Police Reformers to pray for them and help them become better guardians.

TRANSFORMATION WARFARE

Transformation of hard-hearted prisoners is neither an easy task nor an impossible mission. This is a spiritual warfare, a reformation warfare, a warfare between God and Satan, good and evil, virtue and sin. "With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible" (Mt 19, 26). To do this impossible mission we follow 40 days program:

40 Holy Masses and Communion

40 Chapters of the Gospel: Luke and Mark

40 Creed

40 Rosaries

40 Divine Mercy Rosaries

40 Mortifications

4000 Glory be to the Father

4000 Thank you Jesus

If You Believe God Can. If You Believe You Can. Join Us!
Thank You. God Bless You!

PSYCHOLOGY OF REINTEGRATION

Nikita D'Souza

INTRODUCTION

Let us begin by defining what this topic entails. 'Psychology' is simply the scientific study of the human mind and behaviour, and 'reintegration' is the process of an inmate's successful, crime-free transition into the community after their release from prison to break the cycle of incarceration. Thus, the 'Psychology of Reintegration' is the scientific and behavioural component of an inmate's crime-free transition into society following their release from prison.

IMPORTANCE OF REINTEGRATION

The process of correction ends when the individual has been punished, as is the case in most criminal justice systems. It is not considered the duty of the state, but the sole responsibility of the inmates to figure their lives out after their release. Successful reintegration of an individual after they have served their time in prison, on the other hand, should be considered a crucial component of an efficient criminal justice system.

DAILY LIFE IN PRISON

Understanding their incarceration experiences is crucial to understanding why successful reintegration is so important. To the common citizen, being in prison entails spending months

or years in a cell, confined and unable to move around freely. To some extent, this is correct, but there is much more to it. In a cell with periodic food and water, inmates are left alone with their thoughts and feelings of guilt, remorse, rage, frustration, grief, and so on. What they are allowed to do and how long they are allowed to do it are both limited. They may be living in terror and worry every day because they are surrounded by hundreds of extremely dangerous people. Whether or not they deserve it, living in such conditions causes significant psychological and emotional stress which can lead to the development of anxiety, depression, and other psychological disorders, if left untreated. Some inmates, on the other hand, have likely spent most of their lives in jail and feel powerful and secure there. They would rather be powerful in prison than impotent in the outside world. In situations like this, they re-offend in order to return to prison if they are released. This is especially common among children and adolescents who spent time in juvenile detention.

BENEFITS OF REINTEGRATION

REDUCED RECIDIVISM

Reintegration programs are essential for several reasons, the most important being that it reduces recidivism. Former inmates who are unable to successfully re-enter society because they are rejected by their families, stigmatised as abominations, unable to find work, or are victims of violence are the most typical examples of recidivism. However, if they are helped to rebuild their lives after serving a long sentence in prison with the help of reintegration programs, they are less likely to re-offend.

SOCIETAL BENEFITS

This leads us to the next advantage. Reducing recidivism lowers the risk to society posed by a dangerous person being released back into the streets. If an ex-offender can earn a living and gradually return to a regular, crime-free lifestyle, they are no longer a threat to society. Therefore, a successful reintegration program improves society's safety.

Let's use the example of a thief to better understand the next benefit. A thief is convicted and sentenced to prison. After having served their time in prison, they don't lose their status as a "thief". Instead, they continue to be perceived as a threat to society, and are likely to be treated with contempt, harassed, tormented, attacked, and so on after being released. If this person is taught about money and given assistance in finding work, they may be able to demonstrate to society that they no longer require crime, or in this case, theft, to make a livelihood and can work and earn like any other citizen. In summary, if properly reintegrated, former inmates can prove that they are no longer a threat to society and reclaim their lost respect.

METHODS OF REINTEGRATION

When attempting to re-enter society, ex-offenders encounter several problems such as unemployment, substance abuse, low self-esteem, emotional stress, trauma from prison experiences, and so on. They require jobs, retraining, medical/psychological treatment, rehabilitation, legal assistance, and other services. The following are some of the techniques employed by criminal justice systems to achieve this:

JOB TRAINING

Inmates are taught about financial literacy, financial stability, basic job necessities, work etiquette, the importance of planning, the importance of avoiding illegal activity, and other topics in these programs. This gives them the tools they need to take charge of their lives and become self-sufficient. According to studies, offenders who participate in such programs in jail are 23% less likely to re-offend.

VOCATIONAL TRAINING

Several Indian prisons offer vocational training programs with the goal of strengthening an offender's will to work, sense of self-help, and spirit of collaboration by having them interact with others in a regulated atmosphere utilising a more hands-on approach. This helps them in preparing to work a regular day job to support themselves after their release.

TRANSITIONAL HOUSING

Transitional housing services provide a housing facility for people with a criminal record who are unlikely to be accepted by private housing facilities. Prices are often lower than others, making them more accessible to ex-offenders attempting to reintegrate into society.

MENTORING

Finding volunteers or family members to act as mentors during the reintegration process can be quite beneficial. Mentors can be taught to offer encouragement, advice, companionship, practical help, and other services.

REHABILITATION

Reintegration requires rehabilitation because it teaches an offender how to live a crime-free life and the advantages of doing so. It teaches them about societal norms and why they exist. It teaches them empathy while also helping them understand where they went wrong and why avoiding crime is so important. It encourages them to aspire to be responsible members of society while also discouraging them from reoffending.

ROLE OF PSYCHOLOGY IN REINTEGRATION

While an offender faces a great deal of social stress upon re-entry, they also deal with a lot of psychological and emotional stress, which requires treatment. To overcome their feelings of anxiety, despair, low self-esteem, anger problems, trauma, and other mental health concerns, they require the assistance of mental health specialists such as therapists, and the support of their family and friends. Some practices that are integral to a reintegrating inmate's psychological and emotional well-being are listed below:

MEDICAL DIAGNOSIS

Research indicates that while not all mentally ill patients are dangerous, some mental disorders cause people to engage in violent behaviour. These disorders are characterised by delusions, paranoia, hallucinations, cognitive impairments, and other symptoms. All these harmful symptoms can be kept under control if they are appropriately diagnosed and treated. Inmates with mental illnesses face an uphill battle while trying to access much-needed medical help and are categorised as people who belong in prison. They must be treated more like patients and less like criminals because providing them with the necessary medical care can keep them from committing crimes.

THERAPY

As we saw previously, incarceration can lead to a variety of psychological disorders. While depression, anxiety, and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) are commonly seen, a recent study revealed that in more severe cases approximately 30% of inmates suffer from personality disorders such as Multiple Personality Disorder, Antisocial Personality Disorder, Borderline Personality Disorder, and others. These inmates deserve psychological help. To treat such disorders, therapeutic approaches, sometimes paired with medicine, are commonly used. Some examples are cognitive-behavioural therapy and mindfulness-based therapies.

SUPPORT GROUPS

There is no one better to seek support from than someone who is in the same situation as you. The best way to get this support is in support groups, where people facing the same problems come together, share their experiences and challenges, and provide each other with support. Reintegrating inmates require the support of others in the same situation to feel understood and to be able to deal with the challenges that come with reintegration.

ROLE OF FAMILY IN REINTEGRATION

After being released from jail, a prisoner is completely reliant on his or her family for housing, financial and emotional support, and most crucially-acceptance. After being incarcerated, a large proportion of the prison population loses family support and has no one to turn to when they are released, often causing recidivism. Ex-offenders who have adequate family support have a better probability of reintegrating successfully than those who do not.

CONCLUSION

Now that we've covered a wide range of topics, let me emphasize that not all inmates are 'crazy' or even dangerous. Some people end up in prison for a variety of reasons, including doing whatever it takes to feed their families, having underlying psychological issues, being falsely accused and then becoming dangerous to survive in prison, and other factors. The majority of them have the potential to return to being productive citizens but are unable to do so because of how society treats them or because they do not receive adequate medical care. Many of these individuals can benefit from an effective reintegration program to help them make a crime-free transition back into society after their release from prison.

REFERENCES

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/>

<https://www.verywellmind.com/>

<https://div12.org/>

<https://www.samhsa.gov/>

<https://www.tandfonline.com/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FAqf0sDkcz0>

A STUDENT PERSPECTIVE ON PRISONS IN INDIA

Aditi Pathak, Anshika Mary Mathew

INTRODUCTION

“No one truly knows a nation until one has been inside its jails. A nation should not be judged by how it treats its highest citizens but its lowest ones.” – Nelson Mandela. Since decades prisons have been seen as places of punishment and humiliation. As years passed, the degree of punishments became even more inhuman making it a place of fear and isolation. This led to serious mental trauma which went against the very purpose of rehabilitation. The incarceration rates have been increasing tremendously in India and this raised a very important question on how well we could reintegrate the convicts into the normal society. It is the collective responsibility of society, the judicial system and the individuals to make sure of their secure and safe future.

OVERCROWDING

According to NCRB data – Prison Statistics India 2019 report, the occupancy rate of prisons in India has been increasing drastically, though the number of prisons has still remained the same as per the report. There are 1,330 prisons with an actual capacity of 4,03,739 prisoners. But, at the end of the year, this number has increased to 4,78,600. There is an increase of 2.69% of prisoners across the country. Though the total budgetary allocation for prisons was 6818.1 crore, the actual

expenditure was 5958.3 crores. This not only shows gaps in expenditure but also highlights the lack of an empirical research.

CELLULAR JAIL

Certain prisons in India seem to be screaming silently about the horrors going on inside the metal bars. These prisons have tales that shake the very roots of ethics in Indian jurisprudence. The Cellular Jail of Port Blair, for example, has been notorious for its name as it used to confine prisoners into separate cells cutting them off from society pushing them deep into solitary confinement, causing severe depression and rage¹. Similarly, other jails in India are home to severe shortages in funding leading to instances where prisoners and inmates, regardless of being under-trials, could often be forced to clean toilets with mud and experience daily water shortages. Overcrowding is rampant and, in some prisons, inmates are forced to sleep in shifts. This brings us to a dead end the definition of prisons being rehabilitation centres².

OPEN PRISON SYSTEM

The need of the hour thus can be a shift in focus from a confinement and torturous strategy of “punishing” to a concept focusing on freedom. One of the classic examples to this is the “Open prison system” as seen in Rajasthan since 1955. It has been proven that not only has it reduced crime but surprisingly the inmates have even wanted to extend their stay in prisons, as this system has helped them to stay connected with society and enabled them to discover a new identity for

¹ Chaudhary, P. (2017, July 4). Inside 5 of India's Deadliest Prisons. India Times. <https://www.indiatimes.com/news/india/they-are-supposed-to-be-rehabilitation-centres-but-these-5-prisons-turn-every-prisoners-life-into-a-nightmare-234551.html>

² Rath, B. (2017, July 26). Why We Need to Talk about the Condition of India's Prisons. The Wire. <https://thewire.in/uncategorised/india-prison-conditions>

themselves. An open prison system is based more on an approach of trust than punishment where they believe that the prisoners can be kept with minimal security and maximum freedom. The open prison concept works on reverse psychology of nudging the criminals to become responsible citizens.³

EMPLOYMENT SCHEMES

Another way of dealing with prisoners is by introducing them to various avenues of employment which they would have had their hands on if not in jail. This would not only increase their skills but also make them feel inclusive in society. In Tihar Jail, 36 factories have been set up with work units where they indulge in carpentry, culinary skills, making of LED bulbs, etc. There could be an introduction of authentication tags similar to GI tags, where each jail competes for authenticity of the item of their respective skills. This not only brings multi-skilling among the captives but also gives them a psychological shift from the traumas of their critical past.

HUMANNESS

It is time for India to shift its focus from building lesser walls and following lesser torturous practices of considering criminals as inhuman to reforming the definition of prison as real correction centres that give them a second chance of being better humans. It is the collective responsibility of society along with other pillars of justice to accentuate the reformation and rehabilitation process of an individual. Crimes usually cannot be justified. Yet, cutting prisoners off from normalcy would

³ TEDx Talks (2018, July 9). Open Prison System is a game changer. | Smita Chakraborty | TEDxMansarovarPark [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s02dA0pdDgg>

and has led to worse case scenarios, resulting in a net-negative impact on society. The other side of the coin, however, is integration. Integrating the criminals and giving them skill-based placements through job opportunities could make them better humans and render them as assets to the already burdened prison system as well as making them great contributors to the economy of the country.

KOLBE HOME - TRANSFORMING LIVES

Bro Pradeep Anthony OFM

INTRODUCTION

Kolbe Home, an initiation of Prison Ministry India under the leadership of Fr Sebastian Vadakumpadan, is a haven for prisoners' children. It was founded in 2015 at Carmelaram in Bangalore. The reason for this initiative was the result of his experience of rejection of a prisoner's child by a well-established boys' boarding. Satyaseva Catechist Sisters take care of the children and it is under it runs under the direction of Fr Francis Kodiyan MCBS, the cofounder of Prison Ministry India and the national coordinator.

FIRST STEP OF KOLBE HOME

As the stone which was rejected became the corner stone (Ps 118:22), likewise the rejected ones from the society become the focus of attraction in the eyes of Jesus. Yes, the rejected stones in this context are mainly prisoners' children. Presently there are 25 children in Kolbe Home. These children come mainly from broken families, with a single parent, having no moral principles or ideals, and have witnessed in broad daylight the criminal activities done by their own parents. They carry a guilt which is not theirs. Many associate them with the criminal activities that their parents have committed. Ironically the society and their neighbors stigmatize this guilt more deeply into them. Hence the first step of Kolbe home is to enable

them to come out of these unhealthy guilt feelings. And then they are helped to boost their own self-esteem in a dignified manner.

COUNSELOR BECOMING COUNSELEE

It is very mysterious and yet very beneficial to reflect on the words of the Lord Jesus who said: 'I thank You Father Lord of heaven and earth because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants.' (Mt 11:25) When Fr Francis Kodiyan, the co-founder the PMI, asked me to help all the children to set their goals, I borrowed the principles of Dr APJ Abdul Kalam. According to him to achieve our dreams we need 4 essential requirements, which are: 1) Having a strong desire 2) Acquiring Knowledge 3) Hard work 4) Perseverance. However, when I had met most of them personally, I really understood that greater things are revealed to children by God. Their wounded self reflects the wounded self of Christ Himself. No wonder the Lord Jesus also said: 'Unless you change and become like children, you will not enter the Kingdom of God.' (Mt 18/3) Therefore, while teaching I am learning and while counseling, I am becoming a counselee.

TRANSFORMING LIVES

The role of Kolbe home is to transform the personality of each child. Striking the balance between absolute freedom and absolute authority is the key to transforming the life of a child. Most importantly we should remember that each child is unique and different, that is why more than uniformity, the focus should be on unity in diversity. Each child's background, psychological, social and emotional needs are different. Hence, the greatest challenge lies in striking the balance not in general but rather in particular. In other words, each part should be

interconnected to make a perfect whole which implies that attention should be paid to each child according to his or her needs. To bring out the best from a child we need to really listen, talk, play, be with the child and above all, love the child and then at times there requires also disciplining of the child as scripture tells: 'what child is there whom a parent does not discipline.' (Heb 12:7b) Therefore, the time table and the rules of the house make the child disciplined as well as create in them a conscience of responsibility. Thus, it requires not only theoretical knowledge but also experiential knowledge of a child in particular. After doing all these only, we will be able to assess both the weakness and strength of the child.

FORMING THE PERSONALITY

There are three aspects which contribute to a personality. They are: i) Choice ii) Heredity and iii) Environment. Since several centuries many intellectuals and psychologists have been caught in the debate between nature and nurture. To name an ancient philosopher who stands on the side of nature is Plato. Plato profusely states that man has already innate ideas. Nature implies heredity, in this school of thinking geniuses are born. The idea of aristocracy comes from this school of thinking. Aristotle, the student of Plato, took the side of nurture, for him man develops his personality by seeing and experiencing one's ambience. Later on, John Lock follows this school of thinking. Thus, nurture implies our environment and surroundings. In this school of thinking our personality is formed by our surroundings. They hold that geniuses are not born but made. I would like to stress on even another aspect too where, each human being is given free will by God which means a choice is to be made of what he or she wants. From the beginning of the human race God gifted human beings with the faculty of free will. A choice is what we are called to

make and we become what we choose consciously and conscientiously. As Christians we are called to imitate Christ and His mother who always made their will to align with the will of God.

CONCLUSION

Kolbe Home aims at transforming the personalities of children by working on all these areas holistically and thus contributing to the integral human development of the children. It provides ample opportunities to change their environment in the best possible way. It provides nutritious food, good shelter and all the facilities possible. We are also conducting different games, various competitions and science exhibitions consistently in order to help the children to discover in themselves their own untapped potentials. Thus, we enable them to transform their lives.

FROM KAMATHIPURA TO NEW YORK SHWETHA KATTI'S REMARKABLE JOURNEY

Sr Lini Sheeja MSC

Kamathipura is an infamously known red-light area located at Grant Road, Mumbai. This was formerly called 'Lal Bazar' during the time of the British government for being the oldest prostitutes' area in South Mumbai since 1795. Women of various age groups are involved in flesh trade here. Many are trafficked and brought here from West Bengal, Nepal and Bangladesh. There are millions of real stories to be told about the girls and women from Kamathipura. This is a known place where women have sex for money and they are considered as garbage of society, immoral people, but for me, Kamathipura is a land of tears of girl children, young girls and women. Ms Shwetha, the heroin of this article has a story to tell us. Can we walk with her to know and feel the pains of Kamathipura women and the journey of Shwetha from Kamathipura to New York?

BORN IN BROTHEL HOUSE

Shweta, born and raised in Kamathipura, was the oldest of three daughters. She grew up in a brothel until the age of 16 in an environment where abuse and confinement of women was common. Shwetha was raised by commercial sex workers. Her mother used to go for work at 8.30am in the morning and returned by 7pm in the evening. It was normal life for her until

she was raped for the first time. She went to a Marathi Municipal school where her friends called her cow-dung and black bamboo which affected her self-esteem so badly that she was unable to talk to anyone. She was so afraid even to utter a word. She was afraid that people would laugh at her for any word she may utter and any action she did.

GET OUT OF THIS PLACE

All of us have close friends with whom we share all of ourselves. We have friends who try to lift us up. Our friends help us to realize our dreams. It was the same with Shwetha as she was close to Ms Radha, a commercial sex worker, who came to her one day while watching TV and asked whether she would like continue to remain in this red-light area, a place of sorrows and stigma, a place of weeping and moaning after men go away. “Do you want to end up like us? What do you want in your life? If you want to get out of this place, education is the only option you have. We don’t have options and chances in our lives, but you have. Take advantage of it. Get out of this place and make your life. Become what you want to become. Take the opportunity right now. You will get this TV; you will get fridge and even home theatre later in your life when you realize your dreams. For which you need to think of your life seriously right now”. Although Shwetha didn’t take these words too seriously at that moment, but gradually it brought a change in her life and attitude.

WILL I BE SEXUALLY ABUSED THIS NIGHT TOO!

Shwetha was living with her mother and step-father. She had witnessed her mother getting beaten up every day by this stepfather and the misery left them with sleepless nights. Her father wanted her to take up no different business as a child but mother stood strongly not to send her for sex work.

Shwetha never had a peaceful night as a child as she was in fear and trembling. Every evening while returning from school, her heart palpitated thinking what would happen to her that night. Whether her step-father would sexually abuse her that night too? “Will he beat me up if I don’t say yes to his fleshly cravings”? With all these fear and misery Shwetha wanted to get out from the brothel house to a good fortune.

DREAM TO FLY HIGH

In 2012, Shwetha joined Kranti, an NGO that empowers girls from Mumbai’s red-light areas to become agents of social change. Kranti gives vulnerable women opportunity to talk about their identity, to talk about who they are and where they come from. Shwetha could for the first time talk about herself to someone. With firm conviction to focus on her studies and achieve her dreams, Shwetha moved to Kranti, a shelter home, together with other 12 girls, which became her family. It was there that Shwetha started to love herself and believed that she was beautiful and wonderful. After finishing her intermediate examinations, she heard the staff saying that they wanted to send the girls to America to pursue their higher studies. When Shwetha was 12 years old she had the dream of flying to America for her higher studies. As soon as she heard the staff talking about America, she ran to them and blurted out her desire to go to America. She had the full freedom to approach them as the staff and the girls were like a family. The staff immediately agreed to send her.

FROM KAMATHIPURA TO NEW YORK

As Shwetha’s English was not fluent, Kranti sent her for English classes and to travel within the country so as to get exposed to various opportunities. Shwetha travelled to many states, participated in various workshops on sex education, gender

and equality and public speaking. Kranti also helped her to come out of her trauma and to start believing in herself. Meanwhile she applied for her passport and initially couldn't get through TOEFL. It took 10 months to get her passport and through a friend whom she had met in a previous conference she got full tuition scholarship. Her VISA was kept pending. Just one hour before her flight she got her VISA in the hand. When she boarded her dream flight Shwetha couldn't believe herself. Tears of joy were rolling down and wetting the seat.

CONCLUSION

Born in one of Mumbai's biggest red-light districts, Kamathipura, Shwetha was sexually abused by men and she blamed herself for it. Despite all setbacks, she still garnered the courage to dream big and pursue higher education in America. With her determination, she secured admission to New York's Brad College in 2013 on scholarship. I wish and pray that many PMI volunteers would reach out to these lost girls and women to help them realize their dreams.

**PMI DIOCESAN DIRECTORS' TRAINING
PROGRAM 2021
REFORM TO REINTEGRATE
Sr Amala DC**

INTRODUCTION

The PMI Diocesan Directors' Training Program was held from 02-06 August 2021. Fifty volunteers participated from various dioceses across the country. Fr Francis Kodiyan MCBS warmly welcomed Most Rev Bishop Allwyn D'Silva, all the dignitaries and the participants. His Excellency Most Rev Allwyn D'Silva inaugurated the Diocesan Directors' Training Program.

BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS OF PRISON MINISTRY INDIA (PMI)

Most Rev Allwyn D'Silva underlined that Prison Ministry is not a social work, but a Biblical entity. As we are one in God's eyes, we should never shirk doing what is good, for no one is beyond redemption. Prisoners must not be condemned, but encouraged and supported to return to their families. Anchoring on Isaiah 32:18, he reiterated that unless the world, society and our church are transformed by prayer, devotion to Jesus, fasts and sacrifice, the face of the earth may not change for the better.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Fr Francis Kodiyan MCBS highlighted the activities and style of function of Prison Ministry India. He emphasized that Jesus,

who liberated captives, sought and saved the lost is the founder of PMI. He reminded that the motto of Prison Ministry is b

BE A LOVE BOMB - a bomb not to kill but to save the lost and broken-hearted. He highlighted the eightfold path of prisoners' reintegration: Reaching out, Release, Repentance, Reconciliation, Reformation, Rehabilitation, Reintegration and Redemption.

NO ONE IS BEYOND REDEMPTION

Sr Lini Sheeja MSC, PMI former national secretary dwelt on the 3Rs - Release, Reformation and Rehabilitation. She emphasized the Eightfold Path for prisoner's transformation, highlighting how Jesus had gone in search of the broken, the rejected, lost and sinful.

3R THEORY

Fr Varghese Karippery focused on the 3R Theory – Release, Renewal and Rehabilitation of a Prisoner. Jesus Christ and St Paul had applied a similar theory 2000 years ago. Isaiah 14:31 invites us to build up hope, not revenge; forgiveness will lead to self-transformation.

MINISTRY INSIDE PRISON

Sr Adele Korah pointed out that, “We have to enter prisons with the right attitude to heal, re-kindle and instill hope in the lives of prisoners”. While sharing her experiences with prisoners, she highlighted the importance of active sports and how it impacted the lives of Juvenile prisoners.

MINISTRY OUTSIDE PRISON

Fr Benny Pachannal, Assistant Coordinator, explained the various services rendered for the rehabilitation of reformed

prisoners outside prisons. Over the years, the prison ministry expanded and built 4 rehabilitation centres for men, 5 for women and 9 homes for prisoners' children. The Research and Documentation Centre conducts training and awareness programs, arrange conferences and meetings at unit, state and regional levels; and jubilee celebrations as well with active participation at Diocesan Levels.

PMI RUBY JUBILEE PROJECTS

Sr Amala, national secretary highlighted the Ruby Jubilee Celebration, Inauguration of PMI Ruby Jubilee and Launching of PMI Ruby Jubilee Projects. PMI launched 40 Special Task Forces, convened Re-Awakening Retreat, Burning Bush Spiritual Bouquets, and Incessant Intercessory Invocation for the Incarcerated; opened 3 homes for prisoners' children, and released 4 books. Other ruby jubilee projects include 40 Special Task Forces, 400 Scholarships to Prisoners' Children, 400 Released Prisoners, 40 Houses for Released Prisoners, 4000 PMI Volunteers.

MILESTONES OF PMI

Fr Francis Kodiyan MCBS spoke on the Milestones of PMI conceptualised by Frs. Varghese and Francis at St Thomas Ap Seminary Kottayam Kerala in 1981 such as constructing rehabilitation centres, homes for prisoners' children, prison quarters ministry and Launching of Crimino-Social and Psycho-Spiritual Journal and Prison Voice, PMI monthly. The recent milestones are releasing of the PMI Documentary Film by Lavy Pinto, blessing of Reformatory Research and Documentation Centre, and Van Thuan Home, Bengaluru, launching of PMI Special Task forces, Online Retreat, Burning Bush spiritual Banquet, Incessant Intercessory Invocation for the Incarcerated Worldwide and many more.

CENTRAL REGION, MAHARASHTRA STATE, PUNE DIOCESE

Fr Wilfred spoke on the roles & duties of Diocesan Directors. He explained that a director should be simple, humble, have potential, be open to ideas, have good judgement, be co-operative, be filled with the Holy Spirit, be genuine and empathetic; have leadership qualities but most importantly should be a prayer warrior.

PMI SPECIAL TASK FORCES

Fr Michael Francis underlined the fact that the Special Task Forces were launched after spending hours in Eucharistic Adoration and Contemplation to address and save terrorists, mafia dons, death row prisoners, serial killers and habituals. He elaborated on how St Therese of Lisieux, at the tender age of 14, by offering Holy Masses and mortifications, redeemed a hard-core triple murderer, who repented in tears while embracing his capital punishment.

NORTH EASTERN REGION

Sr Jobina informed that there are a total of 77 Prisons in the North East Region. The 14 North Eastern Units of Prison Ministry India along with the collaboration of C.R.I., visit prisons, interact, assist and counsel them in developing, empowering and motivating them. Skill training, Awareness Programmes, Motivational Talks, Health Awareness were given; and Medical Camps and Libraries have been set up.

PMI STATE DIOCESAN & LOCAL UNITS

Fr Shaji Stephen reiterated the Vision & Mission Statement of PMI with the 3R's - Renew, Reform and Rehabilitate Prisoners and integrate them into the mainstream of Society, taking care of the overall welfare and integral development of prisoners

and their families with the hope of creating a crimeless and peaceful Society. He also explained about the Core Executive Body and the duties of the Chairman, coordinator, secretary etc.

PMI SPIRITUAL PRINCIPLES

Joseph, John the Baptist and Jesus were all innocent, yet they were put in prison under false accusations. Pope Francis, visited the prison on a Maundy Thursday for the first time and washed the feet of women as well. What a noble act! He appealed to those in authority to abolish Death Penalty. Sr. Inigo wound up saying that Prison Ministry requires a heart to serve as it's based on three important spiritual attributes: The 3Cs: Compassion, Commitment and Creative Action.

PMI ECONOMY

Sr Amala DC enumerated the 5 Funds of PMI: Prayer, Suffering, Penance, Self-Sacrifice and Material Funds. she informed how funds were raised in PMI and requested everyone present to be pro-active in doing their best to assist collect funds for PMI. She highlighted BDP, the Bank of Divine Providence - begging is a part of the PMI lifestyle as it does not depend on foreign contribution.

INTERCESSORY PRAYER

Rowena Luis based her talk on four principles of Raising a Victory Methodology: Believe - Rom 10:9-10; Rom 4:18-21, Pray - Bar 5:56, Rejoice - Phil 4:4, and Testify. She said that David used 5 stones, which she referred to as faith declarations to defeat the evil one, Goliath. The verses in Heb10:32 and Rev 12:11 refer to God's promises. She also said quoting Gal 6:9 that we should not be weary of doing good and walk in love.

REFORMED PRISONER

Reni George, a redeemed prisoner narrated his journey from being a condemned prisoner to a completely transformed person by the grace of God. He mentioned that the first person to receive the capital punishment was Jesus Christ. Reni was lucky to have received redemption in his lifetime. Prison life helped him to carry out the mission of Prison Fellowship. He runs a home for prisoners' children whom he calls God's children.

PMI REHABILITATION CENTRES

Sr Clara spoke about Jeevodaya which was set up on 22 June 1995 for women released from prison, rescued from the flesh trade, rejected and abandoned. These helpless women were welcomed with love and affection, acceptance and forgiveness, reconciliation with God, self, family and society; and are integrated to become one big family living in harmony and dignity. They are also taught various skills like tailoring, cooking, candle making etc., and take up small duties in the house to become self-reliant.

PMI HOMES FOR PRISONERS' CHILDREN

Sr Basil said Kolbe Home, named after the patron of PMI, St Maximilian Kolbe, is a haven for prisoners' children. The children of Kolbe Home are qualified through education, spiritual, psychological and social training along with parental affection. To further develop the children's skills, it provides ample opportunities like meditation, exercise, community prayers, scripture and spiritual reading.

VALEDICTORY FUNCTION

Mrs Vinita Britto began the programme by invoking God's blessings. Fr Francis Kodiyan welcomed Most Rev Allwyn

D'Silva, the speakers and PMI volunteers. Abraham Varghese did a wonderful appraisal of the DDTP. He appreciated the extremely professional manner in which the Training was imparted to the participants. Most Rev Allwyn D'Silva released the DDTP Collage, Souvenir and awarded certificates to all Participants. His Excellency, in his message congratulated all the participants of DDTP and encouraged them to be good and committed PMI warriors; and acknowledged the combined efforts of the organisers and resource speakers for diligently and effectively training the participants. Sr Amala proposed vote of thanks. The program came to an end with a prayer by Jennifer D'sa.

PENTECOST WITH PRISONERS: LIFE IN THE SPIRIT CONFERENCE

Vinita J Britto

Prison Ministry India celebrated Pentecost with Prisoners and PMI volunteers on 22 May 2021. The Celebration consisted first of all, in 24 hours of Eucharistic Adoration and a Life in the Spirit Conference from 10.00 to 12.30 in the morning. The theme was “All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:4). The goals of this celebration were: 1) Sanctification of Prisoners Worldwide, 2) Sanctification of PMI Volunteers and 3) Eradication of Covid19 from mankind. This is a brief report of the PMI Pentecost celebration.

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION

The Eucharistic Adoration began early morning at 12.00AM. Every PMI state unit, PMI Special Task Forces and PMI rehabilitation centres was given half an hour slot to pray for the purification of prisoners worldwide. Following is the list of the groups who participated in the Eucharistic Adoration.

LIFE IN THE SPIRIT CONFERENCE

Sr Amala DC, PMI National Secretary anchored the Life in the Spirit Conference beginning with the announcement of the program. Sr Lini Sheeja MSC, PMI Former National Secretary, initiated the hymn, Come, Holy Spirit. She said that Jesus appeared to the Disciples when the doors of the house

where the disciples had assembled were locked. Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you”. When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit”. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them. In Pentecost 2021 under lockdown, we are in a similar kind of situation. Through the Healing Power of the Eucharist and through the Loving Power of the Eucharist and through the Forgiving Power of the Eucharist, we receive Jesus whom we know and from whom we ask for help. Therefore, we are to storm heavens to ask for His mercy, humble ourselves and seek His help. She surrendered Most Rev Dr. Allwyn D’Silva, Most Rev. Dr. Anil Couto and Rev. Dr. Augustine Valooran and the participants for the anointing of the Holy Spirit.

WELCOME

Rev Dr Francis Kodiyan MCBS, National Coordinator PMI addressed and welcomed Most Rev Dr Anil Couto, Most Rev. Dr. Allwyn D’Silva, Rev. Dr. Augustine Valooran, Bro Conrad Kitt, Mrs. Falguni Hiren Mehta and the participants. Rev. Fr. Kodiyan in his address stated that as at the first Pentecost the universal Church is eagerly waiting for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. On the 40th Prison Ministry India Ruby Jubilee, Pentecost with prisoners is our quest to search, seek and save the lost. The 24-Hour Eucharistic Adoration started early morning at 12.00 AM on 22nd May and concluded at 11.30 PM with Holy Mass. Half an hour slot was allotted to PMI volunteers in each State, Special Task Forces, and Rehabilitation Centers. Pentecost is a graceful occasion to sanctify PMI volunteers, prisoners worldwide and the whole mankind. Let’s thirst for an overflow of the fruits, gifts, and charisms of the Holy Spirit and intercede for the eradication of Covid-19 Pandemic from this world. The Life in the Spirit Conference is to re-motivate and dedicate ourselves to search, seek and save

the lost. Fr Kodiyan reminded the participants about Rev. Dr. Allwyn D Silva, who is the good shepherd that serves the lost and wounded that they may have life in abundance. Rev. Dr. Anil Couto has exceptional calibre as a shepherd. He offered to Prison Ministry India a three storeyed building in the North Region for use. He is filled with the gifts of the Holy Spirit. He introduced Rev. Dr. Augustine Valooran, V.C. who is the Director of the Divine Retreat Center, Muringoor which is the largest in Asia. He thanked Bro Conrad Kitts, Mrs. Falguni Hiren Mehta and Fr. Rajendra Kumar, interim secretary, Sr. Amala Sabbalarajulu, National Secretary, Sr Lini Sheeja former National Secretary, Sr Shony, Antoinette Fernandez (Pune), Mrs. Rowena Luis, Maharashtra State Secretary and Vinita Britto (Pune) for their help.

HOLY FIRE – HOLY SPIRIT

Most Rev Dr Allwyn D'Silva, PMI Chairman, referred to the short story of a little girl who visited her grandmother on a beautiful Sunday morning. She walked in the flower garden and tried to open a flower bud with her own delicate hands but the petals were broken. She said I don't understand grandma, because when the flower is fully bloomed it is beautiful. Grandmother replied that it was because God works from inside out. This is what happens at Pentecost. The disciples in the upper room were waiting for Him. We are nothing without Him. He explained the 3 classic symbols of the Holy Spirit – Breath for Life; Fire for Power; and the Descending Dove for Peace. Let us, therefore, ask the Holy Spirit to work from within the Prisoners' life. Sr Shony thanked Bishop Allwyn for his message on the Holy Spirit. She also introduced Most Rev Dr Anil Couto, Archbishop of Delhi.

DESCENDING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Most Rev. Dr. Anil Couto, Archbishop of Delhi thanked the organizers for the Life in the Spirit Conference. He thanked God for Prison Ministry India and the work with prisoners, both inside and outside the prison walls. He emphasized that all decisions to enter into the area of work comes from the Holy Spirit and that the Holy Spirit has been working in the hearts of people. Together, we will be marking the Day of Pentecost with the sound of hope, prayer and praise. Pentecost calls for the unity of the Church that is our end. As the united body of Christ every church is to stand before God and intercede for our nation. United Christian Prayer for India (UCPI) is a prayer movement for the country with the sound of hope, prayer and praise - one sound one Hope. The Holy Spirit refers to bring order: “Veni Sancte Spiritus” Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of Thy faithful and enkindle in them the fire of Thy love. The coming of the Holy Spirit caused construction and brought transformation. Acts 2:44 tells us, all who believed were together and had all things in common. In the power of the Holy Spirit, they were listening and proclaiming the Gospel to everyone; Model: Small Christian Communities (SCCs).

Pentecost marks the birth of the Church and leads us into the mission of our calling. Matthew 3:13-17 speaks of the Christ's Baptism in the river Jordan. And Mark 1:10 tells us - And a voice came from heaven, “You are my Son, the Beloved; and with You, I am well pleased”. John 1:12 says, we are called to be children of God through faith in Jesus Christ. In John 14:15 Jesus reminds us “If you love me, you will keep my commandments. He has given us the commandment “Love one another as I have loved you” with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. Through the parable of the

Good Samaritan, the whole world has been evangelized. Non-Christians have come to help in times of Covid-Pandemic; Inter-religious prayers are held to help out and reach out; The presence of Sikhs in Langars is felt all throughout the world. We are the witnesses as our unique identity is of the Holy Spirit.

HISTORY OF THE CHURCH

John 16:20 says your sorrow will turn into joy and in 1 Corinthians 12-14 St. Paul speaks of the power of the Holy Spirit. Prison Ministry India carries out the Gospel of Jesus Christ in Matthew 25:36 “I was in prison and you visited me . . .” 1 John 3:11. This is the message you have heard from the beginning: we should love one another. Extend love beyond our community, to those who have hurt us, wounded us to share in the Trinitarian life. Pope Francis in his Apostolic Discourse said that love will empower coldness! Keep the fire alive in your hearts and never allow it to diminish. Set your minds on the things above. When we set our eyes on Him, we are better able to serve Him. Prison Ministry India flows from compassion. And service ultimately flows through the power of the Holy Spirit above to his precepts, promises and spiritual power. Mrs Antoinette Fernandez thanked Most Rev. Dr. Anil Couto, Archbishop of Delhi, for the inspiring and motivating talk on the Holy Spirit. Further, in light of the scriptures, she developed on the thought that Zechariah speaks of the Holy Spirit, One Sound One Hope of the Holy Spirit – primarily in keeping the commandments. Jesus commanded the apostles not to leave Jerusalem but wait for the gift of the Holy Spirit.

ANOINTING OF HOLY SPIRIT

Sr. Lini welcomed Rev. Dr. Augustine Vallooran VC, Director of the Divine Retreat Centre. She explained that Rev. Fr.

Augustine guides people to experience God's Spirit in their lives. She further said that we are in a similar situation as when the disciples experienced the coming of the Holy Spirit in the locked upper room.

Rev. Dr. Augustine Vallooran spoke of the Prison Ministry as a blessed Ministry. He called to mind the words of the Lord saying "I was in Prison and you visited me". Psalmist: Send forth your spirit and renew the face of the earth – touch all those in prisons and the volunteers. May the face of the earth, truly be renewed in times of trouble, when everyone else has failed us. We pray, to welcome Jesus through his mercy – The Divine Mercy Chaplet.

INFLAMING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Br Conrad Kitt, DRC & Mrs. Falguni Hiren Mehta, DRC Hymn: You were healed, the miracle worker, light in the darkness, we worship you. Pray for the anointing of the Holy Spirit. I will send the Holy Spirit from the Father believing in the mercy of God. Asking that the infinite mercy may descend upon all of us. Faith, Hope and Love – Luke 4: 16-21. When he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has anointed me to bring the good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." And he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. Then he began to say to them, "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing".

Lord, we pray that you would anoint us with the Holy Spirit as we meditate on the good news: 1. Holy Spirit, help us to recognize Jesus so that the eyes of our hearts be opened to experience His presence within us. The Lord is truly present, grant that we may recognize Him in everyone we serve. Eternal Father ...In atonement for our sins and those of the whole world. 1x10 For the sake of His sorrowful Passion, Have mercy on us and on the whole world. Hymn: Hosanna in the Highest. I see a generation.

2. Jesus proclaimed liberty to Prisoners when he claimed that he came "to set prisoners free" – from the strong bars and thick walls – Jesus, we see your face your broken body in them. Paul and Silas were praying, there was an earthquake and they were set free. Break the chains that they experience the Holy Spirit coming upon them. Eternal Father ...In atonement for our sins and those of the whole world 1x10 For the sake of His sorrowful Passion, Have mercy on us and on the whole world.

3. God's spirit is in my heart He has called me and set me apart. This is what I have to do, what I have to do. He sent me to give the Good News to the poor, tell prisoners that they are prisoners no more, tell blind people that they can see - you healed the blind beggar who was blind for 38 years, you healed the sick on the streets of Jericho, the one who waited for you for 8 years. Lord, heal us with your power, heal and anoint the people waiting for you in this Pandemic. Eternal Father ...In atonement for our sins and those of the whole world 1x10 For the sake of His sorrowful Passion, Have mercy on us and on the whole world.

4. You were touched with the Holy Spirit. Pour the Holy Spirit on the volunteers that they experience healing. Thank you Lord the Holy One for being there for us. Let the oppressed be set

free of lust, despair and from the pressures of sin. Have mercy on us and all the prisoners Eternal Father ...In atonement for our sins and those of the whole world 1x10 For the sake of His sorrowful Passion, Have mercy on us and on the whole world.

5. Oh deliver, come and save us, Oh deliver, come and heal us, when we call, our deliverer and healer. Praise you Jesus. Jesus looked at the people who are committed to serve our brothers and sisters in prison. Deliverance, liberation, healing is come, love, joy, peace, kindness, comfort that the Lord anoint us with the Holy Spirit. External Father ...In atonement for our sins and those of the whole world 1x10 For the sake of His sorrowful Passion, Have mercy on us and on the whole world.

May the power of love and understanding, be upon them. Receive the blessing and anointing of the Holy Spirit to empower you in the Holy Spirit of love. O Sacrament most holy, O Sacrament Divine, all praise and all thanksgiving, Be every moment Thine. Sr. Gracy Thomas thanked Rev. Dr. Augustine Vallooran VC, Director of Divine Retreat Centre, who is a notable and charismatic preacher in India for prisoners and volunteers. She thanked him for the Divine Mercy Chaplet for praying for us to experience the presence of Jesus; to set the Prisoners' free; to give Good News to the poor; to heal the oppressed and yes; to anoint each one of us with the Holy Spirit. Happy Feast of Pentecost!

ENFLAMING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Sr Gracy Thomas welcomed Br Conrad Kitt, DRC & Mrs. Falguni Hiren Mehta (DRC), who are serving since 6 and 10 years respectively in the Divine Retreat Center.

The enflaming of the Holy Spirit began with Isaiah 61:1-2. The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD

has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the LORD's favour, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn. Luke 18:29 And he said to them, "Truly I tell you, there is no one who has left house or wife or brothers or parents or children for the sake of the kingdom of God, who will not get back very much more in this age, and in the age to come eternal life."

Hymn: "Here I am Lord". Prayer: Lord, be with us during the time of Pandemic. May the Lord, shine upon us wherever we go. Psalm 40:8. I delight to do your will, O my God; your law is within my heart. John 15:5. I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. John 16:13. When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth. The inflaming of the Holy Spirit ended with a hymn "Make Me a Channel of Your Peace".

VOTE OF THANKS

Fr Rajendra Kumar thanked Bro Conrad Kitts and Mrs. Falguni Hiren Mehta for their inspiring, ardent zeal and enthusiasm in Prison Ministry India. It is not happiness that brings us gratitude. It is gratitude that brings us happiness. Fr Rajendra Kumar, Rev Fr Francis Kodiyan, we appreciate your enthusiasm, vigour and service to prisoners behind the bars. Sr. Amala, National Secretary, for your selfless service and honesty, Sr Lini Sheeja former National Secretary for her beautiful opening prayer, Sr Shony, Antoinette Fernandez (Pune) and Sr Gracy Thomas for welcoming and expressing gratitude to speakers, Mrs Rowena Luis, Maharashtra State Secretary for Concluding Prayer and Vinita Britto (Pune) for reporting.

CONCLUDING PRAYER

Mrs Rowena Luis, PMI MS Secretary thanked Fr. Rajendra Kumar and began with a prayer for the sanctification of prisoners, anointing of volunteers and purification of the world. Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom, abundance and victory, and from glory to glory He is changing us. Loving Father, we praise and thank you with all our hearts for this Life in the Spirit Conference, of feasting on your word, as you flooded our lives with the power of your Holy Spirit may your blessings be lavished on our speakers in Jesus' name. I call you friends because I reveal the love of God to you and separate your sin as far as the East is from the West. Loving Father, we humbly beseech you, of your goodness to comfort all those incarcerated in our country and all over the world. Fill them with a right understanding of themselves, and of your promises; that they may learn to trust your plans for them. Relieve the distressed, protect the innocent, and awaken the guilty; You alone can bring light in the darkness, and good out of evil, grant that the pains and punishments which these your children endure, through their bodily confinement, may lead to setting free their souls from the chains of sin and suffering through the intercession of St. Maximilian Kolbe, in Jesus' name. Let the little children come to me for such is the kingdom of heaven. Loving Father, we bring before you, children that have been incarcerated in prisons all over the world. Let your light shine within them that they may know you and experience your mercies towards them, irrespective of what they have done. Fill them with the grace to cope with prison life and become the men and women you created them to be through the intercession of St. Therese of Lisieux, in Jesus' name.

It is more blessed to give than to receive, remembering those in prison with compassion as if you were with them in prison. Loving Father, we come before you with gratitude in our hearts, for you have chosen us, PMI volunteers, and each one of us by name to be laborers in this Ministry, a Ministry you began from the cross. May the sweet gentle touch of the Spirit from within, purge and purify our hearts of selfishness and strife, that we may be filled with humility to honor our co-workers. Deepen and strengthen our resolve to a greater commitment of service to the lost, least and lonely. May the overflow of grace, goodness and gentleness that we have received, empower us to make known your name to prison authorities and inmates and to those who do not know you. Enlighten us with the voice of your Holy Spirit and make us ever ready to take risks for travelling on uncharted, unexplored pathways, reaching beyond the horizons of this Ministry through the intercession of Cardinal Francis Van Thuan in Jesus' name.

The Lord's is the earth and its fullness, the world and with all people. Loving Father, we come before you bringing our home, this beautiful earth you created by your word and established by your love. May the glory you shared with mankind be manifest once again, in healing and deliverance of all forms of viruses and sicknesses that plague our land and lives. By the stripes and wounds of Jesus, we are healed. By the power of Jesus' death and the blood of the lamb shed for us, may this world be rid of diseases, dread, distress and death and may the newness of life you bestow at Pentecost, bring forth redemption and salvation for all creation through the intercession of St. Francis of Assisi, in Jesus' name. Amen.

**PRISON MINISTRY SUNDAY
PASTORAL LETTER 2021
PRISONERS' REINTEGRATION AND
REDEMPTION**

Bishop Allwyn D'Silva

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ,

As we celebrate Prison Ministry Sunday, let us consider prisoners as our brethren and do whatever is possible for their integral human development. Every diocese shall have a Prison Ministry India (PMI) unit to look after the needs of prisoners, and parish priests shall take special care to reach out to the lost sheep in prisons. Consecrated people have a special responsibility to participate in the release, reformation, and reintegration of prisoners. Pious associations and lay faithful are cordially invited to take part in the prisoners' reintegration projects of PMI. For Jesus came "to proclaim good news to the poor... to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour" (Lk 4: 18-19).

PRISONER'S REHABILITATION AND REINTEGRATION

Alphi (43) was an inmate of Snehashramam, Kerala, a rehabilitation centre for released women prisoners of Prison Ministry India. She was married to Mr Johnson. They have an eight-year-old child studying in Standard III. They had neither

land nor house of their own. PMI bought a small plot of land for them. With the financial assistance of the PMI Ruby Jubilee housing project, they completed the construction of the house and now live peacefully glorifying the Lord. Savitha was in high school when her father was imprisoned. She had no possibility of continuing her education. PMI came to her assistance and now she is completing her M.Com. Though Gopal completed his life sentence, he was not released from prison as he could not pay the compensation to the victim. PMI paid the compensation and now he is released and leading a pacifist family life.

“It is something beautiful, a gift of God, to take care of the people, men and women in jail. Let us thank the Lord for his great love to share the joy of loving,” said Saint Mother Teresa, a Saint of the Gutters, when she addressed PMI volunteers during the second national convention held at Navintha Retreat Centre, Delhi in 1995. When the then Chief Minister of West Bengal met Mother Teresa, he told her about 34 girls in prison who were arrested from brothel houses. These young girls with pathetic family backgrounds had been forced into prostitution and thrown behind bars. They all were picked up by the mother of love and were reformed and reintegrated. Mother Teresa witnessed the tremendous change in the life of every person who was picked up from the dark cells of prisons. Prison Ministry India has rehabilitated and reintegrated thousands of prisoners and their families from the time of its inception.

PRISONERS' REDEMPTION

God came down in our sinfulness! God came down when we were lost! In the eyes of God, we never lose our worth. We always remain precious in his sight; for God is infinite love. God cannot but love, fire cannot but warm up. PMI volunteers

believe strongly that no one is beyond transformation, and our Redeemer has taught us that no one is beyond redemption as he assured Paradise to the ‘Good Thief’. God also chooses the filthiest of places, stinking places, for his work of redemption. Behind the walls of maximum-security prisons, hard-core criminals are being transformed into messengers of hope. “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners” (Mk 2:17). The purpose of Jesus coming to this earth was to call sinners and to redeem the lost. Jesus who cried out from the Cross, “*I thirst*” (Jn 19:28) continues to thirst for the souls behind the dark cells of prisons. What shall we do for the reintegration and redemption of prisoners? If you want to be a part of this noble work of God’s redeeming mission, you can reach out by volunteering in three ways.

Firstly, the origin of Prison Ministry India is from the Blessed Sacrament. Those hours spent before the Blessed Sacrament were powerful moments for the growth of this ministry. Before each visit, members spend time in prayer. They recite the rosary, make intercessory prayers and fast. Basically, Prison Ministry India is a prayer group for the reintegration and redemption of our brethren in prison.

Secondly, you can visit prisons and PMI rehabilitation centres and homes for prisoners’ children. “My family has abandoned me; society considers me only as a criminal. If you do not help me, who else will in this world? When I am released, nobody will dare to give me a job. Would you please find a job for me?” These heart-breaking cries of prisoners moved the hearts of PMI volunteers and the result was the first rehabilitation centre, Snehashramam established in 1991. Today, Prison Ministry India runs 20 rehabilitation centres for released persons and their children.

Thirdly, you can financially support PMI for prisoners' rehabilitation and reintegration. One of the basic principles of PMI is 'begging'. We beg to give prisoners a better future. We beg to provide them a life of dignity. We beg to make them kings and queens. We do not have any foreign funding to meet expenses, but we actualise our plans and visions by meeting people personally. Here we become not mere distributors of easy money, but we become one with the helpless in their struggle. PMI volunteers stand at the church doors with a bucket in their hands, begging something from those who have to give to those who don't have.

PMI RUBY JUBILEE

This year, Prison Ministry India celebrates its Ruby Jubilee with many new projects for the integral development of prisoners and their families. I am glad to share with you some of the major Ruby Jubilee projects such as homes for prisoners' children, houses for released prisoners, establishment of special PMI Task Forces such as Terrorists Saving Squad, Death Row Commandos, Mafia Redeemers, scholarships to prisoners' children, and releasing prisoners with legal and financial assistance. Let us praise and thank God for the unfathomable blessings showered upon our brethren behind the bars and the PMI volunteers. Let us continue to pray for our incarcerated brethren especially during these days of pandemic and closely collaborate with PMI in their endeavour to implement the jubilee projects. I take this opportunity to praise and thank God for all the blessings showered upon prisoners and their families in the past 40 years and extend my heartiest congratulations to those who pioneered this beautiful ministry.

CONCLUSION

As we celebrate Prison Ministry Sunday, let us remember and pray for prisoners all over the world especially the 4.7 lakh people languishing in the 1350 Indian prisons, their families, victims, the officers and the volunteers who serve them. Dear brethren behind the bars, we love you, we are with you, we pray for you and we are ready to do whatever is possible for your reformation and reintegration. Dear PMI family members, your visits to the prison are equivalent to visiting Jesus for he said, “I was in prison and you visited me” (Mt 25:36). During these COVID-19 pandemic days, we pray for you in a special way. Your continued financial support for the Prison Ministry will highly be appreciated.

Along with my brother bishops, I express my sincere gratitude to the dioceses, major superiors and well-wishers for your generous contributions towards this ministry. I am sure Jesus who came in search of the lost will bless you abundantly. I acknowledge and appreciate the PMI volunteers for their profound commitment in reforming and reintegrating prisoners, which all of us know, is one of the most challenging tasks. May Saint Maximilian Kolbe, the patron of Prison Ministry India, intercede for the fruitfulness of this ministry and may Mary, our blessed mother, be always there to protect you.



✠ Bishop Allwyn D'Silva

Chairperson, Prison Ministry India

PRISON: A HOME OF AWAKENING A CHRISTIAN CONCEPT OF INCARCERATION

Dr Francis Kodiyan MCBS

INTRODUCTION

Indian incarceration system though has steadily been improving since independence Indian Christians have not yet developed a policy regarding prisoners, their imprisonment, release, reformation, rehabilitation, reintegration and redemption. The recent findings of the National Crime Research Bureau (NCRB) reveal that the proportion of Christian convicts and undertrials in Indian prisons is two times higher than their general population. There was an 18% increase in undertrial prisoners across India over the past five years, while the increase of Christian undertrials is 53%⁴. The Supreme Court and the High Courts have recently commented upon the deplorable conditions prevailing inside the prisons especially the violations of prisoners' rights. Taking into consideration of these current dreadful developments Prison Ministry India (PMI) which works under the Catholic Bishop Conference of India (CBCI) thought to prepare a Christian Concept of Incarceration. The Catholic perspective of prison is that it shall be a home of awakening. Imprisonment should help the individual to redefine

⁴ Chaitanya Mallapur, "Sikhs, Christians more likely to be jailed than Hindus and Muslims", Hindustan Times, Oct 24, 2015. This study also reveals that most of the Christian prisoners are converts from Tamil Nadu and Orissa.

one's personality, to reform one's character and to revive and regain one's lost human dignity.

SACAMENTUM CARITATIS

In *Sacramentum Caritatis* Pope Benedict XVI speaks on the significance of care for prisoners. The Church's spiritual tradition, basing itself on Christ's own words (cf. *Mt* 25:36), has designated the visiting of prisoners as one of the corporal works of mercy. Prisoners have a particular need to be visited personally by the Lord in the sacrament of the Eucharist. Experiencing the closeness of the ecclesial community, sharing in the Eucharist and receiving holy communion at this difficult and painful time can surely contribute to the quality of a prisoner's faith journey and to full social rehabilitation. Taking up the recommendation of the Synod, I ask Dioceses to do whatever is possible to ensure that sufficient pastoral resources are invested in the spiritual care of prisoners.⁵

JUBILEE YEAR OF MERCY OF PRISONERS

On November 6, 2016 in connection with the Jubilee Year of Mercy of prisoners Pope Francis held a special Holy Mass for 1,000 prisoners from 12 different countries in St Peter's Basilica at the Vatican. They were present with their families, prison guards, penitentiary employees, prison chaplains, and others. During his homily Pope Francis urged authorities to strive for better prison conditions and advocated for support programs and policies that will help prisoners upon their reentry into society. He reminded political leaders that those who have been convicted still have dignity⁶. On November 7–8, 2019 an

⁵ Pope Benedict XVI in *Sacramentum Caritatis* 59.

⁶ Cfr. <https://www.prisonfellowship.org/2016/11/pope-francis-delivers-message-of-hope-and-mercy-to-prisoners>.

international meeting of prison chaplains was organized by the Vatican Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development. Representatives from all continents were invited to deliberate on the theme “Integral Human Development and Catholic Prison Pastoral Care”. I was privileged to represent Asia in this meeting. Pope Francis urged for a change in the outlook and approach in treating prisoners. He highlighted that they must be offered equal opportunities for reform, development and reintegration.

INTEGRAL HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

The Holy Father lamented that large amounts of public resources are allocated to suppressing offenders instead of truly seeking the promotion of the integral development of people, which reduces the circumstances that encourage committing of illegal acts. It is easier and comfortable to suppress than to educate, to deny the injustice present in society and to create these spaces for shutting off transgressors into oblivion than to offer equal opportunities for development to all citizens. This is an educated way of discarding persons.

REINTEGRATION

Pope Francis noted that places of detention often fail to promote reintegration into society because they lack sufficient resources and also because of frequent overcrowding which turns prisons into real places of what he called, “depersonalization”. On the contrary, real social reintegration starts by guaranteeing opportunities for development, education, decent work, access to healthcare, as well as generating public spaces for civic participation. He urged today’s society to overcome the stigmatization of someone who has made a mistake because instead of offering help and adequate

resources to live a dignified life, we are accustomed to discarding the person rather than making efforts for him or her to return to the love of God in his or her life. Often a person leaving prison faces an alien world that does not recognize him or her as trustworthy, denying him or her the possibility of working for a dignified livelihood. The Holy Father said that these prisoners, who have already served their sentences for the evil committed, should not be subject to a new social punishment with rejection and indifference. Such aversion, he warned, exposes them to falling back on the same mistakes.

WINDOW AND HORIZON

Setting aside his prepared Spanish text, the Pope offered the participants an image to take back home to their countries and regions. One cannot speak about debt repayment by prisoners without offering them a window and one cannot change his life without seeing a horizon. He asked the participants to make sure their prisons always have a window and a horizon. “Even a life sentence, which for me is debatable, would have to have a horizon,” he stressed. In union with Pope Francis, bishops, clergy, religious and lay people in India I present this study as a Catholic response to the problems and challenges facing by prisoners in India. It is high time to have a serious discussion on crime and corrections, justice and mercy, responsibility and treatment of prisoners in the Indian context. As Catholics, we need to ask the following: How can we restore our respect for law and life? How can we protect and rebuild communities, confront crime without vengeance, and defend life without taking life? We aim to restore a sense of civility and responsibility to every human being, promote crime prevention, provide justice to the victims, and to release, reform, rehabilitate, reintegrate and redeem the incarcerated.

We begin with the recognition that the dignity of the human person applies to both victim and offender. The current trend of more prisons and more executions, with too little reformation and treatment, does not truly reflect Christian values and will not really leave our communities safer. Christian tradition and faith offer better alternatives that can hold offenders accountable and challenge them to change their lives; reach out to victims *and* reject vengeance; restore a sense of community and resist the violence that has engulfed so much of our culture⁷. This study on *Prison: A Home of Awakening. Christian Concept of Incarceration* is divided into five chapters besides a general introduction and a general conclusion. The first chapter deals with the problems and challenges of prisons and prisoners in India. The second chapter illustrates the origin, vision, mission, rehabilitation and various ministries of Prison Ministry India. The third chapter delineates the biblical, theological, and spiritual foundations of prison ministry. The fourth chapter brings forth the recommendations for prisons and prisoners' reformation. The fifth chapter conveys the messages to the different groups of people associated with prison and prisoners.

⁷ This is what Pope Francis insists us from the very outset of his pontificate, "The Church is called to come out of herself and to go to the peripheries, not only geographically, but also the existential peripheries: the mystery of sin, of pain, of injustice, of ignorance and indifference to religion, of intellectual currents, and of all misery. Cfr. <http://corpuschristiphx.org/blog.php?>

CHAPTER ONE

PRISON AND PRISONERS

1. INTRODUCTION

With prison population rising fast, and rates of re-offending on release very high, is there not an urgent need, without compromising public safety, to consider how best to educate and rehabilitate prisoners rather than just contain them? At present it is quite clear that many of them are not being treated with the dignity and respect which is theirs as human beings. This chapter on *Prisons and Prisoners* briefly discusses the problems and challenges of Indian prisons and prisoners such as overcrowding, prolonged detention of undertrial prisoners, unsatisfactory living conditions, lack of treatment programs and allegations of an indifferent and even inhuman approach of prison staff.

2. PRISONERS WORLDWIDE

As per 31 October 2015 there are 10,357,134 prisoners worldwide. Half of the world's prison population is held in the US, China and Russia. Prison rates in the US are the world's highest, at 724 people per 100,000. In Russia the rate is 581.

Table 1
World Prison Population List
Prison Population Totals, Rates and Trends by
Continent

Continent	Prison Population totals (latest available at 31.10.2015)	National Populations (at dates of prison population totals)	Prison Population Rate (per 100,000 of national populations)
Africa	1,038,735	1,102m	94
Americas	3,780,528	977m	387
Asia	3,897,797	4,227m	92
Europe	1,585,348	827m	192
Oceania	54,726	39m	140
World	10,357,134	7,172m	144

Research shows that the men and women in prisons today are extraordinarily disadvantaged and vulnerable individuals. Researchers prove that compared with the general population, prisoners are thirteen times as likely to have been in care as a child, thirteen times as likely to have been unemployed, and ten times as likely to have been excluded from school. Two thirds of young prisoners have no educational qualifications and that one in five had no idea where they would live when they left detention. A study by the crime reduction charity Nacro showed that 60 per cent of young prisoners came from unstable living conditions, 40 per cent had been neglected or abused as children, and that 72 per cent of prisoners had some

kind of mental health problem – 14 times the level in the general population⁸.

3. INDIAN SCENARIO

According to the available statistics on 31 December 2015 India has a prison population of 4,19,623⁹. Research in crime, criminality and the social, religious and economic backgrounds of criminals is in its infancy in India. England has 141 prisoners for every 100,000 population – the highest proportion in Western Europe. Holland has 100, Germany has 98, France has 93 and Denmark has 64¹⁰. India has only 33. It's a good sign.

Table 2

Indian Prison Population, Rate and Trend Information

Country	Date	National Population	Prison Population	Prison Population Rate	Year	Total	Rate
India	31.12.2015	1289.07m	419623	33	2000	272079	26
					2005	358368	32
					2010	368998	30

As of 31 December 2019, there are 1,350 different types of jails in India having a total capacity to house 4,78,600

⁸ Cfr. Paul Cavadino, Current issues in Penal Policy, Nacro, March 2004.

⁹ Cfr. Roy Walmsley, World Prison Population List, Institute for Criminal Policy Research, 8. Cfr. also www.prisonstudies.org.

¹⁰ NCRI, Prison Statistics 2015. Cfr. World Prison Population List, Findings 234, Home Office RDS Directorate, 2004. The U.S. leads the world in imprisoning people; it detains a quarter of the world's prisoners though it accounts for only five percent of the world's population. The impacts of its punitive policies are felt most heavily in communities of color, where one out of every six Latino boys and one out of every three African-American boys will be incarcerated in their lifetimes, if current trends continue.

prisoners¹¹. The 1,350 prisons in the country consist of 617 Sub Jails, 410 District Jails, 144 Central Jails, 86 Open Jails, 41 Special Jails, 31 Women Jails, 19 Borstal School and 2 Other than the above Jails. Prisons in India, and their administration, are a state subject covered by item 4 under the State List in the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution of India. The management and administration of prisons falls exclusively in the domain of the State governments, and is governed by the Prisons Act 1894 and the Prison Manuals of the respective state governments. Thus, the states have the primary role, responsibility and authority to change the current prison laws, rules and regulations¹². The Central Government provides assistance to the states to improve security in prisons, for the repair and renovation of old prisons, medical facilities, development of borstal schools, facilities to women offenders, vocational training, modernization of prison industries, training to prison personnel, and for the creation of hospitals inside prison. Indian prisoners are categorized as Convicts, Under-trials and Detenues. A convict is “a person found guilty of a crime and sentenced by a court” or “a person serving a sentence in prison”. An undertrial is a person who is currently on trial in a court of law. A detainee is any person held in custody.

4. PRISON PROBLEMS

Though the attempt to modernize Indian prisons has been taking place since decades still they are haunted with

¹¹ The types of prisons in India are the following: Central Jails, Special Jails, District Jails, Sub Jails, Women Jails, Open Jails, Borstal Schools, and other types of Jails. Indian prisons can also be classified as maximum-security prisons, medium security prisons, and minimum-security prisons. Cfr. <http://www.ncrb.in>. National Crime Records Bureau. Retrieved 2016-11-09. For a study on the Historical Evolution of Prison System in India, see Dr L.P. Raju, “Historical Evolution of Prison System in India” Indian Journal of Applied Research, 4/5 (2014).

¹² Cfr. <http://www.country-data.com/cgi-bin/query/r-6166.html>

overcrowding, laxity of professionals and other serious problems. The complaints of the ex-prisoners and their relatives need to be highlighted not as cases of individual suffering but as examples of the general systemic malaise that affects the prison system, leading to serious human rights violations. The following are some of the major problems of prisons and related issues, having a bearing on prisoners' rights.

4.1 HUMAN DIGNITY

The Supreme Court of India, in its judgments on various aspects of prison administration, has laid down 3 broad principles regarding imprisonment and custody. Firstly, a person in prison does not become a non-person. Secondly, a person in prison is entitled to all human rights within the limitations of imprisonment. Lastly, there is no justification for aggravating the suffering already inherent in the process of incarceration¹³. Pope Benedict XVI during his visit to Rebibbia Prison on 18 December 2011 in his answer to the question of Rocco affirmed the role of prisons in promoting human dignity: "The purpose of these prisons is to aid justice, and justice implies in the first-place human dignity. They should be built in such a way that dignity may grow, that dignity be respected and that you may renew within yourselves the sense of dignity, in order to better respond to this intimate vocation"¹⁴.

4.2 OVERCROWDING

Indian jails are overcrowded. The terrible overcrowding only underscores the extent to which our penal system – though it

¹³ Cfr. Shaik Ali, "Prison in India: An Overview" *Indian Journal of Applied Research*, 4/12 (2014) 1.

¹⁴ Cfr. Benedict XVI, Pastoral Visit to the Rebibbia District Prison (Rome), Responses of His Holiness Benedict XV to the Questions Posed by the Inmates, Rebibbia, Sunday, 18 December 2011, Libreria Editrice Vaticana.

pays lip-service to the need for reform and rehabilitation – is, in practice, essentially punitive. Overcrowding is such that prisoners are forced to defecate in front of one another. The problem of overcrowding was so acute that inmates often had to sleep in shifts of 3-4 hours due to lack of space. Prison overcrowding is one of the key contributing factors to poor prison conditions around the world. Data suggests that the number of prisoners exceeds official prison capacity in at least 115 countries. Overcrowding and lack of privacy can bring forth mental health problems, violence, self-harm and suicide¹⁵.

Table 3

Capacity in Indian Jails, Population of Inmates and Occupancy Rate in States/UTs at the end of 2015

States & Union Territories	Available Capacity	Inmate Population	Occupancy Rate # (2015)	Occupancy Rate # (2013)
Total	356561	419623	117.4	118.4

Overcrowding rate in Indian prisons is 117.4 in 2015. This shows that India needs to construct more prisons and thereby to solve this serious problem related to the basic needs and human rights of prisoners. Inordinate delays in trials result in many undertrials having to be detained in jail for unduly long periods – in many cases extending to years. An important factor

¹⁵ The highest rate of overcrowding in the Americas is 310% (El Salvador), in Africa 363% (Benin), in Asia 316% (Philippines), in Oceania 217% (French Polynesia), in the MENA region 186% (Lebanon), and in Europe 136% (Macedonia). In overcrowded prisons, prisoners do not have the minimum space requirements recommended by international standards, spending up to 23 hours of the day, if not all day, in overcrowded cells. Overcrowding can be so severe that prisoners sleep in shifts, on top of each other, share beds or tie themselves to window bars so that they can sleep while standing. Cfr. <https://www.penalreform.org/priorities/prison-conditions/key-facts/overcrowding>. For further studies on overcrowding and suicide see David Scott, “To Cut Jail Suicides, Cut the Prison Population”, The Guardian, 2 February 2017.

responsible for delaying trials is the failure of the agencies to provide security escort to the undertrials to the courts.

The National Police Commission pointed out that 60% of all arrests were either unnecessary or unjustified¹⁶. This has resulted in overcrowding and accounts for 43.20% of the expenditure of jails. Therefore, restraint by the police in resorting to unwarranted arrests by following the guidelines laid down by the Supreme Court would go a long way work to reducing overcrowding in jails¹⁷. Another way to deal with the problem of overcrowding is to decriminalize certain offences and find alternatives to imprisonment, particularly in petty offences and make minor offences compoundable.

4.3 SEEMLINESS OF LABOR

We would like to see a more constructive attitude to work in prison, with the introduction of a normal working day for prisoners. A full working day should be introduced to parallel that of the outside world, eight hours a day, five days a week. The quality of work too should relate to the outside world, with prisoners learning the disciplines and skills they will need when they are returned to society.

4.4 CORRUPTION

At all levels the prison service has some remarkably dedicated staff for whom the term prison 'service' has real meaning. However, in many prisons there exists a group of dispirited workforces. Undoubtedly some of the workforce in prisons, including at leadership levels, needs renewal. It is important for the authorities to root out those elements within the prison staff whose vision has been jaundiced to the extent that it

¹⁶ The National Police Commission: The Third Report, Chapter XXII, 1980

¹⁷ Cfr. <http://www.oocities.org/indianfascism/fascism/prison.htm>.

constitutes an impediment to change. Corrupt practices which have occurred in correctional facilities include staff members having sex with inmates, bringing contraband into facilities, aiding inmates' escapes, and taking inmates out of prison on unauthorized trips¹⁸.

4.5 EDUCATION

More than half of all prisoners are at, or below, the level expected of an 11-year-old in reading. Two-thirds cannot compete with the average junior-school leaver in numeracy, and four-fifths in writing. One recent inspection in British prisons found 70 % of young offenders had reading ages of a seven-year-old. Researches show that prisoners who do not take part in education are three times more likely to be re-convicted. By contrast basic skills in learning in prison can contribute to a reduction in re-offending of around a third¹⁹. Hence education in all levels, both for youngsters and adults, is to be promoted in Indian prisons²⁰. Prisoners need to be taught about their rights.²¹

4.6 HEALTH

The sanctioned strength of doctors and para-medical staff in many prisons is much less than what is required. Non-availability of adequate medical facilities for prisoners is largely due to the lack of fulltime doctors as well as lack of basic infrastructure, like well-equipped ambulances, stretchers,

¹⁸ Cfr. J P Flannery, *Prison Corruption - A Mockery of Justice*, Clark Boardman Company, New York, 1980.

¹⁹ Cfr. Paul Cavadino, "Current issues in Penal Policy", Nacro, March 2004.

²⁰ Cfr. <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200405/cmselect/cmmeduski/114/11405.htm>

²¹ Prisoners' Rights: Need for Transparency and Accountability– A Paper presented in the workshop by Ms. Marion Macgregor of the CHRI

dispensaries, hospital beds etc. Transporting the sick prisoner out in the absence of vehicles and escort in districts sometimes poses a problem. Availability of a lady doctor where there are women prisoners is highly important. This is all the more significant where there are pregnant women.²²

4.6.1 HYGIENE

Overcrowding, lengthy confinement within closed, poorly lit, badly ventilated, and often humid spaces are all conditions frequently associated with imprisonment and which contribute to the spread of disease and ill-health. The health status of prisoners is generally lower than the rest of the population. Rather than being reformatory, sadly, prisons often contribute to hardening criminals further. Hence health care and psychological evaluation of prisoners need to get more attention in Indian prisons. Most toilets are open and dirty, denying the prisoner his basic right to privacy and human dignity. Water shortage being the rule than the exception the toilets prove to be the ideal breeding grounds for health hazards and epidemics.

4.6.2 DRUGS

The number of people in prisons all over the world as a direct result of drugs is high and growing. Some 16 % of male sentenced prisoners in Britain were convicted of drug offences in 2002, compared with just 7 per cent in 1993. And there is a much wider group of prisoners whose offence is in some way drug related. Shoplifting, burglary, vehicle crime and theft can all be linked to drug misuse. According to British Government's updated drug strategy, heroin, crack and cocaine users are responsible for 50 per cent of these crimes. Even where there

²² Source: The Prison Department, Madhya Pradesh

is no direct correlation there is an association: around two-thirds of prisoners use illegal drugs in the year before imprisonment – at least double the proportion of illegal drug users in the general 16–29-year-old population. Yet many prisoners have never received help with their drug problems. Prison authorities should be prepared for drug treatment and rehabilitation for prisoners²³.

4.6.3 ALCOHOL

Alcohol is a serious problem in developing criminal behavior. World Statistics says 63% of sentenced male prisoners and 39 % of female sentenced prisoners admit to hazardous drinking at a level that carries the risk of physical or mental harm. Of these, nearly half have a severe alcohol dependency problem. These are more likely to be younger prisoners aged 16 to 24 who have committed violent offences. It would be of great benefit for prisoners suffering from alcohol addiction to introduce for them weekly Alcoholics Anonymous meeting and other related treatments²⁴.

4.6.4 HIV/AIDS

A national study found that 1.7 % of inmates were HIV positive in Indian prisons. Some prisons provided HIV education. A few prisoners received treatment for HIV infection or co-infection with sexually transmitted infections (STIs). HIV prevalence in prisons in India was higher than that in the general community. Regular monitoring of information on HIV risk

²³ Mandatory Drug Tests in Prisons, RDS Study 189, Home Office, 1998 quoted in Paul Valley, *Prison: A Place of Redemption. A Christian Approach to Punishment and Prison*, Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales (December 2, 2004). Cfr also <http://paulvalley.com/archive/?p=6387>.

²⁴ Alcohol and re-offending – who cares? Prison Reform Trust briefing, January 2004, quoting in N. Singleton, *Substance misuse among prisoners in England and Wales*, Office for National Statistics, (1998)

behaviors and prevalence in Indian prisons is strongly recommended. Voluntary counselling, testing and treatment for HIV and STIs should be provided in Indian prisons²⁵.

4.6.5 MENTAL HEALTH

Many prisoners have significant mental health problems. In British prisons some 72% of male and 70% of female sentenced prisoners suffer from two or more mental health disorders. These figures compare with just 5% of men and 2% of women in the general population. Neurotic and personality disorders are particularly prevalent – 40% of male and 63% of female sentenced prisoners have a neurotic disorder, over three times the level in the general population. A significant number of prisoners suffer from a psychotic disorder. There has been a 77% increase in reported incidents of self-harm amongst prisoners: 17,294 in 2003²⁶. Shortage of mental health professionals in prisons is to be taken seriously. Prison regimes do little to address the mental health needs of prisoners. Prisoners with severe mental health problems are often not diverted to more appropriate secure provision. Indian prison system needs greater attention towards the needs of the vulnerable – women, ethnic minorities, the elderly, and the children of prisoners²⁷.

4.6.6 PRISONERS WITH DISABILITIES

Prisoners with disabilities means those who suffer from mental illnesses, disabilities; ethnic and racial minorities, including indigenous people; older prisoners; prisoners with terminal

²⁵ Cfr. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3102457/>

²⁶ “Safer Custody News”, Prison Service, February 2004.

²⁷ Paul Vallely, *Prison: A Place of Redemption. A Christian Approach to Punishment and Prison*, Catholic Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales (December 2, 2004). Cfr. also <http://paulvallely.com/archive/?p=6387>.

illnesses; prisoners under the death penalty; foreign national prisoners; and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender prisoners. They are to be treated in a special way in accordance with the guidelines of the UN.

5. FAMILY

Research indicates that good family ties can reduce a prisoner's risk of re-offending by as much as six times. A stable supportive family throughout a prisoner's sentence is a key factor in preventing re-offending. As the Catechism of the Catholic Church states, "The family is the original cell of social life. Authority, stability and a life of relationships within the family constitute the foundations for freedom, security and fraternity within society. The family is the community in which, from childhood, one can learn moral values, begin to honor God and make good use of freedom. Family life is an initiation into life in society (CCC 2207, 2224)." Depriving children of a family life by sending their only parent to prison is a step which should be avoided in all but the most serious and violent crimes.

5.1 WOMEN PRISONERS

The needs of women held in detention have received little attention and continue to be neglected by prison authorities. One reason for this is that women prisoners are a clear minority group within prisons. Many women in prison serve a short sentence and are imprisoned for non-violent, property or drug-related offences. They frequently come from deprived backgrounds and experience problems related to alcohol and drug dependencies, infectious diseases, reproductive diseases and histories of physical and sexual abuse. Alarming high rates of mental health problems are reported, such as post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, anxiety and a tendency to self-harm and suicide. Current arrangements for dealing with

women offenders fail to meet their basic needs and are far short of what is required by human rights, by accepted international recommendations and by social justice. Prisons can provide disease prevention and educational programs as well as offer treatment focusing on mental health and substance use problems, and can be used to provide help to women prisoners who are among the most disadvantaged and hard to reach people in any society.

5.2 PRISONERS' CHILDREN

Many imprisoned women are mothers and are usually the sole carer for their children. When a mother is imprisoned, frequently the father does not continue to care for his children, resulting in large numbers of children being institutionalized. In many countries, very young children can stay with their mother in prison, sometimes in special facilities like mother and baby units. Both options, allowing children to live with their mothers in prison and separating them, create difficult dilemmas. Separation of mother and child can cause long-term developmental and emotional harm for the child and can affect the mother's physical and mental health, while at the same time the prison environment is a far from ideal environment for a child to be raised. It is rare that decisions are clearly made in the best interests of the child. As the Second Vatican Council stated: "The role of parents in education is of such importance that it is almost impossible to provide an adequate substitute". Immediate steps should be taken by the prison authorities to strengthen the possibility of maintaining ties between women in prison and their children. Judges, magistrates and legislators should be encouraged to find, as a matter of urgency, alternatives to prison for mothers²⁸.

²⁸ Paul Vallely, *Prison: A Place of Redemption. A Christian Approach to Punishment and Prison*, Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales (December 2, 2004).

6. VICTIM COMPENSATION FUND

The compensation part of the rehabilitation of victims of violence including rape is governed by provision of Section 357A of the Code of Criminal Procedure which states that every State Government in co-ordination with the Central Government shall prepare a scheme for providing funds for the purpose of compensation to the victim of crime. So far 24 states and 7 UTs have formulated the Victim Compensation Scheme. 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 victim or his dependent satisfying the following criteria shall be eligible for the receipt of compensation: He/She should not have been in receipt of any compensation for such loss or injury from any Government authorities or any other scheme of the Central / State Government, for which the applicant or his dependents shall file a declaration to that effect along with the application form. The loss or injury sustained by the victim or his dependents should have caused substantial loss to the income of the family making it difficult to make both ends to meet without the financial aid or which requires such expenditure beyond his means on medical treatment of such mental/physical injury to the victim. Where the offender of the crime is untraceable or cannot be identified, but the victim is identifiable, the victim or his dependents may also apply for grant of compensation under sub-section (4) of section 357 A of the Act²⁹.

²⁹ <http://vikaspedia.in/social-welfare/social-security/central-victim-compensation-fund-scheme-cvcf>.

6.1 VICTIM OFFENDER RECONCILIATION PROCESS

Victim-offender reconciliation is a process through which a trained mediator, often a volunteer, brings offenders and victims in a criminal event together to achieve a resolution that is satisfactory to both parties. The Victim Offender Reconciliation seeks to identify crime that can be successfully dealt with in the community and to effect reconciliation and understanding between victims and offenders. It facilitates the reaching of agreements between victims and offenders regarding restitution and assists offenders in directing payment of their ‘debt to society’ to their victims³⁰.

7. RECIDIVISM

Recidivism is one of the most fundamental concepts in criminal justice. It refers to a person’s relapse into criminal behavior, often after the person receives sanctions or undergoes intervention for a previous crime. British Bureau of Justice Statistics studies have found high rates of recidivism among released prisoners:

- Within three years of release, about two-thirds (67.8 percent) of released prisoners were rearrested.
- Within five years of release, about three-quarters (76.6 percent) of released prisoners were rearrested.
- Of those prisoners who were rearrested, more than half (56.7 percent) were arrested by the end of the first year.
- Property offenders were the most likely to be rearrested, with 82.1 percent of released property offenders arrested for a new crime compared with

³⁰ Cfr. http://www.cjibc.org/victim_reconciliation. As is evident in Christ’s parable of The Good Samaritan (Lk 10:25-37), the first imperative must always be to attend to the victim.

76.9 percent of drug offenders, 73.6 percent of public order offenders and 71.3 percent of violent offenders³¹.

Since some 58 per cent of all prisoners are reconvicted of a further offence within two years of leaving prison. This figure is even higher for young prisoners: 72 per cent for 18-20-year-olds, and 84 per cent among those under 18.

According to National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) crime statistics for 2014 in India 37,90,812 people were arrested out of which 34,94,966 were new offenders. Among the old offenders, 2,34,896 had served a prison sentence once, 47,884 went to jail at least twice and 12,930 were convicted more than thrice. Over all, the percentage of recidivists is 7.8. When compared, the crime statistics for 2013, the percentage of recidivists is 7.2. Despite having been convicted and being jailed for three times, there are several criminals who are showing that they do not mind going back to the jail. This only shows that correctional services in prisons across the country are not enough to bring about a change in the behavior of prisoners³².

8. JUSTICE

True justice must have an inherent attention toward the marginalized, vulnerable or oppressed individuals in society.

8.1 RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

Restorative justice is finding a way for victims and society to forgive an offender; it is about creating a system which

³¹ Durose, Matthew R., Alexia D. Cooper, and Howard N. Snyder, *Recidivism of Prisoners Released in 30 States in 2005: Patterns from 2005 to 2010*, Bureau of Justice Statistics Special Report, April 2014, NCJ 244205. Cfr also <https://www.nij.gov/topics/corrections/recidivism/pages/welcome.aspx>.

³² Cfr. <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/hyderabad/Rate-of-recidivism-on-the-rise-NCRB/article-show/48637317.cms>

recognizes that the perpetrator and the victim are members of society who both need reintegration. This can be achieved by identifying and taking steps to repair harm, by involving all stakeholders, and by transforming the traditional relationship between communities and their governments in responding to crime³³. Such an approach embraces many principles of Christian teaching such as right behavior (Jn 8:11.), repentance (Lk 23:39-44), forgiveness (Mt 6:14-15), healing (Is 61:1-2) and restoration (Lk 15:11-24). Most of all, it recognizes the value of each and every individual, be that person victim or offender. As Christians, we believe that we are all “offenders” before God, yet are still loved by him (Rom 3:22-24).

9. CRIME PREVENTION

Crime Prevention is the anticipation, recognition, and appraisal of a crime risk, and the initiation of action to remove or reduce it. This is an active approach utilizing public awareness and preventive measures to reduce crime. This is possible by improving youth employment, tackling homelessness, promoting youth activity programs, curbing drug and alcohol misuse and promoting measures to support families in distress. “Prevention is the first imperative of justice” states United Nations Document³⁴. “Crime Prevention comprises strategies and measures that seek to reduce the risk of crimes, and their potential harmful effects on individuals and society, including fear of crime, by intervening to influence their multiple causes³⁵.” The key to making significant reductions in the level

³³ For more on restorative justice by Prison Fellowship International cfr. <http://restorativejustice.org/>

³⁴ United Nations document S/2004/616, para. 4

³⁵ Cfr. Guidelines for the Prevention of Crime Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Resolution 2002/13, Annex. See also <http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/justice-and-prison-reform/CRIMEPrevention.html>.

and impact of crime lies as much in the development and implementation of wider social, educational, and economic policies. Justice delayed is justice denied.

10. CLASSIFICATIONS OF PRISONERS

Classification of prisoners is essential to prevent undertrials, first timers and casual prisoners from being influenced, bullied and abused by the few but dominant hard-core criminals in prison. Juveniles who are housed with other hardened criminals, often come out of prison only to commit far more serious crimes than they had done earlier³⁶. Hence classification and separation of prisoners is significant in prison administration.

11. PRISON REFORMS

Over the years Government of India has set up many committees and commissions to investigate prisons and to reform them. The prominent among them were the Justice Mulla Committee Report on Prison Reforms (1982-1983) and the Justice Krishna Iyer Committee on Women Prisoners (1986-1987). The latest one is the Draft National Policy on Prison Reforms and Correctional Administration 2007 prepared by the Bureau of Police Research and Development. It introduced a provision for aftercare and rehabilitation services and the appointment of officers to provide legal aid to prisoners. However, Prison reform needs to be continued and timely updating are to be done systematically. In this process collaboration of voluntary agencies are to be invited as these agencies stand for the realization of the ultimate goal of prison that is the reformation, rehabilitation and reclamation of

³⁶ Total Number of Jails in the Country: 1,401. Central jails 134; District jails 379; Sub jails 741; Women jails 18; Open jails 63; Borstal schools 20; Special jails 43; Other jails 3.

prisoners³⁷. The existing legislation, the Prison Act of 1894, was formulated when the country was under the colonial rule. It has been criticized as being an outdated piece of legislation, which was not in keeping with the modern view of prisons as places of rehabilitation rather than retribution³⁸.

12. ROLE OF NGOS

There is considerable scope for NGOs and voluntary agencies to work in the field of treatment, aftercare and rehabilitation of offenders. If the services of well-organized NGOs could be obtained on a regular basis, it would be desirable to assign a role for them as visualized by the Mulla Committee in regard to the following: -

- a. Services of experts in education, medicine, psychiatry, law, social work, the media etc. could be utilized in the formulation of correctional policy by associating them with advisory committees at the national and state levels.
- b. Appointments of eminent citizens interested in correctional work as visitors to prisons. They could also be appointed as non-official members on sentence reviewing boards for district and central prisons.
- c. In conducting adult education and free legal aid programs;
- d. Running health camps;
- e. Organizing recreational and cultural activities;

³⁷ The best example of Indian prison reform is Kiran Bedi's attempt to transform Tihar jail one of the notorious prisons of the world. She converted it into an ashram. One of the key elements in this change was the introduction of yoga, and meditation. Cfr. Kiran Bedi, *It's Always Possible. One Woman's Transformation of Tihar Prison*, Himalayan Institute Press, Honesdale 2002.

³⁸ In the recent case *Ramamurthy v. State of Karnataka* (1997) 2 SCC 642, the Supreme Court stated that "The century old Indian Prison Act, 1894 needs a thorough look and is required to be replaced by a new enactment which would take care of the thinking of Independent India and our constitutional mores and mandate."

- f. Individual coaching to inmates pursuing higher studies; and
- g. The NGOs should play a greater role in creating the right kind of awareness about the prison administration and the core problems of correctional sub-systems with a view to eliciting public co-operation.

13. CONCLUSION

We have been discussing the various problems and challenges of Indian prisons and prisoners which are to be seriously taken care of by the respective administrative agencies. Society has the obligation to provide the wherewithal to make prison a place of reformation not just one of punishment. That means creating a climate which is conducive to human flourishing, and providing the human, material and educational resources to enable the development, reformation and rehabilitation of prisoners. It also means that prisoners have the obligation to apply themselves to take advantage of the possibility of change which is on offer³⁹.

³⁹ Paul Vallely, Prison: A Place of Redemption. A Christian Approach to Punishment and Prison, Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales (December 2, 2004).

CHAPTER TWO

PRISON MINISTRY INDIA

1. INTRODUCTION

Prison Ministry India (PMI), a Catholic movement for the release, renewal, rehabilitation, reintegration and redemption of prisoners, is fundamentally a prayer group. PMI volunteers also take care of the victims, their reconciliation, restoration and integral human development. PMI has various ministries for the family members of prisoners, prison officials, and even for judges. Its volunteers, from different walks of life such as bishops, priests, religious, seminarians, and laity strive hard to renew themselves first and dedicate their lives for the transformation of the incarcerated. This chapter briefly explicates the history, mission, vision, and ministry of the Prison Ministry India and International Catholic Commission for Prison Pastoral Care.

2. BIRTH AND GROWTH

Jesus Fraternity, a movement to search, serve and save prisoners was established in a prayer group at St Thomas Apostolic Seminary, Kottayam, Kerala under the leadership of Fr Francis Kodiyan and Fr Varghese Karipery. Their initiation to visit the neighboring prison at Kottayam in Kerala gradually led them to the All-Kerala Prison Pilgrimage in 1986. In 1990 Kerala Catholic Bishops Conference welcomed this movement and established its head office at the Pastoral Orientation Centre (POC), Palarivattom by inserting this ministry under its commission for Justice, Peace and Development. Fr Joseph Mackolil was appointed as its Director and Fr Francis Kodiyan MCBS was appointed as its

assistant director and fulltime worker with his residence at POC⁴⁰.

When Jesus Fraternity extended its ministry for prisoners in other Indian states it took a more secular name Prison Ministry India in 1994⁴¹. Under the leadership of Fr Varghese Karipery, the first national coordinator, PMI became a National Body registered as public charitable society under Societies Registration Act No. ER 375 in 1995⁴² and renders its service irrespective of cast, creed, religion and language. At present PMI with its headquarters in Bangalore⁴³ has 850 cells and 165 units all over India and 6000 volunteers enthusiastically bringing hope and quality of life in to the lives of so many hopeless and helpless prisoners⁴⁴. On 24th August, 2000, Prison Ministry India was recognized by the Catholic Bishops Conference of India (CBCI). On 1st October 2014 CBCI arranged a separate desk under its Justice Peace and Development Commission for Prison Ministry India and appointed Fr Sebastian Vadakumpadan as its first Secretary. Most Rev Peter Remigius,

⁴⁰ For the history and early development of Jesus Fraternity, see Francis Kodiyan, *Saga of Divine Providence, The History of Jesus Fraternity and Prison Ministry India*, PMI Publications, Bangalore 1998.

⁴¹ This decision was taken during the first national gathering held in Bangalore on 13-15 August 1994. The second National gathering was in Delhi in 1995 in which Saint Mother Teresa was present. The third was held in Thrissur, Kerala in 1997, the fourth in Mumbai in 1998, the fifth in Calcutta in 1999, the sixth in Hyderabad in 2000, the seventh in Chennai 2002, the eighth in Bhopal, UP, in 2004, the ninth in Mysore in 2007, the tenth at St Thomas Apostolic Seminary, Kottayam in 2010, 11th at Faridabad, Haryana in 2014.

⁴² Following were the PMI national coordinators: Fr Varghese Karipery (1994-1998), Fr Sebastian Theckanath (1998-2002), Fr Sebastian Vadakumpadan (2002-2007), Fr Josekutty Kalayil MST (2007-20011), Fr Sebastian Vadakumpadan (2012-2019).

⁴³ In 2009 PMI purchased a new building at Carmalaram, Bangalore and shifted there its headquarters.

⁴⁴ Cell represents a team of volunteers nearby a prison and unit means a Catholic diocese.

Bishop of Kottar, was its Chairman⁴⁵. In 2017 Most Rev Allwyn D'Silva, the auxiliary bishop of Bombay took charge as the PMI Chairman.

3. VISION

PMI envisions outreaching prisons all over India so as to release, renew, rehabilitate, and reintegrate prisoners. It also intends reformation of prisons, and ensures congruent function of government systems and structures for the amelioration of victims, offenders and their families, society, and government authorities. PMI achieves these goals through committed volunteers such as priests, religious, seminarians and laity, by conducting training sessions, creating sensitivity in government authorities, facilitating empowerment, using philanthropic people, praying, making use of scientific research tools, creating social awareness, planning and executing meticulous preventive measures, conducting regular and holistic counselling, providing legal assistance and using networks. PMI envisages prisons as reformation centers and prisoners empowered and reawakened as reformed dignity regained citizens. Government officials, systems and structures are streamlined to regain and restore the lost dignity both prisoners, prison staff and prisons.

4. MISSION

The most significant PMI mission is to be present in all prisons so as to convey the unconditional, forgiving and liberating love of Jesus to the incarcerated. It is the mission of PMI to create awareness of the importance of prison ministry among priests,

⁴⁵ In 2005 PMI inaugurated the project for the welfare of Indian nationals in foreign prisons. In December 2004, Prison Voice, the national monthly, a registered magazine was started. On 18th July 2003, the North Regional Office was inaugurated and Fr Joseph Kavalakkat became the first Regional Coordinator. In the year 2005, we started the North East regional office. Central regional office was inaugurated in 2011 at Archbishop's House, Nagpur.

religious and laity and to ensure full cooperation and support from government and other related organizations. Furthermore, the mission of PMI is to establish rehabilitation centers in all states so as to complete the process of release, reformation, rehabilitation, reintegration and redemption of prisoners. It is also the mission of PMI to reform prisons, prison staff, and judiciary.

5. MINISTRY INSIDE THE PRISON

PMI offers various ministries to prisoners, released prisoners, prisoners' children, victims, and prison officials. Broadly PMI ministries can be divided into ministry inside and outside the prison. Following are the ministries inside the prison:

- Spiritual Assistance: Holy Mass, confession, way of the cross, Rosary, Prayer groups, bible study, faith sharing and catechesis for Catholics, etc.
- Psychological Assistance: Counseling and psychotherapy
- Moral Assistance: Moral instructions, videos, and films.
- Educational Assistance: Tuition classes, coaching, text books, fees, organizing government examination centers inside the prisons, etc.
- Art and Literary Assistance: Art and literary competitions, publishing magazines with the articles of prisoners, etc.
- Cultural Assistance: Cultural programs such as orchestra, magic show, rhapsody, fine arts training, etc

- Competitions: state and national level art and literary competitions
- Recreational Assistance: Providing recreational materials such as chess, carom board, snake and ladder, etc
- Sports Assistance: Providing sports materials such as volleyball, football, etc
- Legal Assistance: providing lawyers, and doing follow ups of the cases
- Material Assistance: plates, glasses, fan, chairs, shelves, etc.
- Vocational Assistance: Skill trainings such as welding, carpentry, etc.

Volunteers who visit the prison and do ministries inside the prison imitate the spirituality and lifestyle of the Good Shepherd. The summit of the spirituality of the good shepherd can be found in his readiness to offer his life for the sheep - self-immolation, "The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep" (Jn 10, 11, 15-18). The self-actualization of the good shepherd consists in self-sacrifice and in laying down his life for the sheep; may be, to protect the sheep from wild beasts, bandits and inclement weather. It is when we lay down our lives for others like that of the paschal lamb, like that of Bishop Benjamine de Jesus in Philippines⁴⁶, like that of Sr Rani Maria in India⁴⁷, like that of Maxmillian Kolbe in Auschwitz⁴⁸, like

⁴⁶ Bishop Benjamin de Jesus, Bishop of Jolo in Philippines was killed in front of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Cathedral in 1997.

⁴⁷ Sr Rani Maria of Franciscan Clarist Congregation also known as 'Indore Rani' was brutally murdered on Feb. 25, 1995 in broad daylight.

⁴⁸ St Maximilian Kolbe born in Poland, on 8 January 8 1894 was a member of Conventual Franciscan Order. In 1941, the Nazis imprisoned Father Maximilian in the Auschwitz death camp. There he offered his life for another prisoner and was condemned to slow death in a starvation bunker. On August 14, 1941, his impatient captors ended his life with a fatal injection. Pope John Paul II canonized Maximilian as a "martyr of charity" in 1982.

that of Oscar Romero in El Salvador⁴⁹ and like that of the White Fathers in Algeria that we become good shepherds.

6. MINISTRY OUTSIDE THE PRISON

PMI offers the following significant ministries outside the prison.

- Organizing prayer groups nearby every prison to pray daily for prisoners, volunteers and their ministry, the chaplains and correctional officers.
- Finding lawyers and benefactors to assist prisoners
- Establishing renewal and rehabilitation centers and maintaining them
- Assisting ex-offenders in their transition to the community through mentoring and supporting them spiritually, morally and financially.
- Writing letters and seasonal greetings to prisoners
- Assisting families of victims
- Visiting prisoners' families
- Creating public awareness
- Rehabilitation of prisoners' children
- Networking with other NGOs
- Coordination between the police department and prison department.
- Repatriation of foreign prisoners from Indian prisons
- Marriage settlement of released and reformed prisoners
- Educational assistance to prisoners' children

⁴⁹ Archbishop Oscar Romero, the bishop of Poor in El Salvador, assassinated in 1980, promised history that life, not death, would have the last word. "I do not believe in death without resurrection", he said. "If they kill me, I will be resurrected in the Salvadoran people".

7. SEMINARY UNITS

As PMI took birth at St Thomas Apostolic Seminary, Vadavathoor, Kerala, seminaries play a vital role in the reformation and rehabilitation of prisoners. It is the prayer and fasting of seminarians that are more significant than their personal visits. Bishops promote in establishing PMI units in major seminaries and these units work very enthusiastically. Their state-level prison pilgrimage with art and cultural programs have been very effective and used to bring forth unbelievable human transformations both among prisoners, prison staff as well as among PMI volunteers⁵⁰.

8. VOLUNTEERS

PMI has more 8000 volunteers all over India who frequently visit their neighboring prison at least once in a month. Some of them are full-timers and others do their ministry part timely. Following are the various possibilities of volunteers:

- Praying for prisoners and victims and their families.
- Visiting nearby prisons and other correctional institutions
- Visiting family of prisoners and victims
- Finding out doctors, nurses, advocates, counsellors to make use of their service in prisons and arranging their visit in prisons in regular way.
- Collecting the basic materials for the use of prisoners.

⁵⁰ Following are the seminary PMI units: 1) St Thomas Apostolic Seminary, Kottayam, St Mary's Malankara Seminary, Thiruvananthapuram, St Joseph Pontifical Seminary, Aluva, St Joseph Pontifical Seminary, Carmelgiri, Aluva, CST Little Flower Seminary, Aluva, Mary Matha Major Seminary, Thrissur, Good Shepherd Major Seminary, Thalassery, and Kolbe Franciscan Seminary, Aluva.

- Finding out the donors, companies and charitable institutions for the support of the prison ministry activities.
- Conducting awareness programs in faith-based communities, schools, colleges, companies to change the attitude of people towards the prisoners and their rehabilitation.

9. REHABILITATION CENTERS

The reformation and rehabilitation of offenders is the ultimate objective of prison administration. Though prison administration could not succeed in achieving this goal PMI could be proud of achieving this goal through its various rehabilitation centers. In 1991 Jesus Fraternity established its first rehabilitation centre for released male prisoners at Vettukad, Thrissur, Kerala. In 1992 it established the first rehabilitation centre for released female prisoners at Monvila, Thiruvananthapuram. Slowly many rehabilitation centers came in under the leadership of various religious congregations for different groups of released prisoners such as for girls, boys, men, women, etc.

Table 4
PMI Rehabilitation Centers

No	Center	Agency	Year	Place	Category	Person	Contact
01	Snehashramam	Jesus Fraternity	1991	Thrissur	Men	Fr Sunil	09526531746 zebanto@gmail.com
02	Snehashramam	JF/SDP	1992	Trivandrum	Women	Sr Beena	0471 2597170
03	Snehadeepam	SHSp	1994	Kanjirappally	Boys		0482 8272104
04	Shantibhavan	CMF	1995	Ernakulam	Youth	Fr Jos Kidangan	0484 2559400
05	Jeevodaya	Holy Cross	1995	Bangalore	Women	Sr Clara Aalappatt	080 28439926 08277026042 clarajv54@gmail.com
06	Asha Sadan	FCC	1997	Delhi	Girls		01204505275
07	Karunyashram	SABS		Ernakulam	Girls		04827352453
08	Karuna Sadan	Ursulines	2004	Kannur	Girls		0498 5222734
09	Karunalayam	Augustinians	2004	Punalore	Girls		0475 2250026
10	Nannettu Illam	Cluny		Chennai	Women	Sr Philip	9626780096
11	Jivan Jyothi	Augustinians	2006	Kumaly	Girls		04869 263325
13	Nirmal Jyothi	Augustinians	2007	Mananthawady	Girls		04935 271330
14	Snehadan	Augustinians		Aduvassery	Boys	Sr Maya	9400140898
15	Premodaya	St Anne's	2010	Bangalore	Children	Sr Vinitha	8792793919 08025554683
16	Snehatheeram	Alappuzha Diocese	2014	Alappuzha	Men	Ummachan	9447896744
18	Kolbe Home	PMI	2015	Bangalore	Boys	Sr Basil	8296304931
19		Mount Carmel	2015	Wardha	Women	Sr Jincy	07798154520
20	Kolbe Home	PMI	2017	Chennai	Men	Anthony Swami	9444209591
21	Van Thuan Home	PMI	2020	Bangalore	Men	Fr Francis	9447710488
22	St Antony's Home	PMI	2021	Kankavali	Boys	Holy Cross Sisters	

10. REPATRIATION

In 2003 Parliament of India enacted the Repatriation of Prisoners Act for transferring the prisoners to their own country and vice-versa. Under this Act the request for transfer is to be made by the convicted prisoner on grounds of age or physical or mental condition and such request is to be granted only when the receiving and transferring State agree. The repatriation of prisoners can be effective only when the judgment for the offence of a prisoner is final. A pending case cannot be considered for repatriation. The enforcement of the sentence is governed by the law of the receiving State⁵¹. PMI Volunteers with the assistance of Nuncios and Nunciatures in various countries effectively handed over many foreign prisoners to their countries of origin.

11. LEGAL ASSISTANCE

PMI has in many states associations for lawyers who voluntarily extend their hands to help the prisoners. They do their valuable service to prisoners who have nobody to give legal assistance, and do follow ups to their cases. They provide legal literacy among the volunteers and prisoners.

12. PRISON MINISTRY SUNDAY

CBCI has officially arranged a Prison Ministry Sunday on 17th August 2003 for propagating values of love of our brethren behind bars irrespective of which category of life they belong. The date is given in connection with the feast of St Maximillian Kolbe, the patron of Prison Ministry India⁵². CBCI decided that during this Sunday pastoral letters promoting prison

⁵¹ For a detailed guideline on Indian repatriation see http://mha1.nic.in/PrisonReforms/pdf/GuidelinesRepPrison Act_100815.pdf.

⁵² August 14th is the feast day of Maximillian Kolbe.

ministry shall be read out in all Catholic parishes in India in vernacular languages and offerings shall be collected from the faithful for promoting prison ministry. CBCI has arranged Prison Ministry Sunday as previous Sunday to Independence Day, i.e., August 15.

13. PRISON CHAPLAINCY

The Catholic Church has an unbroken history, through the centuries and across the world, of visiting those in prison. The Church has been connected to prisons for as long as it has existed⁵³. Christian doctrine was one of the greatest influences upon the thinking of those who conceived the prison concept. The affinity between them is certainly no coincidence, as even the name the ‘penitentiary’, is derived from the Christian concept of penitence meaning “regret for wrongdoing or sinning”⁵⁴.

In 1773 British Parliament authorized the appointment and payment of chaplains to prisons with the condition that he shall read morning and evening prayers each Sunday, Good

⁵³ It was the British who introduced prison chaplaincy system in prisons. Rabbi Philip R. Alstat (1891–1976), who served for three decades as the Jewish chaplain for “The Tombs”, the Manhattan Detention Facility, once described his service as follows: “My goals are the same as those of the prison authorities - to make better human beings. The only difference is that their means are discipline, security, and iron bars. Mine are the spiritual ministrations that operate with the mind and the heart. See Edward Fiske, “City Prison Chaplains’ Load is Heavy”, *New York Times*, October 26, 1970. Most chaplains report that they perform a wide range of functions - from administering religious programs, to training volunteers, to advising other prison staff members. In the view of many chaplains, however, their most important role is to personally lead religious services, provide religious education and counsel inmates.

⁵⁴ In 1553 the first ‘House of Correction’ was opened in London. Pope Clement IX erected a Monastic Prison at San Michele, Rome in 1703. John Wesley (Methodist) preached monthly to prisoners at Oxford Castle, while his brother Charles regularly visited Newgate, even composing hymns for the condemned. However, it was the work of Christian reformer John Howard that left the most lasting impression. See David Scott, “Priests, Prophets, and Pastors: The Historical Role of the Prison Chaplain”, *Justice Reflections*, 31/2013, 2-3, 7. See also www.academia.edu/11405930.

Friday and Christmas ... preach two sermons each Sunday ... all offenders shall attend⁵⁵. The General Penitentiary opened in 1816 was designed with the sole intention of inducing the reformation of convicts. The 1952 Prison Act made it crystal clear that every prison to have a chaplain⁵⁶. By fulfilling his roles, the chaplain becomes prophet, priest and pastor to the prison.⁵⁷ Prison chaplains are to be prophets by bringing theological insights into the everyday management of the prison and into the development of penal policy. They are also priests because they link man with God's scheme of redemption, and pastors to see man not as prisoners or problems, or threats or even patients or clients, but as people, unique and distinct persons⁵⁸.

14. RELIGIOUS ASSISTANCE IN INDIAN PRISONS

Model Prison Manuel India recommends that well known personalities from all religions should be invited to deliver lectures to prisoners for their moral uplift. The help of NGOs and welfare agencies could be taken in this regard. Every prisoner should be allowed to perform his devotions in a quiet and orderly manner⁵⁹. Matters affecting caste and religion inside

⁵⁵ David Scott, "Priests, Prophets, and Pastors: The Historical Role of the Prison Chaplain", Justice Reflections, 31/2013, 8.

⁵⁶ David Scott, "Priests, Prophets, and Pastors: The Historical Role of the Prison Chaplain", Justice Reflections, 31/2013, 20.

⁵⁷ This is referring to the Anglican Chaplain General, the Principal Roman Catholic Chaplain and the Superintendent Methodist Chaplain. For further details on chaplaincy hierarchy see Atherton (1987) and Prison Service Chaplaincy (1988). The Church of England chaplain must be a member of the church before s/he can become a prison chaplain on a part-time basis.

⁵⁸ David Scott, "Priests, Prophets, and Pastors: The Historical Role of the Prison Chaplain", Justice Reflections, 31/2013, 24-25.

⁵⁹ Bureau of Police Research and Development Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, Model Prison Manuel for the Superintendence and Management of Prisons in India, New Delhi 2003, 15,23.

the prison are significant in the context of prisoner rights.⁶⁰ Religious instructions and moral lectures can be given to prisoners⁶¹.

The role of religion in shaping personal morality and conduct has been accepted from the beginning. Religious preceptors therefore played important part in prisons. Religion often provides a safe anchor to a drifting man. Many a man facing moral crisis has been saved by the solace provided by salutary doctrines enshrined in religious books. So religious and moral training should form an important part of prison life. Prisoners are persons who neither lose their citizenship nor other rights which are not covered and prohibited by the prison rules. They can exercise and confess any faith or religion even behind bars. It is the duty of the prison authorities to respect the religious⁶².

15. INTERNATIONAL CATHOLIC COMMISSION FOR PRISON PASTORAL CARE (ICPPC)

This Commission was founded at an international congress, convoked in Rome in the Holy Year 1950, by the Secretary of State, the later Pope Paul VI. Participating at this congress were heads of prison chaplaincies from many European countries, the USA and Argentina. Fifty years later with 105 member countries it is respected as a worldwide Public Association of the Faithful in the Catholic Church, with new statutes and the same interest in pastoral care for those in prison.

⁶⁰ For instance, see Kerala Prison Rules 1958, Rule 274. It also states that prisoners observing religious fasts need to be supplied with articles required for the pooja at a cost not exceeding the cost of dietary articles not issued to them during the days of fast.

⁶¹ See JMJ Sethna, *Society and the Criminal* (1980) 283. Justice Krishna Iyer of the Supreme Court urged the jail authorities to consider the desirability of providing instructions in Transcendental Meditation to prisoners. Cfr. Mohammed Giassudhin v. State of Andhra Pradesh, (1977) 3 s.c.ci”2s7 at 295; Rule 279.

⁶² Cfr. KA Antony, “Life in Prison Transforms a Murderer into a Writer and Philosopher”, *Indian Express* (Cochin), August 21, 1992, 3.

Following that inaugural congress, subsequent congresses were held in Fribourg (Switzerland 1954) and in Freiburg-im-Breisgau (Germany 1955). In 1972 the venue was Rome at which time the participants were presented to Pope Paul VI. In order to establish the Commission on a legal footing, an interim executive commission decided on an association according to Swiss law. Statutes were agreed in September 1974 by a constituent Congress in London. Membership consisted of Chaplains General actively involved in prison work, plus delegates for the Penitentiary Apostolate which latter were appointed by the Bishops Conference for countries without a Chaplain General.

A Congress was held every two or three years. The first President was H.van den Bulcke (Belgium). Over the years since its foundation the name of the Commission was changed several times. The term “Commission”, initially chosen to indicate the informal structure of the executive post, was retained despite occasional misunderstanding of the title. On 30 August 2011 Fr Sebastian Vadakumpadan was elected as the Asian Delegate of ICCPPC during its International conference held in Cameroon.

16. CONCLUSION

Prison Ministry volunteers are called to search, serve and save the incarcerated. Prisons and prisoners are great opportunities given by God for our own redemption. Our redemption depends on our commitment to and self immolation for the prisoners. But often many volunteers are not convinced of this truth. The words of prophet Ezekiel should inspire us to rededicate ourselves for this ministry. He speaks against the shepherds who fed themselves with the milk, meat and wool of the sheep and who failed to feed the flock, who failed to

make the weak sheep strong, who failed to care for the sick ones, who failed to bandage the injured ones, and bring back the strays and the lost.

Shepherds, the Lord of Yahweh says this: Disaster is in store for the shepherds of Israel who feed themselves! Are not shepherds meant to feed a flock? Yet you have fed on milk, you have dressed yourselves in wool, you have sacrificed the fattest sheep, but failed to feed the flock. You have failed to make weak sheep strong, or to care for the sick ones, or bandage the injured ones. You have failed to bring back strays or look for the lost (Ezk 34, 2-4).

CHAPTER THREE

THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS OF PRISON MINISTRY

1. INTRODUCTION

Crime is fundamentally a result of man's rebellion against God. The solution is in the person of Jesus Christ. It begins with repentance and the gift of the Holy Spirit, and is accomplished through His power to sanctify and transform individuals. No one is ever beyond redemption. We need not give up on people even when it seems they will never change. Instead, we pursue and continue to encourage those God brings to us. For all things are redeemable through Christ. In this chapter we discuss the biblical, theological, and spiritual foundations of prison ministry.

2. SCRIPTURAL FOUNDATIONS

The most significant scriptural basis for the Church's approach to prisoners is: "I was in prison and you visited me," (Mt 25, 36). Very distinctly Jesus proclaims his ultimate goal of incarnation at the synagogue of Nazareth: "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor" (Lk 4:16-19). Letter to the Hebrews exhorts us how to do prison ministry: "Continue to remember those in prison as if you were together with them in prison, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering" (Heb 13:3; Mt 25:40-43; 9:35-38; Jn 21:16-17; 1 Jn 3:16-18).

2.1 JESUS THE PRISONER

Jesus not only preached about prison ministry but also personally underwent the injustice of unjust judgment, humiliation of incarceration, harsh torture by the soldiers and the brutal crucifixion. Jesus was arrested in the middle of the night on the word of a paid informer, subjected to intimidating questioning, remanded in custody, underwent police brutality, given a bogus trial and condemned to death by a weak judge who was put under pressure by public opinion⁶³.

2.2 JESUS' MINISTRY

When Jesus was berated for eating with tax collectors and sinners, he answered that “it is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners” (Mk 2:17). Back in the day, tax collectors were loathed as corrupt, treacherous . . . criminal. Yet Jesus went to them, spent time with them, shared a friendly meal with them. He did not overlook what they had done or what they had become. But in the moral “sickness” of their sin, He offered them the healing of His forgiveness, His salvation, and even His friendship. One of those loathed tax collectors was Zacchaeus, a corrupt man who had grown rich by cheating others (Lk 19:9). This man that the others had considered an outcast was to be restored as a brother. If Jesus were on earth today, would we find Him in the prisons, talking and dining with the most loathed criminals and outcasts? Of course we would. He would be there “to seek and to save the lost” and to restore them to sonship, just as He did with Zacchaeus⁶⁴.

⁶³ “All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” Rom 3:23. See also Gal 6:9-10; Gal 5:16-23.

⁶⁴ Jesus liberates the Samaritan Woman (Jn 4), the sinful woman (Lk 7, 36-50), woman caught in adultery (Jn 8, 1-11) and so on. The parables of the lost coin, lost sheep and the prodigal son further illustrates Jesus’ attitude towards the lost (Lk 15).

2.3 FREEDOM FROM BONDAGES

God seeks to set prisoners free - not always from their physical prison, but certainly from their imprisonment by sin, ignorance, rebellion, and foolish choices. Jesus identified Himself as the source of this freedom. As this is an important part of God's work, it is an important part of the Church's work as well. Society may intend prison to be a place of punishment, but God can use it as a place of refinement, transformation and awakening. He does not give up on those in prison, but pursues them in love (Ps 146:7-9; Is 42:6-7; Is 61:1-3; Lk 4:17-19; Ps 69:33). We all know what it's like to be in bondage to - imprisoned by - our sin and foolishness apart from Christ (Rom 7:21-25).

2.4 NO ONE IS BEYOND GOD'S REACH

A person's past does not have to dictate his future. Even a former criminal, if he has learned from his mistakes and renounced his sins, can become a great leader in God's hands. Moses, who was a murderer and a fugitive from justice, was called by God to lead His people out of slavery. In the heat of passion, he had killed an Egyptian, hidden him in the desert sand, and fled the country because the head of the government was out to execute him (Ex 2:11-15). Yet this is the man God called to lead His people to the Promised Land, to receive the Ten Commandments - to be a pivotal figure in salvation history. Apostle Paul was a religious zealot who had burned in his hatred for Christians and conspired in putting them to death for their faith. Yet Jesus called Paul to Himself, directed him to write most of the New Testament, and turned him into the early Church's greatest missionary to the Gentiles.

2.5 BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN CHRIST

Despite their past, offenders who come to Christ have a new identity and a new relationship to the Church! We are to receive them as *family*, our brothers and sisters in Christ. Our attitude towards prisoners shall be like that of St Paul to Onesimus, “I appeal to you for my son Onesimus, who became my son while I was in chains. Formerly he was useless to you, but now he has become useful both to you and to me ... Perhaps the reason he was separated from you for a little while was that you might have him back for good - no longer as a slave, but better than a slave, as a dear brother. He is very dear to me but even dearer to you, both as a man and as a brother in the Lord” (Philem 10-11, 15-16; I Cor 12:21-25). As brothers and sisters, we are to assist them coming out of prison as they struggle over many hurdles to rejoin their families and their communities (Gal 6:1-10; Rom 12:10-16; James 2:14-17). We also need to attend to victims and their healing; we need to consider the impact of crime on communities. Catholics affirm that human dignity still accrues to prisoners. They have rights but also responsibilities for their crimes⁶⁵.

3. THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATION

Theology of prison ministry highlights how Jesus comes in search of the lost sheep, carries him/her on His shoulder, feeds him/her with His Eucharistic body, sanctifies him/her with His precious blood, guides him/her by His Holy Spirit, protects him/her by His guardian angels, inspires him/her by His saints and martyrs and thereby saves him/her for eternity.

⁶⁵ Michael Kennedy S.J. had a number of juvenile offenders who wrote to Pope Francis. “Dear Pope Francis, tonight we pray for all the victims of violence. The families of people we hurt need healing. Our families need healing. We are all in pain. Let us feel Jesus’ healing tonight.” Another wrote: “I read that the harshest sentence that a youth can receive in Italy is twenty years. I wish this was true here. I am glad to be a Catholic because we have a pope like you. We need examples of God like you in this violent world.”

3.1 DIVINE MERCY

When Jesus, from the Cross, spoke the words: “Today you will be with me in paradise (Lk 23:43)”, He was speaking to a convicted thief. True mercy, as John Paul II says in the encyclical *Dives in Misericordia* – God is Rich in Mercy – is “the most profound source of justice⁶⁶”. Some theologians affirm that mercy is the greatest of the attributes and perfections of God. It is the mystery of mercy which reveals to us that within history is a sacred history of salvation, a new possibility for being human. Jesus preached “Blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy” (Mt 5:7) – an axiom which the present Pope has said constitutes a synthesis of the whole of the Gospel⁶⁷. He has also made mercy one of the principal themes of his preaching: mercy is at the heart of the parables of the prodigal son (Lk 15:11-32), the Good Samaritan (Lk 10:30-37), and the merciless servant (Mt 18:23-35). But most of all Christ embodied the love of “the Father of mercies” (2 Cor. 1:3) in his death on the Cross which is “the overwhelming encounter of divine transcendent justice with love: that ‘kiss’ given by mercy to justice⁶⁸”.

When Christ is confronted with a woman caught in the act of adultery (Jn 8:1-11) he does not condone or excuse her offence. But he manifests his trust in the redemptive power of mercy by forgiving the woman, saying to her: “Go and sin no more” (Eph. 2:4). Mercy is contrasted with God’s justice, and shown to be “not only more powerful than that justice but also more profound⁶⁹”. God’s total love is given not because we have earned it, but because we need it. Mercy, as Jesus showed, is

⁶⁶ *Dives in Misericordia*, 14

⁶⁷ *Dives in Misericordia* 8

⁶⁸ *Dives in Misericordia* 9

⁶⁹ *Dives in Misericordia* 4

necessary for justice to complete its personal and social end. It does not abolish the order of justice but is the freedom to transpose justice into redemption. This is what makes society humane.

Most men and women in prison are there for a reason: they did the crime and are doing the time. Hitting rock bottom is what prods many offenders to take an honest look at their lives and cry out to God for mercy. And God is ready to give it (Ps 107:10-16). Transformed lives point everyone's attention to God! This is the greatest motivation to get involved in prison ministry. No one else can take credit for the miraculous turnaround in criminals' lives. "Listen to my cry, for I am in desperate need; rescue me from those who pursue me, for they are too strong for me. Set me free from my prison, that I may praise your name. Then the righteous will gather about me because of your goodness to me" (Ps 142:6-8).

3.2 SELF SACRIFICE

It is the self-sacrifice, the fidelity to commitment unto death that is the hallmark of prison ministry. "Greater love has no man than this that a man lay down his life for his friends" (Jn 15, 13). The more we have this self-offering mentality of the shepherd, the more we become the Good Shepherd - Jesus Christ. It is in this way that Jesus became the high priest. Jesus was high priest not by being the member of the Levite tribe but by his self-sacrifice at Calvary, by making himself a paschal lamb. It is in this total self-sacrifice that the self-actualization of the sheep and the self-actualization of the shepherd become the same. It is in this total self-sacrifice that we find the passage and growth from the identity of a sheep to the identity of the shepherd. This is all the more evident in the institution of the Eucharist, where Jesus states: "This is my body broken for you; this is my blood of the new covenant shed for many" (Lk

22, 19-20; Mt 26, 26-28). As the paschal lamb Jesus sacrificed himself on the cross for the remission of the sins of the world. “Because all this happened to fulfill the words of the scripture: ‘Not one bone of his will be broken’ (Jn 19, 36). “After this, Jesus knew that everything had now been completed and, so that the scripture should be completely fulfilled, he said, ‘I am thirsty’ ... After Jesus had taken the wine he said, ‘it is fulfilled’; and bowing his head he gave up his spirit (Jn 19, 28-30)⁷⁰.

3.3 OVERWHELMING LOVE

The parable of the prodigal son (Lk 15, 11-32) illustrates the Divine initiative in the self-transformation of a prisoner. This parable represents those who work in the reformation and rehabilitation centers for released prisoners. The director and staff of the rehabilitation centers shall imitate the father of the prodigal son to regain the released prisoners for the Lord. The father of the prodigal son demonstrates and represents the unconditional and intense love of Father God especially towards the lost. The parable very distinctly manifests the great joy of the Father when a lost son/daughter returns. As Father God, the father of the prodigal son has open hands, open arms and an open heart. This can be the best role model for the directors of prisoners’ reformation and rehabilitation centers. When the son asks for his share, the father does not argue. He knows that if the son is ever to learn he must learn the hard way; and he grants his request.

There should be a homely atmosphere in prisoners’ rehabilitation centers. The atmosphere of rehabilitation centers should be just the opposite of a prison. If the prison is wretched and full of misery rehabilitation centers should overflow the

⁷⁰ Francis Kodiyan, *Rainbow: Theological Foundations of the Jesus Fraternity and Prison Ministry India*, Asian Trading Corporation, Bangalore 2007, 152-153.

compassion and forgiving love of God the Father. Prisoners' rehabilitation centers must always echo the voice of Father God, "You are my beloved son". Since it is the father's house there exists no reason for fear. No fear of rejection, dismissal, sending out, and watching. Instead, there should have radical trust, faith, and confidence. In prisoners' rehabilitation centers of Prison Ministry India, there are no locks, watch dogs, guards, compound walls, gates and alarms. Even doors are not locked. Mutual relationship is built up in total inner freedom, love, trust, respect and acceptance. Rehabilitation centers shall be a meeting place of repentance and forgiveness, momentary and eternity, death and life, human and divine, fragile and powerful, sick and healthy.

3.3.1 HOSPITALITY

The spirituality of the father of the prodigal son who wholeheartedly welcomes and arranges a great banquet at the return of his son is like the spirituality of St Monica (333-387), the mother of St Augustine of Hippo (354-430), who prayerfully and patiently waited for the conversion of her son. "While he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was moved with pity" (Lk 15, 20). In spite of his changed and beggarly appearance, his father recognizes him even from a distance. "He ran to the boy, clasped him in his arms and kissed him" (Lk 15, 20). Just as the father of the prodigal son welcomed the lost son with a tenderly kiss, the director should welcome the sons and daughters with an embrace. This embracing and warm welcoming should come from such a deep divine love that it should produce great ripples of reconciliation, forgiveness and inner healing within the individual. The director of prisoners' rehabilitation centers should welcome the newcomers like the Father of the prodigal son, with warmth and compassion.

3.3.2 COMPASSIONATE LOVE

Father of the prodigal son manifests a love which is very compassionate. In spite of the infidelities of his son he accepts him, welcomes him and gives him a royal treatment. This reveals the compassionate love of father God and His great joy in receiving a sinner coming home. On 20 January 1999 His Holiness Pope John Paul II during the general audience spoke on the same love, “Intense, constant and compassionate love, in spite of the infidelities of the people”⁷¹. God’s love overwhelms us with compassion. The authority of the director of the rehabilitation centre is the authority of true compassion. It is not a sort of human love that is expected from the director but the divine love and mercy which has the power to transform desperation into hope and death into life. “Love is always patient and kind; love is never jealous; love is not boastful or conceited, it is never rude and never seeks its own advantage, it does not take offence or store up grievances. Love does not rejoice at wrong doing, but finds its joy in the truth. It is always ready to make allowances, to trust, to hope and to endure whatever comes” (1 Cor 13, 4-7). With deep genuine love even, the hard-hearted criminals can be transformed as true lambs.

3.3.3 UNCONDITIONAL LOVE

We find the immense and unconditional love of Jesus in the figure of the father of the prodigal son. When the lost son returns, he organizes a wonderful feast. “Quick! Bring out the best robe and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the calf we have been fattening, and kill it; we will celebrate by having a feast, because this son of mine was dead and has come back to life; he was lost and is found. And they began to celebrate” (Lk 15, 22-24). Those who work

⁷¹ Vatican Information Service, English Edition, Jan, 20, 1999, 1.

in prisoners' rehabilitation centers shall be men and women of unconditional love and commitment. "Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end" (Jn 13, 1). They shall be ready to lay their own lives for the reformation and rehabilitation of prisoners. "No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends" (Jn 15, 13).

Prisoners' rehabilitation centers should be the source of infinite compassion, unconditional love, and everlasting forgiveness. The director/directress has called to become the Father: a father who can welcome his children home without asking them any questions and without wanting anything from them in return. In prisons they might be fed up with the insincere love of the friends and relatives. What they need in rehabilitation centers is the love of a true father, a father who can claim for himself the authority of true compassion.

3.3.4 FORGIVING LOVE

Father of the prodigal son welcomes his children home without asking them any questions and without wanting anything from them in return. He says nothing to his son but provides more than what he needs such as the robe, ring, sandals, food, shelter, etc. More than material things what the father gives is forgiveness, honor and acceptance. He continues to let his conduct speak for him and thereby shows his spirituality of silence, life witness, and the spirituality of being. This also proves that each sinner is precious that God and His ministers regard no efforts too great to reclaim such. Like the Father of the prodigal son, the director of prisoners' rehabilitation centre shall be one full of forgiving love. On the cross Jesus prayed for those who persecuted him. He taught to pray for enemies. On the cross he forgave his enemies and prayed, "Father forgive them; they do not know what they are doing" (Lk 23, 34). Sons and daughters of rehabilitation centers shall be well trained

to forgive everybody. They need to learn the art of reconciliation; reconciliation with one's own family and victims⁷².

3.3.5 REAWAKENING IN CHRIST

Through our relationship in Christ, all can experience growth, healing, and restoration. Healing takes place in the context of community as we relate to each other within the body of believers. Therefore, we seek to engage the whole Christian community in reentry ministry, not just isolated individuals. Love and teaching expressed through the body of Christ, in its diversity and with all its gifts, produces maturity in Christ (Jn 17:21-23; Eph 2:19-22; 1 Jn 4:7-8). The Body of Christ is called to minister to those who are imprisoned or oppressed. Unlike any other organization or ministry, the Church has been ordained to be God's instrument of grace and ministry in this world. The act of serving prisoners, ex-prisoners, and their families in the name of Jesus is both a ministry and a means of worship and spiritual growth. Through God's power, those who are enslaved by sin can be set free. Reentry ministry serves the community by helping ex-prisoners avoid going back to their criminal lifestyles and returning to prison. The message of the church is that there is no temptation that cannot be overcome by God's grace. Jesus freely offers forgiveness of sin and deliverance from evil (Acts 2:38-39; 1 Pt 5:8-9; Rom 12:1-2; James 4:7-8; Rom 8:1-3).

⁷² Cfr. Francis Kodiyan, Rainbow. Theological Foundations of the Jesus Fraternity and Prison Ministry India, Asian Trading Corporation, Bangalore 2007, 164-168. See also Francis Kodiyan, Religious Conversion Trajectory, PMI Publications, Bangalore 1998. Once Abraham Lincoln was asked how he was going to treat the rebellious southerners when they had finally been defeated and had returned to the Union of the United States. The questioner expected that Lincoln would take a dire vengeance, but he answered, 'I will treat them as if they had never been away'. William Barclay, The Gospel of Luke, TPI, Bangalore 1981, 205.

By our faith, we bring glory to God on earth and communities are transformed. Reentry ministry is a powerful testimony to the world of the transforming power of the love of Christ. The community as a whole experiences transformation as the Church reaches out to all those impacted by crime and demonstrates the mercy and grace of Jesus (Mt 5:13-16; Eph 4:14-24; Jn 17:21-23; Is 32:18). If Jesus were on earth today, would we find Him in the prisons, talking and dining with the most loathed criminals and outcasts? Of course, we would. He would be there “to seek and to save the lost!” God does not despise the broken; nor should we. Rather, we are to imitate the One who came to seek and to save the lost - as we once were - no matter what type of bonds enslave and cripple them. “A bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out. In faithfulness he will bring forth justice” (Is 42:3). “Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God” (Eph 5:1). Jesus identifies strongly with the weak, the helpless, and the outcast. He considers the way we treat *them* to be the way we treat *Him*. He wants us to identify with them as well, putting ourselves in their shoes and caring for them⁷³.

Every individual is created in the image and likeness of God (Gen 1, 27). And because God became flesh, and entered the human race in person in Jesus Christ, as true God and true man, Christ challenges us to see God’s presence in our neighbor, especially the neighbor who suffers or who lacks what is essential to human flourishing. In relieving our neighbor’s suffering and meeting our neighbor’s needs, we are also serving

⁷³ “Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me” (Mt 25:34-40). Cfr. also Heb 13:1-3; James 2:1-5; I Cor 6:9-11;

Christ⁷⁴. Catholic social teaching therefore contains a “preferential option for the poor⁷⁵”. Scripture tells us we will be judged by our response to the “least of these” (Mt 25:40), in which we see the suffering face of Christ himself. Humanity is one family and the vulnerable are not a burden; they are our brothers and sisters. We must always keep in mind that, whatever their offence, every criminal is also a sister or brother for whom Christ died⁷⁶.

4. SPIRITUAL FOUNDATION

The history of the Prison Ministry India has always been a saga of divine providence. At all times it manifested the immense divine, providential and spiritual experiences its members enjoyed as they became fully immersed in prison ministry⁷⁷. The secret behind the great success of the Prison Ministry India is nothing but its solid spiritual foundation; its spiritually rooted lifestyle, action plans and reformative and rehabilitative methodologies. Following are the salient features of the Spirituality of Prison Ministry India.

⁷⁴ The 1996 document on The Common Good expresses it well: We believe each person possesses a basic dignity that comes from God, not from any human quality or accomplishment, not from race or gender, age or economic status. The test therefore of every institution or policy is whether it enhances or threatens human dignity and indeed human life itself. Policies which treat people as only economic units, or policies which reduce people to a passive state of dependency on welfare, do not do justice to the dignity of the human person. Cfr. The Common Good and the Catholic Church's Social Teaching, Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, 1996, par 13.

⁷⁵ The phrase came out of a meeting of the Catholic bishops of Latin America, held in Puebla, Mexico in 1979

⁷⁶ Cfr. Paul Vallely, Prison: A Place of Redemption. A Christian Approach to Punishment and Prison, Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales (December 2, 2004).

⁷⁷ See Francis Kodiyan, Saga of Divine Providence. The History of Jesus Fraternity and Prison Ministry India, PMI Publications, Bangalore 2000; Veekke, Star of Hope in Dark Cells, PMI Publications, Bangalore 2000; Jose Pulickal, Jesus the Dynamic Way. Towards the Ministry for the Least, the Lost, and the Last, Claritian Publications, Bangalore 1999.

4.1 OVERWHELMED BY THE LOVE OF FATHER GOD

The Most Holy Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, the Perfection of perfection, the source of all mysteries, the light that enlightens everything (CCC 234), is the solid rock on which PMI has been founded. Its members frequently experience the Fatherly love of God, the grace of Jesus Christ and the unceasing guidance and fellowship of the Holy Spirit. All dreams, projects, and activities of the PMI emerge from this profound union with the Triune God.

4.1.1 Divine Providence

Those who live a life of poverty in spirit (Mt 5,3) manifesting their nothingness and total dependence on God through acts of faith, prayer and fasting, inevitably experience divine providence. The never-ending love and care of God the Father provides many occasions to experience His divine providence. This divine providence is not simply a feeling that whatever we ask will be provided by God, rather, it is a firm faith that if God cares for the lilies in the field and birds of the air how much more will He care for us (Mt 8,25-34). It is the deep conviction that God will take care of and fight for us as he did for the Israelites. When we begin a life of faith in the Triune God we enter into a divine track and into His divine plan of salvation. The moment we enter into His track from then onwards He takes care of us. We receive His Spirit. We are overwhelmed and completely led by His Spirit like Abraham, Moses, David, Elijah, Elisha, and the other prophets

In order that God stands for us, our will must be in accordance with His divine will. We need to know the will of God and we must live and act according to His divine blueprint. To grasp His divine blueprint and to work for its realization we must have complete trust and humble dependence on divine

providence. The PMI completely depends on the providence of God and on the generous contributions of local people. Every renewal and rehabilitation centre has its own benefactors, who regularly contribute their mite for the daily maintenance of inmates and institute. This points out the fact that it is the responsibility of society, and of the local people to look after and to bring the prisoner back to the main stream of society⁷⁸. In short, BDP - Bank of Divine Providence - is the bank of Prison Ministry India⁷⁹.

The PMI lifestyle of constant prayer and fasting reveals also the total reliance on divine providence. The habit of prayerful reflection and the search for the divine plan open up a dynamic milieu containing new insights and enthusiasm. Moreover, they unveil before us the face of the crucified Christ in tortured prisoners, prostitutes, drug addicts and street children. Through Christ centered prayer our selfish ambitions and false motivations are corrected and purified by the precious blood of Jesus⁸⁰.

4.2 REDEEMED BY THE PRECIOUS BLOOD OF JESUS

Jesus, the Son of God, sent by the Father to do His will, died on the cross, is the only asset of PMI. Through his death and resurrection Jesus accomplished the mission and consequently fulfilled the mystery of reconciliation and redemption. “When Jesus had received the wine, he said, ‘it is finished.’ Then he

⁷⁸ Agricola, “Divine Providence in Prison Apostolate”, in *Prisoners Our Own Brethren*, ed., Varghese Karipperry-Latika, PMI Publication, Bangalore 1998, 94-97.

⁷⁹ For further experiences of divine providence in the history of Jesus Fraternity and Prison Ministry India, see Francis Kodiyan, *Saga of Divine Providence. The History of Jesus Fraternity and Prison Ministry India*, PMI Publications, Bangalore 2000.

⁸⁰ Jose Pulickal, “The Biblical Perspectives of the Dynamic Charism of Prison Ministry India”, in Varghese Karipperry-Latika, *Prisoners Our Own Brethren*, PMI Publications, Bangalore 1998, 34.

bowed his head and gave up his spirit” (Jn 19,30). Jesus not only forgives sins and heals the wounds of the sinners but also nourishes and redeems them by his Body and Blood. He has the water of eternal life (Jn 4,14) and is the bread of life (Jn 6,35). He came that they may have life and have it abundantly (Jn 10,10). He is the resurrection and the life (Jn 11,25). He is the way, the truth and the life (Jn 14,6). He shed for us even the last drop of his blood. “One of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once blood and water came out” (Jn 19,34). The PMI firmly believes that Jesus is the savior of the world. “Only in Jesus is there salvation; for of all the names in the world given to men, this is the only one by which we can be saved (Acts 4,11-12). He saved the world by emptying himself and obeying to the point of death on a cross (Phili 2,5-10).

4.3 EMPOWERED BY THE WORD OF GOD

The Word of God, with which the universe was created, God became man, and mankind was redeemed, is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and spirit, of joints and marrow and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart (Heb 4,12). The constitution on *Divine Revelation* of the Second Vatican Council declares: “The Church has always venerated the divine Scriptures as she venerated the Body of the Lord... She has always regarded and continues to regard the Scriptures as the supreme rule of her faith” (DV 21). PMI gives prime place to the Word of God and constantly finds her nourishment and strength in the Sacred Scriptures (CCC 104). We drink abundantly from the Holy Bible, the best tonic, especially when we are engaged in ministries. We give special importance to the breaking of the Word of God during Holy Mass, in which the Word of God is officially read and interpreted. Likewise,

in prayer meetings of the PMI Word of God is to be read, explained and prayed over.

4.4 LED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT

PMI members derive delight from the company and constant guidance of the Holy Spirit. As the Spirit of the Lord led the prophets, we are always led and assisted by the Holy Spirit. We are to be ever open to the Spirit and are to be trained in listening to the Holy Spirit who speaks through everybody, even through those who are new and weak. St Paul in his first Letter to the Corinthians affirmed in no uncertain terms that we are the temples of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 3,16; 6,19). The indwelling of the Holy Spirit springs forth in us the fruits (Gal 5,22-23), gifts (1 Cor 12-14), and charisms of the Holy Spirit. Baptism in the Holy Spirit is the door through which we enter into this Spirit-filled life. “In order that we may be unceasingly renewed in Him (Eph 4,23), He has shared with us His spirit who, existing as one and the same being in the head and in the members, vivifies, unifies and moves the whole body” (GS 7).

4.4.1 DISCERNMENT OF THE SPIRIT

Grasping the divine blueprint, the will of God, is a difficult process. Here discernment of the Spirit is an important factor. Always seeking the will of God is the way of the PMI. Before launching any project PMI members make sure that it is the will of God. Absolute dependence on divine providence does not mean that we do not plan anything. We need to plan well but we are ready to submit everything to the process of discernment. God, the greatest architect, has a plan for each one of us, not for our destruction but for our better future and goodness (Jer 29,11). He knows every minute detail about our life. Every second of our life is planned by Him. We must trust in Him and seek His will for us and with our free will we

must realize it. PMI members should be experts in the art of discernment of the Spirit. Personal prayer, group prayer, prayerful discussion, consultation with experts, and a final word from authority are effective means in understanding and discerning the plan of God⁸¹.

4.4.2 GREAT DIVINE DREAMS

God has great dreams for each one of us. He also has great dreams for hardcore criminals. Similarly, PMI members should be visionaries: they should be optimistic, having great dreams, visions, plans, projects to pray for, to discuss, to believe in and to work hard for. The prime duty of PMI is to reveal the divine dreams for the prisoners and to help them to realize these dreams in their lives.

4.5 NOURISHED BY SACRAMENTS

The sacraments, the best means of sanctification which confer the grace of Christ, are the main spiritual food of the Catholics. Active participation in the sacraments helps us to bring about the full realization of human and Christian potentialities. This consists in the progressive divinization that results from a sharing in the mysteries of Christ in the sacraments and in the reproduction of the patterns of Christ's life in day-to-day life. It is the result of divine initiative and human co-operation (Cf. Jn 6, 44; 15, 5). The risen Christ, with the fullness of grace, communicates this to the members of his Mystical Body through the sacraments. The life of intimate union with Christ in the Church is nourished by spiritual aids, especially by active participation in the sacred liturgy (Cf. AA 4). As Catholics PMI volunteers have to be daily nourished by the sacrament of the

⁸¹ For further information regarding discernment of Spirits see, St Ignatius of Loyola, *Spiritual Exercises*, SCM Press, London 2010.

Most Holy Eucharist and fortnightly by the sacrament of reconciliation.

4.6 ENLIGHTENED BY SPIRITUAL EXERCISES

Besides the sacraments, the Catholic Church provides an abundance of spiritual exercises such as the divine office, personal prayer, meditation, examination of conscience, spiritual reading, the rosary, and the way of the cross which are ladders to reach spiritual heights. The constitution on the *Sacred Liturgy* emphasizing the importance of the Divine Office states that Christ continues, “His priestly work through the agency of His Church [...] not only by celebrating the Eucharist, but also in other ways, especially by praying the Divine Office” (SC 83). The Liturgy of the Hours invites us to march ahead to the spiritual heights and perfection of the psalmist, Mother Mary, and other biblical models like John the Baptist, and Zechariah. It introduces us to the right spiritual attitudes, motives, virtues and values found in the lives of the holy people in Sacred Scripture and provides a familiarity with them by creating holy thoughts, images, aspirations, and dreams. PMI volunteers are to be spiritually enlightened by actively participating in the daily spiritual exercises both individually and community wise.

4.7 FORTIFIED BY ASCETICAL PRACTICES

The Sacred Scriptures, the Fathers of the Church, the magisterium and the sacred liturgy invite us to do penance for our own personal sanctification and for the sanctification of the whole world. The Catechism of the Catholic Church recommends three typical and traditional ways, fasting, prayer and almsgiving, as the most important ascetical practices (CCC 1434; Tobias 12,8-10, Is 58,3-10). Christian asceticism is based on the emphasis given by Jesus to self-denial and self-emptying.

“If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me” (Mk 8,34). Ascetical practices invite us to incorporation into the death and resurrection of Christ. Like St Paul who practiced asceticism, “I pommel my body and subdue it, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified” (1 Cor 9,27). The secret of the success of PMI missions and ministries is that its members voluntarily practice different types of asceticism such as chain fasting, incessant prayer, doing ministry with maximum inconvenience and so on.

4.7.1 MAXIMUM INCONVENIENCE

One of the ascetical practices that PMI practices is to work with maximum inconvenience. This we took as our lifestyle not only because it is the most effective method, but also because it is only when we work with maximum inconvenience, we will have the occasions to experience divine providence. It also helped to be in solidarity with the inconveniences of prisoners. The first All-Kerala Prison Pilgrimage taught the PMI members that the apostolate with maximum inconvenience is more effective than the one with maximum convenience. We believe that the hardships we undertook during the prison pilgrimage really played a great role in the renewal of prisoners and in the development of the apostolate towards the lost sheep. All the preparations for the prison pilgrimage we did together with our priestly studies. We were very particular that due to this ministry we should not neglect our studies. We made use of all our free times for this apostolate.

During prison pilgrimages we always depended on public transport services. It was not easy because we not only had our personal luggage, but also Bible bundles, packets of books and periodicals to distribute to the prisoners, as well as musical

instruments. It was like an exodus of refugees. Sometimes seeing our luggage buses did not stop to take us. But always the grace of our Lord was with us and we were able to arrive at every prison at the exact time as fixed in the program.

4.8 ADORNED BY VIRTUES

The theological virtues of faith, hope and charity are the foundation of Christian moral activity, which gives life to all the moral virtues (Cf. CCC 1812-1813). Like Abraham who dared to offer his only-begotten son as a sacrifice to the Lord, life of PMI members should be filled with faith, hope and charity. Faith, “the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen” (Heb 11,1), enables the mind to assent to God’s revelation. This means an ascent to and an acceptance of God’s Word of salvation through Jesus Christ. Faith in Christ, which is a gift of God and a supernatural virtue infused by Him (CCC 153), is the surest means to overcome the world (1Jn 5,5) and to live a holy life. We can purchase it from the divine sphere, for “God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but have eternal life” (Jn 3,16)⁸². The lifestyle of PMI provides its members ample occasions to constantly practice not only the theological virtue of faith but also other virtues. By faith its members fully trust in the Lord, and completely surrender to the will and master plan of God (Rom 8,31; Phil 4,13; Is 40,31)⁸³.

⁸² See W. Beveridge, *The Theological Works of William Beveridge*, John Henry Parker, Oxford 1844, IV, 37ff.

⁸³ See, Sebastian Kochupura, “Isosahodaryam Thyagojalamayoru Jivithasaily”, in Thadavarayiloru Kaithiri, ed., Joseph Mackolil, OIRSI, Kottayam 1996, 27-28.

4.9 ENRICHED BY FRATERNITY

Every human being is a child of God, created in the image and likeness of God, and is redeemed by the precious blood of Jesus. Hence all human beings are our brothers and sisters, children of the heavenly Father. The fundamental principle of the spirituality of fraternity emerges from the commandment of Jesus Christ, “Love your neighbor as yourself” (Mt 22, 39-40). Prison Ministry India is primarily a fraternity, where sisters and brothers, whether they are bishops, priests, women or men religious, or lay people, live together as one family with “equality, fraternity, liberty and responsibility”. This fraternity is based on the fraternity of the Holy Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and is extended to prisoners, prostitutes, street children, beggars, drug addicts, AIDS patients, as well as to angels and saints in heaven. All become one family.

As it was in the early Christian Church, there exists an atmosphere of deep personal friendship and communion among PMI members. Fraternity means a spring of friendship, neither selfish, nor simply peripheral but a deep and genuine, developing from a single being and reaching to every being in the cosmos, a universal brotherhood. Whenever the beginnings of disagreement, misunderstanding, and animosity emerge among members, something quite natural among human beings, they are to be cleared as early as possible. If one cannot fully reconcile with one's brothers how can he/she work for the reconciliation of prisoners and victims⁸⁴.

PMI members manifest their fraternal spirit not only by encouraging and appreciating our brothers and sisters but also

⁸⁴ On spiritual dimensions of the Jesus Fraternity, see Francis Kodiyan, “Interiority of Prison Ministry India”, in *Prisoners Our Own Brethren*, ed., Varghese Karipperiyal-Latika, PMI Publications, Bangalore 1998, 16-21.

by timely corrections and healthy criticisms. When we organize prolonged programs, every day we evaluate the activities and plan the coming day events. This daily practice of self-evaluation, criticism, analysis and planning were very important during the All Kerala Prison Pilgrimages. True fraternity leads to the communion of saints. The term ‘communion of saints’ has two closely linked meanings: 1) communion in holy things, 2) and communion among holy persons (CCC 946-948). We speak only of the communion of holy people. The pilgrims on earth, the dead who are being purified, and the blessed in heaven together form one Church. The most important member is Christ, its head. In this communion, the merciful love of God, and his saints are always there to pray for us (CCC 962)⁸⁵.

Mary, Mother of God, is also the mother of the members of Christ. “By her complete adherence to the Father’s will, to his Son’s redemptive work, and to every prompting of the Holy Spirit, the virgin Mary is the Church’s model of faith and charity” (CCC 966). PMI has a great devotion to Mary and Joseph. Many times we experienced the powerful intercession of Mary in our ministry for prisoners. Often when the authorities unnecessarily denied permission to conduct programs for prisoners Mary came to help us.

⁸⁵ See J. Navone, “Heroes, Saints and Leaders”, *Studies in Formative Spirituality*, 11 (1990) 30. See also A. Goodier, *Saints for Sinners*, Sheed & Ward, London 1943. Christian communion among our fellow pilgrims brings us closer to Christ. Likewise our communion with the saints joins us to Christ, from whom as from its fountain and head issues all grace, and the life of the People of God itself. Quoting from *Martyrium Polycarpi* the Catechism of the Catholic Church states: “We worship Christ as God’s Son; we love the martyrs as the Lord’s disciples and imitators, and rightly so because of their matchless devotion towards their king and master. May we also be their companions and fellow disciples!” (CCC 957). The saints are saints because of their participation in the paschal mysteries of Christ. Their lives are true images of the goodness of Christ. Saints are living images, which enable our believing and hoping and loving within the concrete particularities of our life stories.

5. CONCLUSION

We have been discussing the scriptural, theological and spiritual foundations of Prison Ministry. What PMI does is the continuation of Jesus' mission and ministry. Scriptural foundation highlights Jesus the prisoner, His ministry, His mission to liberate people from bondages, and underlines that He came in search of the lost to save them. Theological foundation emphasizes the aspect of divine mercy, self-sacrifice, overwhelming love, compassionate love, forgiving love and unconditional love which shall in the course of time bring forth a reawakening experience in the incarcerated. The significant features of spiritual foundations are 1) overwhelmed by Father God's love, 2) redeemed by the precious blood of Jesus 3) led by the Holy Spirit, 4) empowered by the Word of God, 5) nourished by the sacraments 6) enlightened by spiritual exercises, and 7) fortified by ascetical practices, 8) adorned by virtues of faith, hope and charity, and 9) enriched by fraternity. All these scriptural, theological and spiritual characteristics of PMI can be summarized in the most supreme law, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength and love your neighbor as yourself (Mk 12, 30-31).

CHAPTER FOUR

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. INTRODUCTION

True justice must produce a positive outcome for the victim, for society and for the offender. It must give every opportunity for prisoners to come to terms with what they have done, to recognize their own guilt, and to acknowledge the need for remorse and penitence. It must be possible, within such a system, for an offender to make different choices from those that they have hitherto made. And the system must make it possible for that transformation to take place, and be assisted, at every point during the offender's sentence and life thereafter⁸⁶. We would like to see a prison system in which there is better education, more drug treatment, more behavioral program and better mental health care. With this in view we propose the following recommendations.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

We would like to suggest the government the following recommendations for your favorable consideration:

3. PRISON – A HOME OF AWAKENING

Prison shall be a home of reawakening, redeeming the inmate and thereby he/she may be able to lead a pleasant life after imprisonment. Incarceration must give every opportunity for prisoners to accept their own guilt, and to acknowledge the need repentance. In atoning for their past they recognize the human dignity of their victims and they also help to redeem

⁸⁶ Cfr. Paul Vallely, Prison: A Place of Redemption. A Christian Approach to Punishment and Prison, Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales (December 2, 2004) 2

themselves. Prisons shall have a homely environment of healing and reawakening that shall facilitate the process of rehabilitation/re-entry for those who have been incarcerated⁸⁷".

4. FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS

A major breakthrough in prison rights jurisprudence came in 1974 in *DBM Patnaik*⁸⁸ and the court asserted that the mere detention does not deprive the convicts of all the fundamental rights they otherwise possess. *Maneka Gandhi*⁸⁹ case generated a strong current and converting the right to life and personal liberty in Art. 21 into a great shield against deprivation of human rights. The Supreme Court reiterated the principle that "imprisonment does not spell farewell to fundamental rights" in *Charles Shobhraj*⁹⁰.

5. HUMAN RIGHTS

The United Nations Covenant on Civil and Political Rights which states in part: "All persons deprived of their liberty shall be treated with humanity and with respect for the inherent dignity of the human person"⁹¹. Therefore, both under national as well as international human rights law, the state is obliged to uphold and ensure observances of basic human rights.

⁸⁷ In September 2015 Pope Francis visited the Philadelphia prison and said "Jesus seeks us out; He wants to heal our wounds, to soothe our feet which hurt from travelling alone, to wash each of us clean of the dust from our journey. He doesn't ask us where we have been. He doesn't question us about what we have done. Rather, he tells us, 'Unless I wash your feet, you have no share with me. Jesus comes to meet us, so that he can restore our dignity as children of God. He wants to help us to set out again, to resume our journey, to recover our hope, to restore our faith and trust. He wants us to keep walking along the paths of life, to realize that we have a mission, and that confinement is never the same thing as exclusion. Cfr. <http://www.prisonfellowship.org>."

⁸⁸ AIR 1974 SC 2092.

⁸⁹ AIR 1978 SC 597.

⁹⁰ AIR 1978 SC 1514.

⁹¹ United Nations International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 10

6. RIGHT TO RELIGIOUS ASSISTANCE

Religion plays a great role in transforming prisoners. As almost all prison Manuals recommend religious practices are to be promoted among prisoners so that they may get sufficient opportunities for God to intervene in their lives. United Nations' standard Minimum Rules for the treatment of Prisoners highlights the role of religion during incarceration:

- (1) If the institution contains a sufficient number of prisoners of the same religion, a qualified representative of that religion shall be appointed or approved. If the number of prisoners justifies it and conditions permit, the arrangement should be on a full-time basis.
- (2) A qualified representative appointed or approved under paragraph (1) shall be allowed to hold regular services and to pay pastoral visits in private to prisoners of his religion at proper times.
- (3) Access to a qualified representative of any religion shall not be refused to any prisoner. On the other hand, if any prisoner should object to a visit of any religious representative, his attitude shall be fully respected. So far as practicable, every prisoner shall be allowed to satisfy the needs of his religious life by attending the services provided in the institution and having in his possession the books of religious observance and instruction of his denomination⁹². Prison chaplains shall be appointed in prisons where there are Christian prisoners.

⁹² United Nations, Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, Adopted by the First United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, held at Geneva in 1955, and approved by the Economic and Social Council by its resolutions 663 C (XXIV) of 31 July 1957 and 2076 (LXII) of 13 May 1977, 41-42.

7. RIGHT TO PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSISTANCE

NCRI prison statistics of 2015 states that a total of 5,203 inmates were reported as mentally ill out of total 4,19,623 inmates lodged in various jails in the country as on 31.12.2015, accounting for about 1.2% of total such inmates. More facilities for psychological assistance are needed in prisons. Councilors, psychiatrists, mentors shall be available in prisons. Besides suffering from physical ailments, the prisoner also undergoes considerable stress and trauma during his stay in prison. Imprisonment is often accompanied with depression and a feeling of isolation and neglect. Counselling should aim not merely at providing temporary relief by pulling them out of their depression, but at instilling hope and a sense of purpose in them and by equipping them with skills that may prove useful upon release. Suitable arrangements should be made to provide psychiatric counselling to those suffering from chronic depression, particularly to women prisoners.

8. RIGHT TO LEGAL ASSISTANCE

Though there are legal assistants appointed by government, they are neither sufficient nor efficient. Many are incarcerated without committing any crime. For them a simple legal assistance would be very beneficial for their release. Free legal assistance shall be arranged in prisons for those who have nobody to take care of. Legal Aid consists of four essential components. The first step is to impart legal literacy with the aim of spreading awareness amongst prisoners about their rights and obligations and sensitizing the prison administration. Legal aid must help the prison system in reducing reforms. The next step is that of litigation, where the legal aid workers take up cases of prisoners in courts and see that justice is done.

Legal aid workers should make greater use of the judgment of the Supreme Court in *Common Cause v. Union of India* (1996 4 SCC 33) and approach the courts to get more persons released from jails. Legal literacy drives should be launched with the aim not only of sensitizing the prison administration but also of spreading awareness amongst prisoners about their rights and obligations. It is necessary to keep identifying those who need and deserve legal aid. Legal aid workers shall identify such prisoners and educate them about their right to legal aid. They must help in getting the undertrials released on bail and on personal recognizance. They shall constantly monitor prison conditions and suggest changes in law to bring about the desired reforms. Para legal staff should be utilized to work in prisons and provide the required legal aid to prisoners.

9. RIGHT TO MORAL ASSISTANCE

If the aim of prison is renewal, revival and transformation of prisoners there shall be ample opportunities for moral instructions by eminent personalities who would be able to motivate them to change themselves.

10. RIGHT TO EDUCATION

Every prisoner shall have the right to education especially if the prisoner is below the age of 30. Those who have been undergoing studies prison shall arrange proper facilities to continue and complete it. Research highlights that prisoners who do not take part in education or training are three times more likely to be re-convicted. By contrast basic skills learning can contribute to a reduction in re-offending of around 12%⁹³. There is clear need for the Government to do more in improving education in prisons and in particular to address

⁹³ Cfr. Social Exclusion Unit Report Reducing re-offending by ex-prisoners, July 2002

the issue of disruption to education programs caused by the constantly rising number of internal prisoner transfers⁹⁴.

11. RIGHT TO LEISURE, RECREATION AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

Prison authorities shall take care to provide leisure, recreation and cultural activities for prisoners. NGOs can play a greater role in this realm by providing necessary materials to prisoners.

12. RIGHT TO VOTE

We would like to see a prison regime which treats prisoners less as objects and more as subjects who can become authors of their own reform and redemption. We would like to see the right to vote restored to sentenced prisoners. Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg has ruled that removing prisoners' right to vote is illegal. The existing laws and arrangements should be reviewed so that the prisoners could exercise the right to vote, like any other citizen.

13. RIGHT NOT TO BE TORTURED

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights states: "No one shall be subject to torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment of punishment"⁹⁵. The undertrials and convicts are to be encouraged to "appeal confidently to the court brutalities of jail authorities.

⁹⁴ Out of 1,34,168 convicted inmates, majority of inmates are either illiterate (36,406) or educated up to Class X (57,610). Out of 2,82,076 undertrial inmates, 80,528 were illiterates, 1,19,082 were educated up to Class X, 58,160 having education of above Class X & below graduation, 16,365 were graduates and 5,225 were post graduates.

⁹⁵ Universal Declaration of human Rights, Article 5.

14. DIGNITY OF LABOR

A full working day – eight hours a day, five days a week – should be introduced in prison. The work too should relate to the outside world, with prisoners learning the disciplines and skills and standards they will need for resettlement when they are returned to society. Catholic social teaching sees work as the quintessential human activity through which men and women subdue the earth and share in God's creativity. Work, in the analysis of Pope John Paul II in his encyclical *Laborem Exercens* (On Human Work)⁹⁶, is the defining act which makes us fully human, for our potential is realised through action, work and by acting in solidarity with others as 'a person in community'. Work expresses human dignity and also increases it. Meaningful work, he implies, is a basic human right. In his Jubilee Year statement on prisons in July 2000 the Pope John Paul II applies this notion specifically to the penal system:

To make prison life more human it is more important than ever to take practical steps to enable prisoners as far as possible to engage in work which keeps them from the degrading effects of idleness. They could be given access to a process of training which would facilitate their re-entry into the workforce when they have served their time. . . . Prison should not be a corrupting experience, a place of idleness and even vice, but instead a place of redemption⁹⁷.

15. OVERCROWDING

Optimum capacity of prisons needs to be assessed. Central Jails should not house more than 750 inmates and district jails

⁹⁶ Cfr. Pope John Paul II's encyclical *Laborem Exercens* (1981).

⁹⁷ Message of His Holiness John Paul II for The Jubilee in Prisons, 9 July 2000.

not more than 400. Certain offences should be decriminalized and alternatives to imprisonment should be designed to deal with such cases. Some more offences should be added to the list of compoundable offences prescribed in law. Unnecessary and indiscriminate arrests should be avoided by police personnel. Alternative care homes for non criminal mentally ill persons should be built⁹⁸.

16. HEALTH CARE FACILITIES

It is necessary to review the strength of doctors sanctioned for prisons and ensure the availability of adequate medical facilities for prisoners and prison staff. At least one woman medical officer must be available at times to attend to women prisoners. Adequate infrastructural health care facilities, like well equipped ambulances, stretchers, dispensaries, hospital beds etc. should be made available to the prison administration. There should be a clearly defined system of responsibilities of the prison staff in case of a medical emergency, which should be made known to prisoners through a chart. NGOs' help should be enlisted in dealing with drug addicts and in establishing drug de-addiction centres.

17. CLASSIFICATION OF PRISONERS

Classification of prisoners on the lines of education, income tax status or socio-economic background should be abolished. Mixing of first offenders, civil offenders, small offenders with other highly professional criminals will badly affect the newcomers. To avoid this tragic situation let there be separate facilities for the first offenders, civil offenders and so on.

⁹⁸ Total Capacity of Jails in the Country: 3,66,781: Central jails - 1,59,158 (43.4%); District jails - 1,37,972 (37.6%); Sub jails - 46,368 (12.6%); Women jails - 4,748 (1.3%); Open jails - 5,370 (1.5%); Borstal schools - 1,830 (0.5%), Special jails - 10,915 (3.0%); Other jails - 420 (0.1%).

18. PRISON STAFF

Most prisons suffer from shortage of manpower. The State Governments should periodically review the requirements of different types of staff required, including medical, and take steps to remove the shortage. The posts of convict warders should be abolished and an equivalent number of regular posts should be created to meet the requirements of manpower. A conscious policy towards the induction of more women in the prison administration is necessary to bring about gender balance and sensitivity within the system. The pay-scales of lower ranks in the prison department need to be reviewed. The State Governments should not downgrade the posts of the prison department by prescribing lower pay scales for them as compared to the posts of the other departments, particularly when the recruitment to these posts is done by the State Public Service Commission on the basis of a combined recruitment test. The excellent prison staffs are to be appreciated and the corrupt are to be removed.

19. TRAINING

It is necessary to organize periodic training programs and refresher courses for all levels in the prison administration. All State Governments should establish training institutions exclusively for the basic as well as in-service training of the prison staff. The NHRC and the State Human Rights Commissions should ensure that the human rights component is made central to all training modules adopted and implemented by the prison training institutions. The training of prison staff must be made the responsibility of those who are professionally competent and who have the required aptitude to bring about reforms.

20. ACCOUNTABILITY

A Manual, explaining to the prisoners their rights and obligations, procedure for lodging complaints, the conduct that is expected of jail administration etc., should be prepared in simple language for prisoners' benefit. This Manual should be supplemented by the efforts of the NGOs to do legal literacy work amongst prisoners. An effective complaint system should be established which would encourage the prisoners to lodge complaints without fear of retribution. The complaints should be enquired into fully and impartially and strict action should be taken against the persons found guilty. No attempt should be made to suppress wrong doing by any member of the prison staff. Prisons should be opened to civil society organizations as this would help in ensuring transparency and accountability in the prison administration.

21. ALTERNATIVES TO IMPRISONMENT

Civil offenders and small offenders and long-term prisoners also can be given different types of punishment instead of imprisonment such as community works, works in hospitals, municipalities, and so on. Send fewer people to prison and consider how to make more effective alternative punishments within the community. The fines system, which many now feel is enfeebled and discredited, should be rebuilt, using new systems such as computerized direct deductions from wages and reinvigorating old enforcement strategies. For the poorest in society, particularly those on benefits, fines should not be courts' first recourse; sentences of community service, in the form of unpaid work or some acts which focus on paying back to the community, make more sense, as part of a much more comprehensive system of community sentencing. The Government should introduce a wider range of community punishment programs. In between a range of new types of community service should be designed with particular emphasis

on the needs of offenders who are women, boys, elderly or those suffering from mental problems.

22. REHABILITATION

The New Prison Manual 2016 recognizes that it is the States' responsibility to devise and develop mechanisms for rehabilitation of released convicts (Chapter XXII – After-Care and Rehabilitation). It is envisaged that special committees known as Discharged Prisoners' After-Care and Rehabilitation Committees should be set up at the district or State level for planning and devising appropriate mechanisms for rehabilitation and after-care assistance to prisoners. In 1977 in *Hiralal*⁹⁹ and *Mohd. Giasuddin*¹⁰⁰ the Supreme Court stressed for the first time the need for rehabilitation of prisoners.

In September 2015 Pope Francis visited the Philadelphia prison and reminded all present that rehabilitation is the responsibility of all of society - from corrections workers, to those in communities outside prisons, to the prisoners themselves. "This time in your life can only have one purpose to give you a hand in getting back on the right road, to give you a hand, and to help you rejoin society. Such rehabilitation would elevate the morale of all". On 15 December 2015 again Pope Francis insisted: "It must be kept in mind that penal sanctions have the aim of rehabilitation, while national laws should consider the possibility of other establishing penalties than incarceration"¹⁰¹.

⁹⁹ AIR 1977 SC 2237.

¹⁰⁰ AIR 1977 SC 1926.

¹⁰¹ Pope Francis, Message for World Day of Peace, Dec. 15, 2015.

23. ABOLITION OF CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

The Catholic Church in India wants that India abolishes the capital punishment as it is against the commandment of God – Do not kill. This is all the more significant in a country where ahimsa – nonviolence is one of the basic habits of its children. Ahimsa comes as the first in Panchasilas. It was Mahatma Gandhi's life principle by which he won freedom from the British. What Pope John Paul II has said on this subject has a wider application here. The death penalty, he says in his encyclical *Evangelium Vitae*, is justifiable only “in cases of absolute necessity, in other words, when it would not be possible otherwise to defend society”¹⁰². He continues: “Today, however, as a result of steady improvement in the organization of the penal system, such cases are very rare, if not practically non-existent”¹⁰³. In the same encyclical he elaborates: “Modern society in fact has the means of effectively suppressing crime by rendering criminals harmless without definitively denying them the chance to reform”¹⁰⁴. On 15th December 2015 Pope Francis appealed to governmental authorities to abolish the death penalty where it is still in force, and to consider the possibility of an amnesty”¹⁰⁵.

24. SMALLER PRISONS

We would like to see smaller more human-scaled prisons with moves to implement the strategy of community prisons so that prisoners serve their sentences in small institutions, integrated into their local community, as close to their homes

¹⁰² *Evangelium Vitae*, 56

¹⁰³ *Evangelium Vitae*, 56

¹⁰⁴ *Evangelium Vitae*, 27

¹⁰⁵ Pope Francis, Message for World Day of Peace, Dec. 15, 2015. A total of 325 convicts including 10 Females awarded capital punishment were lodged in different jails of the country at the end of the year 2015.

as possible. This would be both more humane and would, as all research shows, reduce re-offending. It would also alleviate pressure on overburdened staff.

25. UNDERTRIALS

67% of the people in Indian jails are undertrials – people not convicted of any crime and on trial in a court of law. Among the larger states, at 82.4%, Bihar had the highest proportion of undertrials, followed by Jammu & Kashmir (81.5%), Odisha (78.8%), Jharkhand (77.1%), and Delhi (76.7%)¹⁰⁶. Life of an under trial is worse. He /she is not even convicted yet and still, sometimes, they end up spending years in prison. It is high time to speed up the trials and hasten the process of judgment so as not to unnecessarily prolong the sufferings of the innocents¹⁰⁷.

26. PAROLE

Government should re-examine the inclination for the parole system to deny early release to those who refuse to ‘show remorse’ for a crime which they maintain they did not commit. It is inhumane, however horrifying their crimes, to leave prisoners with no hope of release once they have ceased to be a danger to society.

27. WOMEN PRISONERS

Programs should be implemented to sensitize the prison administration on gender issues and the special needs of women prisoners. Besides special facilities for pregnant women,

¹⁰⁶ The Hindu, December 2, 2016.

¹⁰⁷ Maximum number of undertrials 99,398 (35.2%) out of 2,82,076 were detained for up to 3 months at the end of 2015. A total of 3,599 undertrials (1.3% of total undertrials) were detained in jails for more than 5 years at the end of the year 2015. Uttar Pradesh had the highest number of such undertrials (1,364) followed by West Bengal (294).

arrangements should be made to allow women to go back to their families for post natal care. It is necessary to take special care to rehabilitate women prisoners, as it is harder for them to find acceptance in civil society upon release than men. Thus women should be specially equipped with vocational skills to empower them on their return to society. Arrangements should be made for women to reside in special homes if they find it difficult to get accepted in society after release. Medical arrangements must be made to look after the special requirements of women prisoners. The Government should take steps to reduce the number of women in prison for comparatively trivial offences like motoring offences, crimes arising out of financial problems and debt, and shoplifting.

28. PRISONERS' CHILDREN

Depriving children of a family life by sending their only parent to prison is a step which should be avoided in all but the most serious and violent crimes. We find it impossible to accept that women need to be in prison depriving their children of a mother. Judges, magistrates and legislators should be encouraged to find, as a matter of urgency, alternatives to prison for mothers. Immediate steps should be taken by the prison authorities to strengthen the possibility of maintaining ties between women in prison and their children¹⁰⁸. Releasing women prisoners late evening is to be ceased.

29. FAMILY VISITS

The Prison Service should take interest in facilitating prisoners' family members to visit them. For this, prisoners shall be put in nearby prisons and not to transfer them to far away prisons.

¹⁰⁸ A total of 374 women convicts with their 450 children and 1,149 women undertrials with their 1,310 children were lodged in various prisons in the country at the end of 2015.

NGO visits and opening the prisons to civil society organizations would lead to greater transparency and accountability in the prison administration.

30. VICTIMS

The first imperative must always be to attend to the victim. Greater awareness of the physical and psychological problems of victims is needed from all citizens. Greater awareness of the needs of victims of crime should be encouraged among Christians at parish level.

31. JUDGMENT

Government should take initiative to introduce a Sentencing Guidelines Council so that sentencing becomes proportionate, consistent and effective throughout the nation. It might start by recommending that large numbers of very low risk offenders be diverted from prosecution by conditional cautions, warnings and reprimands. It might consider how to reduce the needless use of custodial remand. Custody should be reserved for the most serious and dangerous offenders.

32. CONCLUSION

The above-mentioned recommendations are carved out of the 30 years of prison ministry experience in almost all the states and Union Territories of India. The Catholic Church in India expects that the respective prison departments would consider them seriously and make necessary amendments in the course of time. We are sure that these amendments would be able to radically transform not only prisoners but also the prison atmosphere and would be able to achieve the greatest goal of prison system that is prisoners' reformation and rehabilitation.

CHAPTER 5

MESSAGES

1. INTRODUCTION

The CBCI Policy regarding prisoners and their reformation would also like to transmit messages to all those who are related to prisoners and prisons such as those incarcerated, their officers, families, judges, victims, NGOs, PMI volunteers, and so on. Hence this chapter briefly conveys the CBCI messages to prisoners and all those who are in association with them.

2. PRISONERS

While you are in prison you represent Jesus for He said, “I was in prison and you visited me” (Mt 25, 36). Your incarceration whether right or wrong is an opportunity to review your life and to reform, revive and reclaim it. It is your duty to transform this traumatic experience to a redeeming and reawakening event. The Holy Father Pope Francis during Jubilee Year of Mercy of prisoners on November 6, 2016 admonishes us to have hope, great hope: “God too hopes. His mercy gives him no rest. He is like that Father in the parable, who *keeps hoping* for the return of his son who has fallen by the wayside. If God hopes, then no one should lose hope. For hope is the *strength* to keep moving forward. It is the *power to press on* towards the future and a changed life. It is the *incentive* to look to tomorrow, so that the love we have known, for all our failings, can show us a new path¹⁰⁹.”

¹⁰⁹ Cfr. Radio Vaticana, 6 November 2016.

3. PRISON OFFICERS

Prison officers, prison doctors and prison chaplains take on a difficult task at society's behest. For many of them the work is a vocation. At all levels, including leadership levels, we detect some remarkably dedicated staff for whom the term prison 'service' has real meaning. In most cases, however, those working in prisons are trying in extremely difficult circumstances to carry out an important vocation conscientiously. As prison officers you are expected to handle them with care as they are vulnerable and delicate in all sense. Remember that even in the hardcore criminal there is a dim light of Jesus which can be illumined by flaming their hidden humanness and divineness. It is important for the authorities to root out those elements within the prison staff whose vision has been corrupted or jaundiced to the extent that it constitutes an impediment to change.

4. VICTIMS

We know that you are undergoing a very difficult situation. In this moment don't think that you are alone. We the members of the Catholic Church are with you and we pray for you. Remember that forgiveness is the greatest virtue. Make use of every opportunity to forgive others.

5. FAMILY MEMBERS

In this traumatic time of your life, you are not alone. We the members of the Catholic Church assure you our prayer and our volunteers would be there to assist you personally. Governments therefore have a responsibility to ensure, at every level, local and central, that their policies serve the common good by protecting the weak and vulnerable, and by promoting the integral human development of everyone.

6. BISHOPS

PMI exists and brings forth innumerable fruits only because of your paternal blessing and valuable interventions. We appreciate your regular visits to prisons and for your annual pastoral letter during the PMI Sunday. We greatly value the service of diocesan directors for Prison Ministry and the dedication of religious and lay faithful in visiting prisons. In *Sacramentum Caritatis* Pope Benedict XVI exhorts:

The Church's spiritual tradition, basing itself on Christ's own words (cf Mt 25, 36), has designated the visiting of prisoners as one of the corporal works of mercy. Prisoners have a particular need to be visited personally by the Lord in the sacrament of the Eucharist. Experiencing the closeness of the ecclesial community, sharing in the Eucharist and receiving Holy Communion at this difficult and painful time can surely contribute to the quality of a prisoner's faith journey and to full social rehabilitation. Taking up the recommendation of the synod, I ask dioceses to do whatever is possible to ensure that sufficient pastoral resources are invested in the spiritual care of prisoners¹¹⁰.

7. PRIESTS

Your spiritual assistance for prisoners and released prisoners is always highly appreciated. Please take care of prisoners and their families in your parish and nearby your monasteries. During the celebration of your Holy Mass please pray for the conversion of prisoners and for their welfare. Above all you shall be a good listener prepared to take as your motto the words of Ezekiel who ministered to the Israelites held captive

¹¹⁰ Pope Benedict XVI, *Sacramentum Caritatis*, 59.

by Babylon: “I sat where they sat (Ezk 3:15)”. To those who ask to come to prison to “bring the prisoners to God”, one experienced prison chaplain often replies: “please come, but you may find that God is already here and that often it is the chaplain who has the conversion experience¹¹¹.” Arrest is a dehumanizing experience and prison exacerbates that. Inmates find their self-esteem is diminished, they lose their identity and become a number, their physical life is basic and restricted. In such situation as Pope John Paul II has said: “prison life runs the risk of depersonalizing individuals, because it deprives them of so many opportunities for self-expression¹¹²”. When a chaplain addresses them as an individual of dignity and worth, someone made in the *imago Dei*, that can be the first step on the road to hope and redemption. The chaplain breaks down barriers which are far more profound than prison walls¹¹³.

8. RELIGIOUS

Catholic Church is always indebted to you for your spiritual and financial support to those who are in prison. You are always very generous and encourage the PMI volunteers with accommodation, food and regular visits to neighboring prisons. It is only through your saintly personnel life that PMI could do something for the release, reform, rehabilitation and reclaim of prisoners.

9. PMI VOLUNTEERS

The Catholic Church in India highly appreciates your great commitment in rendering your life for the promotion of prison

¹¹¹ Cfr. Paul Vallely, Prison: A Place of Redemption. A Christian Approach to Punishment and Prison, Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales (December 2, 2004).

¹¹² Message of His Holiness John Paul II for The Jubilee In Prisons, 9 July 2000.

¹¹³ Cfr. Paul Vallely, Prison: A Place of Redemption. A Christian Approach to Punishment and Prison, Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales (December 2, 2004).

ministry. Remember that through your prolonged commitment to prison ministry you are renewing the face of the Catholic Church in India. You are manifesting the compassionate heart of Jesus to the people of India. Jesus invites us to see Himself in the marginalized, alienated and rejected. Thereby He calls us always to extend his Kingdom of mercy and compassion.

10. LAY PEOPLE

We highly appreciate your valuable prayer and sacrifices for the conversion of prisoners and above all your commitment in visiting prisons and assisting them in manifold ways. Take care that you always join with the nearby PMI prayer group when visiting the neighboring prisons. Remember that visiting and assisting the families of prisoners is also of great value. By this you make sure that you enter into heaven because Jesus said, “I was in prison and you visited me” (Mt 25,36).

11. SOCIETY

Society has a responsibility for the physical and psychological as well as spiritual welfare of prisoners. Not to promote the interests of prisoners would, in the words of Pope John Paul II, “be to make imprisonment a mere act of vengeance on the part of society¹¹⁴”.

12. CONCLUSION

The penitentiary itself shows that the time of incarceration is meant for repentance and reawakening. Penal system must provide ample opportunities for reform and rehabilitation at its every stage. For the realization of these penitentiary goals all in the society should do their roles. Only when everybody

¹¹⁴ Cfr. John Paul II, Jubilee Year Statement on Prisons, 5.

cooperates the renewal and rehabilitation of a prisoner can take place. As Dostoevsky said the degree of civilization in a society can be judged by entering its prisons. Catholic response to prison and prisoners can be summarized in the words of Saint John Paul II: “Prison should not be a corrupting experience, a place of idleness and even vice, but instead a place of redemption”.

We conclude this study with the words of Pope Francis who during his visit to the Philadelphia prison in 2015 said, “Through Christ, transformation is possible. Let us look to Jesus, who washes our feet. He is ‘the way, and the truth, and the life.’ He comes to save us from the lie that says no one can change the lie of thinking that no one can change. Jesus helps us to journey along the paths of life and fulfillment.”

Jesus comes to meet us during incarceration, so that he can restore our dignity as children of God. He wants to help us to set out again, to resume our journey, to recover our hope, to restore our faith and trust. He wants us to keep walking along the paths of life, to realize that we have a mission, and that confinement is not the same thing as exclusion.

During the jubilee of prisoners at St Peter’s square on 6 November 2016 Pope Francis encouraged prisoners to have hope, reminding them that hope “is the strength to keep moving forward. It is the power to press on towards the future and a changed life. It is the incentive to look to tomorrow, so that the love we have known, for all our failings, can show us a new path. In a word, hope is the proof, lying deep in our hearts, of the power of God’s mercy.”

A prisoner “is no longer regarded as an object, or a ‘slave of the state’, who the law would leave at the prison entrance and

who would be condemned to ‘civil death’.”¹¹⁵ It is increasingly been recognized that a citizen does not cease to be a citizen just because he has become a prisoner. Incarceration is an opportunity for every prisoner to awaken and to regain his lost human dignity by means of personal reformation and rehabilitation. Prison staff, family members, society and PMI volunteers shall assist the prisoner in his/her endeavor to regain his lost paradise.

¹¹⁵ Dr. Kurt Neudek, *The United Nations in Imprisonment Today and Tomorrow-International Perspectives on Prisoners' Rights and Prison Conditions* eds., Dirk van Zyl Smit and Frieder Dunkel; Kluwer Law and Taxation Publishers, Deventer, Netherlands, 1991.

MARTIN MOSEBACH
THE 21: A JOURNEY INTO THE LAND OF
COPTIC MARTYRS

Plough Publishing House, New York: 2019

Pages 272, ISBN13: 9780874868395

Dr Jaison Kunnul MCBS

INTRODUCTION

The 21: A Journey into the Land of Coptic Martyrs is an international bestseller written by German journalist Martin Mosebach. He wrote originally under the title *Die 21: Eine Reise ins Land der Koptischen Martyrer* published by Rowohlt Verlag GmbH, Hamburg, Germany 2018. This book is Mosebach's journey to Egypt to discover the stories of the 21 Christians killed by ISIS on the Libyan coast and whose deaths were broadcast to the world in a video released on 15 February 2015. For the 21 brave men who were executed simply for being Christian, their faith supported them through the end of their lives. They took a stand, and they were killed for their faith. Martin Mosebach is helping their story and courage to live on - and to be shared with many others.

STRUCTURE AND BACKGROUND

Mosebach divides the book into twenty-one chapters, each headed by a picture of one of the martyrs. The martyrs mainly were young men in their twenties or thirties who had gone to

Libya to find work. Sixteen were from the small town of El-Aour, in Upper Egypt; the others came from other Egyptian towns, except for Matthew Ayariga, from Ghana. He was not Coptic; it is not even clear if he was initially Christian, but as with other saints throughout Christian history, he voluntarily joined, receiving, if no other baptism, the baptism of blood. Mosebach takes us on a journey as he investigates the background of these 21 men and the Coptic Church. The church is officially known as the Egyptian Orthodox Church. Through 21 chapters, Mosebach gives an overview of the Coptic Christians of Egypt, their heritage, history, and liturgy, as well as brief biographies of most men. He describes their family lives, church, and beliefs with clarity that the reader experienced the journey alongside the author.

THE 21 MARTYRS

The book begins by listing the names of Twenty-One Copts Martyrs: 1) Tawadros Youssef Tawadros, born September 16, 1968, in El-Aour, 2) Samalut Magued Seliman Shehata, born August 24, 1973, in El-Aour, 3) Samalut Hany Abd el Messiah, born January 1, 1982, in El-Aour, 4) Samalut Ezzat Boushra Youssef, born August 14, 1982, in Dafash, 5) Samalut Malak (the elder) Farag Ibrahim, born January 1, 1984, in Al-Subi, 6) Samalut Samuel (the elder) Alham Wilson, born July 14, 1986, in El-Aour, 7) Samalut Malak (the younger) Ibrahim Seniut, born September 9, 1986, in El-Aour, 8) Samalut Luka Nagati Anis, born in January, 1987, in Mashat Manqatin, 9) Samalut Sameh Salah Farouk, born May 20, 1988, in Menqarios, 10) Samalut Milad Makin Zaky, born October 1, 1988, in El-Aour, 11) Samalut Issam Baddar Samir, born April 15, 1990, in El-Helmeya, 12) Youssef Shoukry Younan, born June 2, 1990, in El-Aour, 13) Samalut Bishoy Stefanos Kamel, born September 4, 1990, in El-Aour, 14) Samalut Abanub Ayat Shahata, born

July 22, 1991, in El-Aour, 15) Samalut Girgis (the elder) Samir Megally, born October 1, 1991, in Samsum, 16) Samalut Mina Fayez Aziz, born October 8, 1991, in El-Aour, 17) Samalut Kiryollos Boushra Fawzy, born November 11, 1991, in El-Aour, 18) Samalut Gaber Mounir Adly, born January 25, 1992, in Menbal, 19) Matay Samuel (the younger) Stefanos Kamel, born November 26, 1992, in El-Aour, 20) Samalut Girgis (the younger) Milad Seniut, born December 17, 1992, in El-Aour, and 21) Samalut Matthew Ayariga, from Ghana.

PROFOUND FAITH OF FAMILIES

When Mosebach interviewed the relatives of the martyrs, they all shared in the immense pride of having their loved one become a martyr for Christ, rather than their own loss, without taking any revenge on the ISIS terrorists who beheaded their innocent children, husbands, fathers, and brothers for being Christians. Instead, they are all proud that a member of their family has become a saint. The focus of this book is not on the persecutors or the religious, political, economic or other motives which may have motivated these Barbic deeds. Instead, the author is interested in who these victims were. He wanted to show the readers what they believed and how they prepared how what they believed prepared them to faith death serenely.

Mosebach sees the martyrs' families as easter families, showing a great message of Christian hope. He writes: "All the houses I visited shared one common feature: the household was not in mourning. Condolences and expressions of sympathy seemed out of place. Each family seemed to me to have somehow been elevated to another plane. A scorching flash of violence had struck them, followed by a majestic clap of thunder that had slowly faded yet never fully died out. Now, at the end of the lane on which most of the martyrs had lived

stood the massive, bare, concrete dome, looking so foreign that it might as well have been beamed down from outer space.” Some reactions of the relatives are worthy of mentioning here. Girgis’s Father said that he always carried a photograph of two Christians with the Martyrs’ Families killed in a bombing, saying: “I wish I were with them, and like them.” Issam’s widow showed the author a photograph people considered prophetic. “During a visit to the Monastery of Saint Samuel, Issam had asked a monk what the future might hold. Issam knelt silently before him, and the monk put his hands around the young man’s neck—that was the exact moment the snapshot recorded. On the night the Twenty-One were abducted, the monk had a dream: he saw Issam and other men tormented by a large hound dog in uniform, and then a dagger suddenly pierced his chest.” Luka’s widow said that once, after hearing a sermon on martyrdom, her husband had said: “I’m ready.” He mentioned having an intuition that martyrdom awaited him. Milad’s parents thanked God for their son’s martyrdom, and the parents of Girgis recalled how their son had always wanted to become a martyr. However, they had not prayed for his deliverance during his captivity, but only that he remains strong. He had remained strong indeed and was now the family’s pride and joy.

MIRACLES

Some miracles also occurred just after the martyrdom. The little son of Samuel (the elder) fell to the street from the third floor, and his arm was broken in several places. When he regained consciousness, he claimed his father had caught him, and a few days later, his x-rays showed not a single fracture. Sameh’s son, who fell ill and began vomiting after his father’s death, also saw him again: Sameh had laid his hand on the child’s head and said, “It’s going to be all right,” and the boy had immediately felt well again. A childless Muslim woman

came to Issam's mother for help—local Muslims often ask their Coptic neighbours to pray for them: “Your God listens to prayers and works wonders.” She gave the woman one of Issam's shirts. Maybe the woman wore it when she lay with her husband—who knows? In any case, after fifteen infertile years, she became pregnant twice while in possession of the shirt

PERSONALITY DESCRIPTION

The 21 are modern-day lessons for each one of us. It is described in their personalities for the official martyrology of the optic Church. Moreover, they have arranged a beautiful Phrase for each one. “He was quick to forgive, argued with no one, and was faithful and honourable” (Magued). “He served his whole family” (Hany). “He was friendly and had a kind heart” (Ezzat). “He slept with the Bible on his chest. He prayed and strictly followed the fast” (Malak). “His peaceful smile showed how close he was to God” (Luka). “He gave alms even though he was poor” (Sameh). “He carefully considered his words before opening his mouth” (Milad). “He was discreet, respectful, and calm” (Issam). “He was calm, obedient, and quick to confess” (Youssef). “He devoted a lot of time to helping the ‘Lord's brothers’—the poor” (Bishoy). “He was a man of prayer and liturgy” (Girgis the younger). “He was a quiet man, even when criticized” (Mina). “He was an honest worker and treated his parents with respect” (Kiryollos). “His heart was pure and simple, his words humble” (Gaber). “He was compassionate and strove to help others” (Girgis the elder).

CONCLUSION

The 21: A Journey into the Land of Coptic Martyrs is very informative about the Coptic Orthodox traditions and culture. The author describes in detail their churches and religious services. If you are interested in the history of the Coptic Orthodox Church,

you will enjoy this book. This book dealt not only with the martyrdom of 21 modern-day saints of the Coptic church, but it also recounts the state of Christian persecution in the Middle East in general. However, even amid gruesome persecutions against Christians, the followers of Christ are still boldly living the faith. Tertullians' quote, "The blood of martyrs is the seed of faith" is applicable even today.

DR FRANCIS KODIYAN MCBS
PRISON MINISTRY SUNDAY PASTORAL
LETTERS 2004-2021

PMI Publications, Bangalore 2021, Pages 186

Bro Pradeep Anthony OFM

Rev Dr Francis Kodyan the Cofounder of Prison Ministry India has compiled this book in order to prove the ecclesial foundation and profound spirituality behind the ministry for the incarcerated. To experience the words of Jesus “the harvest is plentiful and labourers are few” (Lk 10:2b) PMI is the right place. This book highlights the state of prisoners, PMI’s intervention, and the role of PMI volunteers. The 18 pastoral letters were written by two gifted chairmen of PMI, namely Most Rev Bishop Allwyn D’Silva and Most Rev Bishop Peter Remigius. Each of the letters connects as the tread of the times and brings forth significantly the essential qualities for PMI spirituality, its ecclesial, biblical and social significance. The four pastoral letters are written by Most Rev Bishop Allwyn D’Silva and fourteen letters are written by Most Rev Bishop Peter Remigius. In brief each year a theme is selected to explicitly bring the awareness of the state of the prisoners and explains the role of PMI volunteers.

Bishop Allwyn D’Silva in the Pastoral letter of 2021 the theme being the ‘Prisoners’ Reintegration and Redemption’ practically explains the role of the PMI volunteers. There are 3 things,

i.e., praying for prisoners, visiting prisoners, and begging in order to help prisoners. In the pastoral letter of 2020, the theme was 'Reform to Reintegrate'. To summarize this letter Rev Bishop writes, the meaning, purpose and Goal of the human life is to return to God. In the pastoral letter of 2019, the theme was 'Walls Do Not Create Prisons,' this title, is borrowed from the author Richard Lovelace from the poem to Althea. His thought was "Incarceration shall not lock up one's thoughts, imagination, dreams, visions, insights, plans, and projects. If you have the right frame of mind - if your mind is innocent and quiet, then what others see as a prison can be a refuge, a hermitage, an ashram where reformations and revolutions can take place." Similarly, another book named 'No Friend but the Mountains' by Behrouz Boochani had won Victorian Prize in 2019 illustrates the 700 forgotten people of Papua New Guinea. Liu Xiaoba who is deemed to be China's Nelson Mandela has been taken as the example to show the fact that 'Self-responsibility plays a major transformation.' In the pastoral letter of 2018, the theme is You Are not Alone - loneliness is not the part of God's plan. This letter brings out the fact of the danger of modern society, that is, being connected in imagination artificially but not in reality. People are orienting towards materialistic dimension than relational dimension.

The pastoral letter of 2017, carries the theme of 'Forgiveness Cannot undo the Past but Can Enlarge the Future.' In this letter the value of forgiveness and mercy is highlighted. The Church has to show the face of the mercy. Role of PMI volunteer is to bring hope, faith and a sense of restorative justice in the prisoner. In the pastoral letter of 2016, the theme was 'Changing Hearts, Transforming Lives and Impacting the World'. This explains how mercy puts aside sin. The fact to be considered is about 70 percentage of prisoners are undertrial

prisoners. In the pastoral letter of 2015, the running theme is 'Create Homes not Cells.' At home people are cared, loved, trusted and relationships happen where as in prisons people are considered merely as numbers. In the pastoral letter of 2014, the theme chosen was 'Transforming Hearts, Lives and the World.' 'Love changes the heart of many' has been the focus of this letter. Love transforms foes into friends, fear into trust and takes the form of the incarnate. It is easy to punish the weakest but not the big fish, it swims away. In the pastoral letter of 2013, the theme was 'Year of Faith and Prison Ministry. In this letter the aspect of visiting prison is equivalent to visiting Christ is brought out. In the pastoral letter of 2012, the theme was 'In Search of the Lost Sheep.' In this letter the church highlights the priceless dignity of the human being who is made in the image of Christ. The situation of the prison is as follows: instead of reforming prisoners, prisons have been becoming the breeding ground of criminals.

Pastoral Letter of 2011 discusses the theme 'Neither Do I Condemn You.' This letter states that thousands of prisoners are waiting to hear these words from PMI volunteers, and it once again gives importance to the dignity of the Human Being. Pastoral letter 2010 illustrates the theme 'Together We Change the World.' The call for the Church is to attend to the need of the suffering humanity behind the bars. We can transform the world by our selfless service. Pastoral letter 2009 elaborately explains 'Prison Ministry - A Call to Make a Difference.' This letter invites to bring changes in the lives of the prisoners. Pastoral Letter 2008 delineates the theme 'Prison Ministry - A Call to Serve the Least.' As Jesus came to call sinners similarly even our call is to call sinners and to save their entire family. This could be done by being a volunteer, praying and contributing for the welfare of prisoners. Pastoral Letter 2007

investigates the theme 'I Came not to Call the Righteous but Sinners.' Our call is to accept, encourage, show compassion and love prisoners. Pastoral Letter 2006 elaborates the theme 'Prison Ministry - A Journey Along with Prisoners.' The Church once again brings out the importance of giving respect to the human dignity despite of the crimes done by prisoners. Non-condemning and accepting attitudes bring transformation. Pastoral Letter 2005 elucidates the theme 'Prisoners - Persons with Fundamental Rights.' This letter borrows the idea of Cardinal Renato Martino who says: "An imprisoned man has the right to be considered as a person." The fruits of PMI rehabilitation centres through counselling, job and marriage settlement and skill managements are brought out in this letter. Pastoral Letter 2004, explores the theme 'Gun Cannot Change Prisoners, Nun Can.' Prisoners could be transformed by the word of love and concern than with lathi's is the fact that is brought by this letter. This fact has been acknowledged by the testimony of former home minister of Andhra Pradesh T Devender Gouda.

The author brings to light the rich motivating factors of PMI spirituality, ecclesiology, sociology, psychology, and above all the significance of pastoral theology for the least, lost and the last. I am sure those who read this book would highly benefit from the insights and inspirations and innovations hidden in these golden lines written by eminent bishops.

DR FRANCIS KODIYAN MCBS

POPES TO PRISONERS

PMI Publications, Bangalore 2021, Pages 280

Sr Lini Sheeja MSC

Neil Armstrong, the first man to land on the moon on 20 July 1969, having reached the destination, looked down at the earth from the moon and said “O Lord, How Great Thou Art”. The book *Popes to Prisoners* makes me wonder how great God is for all the marvels our Redeemer works through every one of His chosen ones. An estimated 650 million people watched in suspense as Neil Armstrong descended a ladder towards the surface of the Moon. As he took his first steps, he uttered words that would be written in history books for generations to come: “That’s one small step for man is one giant leap for mankind.” *Popes to Prisoners* compiled by Rev Dr Francis Kодиyan MCBS, PMI cofounder, is a great resource for every prison chaplain, for every Catholic and every volunteer who wants to journey with prisoners and their families. This is a guide for all of us to embrace every broken being with the look of our Master and the love of our Redeemer.

Popes to Prisoners is full of words of empathy from the Supreme Pontiffs to the broken ones. It’s oneness of the Church with the deserted ones. The book reveals to us that the entire Catholic Church is mindful of more than 11 million people incarcerated throughout the world. We all of us are broken beings. God came down in our brokenness! God came down

when we were lost! God came down when we were abandoned. God came down in our emptiness. The words of Popes to prisoners take away the burden, the chord, the misery which binds every prisoner behind the bars. Man was hiding as we read in Genesis 3:10, “I’m naked,” said Adam. That’s when God asked that question to Adam, “Adam, who told you, you were naked?” (Gen 3:11). I didn’t say that you were naked. Did I say that you need to be ashamed of yourself? Did I say you were empty? Although Adam was hiding himself, God who went in search of Adam said, I didn’t say that you were naked. Did I say you lost your standing with me? In the eyes of God, we never lose our worth. In the eyes of the Catholic Church every prisoner is capable of redemption, for our God is behind the bars (Mt 25:36) and every prisoner is precious (Lk 19:10). The book *Popes to Prisoners* is a record for global prison ministry in which the thoughts, words and down to earth deeds of Supreme Pontiffs to prisoners are revealed.

In Luke 15, we read Jesus telling us, ‘I go in search of the lost sheep’ and that is the nature of God and Jesus reveals this to us. The Shepherd knows that a sheep that is lost and entangled in the midst of thorns and thistles in the desert will perish and so, the Shepherd is in search of it. God has always that nature, of going in search of the lost. *Popes to Prisoners manifests the heart of our Supreme Pontiffs who go in search of the sad, the broken, the vulnerable, the sick and the sinful.*

“Prisoners easily can be overwhelmed by feelings of isolation, shame and rejection that threaten to shatter their hopes and aspirations for the future. Within this context, chaplains and their collaborators are called to be heralds of God’s infinite compassion and forgiveness. In cooperation with civil authorities, they are entrusted with the weighty task of helping the incarcerated rediscover a sense of purpose so that, with

God's grace, they can reform their lives, be reconciled with their families and friends, and, insofar as possible, assume the responsibilities and duties which will enable them to lead upright and honest lives within society." This address of His Holiness Benedict XVI to the Participants in the Twelfth World Congress of the International Commission of Catholic Prison Pastoral Care, Castel Gandolfo, on Thursday 6 September 2007, challenges every Catholic, every Chaplain, every volunteer to be the compassionate God to our brother and sister behind the bars. "Love ought to show itself in deeds more than in words," said St Ignatius of Loyola. The book, *Popes to Prisoners*, is pure love of the Catholic Church shown in action than in mere words.

"The Church is close to you. She wants to witness to the hope Christ brings us. No act can deprive you of the dignity that is yours as a child of God", said Pope John Paul II to the Young Prisoners on the Occasion of the 12th World Youth Day Celebrations held in Paris on 21-24 August 1997. "The biggest must serve the smallest. He who feels biggest must be the servant. May this gesture that I make help us to be more servant-like with one another, more friendly, brothers in service" said Pope Francis after the washing, drying and kissing the feet of the inmates: nine Italians, and one each from Brazil, Ivory Coast and Morocco. Pope Francis, who suffers from sciatica, took help from his aides to stand up and kneel down before each prisoner at the prison in Velletri, outside Rome.

With these words and deeds of popes to prisoners, I see the fulfilment of the scriptures by God's anointed and appointed ones. "I led them with cords of human kindness, with bands of love. I was to them like those who lift infants to their cheeks. I bent down to them and fed them" (Hosea 11:4). God's heart moved for the Israelites and our Popes' hearts move for the

lost ones. God bends down to lift His people who were lost and our Popes bent to wash the feet of the prisoners. God in His graciousness says to the chosen ones not to be afraid, and in the Holy Bible we come across 365 times God saying to His created ones not to be afraid. The book *Popes to Prisoners* is full of assurance from the Sovereign Pontiffs to the dejected and rejected ones behind the bars.

“I spoke to him as a brother whom I have pardoned, and who has my complete trust”, said Pope John Paul II after meeting Mehmet Ali Agca, his assassin at Rebibbia Prison in Italy. Every reader’s heart would move with tears when one reads this incident. Pope calls his assassin as brother. As Jesus made history, our Popes make history through their words, deeds and thoughts for the broken ones. Jesus came down for the outcasts and Popes receive the outcasts as their brothers and sisters. The reputable persons reach out to the disreputable people with the message of hope and love.

“And I tell you, you are Peter and on this rock I will build my Church and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it” (Mt 16:18) said Jesus to Peter. Jesus established St Peter as the first Pope and after Jesus’ death and resurrection he served as the head of the Apostles and was the first to perform a miracle after Pentecost (Acts 3:1–11). From then on the Church had 264 popes and on March 13, 2013, Cardinal Bergoglio at the age of 76 was named the 266th Pope of the Roman Catholic Church, adopting the name Francis. The broad job description for the role of the Pope is to be the Head of the Catholic Church and the Bishop of Rome.

The key roles of Pope are to define faith issues, to define all issues related to morality and faith, to administer the Church, to appoint Bishops, to create dioceses, to create Cardinals and

to name Saints. We see these bishops of Rome reaching out to prisoners with the message “not to lose hope and you are not alone”. We see the bishops of Rome breaking the boundaries and reaching out to the unreached. We see the bishops of Rome reaching out to the marginalized, the outcasts and the sinners in the dark cells of prisons. We see the bishops of Rome talking to death row prisoners in death chambers. We see the bishops of Rome reaching out to the peripheries with the message of ‘another world is possible’ for the incarcerated and ‘hold on to the Creator who is love alone’.

Popes to Prisoners is the 12th book of Rev Dr Francis Kodiyan MCBS, PMI national Coordinator and secretary to CBCI for Prison Ministry India and I congratulate the Father of prisoners, a man with vision and mission for our brethren behind the bars. I am enthralled by his vision in presenting these documents, sayings and deeds of Popes to prisoners as a book. As I’m deeply grateful at the work of Fr Francis in this compiled work, I wish all bishops, priests, religious, chaplains, every Catholic and every volunteer of prison ministry to get a copy of this book to know the depth of their call as a Catholic and all the more to be His chosen ones in His vineyard. “Happy is the nation whose God is the Lord and the people whom He has chosen as His own” (Ps 33:12).