ISSN 0972-7701

Reformative Explorations

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

Volume 10 01 September 2024 Number 3

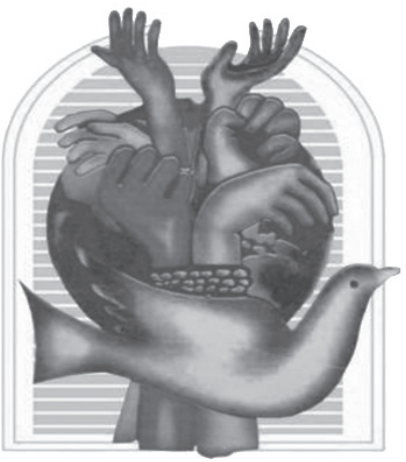
Reformative Explorations

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

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: nationalpmi2015@gmail.com;
www.prisonministryindia.org

Reformative Explorations

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



Volume 10 01 September 2024 Number 3

Reformative Explorations

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

Volume 10 | 01 September 2024 | Number 3

Contents

Editorial
Reformative Explorations
10/3 (2024)
Pages 4-23

PSYCHOLOGY OF REFORMATION: FACTORS AND MEANS

Dr Francis Kodiyan MCBS

1. Introduction

Psychology, the science of mind/behaviour, has a significant role to play not only in human formation but also in reformation. This is all the more true in the reformation, rehabilitation and reclamation of released prisoners, prostitutes and criminals. The article on the *Psychology of Reformation* is written mainly in view of the reformation of released prisoners at the varied rehabilitation centres of Prison Ministry India/ Jesus Fraternity[1]. This study has three sections. The first part treats the psychology of reformation, the second part deals with certain psychological factors related to reformation, and the third delineates some of the common psychological means of reformation.

2. Psychology of Reformation

By the term reformation we mean the process of reintegrating those who have gone astray, e.g., prisoners, prostitutes and the like. Reformation, a complex human reality having psychological, moral, spiritual, intellectual, and socio-economical elements, affects all of man's conscious and intentional operations. It directs one's gaze, pervades one's imagination, and releases

1 For a study on the rehabilitation centres of Jesus Fraternity/Prison Ministry India, see Francis Kodiyan, "Reformative Explorations: Foundations for a Psycho-Spirituality and Crimino-Sociology", *Reformative Explorations*, 1/1 (2003) 10-11.

the symbols that penetrate to the depths of one's psyche. It enriches one's understanding, guides one's judgements and reinforces one's decisions[2]. According to psycho-social analysis, reformation is characterised by a conscious modification of one's own system of opinions, by an adoption of new values and ideas. Reformation is a complex process of transformation involving various conscious operations of the human person. It is a redefining of one's character, nature, and life goal[3]; a transition from irresponsible to responsible behaviour. Hence reformation in the psychological sense is a radical transition of standpoint[4].

Psychologically speaking, reformation is necessary for the complete maturing of the personality of the deviated. The individual in need of reformation is often one who is cut off from supernatural life. He is not moving toward the supernatural end, the only ultimate end towards which he ought to move. In other words, he is not be growing towards the supernatural fulfilment. The individual in need of reformation is, psychologically speaking, stunted in growth. His personality is not integrated. There may be conflict in his life. Both on the supernatural level and on the natural level reformation represents a growth toward unity and fulfilment[5]. Despite all the psychological investigations into the different aspects of reformation almost all psychologists agree that reformation is still a mystery. If we know a person psychologically, we can foresee fairly correctly his type of reformation, whether it is

2 See K. Cassidy, «Conversion Dynamics of the "Spiritual Exercises"» *Review for Religious*, 45 (1986) 925.

3 See H.R. Bagwell, "Abrupt Religious Conversion Experience", *Journal of Religion and Health*, 8 (1969) 174.

4 See H.C. Warren, ed., *Dictionary of Psychology*, Houghton Mifflin Company, Dallas 1934, 61.

5 See G.F. Kenny, *Theories of Religious Conversion Among English Speaking Psychologists from James H. Leuba to the Present*, Pontifical Gregorian University, Rome 1957, 49.

sudden or gradual, quiet or excited. But psychology can see only the human side of reformation. The divine side and the spiritual aspect, the final cause and the real nature of reformation, is inscrutable. Every reformation enfolds in itself a divine secret - the mystery of life - whose power and beauty will gradually be unfolded to the eye, but whose inner significance no mind can penetrate[6].

3. Factors of Reformation

Reformation does not just happen. It is caused and caused by several factors. There are divine and human factors. This article focuses only on certain human factors. Among the human factors of reformation there are various elements such as environment, heredity, time, society, tradition, place, genetics, interest, beliefs, politics, social status, occupations, education and morality that are at work to encourage and nudge one towards reformation. These factors, as well as the impact of adolescence, personality, culture, and conflict elements provide additional contexts for reformation and a rich base for understanding the dynamics of reformation.

3.1. Maturation Period

By the maturation period we mean, first and foremost, adolescence where the intense maturation process takes place. Secondly, as human maturation is a lifelong process, by the maturation period, we mean, in actuality, one's entire life. As a human being lives his life successively by moments and days, months and years so reformation is a lifelong struggle that is to be lived daily with the help of the God's grace. Prison statistics reveal the fact that most of ~~the~~ prisoners are youngsters. This fact leads to the conclusion that there is a relation between deviation and adolescence. Adolescence is a prime time for

6 See J. Strachan, "Conversion", in *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, ed., J Hastings, T & & Clark, Edinburgh 1911, IV, 109.

conflict, identity crisis, searching, re-evaluation, and value selection. Reformation is closely related to those great physical and mental changes which mark the transition from childhood to youth and on into manhood or womanhood. During this time of stress, even nature calls for readjustment. The maturation of reason, feeling, and moral sense precipitate a spiritual crisis. Many other psychologists and theologians support the theory of an ongoing reformation in which the maturation takes place not only during adolescence but also during one's entire life-span. Reformation is a never-ending reality. The new life of maturity and personal insight takes place all throughout life.

3.2. Personality Structure

Personality is an important factor in the process of reformation, because reformation differs according to one's personal development and the nature and structure of the personality. The differences in moral outlooks such as mature concepts of self-chosen direction, universal ethical outlook, etc., also affect the process of reformation. According to these variations, reformation may occur slower or faster in one's life. There may be personalities more or less suitable or unsuitable for reformation. There can be persons who feel the need for reformation and others who never feel the need[7]. Some persons could never under any circumstances be reformed. They may have a personality unsuitable to reformation. Our study on the relation of personality and reformation concludes that a certain type of man needs a certain type of reformation. Most of the writers on the influence of personality structure

7 See M. Szentmártoni, *Psicologia della religione*, Editrice PUG, Roma 1994, 70. See also S. Yochelson - S.E. Samenow, *The Criminal Personality*, Jason Aronson, New York 1976, I, 1-44. Larry Lilly, prison chaplain, admits that some prisoners are beyond remedy. They do not want to be rehabilitated. They cannot be helped because they do not want to be helped. See T. Carlson, "Deliver us from Evil. Prison Fellowship's Saving Grace", *Policy Review,* Fall (1992) 75.

on reformation agree that indifference is one of the factors that prevents reformation. For example, B. Gillespie affirms: "A policy of total non-cooperation, detachment, and humour seems to be the best defence against induced change. A lack of involvement avoids commitment"[8].

3.3. Culture

Each reformation is unique because it occurs in a unique cultural context. V. B. Gillespie suggests: "This context may embrace the political, social, economic, and religious centres of a person, but whatever the meaning, it never takes place outside a cultural context of some kind"[9]. The person and the experience of reformation are formed by the cultural context. Culture is the filter through which external influences are received. Its function as a mould in setting the lifestyle has long been recognised. This leads us to believe that reformation would not be likely to occur if culture did not expect it to occur. Reformation has different meaning in various cultural contexts. For some it is the cultural traditions that bind and form their types and peculiarities of belief. Cultural conditioning may be more significant than suggestibility in determining the form that a particular reformation may take[10]. Indeed, spiritual growth will be crippled if we allow culture, upbringing, and childhood concepts to distort the true image of God as a loving Father. At times culture may also be influenced to create a distorted self-image[11]. There may be variations in the mentality of reformation depending upon the dominant religious culture of a country. Tendencies towards reformation in a country where the dominating religious culture is Hindu may not be the same as

8 V.B. Gillespie, *The Dynamics of Religious Conversion*, Religious Education Press, Alabama 1991, 112.

9 V.B. Gillespie, *The Dynamics of Religious Conversion*, 3.

10 See V.B. Gillespie, *The Dynamics of Religious Conversion*, 115-117.

11 See J.M. Fuster, *Growing in Christ*, St Paul Publications, Bombay 1982, 20-22.

in a country where the dominating culture is Christian, Moslem or Buddhist and vice versa. The attitudes towards reformation may even vary between Catholic countries where the emphasis is on the sacraments and traditions and non-Catholic countries where the emphasis is on the Bible[12].

3.4. Conflict Elements

The reformation process may begin with an experience of disruption in a subject's spontaneous self-understanding. The distant preparation for a reformation can be a sentiment of dissatisfaction. It may even be triggered by a variety of superficial enjoyments. Dissatisfaction increases with an increase in the disorders of life. Such disruption is brought about by a personal confrontation with a new self-transcending field of meaning, which invites the subject to re-identify him within a new context it provides. The reformation may occur when a subject embraces the new context and re-identifies himself in its light[13]. Often, reformation takes place in an acutely confused state. Intense intra-psychic conflict, distinctive sense of unrest, dissatisfaction with self, feeling of wanting something or wanting to be something, etc., are often evident. Others may have the experiences of unsolved problems, cumulative stress, nervousness, anxiety, or over-stimulation. Lofland and Stark point out that enduring and acutely felt tensions would enhance reformation[14].

Reformation can be an outcome of a crisis. Though it may occur to persons in a variety of circumstances and forms, and

12 On culture and personality development see G.W. Allport, *Pattern and Growth in Personality*, Holt, Richard and Winston, London 1961, 165-175.

13 M. Baird, "Self-Transcendence and Narrative Practice. A Preliminary Study of the Antecedents of Conversion Experience", *Studies in Formative Spirituality,* 13 (1992) 346.

14 See W. Kox - W. Meeus - H. Hart, "Religious Conversion of Adolescents. Testing the Lofland and Stark Model of Religious Conversion", *Sociological Analysis,* 52 (1991) 227.

though there may exist many preparatory steps and long-range consequences, the event of reformation comes to focus in a crisis of ultimate concern. In his view the more acute the crisis, the better the prognosis for reorganisation; indeed, even reconstruction of a whole life. Such crises urge one to die and to be born again. The day arrives when this urging bursts forth as an insight or an enlightenment which hastens the person onto radical change[15]. It is true that reformation happens often at a time of crisis characterised by a certain disequilibrium from which one wants to emerge, or by a loss of an interior security. The aspiration for personality by a young man, the shame of a certain vice or sin, death, sickness, war, failure, captivity, etc., are some of the propitious moments for reformation[16]. It has been recognised that in times of general societal unrest, in times of war, epidemics and the like, more reformations are noted. Economic depressions in the country also can affect the reformation of the period.

4. Means of Reformation

Psychology from its years of research and experiments, proposes many effective means that could help one arrive at the summit of reformation. There could be many obstacles and blocks to the growth of reformation. These can be due to some psychological and psychosomatic problems or sickness. In order to overcome these obstacles, we need to discern them, accept them and to cure them. Though self-analysis helps to a certain extent often it may be beyond the capacity of the individual's own effort. There needs to be the assistance of experts. Here comes the need for counselling. When the problems come under the clinical level there needs to be the

15 See K. Cassidy, "Conversion Dynamics of the Exercises", *Review for Religious*, 45 (1985) 925.

16 See Y. Congar, "La conversion. Etude théologique et psychologique", *Parole et Mission*, 3 (1960) 510.

help of medicines to overcome it. In such situations clinical psychology and psychotherapy come to its assistance.

4.1. Attitudinal Change

In the traditional point of view the term attitude stands for some internal affective orientation that would explain the actions of a person. Its contemporary usage, it generally entails several components such as the cognitive, the affective, the evaluative and the conative (disposition for action)[17]. In the reformation trajectory the old negative attitudes must be changed. In the pursuit of the fullness of human life, everything depends on the frame of reference, the habitual outlook, the basic vision one has of oneself, of others, life, the world, and God. For instance, consider the attitude of two prisoners who look out from prison bars. One sees mud and the other sees stars. If one is to change, to grow into a person who is more fully human and more fully alive, one certainly has to become aware of one's vision and patiently work at redressing its imbalances and eliminating its distortions. All real and permanent growth must begin here. There can be no real growth until and unless our basic perception of reality, our vision, is changed.

The attitude of genuineness with self, according to J.M Fuster, is the consistency between the three levels of authenticity, sincerity and congruence in a person. The first level of genuineness with oneself is the awareness of the exact and real feeling. The second level is to acknowledge that feeling as part of one's experience. The third level is the level of decision, that is, to decide either to reject the feeling or to encourage it. To be genuine with self means to label one's feeling correctly, to admit it as part of one's experience, and to be aware of the decision one must take to reject or to encourage the feeling. The attitude of respect towards self emerges from the sense

17 See A.S. Reber, *Dictionary of Psychology*, Penguin Books, London 1985, 65.

of worth of the human being. It arises from love of self and self-acceptance. It is the fruit of an objective self-perception. It is an attitude of being fully responsible for one's decision taken with full knowledge, awareness and consent. Self-respect makes one feel adequate and competent to deal with people and to do one's work with enthusiasm[18]. Rebuilding the sense of self-respect that is lost is a significant act in the trajectory of reformation. For this rebuilding of self-respect there must be somebody who believes in them, trusts them, to help them. M.R. McGeady writes about what they tell the newcomers of *Covenant House*: "We believe in you. We trust you. We are going to do all we can to help you. All we ask is that you do all you can to help yourself"[19].

4.2. Motivational Change

The term motivation means an intervening process or an internal state of an organism that impels it to action. It is an energiser of behaviour. It is a state of arousal that impels an organism to action; a rationalisation, or a justification that a person gives as the reason for his/her behaviour. According to A.S. Reber, the motivational states result from the multiple interactions of a large number of other variables, among them the need level, the incentive value of the goal, the organism's expectations, the availability of appropriate responses, the possible presence of contradictory motives and many unconscious factors.

---

18 See J.M. Fuster, *Growing in Christ*, 121-125. John Powell states that there are five essential steps that lead to the fullness of life. They are 1) to accept oneself, 2) to be oneself, 3) to forget oneself in loving, 4) to believe and 5) to belong. See John Powell, *Fully Alive Fully Human. A New Life Through a New Vision*, Tabor Publishing, Texas 1976, 14-15.

19 See M.R. Mcgeady, *God's Lost Children*, Covenant House, New York 1991, 15. On attitudinal formation and change see also P. Mussen - M.R. Rosenzweig et al., *Psychology. An Introduction*, D.C. Heath and Company, London 1973, 92-109.

Contemporary research on motivation suggests three basic orientations. 1) Physiological motivation is limited to the primary drives such as hunger, thirst, sex, etc. 2) Behavioural motivation is concerned largely with elaborations and refinements of the drive theory and the learning theory. 3) Psycho-social motivation is oriented toward explanations of complex, learned, human behaviours. Motivation is intimately intertwined with that of emotion. The energising elements of a motivational disposition often have a strong emotional tone[20]. There are different types of motives such as the deficit motives and the growth motives. The former include elementary psychological needs of thirst, hunger, sleep, safety comfort and security. The latter include the ambitions, interests and outthrusts. According to Maslow the growth motives lead to self-actualisation. Each personality strives to maintain its integrity and fulfil its own destiny in its own way. This concept is definitely pointed towards the future[21].

G.W. Allport also speaks of the growth motives. He argues that the basic drives of the child should be gratified so that the child may later be freed to adopt less self-centred motives. Thus a child who has a sufficiency of food, care, safety and love need not, as he grows older, be obsessed by these basic needs. He can easily reach out to expanded goals. If he has known basic drive-gratification and security then later in life he can tolerate frustration of these same drives more readily than a person whose whole personality is permanently pivoted on needs that were never adequately gratified[22]. G.W. Allport emphasises the significance of the motive called intention. According to him it

20 See A.S. Reber, *Dictionary of Psychology*, 454-455. See also L.M. Rulla, *Anthropology of the Christian Vocation*, Gregorian University Press, Rome 1986, I, 117-150.

21 See A.H. Maslow, *Motivation and Personality*, Harper, New York 1954, Chapter-5. See also G.W. Allport, *Pattern and Growth in Personality*, Holt, Richard and Winston, London 1961, 215, 221.

22 See G.W. Allport, *Pattern and Growth in Personality*, Holt, Richard and Winston, London 1961, 215.

enables one to overcome the hurdles that stand as great blocks for the total realisation of the ultimate motivation. It refers to what the individual is trying to do. He argues:

> There are, to be sure, immediate and short-run intentions (getting a glass of water, brushing off a fly, satisfying any drive); but the term has particular value in pointing to the long-range dispositions in personality. We can *intend* to order our lives by some ethical code, to search out a meaning for existence. A religious intention leads us to order our life in the hope of attaining at the end a beatific vision[23].

There is another motive called the achievement motive that is important in relation to the trajectory of prisoners' reformation. This is the attempt to attain a prescribed goal and is the personal motive manifested as a striving for success that could play a very significant role in prisoners' reformation. At the basis of the progressive process of any reformation there must be a strong desire or motivation. The motif experience can be defined as those aspects of a reformation which are most memorable orienting to the person 'doing' or 'undergoing' personal transformation - aspects that provide a tone to the event, its pointedness in time, its positive or negative affective content and the like[24]. Reformation is a constant process. It is always on the move towards its established goal. It is like the captain of the ship, who once the ship is out of harbour, points the bow of the ship in the direction of the harbour to be reached. Due to the wind, variations of current and climate, until and unless he continuously redirects the ship, he will not be able

23 G.W. Allport, *Pattern and Growth in Personality*, 223. On transformations of motives see G.W. Allport, *Personality. A Psychological Interpretation*, Constable and Company Ltd., London 1951, 190-213.

24 See J. Lofland - N. Skonovd, "Conversion Motifs", *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 20, (1981) 374.

to reach the port. In the same way, the person undergoing the process of reformation should continuously renew the ultimate motivation or the basic goal of his/her life.

4.3. Personality Change

G.W. Allport defines personality as the dynamic organisation within the individual of those psycho-physical systems that determine his characteristic behaviour and thought[25]. The attitudinal and the motivational change, which we have already discussed, should lead one to the entire change of personality. The scientific notions about the different personality type theories and personality trait theories[26] assist one to assess personality disorders[27]. An integral assessment of the personality disorders should lead one to make the personality changes.

25 G.W. Allport after giving the definition explains elaborately the significance and meaning of the each word in the definition. See G.W. Allport, *Pattern and Growth in Personality*, 28-30. See also G.W. Allport, *Personality. A Psychological Interpretation,* Constable and Company Ltd, London 1951, 24-54.

26 Type theories are primarily concerned with that which is common among individuals and trait theories focus on that which differentiates them. See A.S. Reber, *Dictionary of Psychology*, 533-534. It is Hippocrates who provided the oldest personality types. He hypothesised four basic temperaments in a person: choleric, sanguine, melancholic and phlegmatic. Each individual is a representation of a particular balance of these elements. W.H. Sheldon argues that body types are intimately related to personality development. C.G. Jung classified the personalities as introvert and extrovert. The trait theories assume that one's personality is a compendium of traits or characteristic ways of behaving, thinking, feeling and reacting etc. See A.S. Reber, *Dictionary of Psychology*, 533. For the personality types of G.W. Allport see G.W. Allport, *Pattern and Growth in Personality*, 16-18, 332-356; K. Young, *Personality and Problem of Adjustment*, F.S. Crofts and Co., New York 1947, 276-339.

27 Personality disorders generally encompass minor neuroses as well as full-blown psychotic disturbances. It stands for behavioural disorders. There are three subclasses of disorders such as 1) the general personality disorders like compulsive, cyclothymic, paranoid and schizoid personalities, 2) the sociopathic disorders such as antisocial, dyssocial, psychopathic and sociopathic personalities and 3) the sexual deviants whose primary mode of sexual gratification is generally regarded as socially undesirable. See A.S. Reber, *Dictionary of Psychology*, 535.

Personality change is a synonym for the change of character. Character is the sum total of all the traits that yield a unified whole which reveals the nature of a person. Usually the persons who are under the process of reformation have some kind of character disorder. The term character disorder serves as a general label for persons who chronically and habitually engage in maladaptive behaviours, who are inflexible, who restrict their own opportunities for growth and usually manage to function in ways that evoke unpleasant reactions from those around them[28]. When there are character or personality disorders there are the psychologically advanced technologies to find out the disorders and to cure them like that of the personality analysis theory of Sigmund Freud.

Personality changes as it grows. Motives, which are the dynamos of personality, also change[29]. Personality progresses from dependency in childhood, through growing independence in adolescence to dependability in adulthood. According to G.W. Allport, if the need of the first year of the infant to establish dependency on firm and natural foundations is met, the child is in a far better position in later years to enter the stage of self-actualisation. If it is not met, its entire life may manifest greediness, possessiveness and similar efforts to obtain the condition of loving dependence that the individual was at first denied. In place of trust, life is built on mistrust. There is some evidence that children lacking basic trust in early life are prone to develop a suspiciousness of nature, including prejudices against minority groups in later childhood[30]. G.W. Allport argues that self-consciousness is a gradual acquisition during the first five or six years of life. Although this process is gradual, it is no

28 See A.S. Reber, *Dictionary of Psychology*, 116-117.

29 See G.W. Allport, *Pattern and Growth in Personality*, 219.

30 See G.W. Allport, *Pattern and Growth in Personality*, 79. See also G.W. Allport, *The Nature of Prejudice*, Addison-Wesley, Cambridge 1954, Chapter 18.

doubt the most important development that occurs during a person's entire life[31].

4.4. Self-Analysis

The discovery of the self is an attempt to dive deeply into the different unknown areas of one's personality. It helps to clarify certain issues, to loosen certain knots, to connect certain experiences and to bring about an inner unity and integrity within the person. Thus we come to know where we are in our world and where we ought to go in our lives. To make a serious self-analysis, first of all, one must have some general understanding of oneself; one must be very sincere and honest with oneself and must have a great respect for oneself. This is a process of looking at oneself through God's eyes and seeing oneself as the effect of God's choice. Self-analysis is a self-confrontation. It is a confrontation with the self without the counsellor. Observation through self-exploration should lead one to find the discrepancies in his behaviour. The awareness and the confrontation of this is the starting point for change. Personal growth takes place in a series of endless self-confrontations[32]. A deep and genuine self-exploration naturally leads to self-understanding. By self-understanding one comes to know where one wants to be. This sheds light upon one's ultimate goal. When we know where we are and where we want to be, we want to take the systematic steps towards attaining this plan of action.

J.M. Fuster proposes three practical and effective skills to facilitate self-analysis. The first skill is responding to oneself. This skill enables us to understand our feelings and experiences

31 Some philosophers argue that each personality contains an unchanging and imperishable soul-substance. It is this substance that guarantees unity to a given life from birth to death. Some others do not agree with it. See G.W. Allport, *Pattern and Growth in Personality*, 111-115.

32 See J.M. Fuster, *Growing in Christ*, 127-130.

and to be in psychological contact with ourselves. The second skill is personalising. It is the personalising of our experience or identifying in what way we are contributing to creating that experience in ourselves. The skill of personalising takes us away from blaming others for our problems and focuses our attention on what we are doing or not doing that contributes to our problem. This boosts the progress of reformation. The skill of personalising has two sub-skills: personalising the problem and personalising the goal. The third skill is initiating and acting. This enables us to identify a course of action which will take us from where we are to where we want to be. The purpose of initiating is to motivate us to act in order to solve our problem[33].

Self-analysis brings forth self-awareness, especially the awareness of one's own unique mission. This also encompasses at the same time an awareness of one's unique function in the universe that should lead one to total dedication to it[34]. It points out that self-awareness leads one to ~~the~~ self-acceptance. It is a positive and dynamic disposition by which we gratefully recognise all the bodily and spiritual gifts God has given us, and dedicate ourselves to exploit them for the purpose for which he has given them to us. It is self-contentment. It accepts not only the potentialities but also all the limitations. Self-acceptance leads also to the acceptance of others and their potentialities. Travelling the long path of self-knowledge and self-awareness will reveal two things: 1) an awareness that there are many aspects of the self which cannot be understood, 2) a discovery that we are not as good as we thought we were. Self-knowledge with the unveiling of our needs, neurotic tendencies and security seeking natures, etc., reveals our true reality. This

33 See J.M. Fuster, *Growing in Christ*, 139-161. See also R.R. Carkhuff et al., *The Art of Helping Trainer's Guide*, Human Resource Development Press, Amherst 1977.

34 See J. M. Fuster, *Growing in Christ*, 65-67.

awareness of the naked reality may become the steppingstones for the growth in reformation[35].

4.5. Counselling

It was Sigmund Freud who brought about a new chapter to the field of counselling by introducing psychoanalysis into it. His psycho-sexual theory illustrates the trajectory of personality development. He explains this through four stages that are experienced in the growing years of infancy, childhood and adolescence. 1) The oral stage is between the birth and the second year of life. The infant experiences the oral stage of psycho-sexual development. The mouth is the principal erogenous zone at this stage. 2) The anal stage occurs between the ages of 2 and 4 years. Children become intensely aware of their bodies' elimination needs and processes. At this stage the prime erogenous zone is the anal region. 3) The phallic stage is between the ages of 4 and 6. At this period the erogenous zone shifts from the anal to the genital region of the body. The latency period is between 6 to 12 years of age. Children enter in a transitional period. Basic drives and urges are relegated to the unconscious mind and become dormant. 4) The genital stage is the onset of puberty. Many of the old oedipal feelings are reminded of at this time. The young person experiences the full force of adult-like sexual emotions and urges[36].

---

35 See J. Pasquier, "Experience and Conversion", *The Way,* 17 (1977) 116-117.

36 See S. Freud, *The Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud. A Case of Hysteria. Three Essays on Sexuality and Other Works*, VII, tr. J. Strachey - A. Freud, The Hogarth Press, London 1956, 125-311; *Jensen's 'Gradiva' and other Works*, IX, tr. J. Strachey - A. Freud, The Hogarth Press, London 1959, 205-209; J.J. Bigner, *Individual and Family Development. A Lifespan Interdisciplinary Approach,* Prentice Hall, New Jersey 1994, 47-49; D.R. Shaffer, *Developmental Psychology. Childhood and Adolescence,* Brooks/Cole Publishing Company, Belmont 1985, 46-56; R.E. Muuss, *Theories of Adolescence*, McGraw Hill, New Delhi 1988, 33 ff.

Later Carl Rogers came forward with his *Client Centred Therapy*[37]. He shifted the focus of Freud from diagnosis to the relationship between counsellor and client. From his experience in scientific research Carl Rogers suggested four conditions as necessary for the initiation process of constructive personality change. These conditions are: 1) The counsellor must be congruent or transparent, that is, his words must be in line with his feelings - congruence. 2) The counsellor must have a warm acceptance and esteem for the client as a separate person - acceptance. 3) The counsellor must have the ability to see the client and his world as the client sees them - empathy. 4) The client must experience himself as being fully received - communication. Carl Rogers' model of counselling is two-dimensional: the dimension of the person of the counsellor and the dimension of the person of the client. The three fundamental attitudes of the counsellor towards the client are congruence, acceptance and empathy[38]. He promoted a therapeutic attitude of positive regard toward clients. This is characterised as being warm, genuine, giving total attention and acceptance to the client. He felt that such an attitude would help the client to become more self-accepting and to achieve the greatest degree of personal growth possible[39].

In 1969, Carkhuff presented another model of counselling.

37 See C.R. Rogers, *On Becoming a Person. A Therapist's View of Psychotherapy,* Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston 1961, 126.

38 C.R. Rogers, *Counselling and Psychotherapy*, Houghton Mifflin, Boston 1942; *Client-Centred Therapy*, Houghton Mifflin, Boston 1951; "The Necessary and Sufficient Conditions of Therapeutic Personality Change", *Jesuit Consultation of Psychology*, 21 (1957) 95-103; *On Becoming a Person*, Houghton Mifflin, Boston 1961; C.R. Rogers et al., *The Therapeutic Relationship and its Impact*, University of Wisconsin press, Madison, Wisc. 1967; J.M. Fuster, *Personal Counselling*, St. Paul Publications, Bombay 1980, 26-30; *Helping in Personal Growth*, St. Paul Publications, Bombay 1974.

39 See J.J. Bigner, *Individual and Family*, 62-63.

It is both a recognition of, and an enriching extension of Rogers' model and centres on the level of the functioning of the counsellor. In order that the client may be helped, the counsellor must function at a level higher than the client's level of functioning or else, the client will deteriorate[40]. Commenting on Carkhuff, J.M. Fuster writes that the quality of the person who functions as the counsellor is of supreme importance for effectiveness. If he has higher human qualities, the counselling is more effective, if he has lower qualities the counselling is less effective.

The concept "function" is defined in terms of nine variables: empathy, respect, genuineness, concreteness, self-disclosure, confrontation, immediacy, self-actualisation, and potency. Confrontation is an action which is initiated by the counsellor based on his understanding of the client. There are two essential ingredients of confrontation. They are 1) observation of some discrepancy in the client and 2) bringing this to the awareness of the client[41]. Another basic concept of this model is the division of the counselling process into three stages as initial, intermediary and final. It has two phases. The first phase leads the client to self-exploration and self-understanding. The second phase stimulates the client to plan some constructive action[42]. Though there are many models for counselling, the goal of all these models is to effect change in behaviour. In order to achieve this change the client must act. Counselling confrontation that leads to the inner transformation can take place only if we are willing to enter our inner world, the world

40 See R.R. Carkhuff - B.G. Berenson, *Beyond Counselling and Therapy*, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, New York 1977. See also R.R. Carkhuff, *Helping and Human Relations*, I-II, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, New York 1969; R.R. Carkhuff et al., *The Art of Helping - Trainer's Guide*, Human Resource Development Press, Amherst 1977; J.M. Fuster, *Personal Counselling*, 35-50.

41 See J.M. Fuster, *Growing in Christ*, 127-130.

42 See J.M. Fuster, *Personal Counselling*, 38-50.

of our spirit. There we encounter not only our false self but also our true self in God[43].

4.6. Psychotherapy

In a general sense psychotherapy means the use of any technique or procedure that has a curative effect upon any mental, emotional or behavioural disorder. In technical literature the term is properly used only when this process is carried out by someone having recognised training and who uses accepted techniques[44]. The goal of psychotherapy is to bring about a personality change in psychotic and chronic psychoneurotic patients, in terms of a more effective reorganisation of the psychological processes. This may require many sessions and last months or years[45]. Depth psychotherapy aims at deep structural changes in personality and focuses its attention on clients in the abnormal range of psychic health[46]. According to M. Szentmártoni the important factors and means of psychotherapeutic cure are the following: 1) catharsis, 2) the sense of safety or security or empathy, 3) the sense of life, 4) the positive orientation[47], and 5) the tranquillity of conscience[48]. A nervous disturbance may not be cured by prayer; however, it can be cured by psycho-therapy. The maxim established by C.G. Jung remains valid even today: "The unmistakable feature of the

43 See R. Struminski, "Conversion, Pastoral Counselling, and Spiritual Direction", *Review for Religious*, 43 (1984) 404.

44 See A.S. Reber, *The Dictionary of Psychology*, 598.

45 See J.M. Fuster, *Personal Counselling*, 23.

46 See B.J. Tyrrell, *Christotherapy II. The Fasting and Feasting Heart,* Paulist Press, New York 1982, 97. See also R. Rossi, "The Distinction between Psychological and Religious Counselling", *Review for Religious,* 37 (1978) 550.

47 See C. Hecht, „Kognitive Verhaltenstherapie", in *Wege zum Menschen. Methoden und Persönlichkeiten Moderner Psychotherapie*, ed., H. Petzhold, Jungfermann Verlag, Paderborn 1984, 397-488. See also M. Szentmártoni, "Vita spirituale e salute mentale", *Rassengna di teologia*, 34 (1993) Università Pontificia Salesiana, Roma 1981, 288.

48 See M. Szentmártoni, "Vita spirituale e salute mentale", 288-89. See also M. Szentmártoni, *Moral Judgement and Depression*.

neurosis is the fact that their causes are psychic, and that their cure depends entirely upon psychic methods of treatment"[49]. Some of the often-used psychotherapeutic techniques are de-sensitation, transference, verbalisation and self-suggestion and the corresponding spiritual practices are meditation, personalised faith, spiritual direction and memorised prayers like ejaculations[50].

5. Conclusion

Psychology has a vital role to play in the reformative, rehabilitative and reclamative process of released prisoners. It is a rich resource which provides important aids for the initiation, development and completion of reformation and rehabilitation. Psychological factors such as maturation period, personality structure, conflict elements, and culture are to be seriously considered in the analyses of deviations and in the reformative proposals. Willingness to make a radical attitudinal and motivational change leads one to an entire personality change. Self-analysis, counselling and psychotherapy assist the released prisoner in his/her attempt to integrally reform by clearing away problems, blocks and other disorders.

49 C.G. Jung, *Psychology and Religion. West and East*, tr. R.F.C. Hull, Pantheon Books, New York 1958, 328.

50 See M. Szentmártoni, «Vita spirituale e salute mentale», 292-295.

Articles
Reformative Explorations
10/3 (2024)
Pages 24-30

PILGRIMS OF HOPE

Sr Inigo Joachim SSA

Pope Francis, the prophet and the evangelizer of the modern world, has announced that 2025 will be a Jubilee year. A Jubilee in the Catholic Church is a significant celebration that commemorates an anniversary typically occurring at intervals of 25, 50 or 100 years. Jubilee carries a deep theological significance and serves as a time of spiritual renewal, forgiveness of debt and, above all, reconciliation. It is a time of re-establishment of justice and equality. In the ancient Hebrew tradition, the Jubilee Year was celebrated every 50 years when slaves would be freed and debts forgiven (cf. Book of Leviticus 25: 8-13). The jubilee year was thus meant to restore equality among all the children of Israel, offering new possibilities to families who lost their property and even their personal freedom. The Catholic Church has given to the Hebrew Jubilee a more spiritual significance. It consists in a general pardon, an indulgence open to all, and an opportunity to renew one's relationship with God and his neighbour. We are urged to make our church an open church, a welcoming church, a church that neither condemns nor judges but a Church that is a beacon of Hope in the stormy sea of troubles.

Pope John Paul II encouraged the reduction or even forgiveness of foreign debt during the last Jubilee in 2000. Pope Francis has stressed on "hope and forgiveness" as the central themes of the forthcoming Jubilee Year of 2025. He proposes the following in one of his discussions: "After a mismanaged globalization, after pandemics and wars, we are

now faced with a debt crisis that mainly affects the countries of the Global South, generating misery and distress. This situation deprives millions of people of the possibility of a decent future. Pope Francis said that he wanted to echo this prophetic appeal. "We are only custodians and stewards of our money, not masters."

Jesus' first sermon as found in the Gospel of Luke, presents him unrolling the scroll of Isaiah in the Synagogue and announcing that He had come to proclaim "the Year of the Lord" - that is the Jubilee Year. Pope Francis has announced that the Church will celebrate the Jubilee Year in 2025 with the theme, "Pilgrims of Hope", in order to bring Hope and compassion to a wounded world. The 2025 Jubilee will begin in Advent 2024 and will run until the Feast of the Epiphany in 2026. He will open four Doors in Rome following the tradition of the Catholic Church - St. Peter's Basilica, John Lateran, Church of Mary Major and St. Paul's outside the Walls. In addition to the four Major Basilicas, another has been added by the Pope - the prison door to signify that our Church is a welcoming church, not condemning church and no one is excluded from the Church. Christ is the door waiting every day at the door of our heart to bring hope to us: "Listen! I stand at the door and knock; if any one hear my voice and open the door I will come into their house and eat with them, and they will eat with me" (Rev: 3:20).

What is Hope?

More than ever the world stands in need of hope. Hope is not mere optimism. It is conviction of things not seen (Rf. Heb: 11: 1) and to expect with confidence and anticipation". Looking back, there are many reasons to feel despondent and helpless: The world is full of hatred and bloodshed today. In the name of religion, vengeance and greed, is on the rise.

The shocking wars between Russia and Ukraine, Israel and Palestine, are resulting in loss of innocent lives in thousands, and producing millions of refugees pleading for food and shelter. No country or State is ready to open its doors to them. Our planet is wounded and bleeding. A massive landslide hit the Wayanad District in Kerala burying many villages, where many people perished. Unimaginable is the way women are treated as commodities to be bought and sold and to be traded and paraded including the shameful Kolkata rape-murder. The indifference and apathy of the governments towards the poor, the increasing number of divorces, breakdown in families, etc., are a perennial cry for help. Yet, we place our trust in the living God, knowing that the coming years will not be a repetition of the past. We refuse to succumb to despair. The Pope's hope-filled words are soothing balm to us: *"***God is not indifferent! God cares about human beings and creatures!** God does not abandon us! *W*e believe that the evil forces cannot have the final say. The Pope encourages everyone not to lose hope in our human ability to conquer evil and to combat apathy and indifference. Eventually, new life emerges even from the depths of death. As we gaze into the horizon of the New Year 2025, may hope spring forth in our hearts.

We Are Pilgrims of Hope

Just as Israelites journeyed to Jerusalem to celebrate the Biblical Jubilee, the Catholic Jubilee also finds theological roots in the imagery of pilgrimage. The very idea of **pilgrimage** suggests the communal dimension of the Church: we are all on this journey together, no one is alone in their quest and desire to reconcile with God and neighbour. Pope Francis recalled that Christian pilgrimage means keeping our eyes, minds, and hearts fixed on our goal - which is Christ - and to set out every

day anew. "Our pilgrimage on this earth is far from a pointless journey or aimless wandering," he said. "On the contrary, each day, by responding to God's call, we try to take every step needed to advance towards a new world where people can live in peace, justice, equality and love."

"We are pilgrims of hope because we are pressing forward towards a better future, committed at every step to bringing it about. This is, in the end, the goal of every vocation: to become men and women of hope. As individuals and as communities, amid the variety of charisms and ministries, all of us are called to embody and communicate the Gospel message of hope in a world marked by epochal challenges." May no one feel excluded from this calling. The Pope is exhorting each one of us: "Let us have the courage to commit! Each of us in our own small way, in our particular state of life, with the help of the Spirit, can be a sower of the seeds of hope and peace. Let us rise up and set out as pilgrims of hope, so that, as Mary was for Elizabeth, we too can be messengers of joy, sources of new life and artisans of fraternity and peace."

What is the Source of our Hope?

Our hope comes from God, the creator of hope. God is the source of our hope. And now, Lord, for what do I wait? My hope is in You" (Ps. 39:7). The reading and reflecting on the Word of God gives us the reason to be hopeful. We read in Paul's letter to Romans 4: 18: "Hoping against hope". Scripture is full of stories about people who persevered because of their faith and hope. People like Noah, Abraham, Joseph, Moses and Joshua pressed on - even when they didn't "receive what was promised" (Heb: 11:39). Isaac was born to **Abraham and Sarah** when Abraham was 100. Abraham believed that the Lord who called him and made a covenant with Him to multiply his race will not deceive him. **Jochebed**

and Amram, the parents of Moses, hoped that God is greater than Pharaoh and they decided, "We cannot save our little boy from the forces of death, but God can." God always honours such hope. **Hannah's** prayer with tears was answered with a wonderful son Samuel. **St. Anne and St. Joachim's** persistent prayer for 20 years gave them a child who would be the mother of the Saviour of the world. **St. Monica's** prayer for the conversion of her son Augustine without giving up hope for 17 years, was answered in the miraculous transformation of St. Augustine. When **Pope Benedict XVI** resigned, many thought that the Catholic Church is over. Jesus, the Head of the Church brought Pope Francis from a corner of the world to shock the world by his innovative and admirable leadership. Final victory is God's. This is not Utopian or naive faith. We are in the safe hands of our loving God who will never drop us down. Hope will never disappoint us.

Around the world, there are millions of people working for justice, peace, human rights, the dignity of women and children, and to end drug proliferation, human trafficking, and sex slavery. We can help them by supporting their work and be part of their mission. They are serving humanity. Let us never think there is only evil. There is abundant good everywhere, we just have to look and see and join in. The wall at Jericho was an impenetrable force as it was built with a solid stone. The young leader Joshua having a ragtag Israelite army on his side had to face the well trained Canaanite army. The Israelites, after a long journey in the desert, already tired, hungry, facing a strong enemy seemed an impossible task. In the Bible, there are many instances of people facing seemingly hopeless situations. In fact I cannot find a single person who faithfully walks with God without first facing a hopeless situation.

Abraham was too old. Joseph was betrayed by his brothers and put in prison - a hopeless case. Moses faced the Red Sea while escaping from the most powerful army in the world - a hopeless case. The Walls of Jericho were too strong. Gideon had just 300 against 300,000. David stood across the valley from the blood thirsty giant. Esther was an orphan girl facing the powerful King. Daniel was in lions' den. His Hebrew friends were thrown in fire. Jonah was swallowed by a whale. Lazarus was dead. Peter was a coward; Jesus was humiliated, hung on a Cross and buried in a tomb. Paul was imprisoned. Timothy was too young; everyone was ready to close the Book, believing that the Game was over. But we can never put a full stop where God has put a coma. When all other options wear out, when circumstances couldn't get worse, when everything has failed, God shows up. The Red Sea opened the way only for the Israelites and drowned the Egyptians; Gideon won without weapons. Esther spoke and the King listened. Nineveh repented; Peter preached his first sermon and 3000 were converted. Paul became a martyr for Christ. Lazarus came to life. Abraham became the Father of the Nations, the young son repented and returned. The formidable Walls of Jericho stumbled and Israelites reached their Promised Land. Jesus Christ, the author of life rose again from the tomb victoriously.

With God the seemingly impossible situation - is not only possible, but also favourable. Only God can turn a Mess into a Message, a Trial into Triumph, a Test into a Testimony, a Victim into a Victory. Let us rejoice in our trials and challenges. God does His best work in seemingly hopeless situations. God is faithful, was faithful and will always be faithful, no matter how hopeless the situation is. We can live without food for 40 days; without water for 8 days; without breath for a minute. But we cannot live even one moment without Hope. Hope is such a marvelous thing. It bends, it twists, it sometimes hides,

but rarely does it break. It sustains us when nothing else can. It gives us reason to continue and courage to move ahead, when we tell ourselves we'd rather give in. The Apostle Paul exhorts in II Cor. 5: 7: We are to "walk by faith, not by sight". It is our Christian duty to walk by faith in this world, until we come to live by sight in the eternal world. May we tirelessly strive to look to Mary, the Mother of Hope, as our guide and model. Standing at the foot of the Cross, she witnessed her son die. Three days later, she knew Him as the resurrected one. May God bless us as we begin the "Year of Hope." May we continue to walk together as Pilgrims of Hope.

Articles
Reformative Explorations
10/3 (2024)
Pages 31-34

JUBILEE OF PRISONERS: ALL-INDIA PRISON PILGRIMAGE

Dr Francis Kodiyan MCBS

Pilgrims of Hope

Traditionally a Jubilee Year is proclaimed by the Universal Church every 25 years. It is a particular year set aside to encourage the faithful to embark on pilgrimages, to repent of their sins and forgive the sins of others, and to renew focus on the spiritual life. In the Hebrew tradition, as recorded in Leviticus, a Jubilee was celebrated every 50 years with the freeing of slaves and the forgiveness of debts. In 1300, Pope Boniface VIII instituted the first Christian Jubilee, and since then the Church has designated each new Jubilee as a special year of grace and forgiveness, offering the faithful an opportunity to obtain a plenary indulgence. The 2025 Jubilee will be centred on the theme "Pilgrims of Hope." As His Holiness Pope Francis so beautifully expressed it: "We must fan the flame of hope that has been given us, and help everyone to gain new strength and certainty by looking to the future with an open spirit, a trusting heart and far-sighted vision." The Jubilee begins on December 24, 2024, with the official Opening of the Holy Door of Saint Peter's Basilica, and runs to January 6, 2026, the Feast Day of Epiphany, with the Closing of the Holy Door.

Preparation for the Jubilee

Pope Francis declared that 2024 be marked as a year dedicated to prayer in preparation for the Jubilee. Dioceses, parishes,

religious institutes and pious associations are invited to promote initiatives to remind people of the centrality of both individual prayer and community prayer. The Year of Prayer is, in the Pope's words, focused on "rediscovering the great value and absolute need for prayer, prayer in personal life, in the life of the Church, prayer in the world." In accordance with the instruction of the Holy Father Prison Ministry India launches spiritual preparations by offering Holy Masses, reciting Holy Rosaries, Divine Offices, Divine Mercy Chaplets, Way of the Cross, "Thank You Jesus", and offering fasting, mortifications and sacrifices. PMI national, state and diocesan executive members shall take extra care in motivating our volunteers and implementing these spiritual preparations. The state and diocesan coordinators are cordially invited to report their jubilee programs to the national office.

Opening of Holy Door in Prison

The Dicastery for Evangelization issued a note reaffirming that the Holy Doors of the 2025 Jubilee of Hope in Rome will be located at the four papal basilicas as well as at a prison. The Holy Doors will be located at the Basilica of St. Peter, the Archbasilica of St. John Lateran, the Basilica of St. Mary Major, and the Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls. A fifth door will also be located at a prison, the name of which has not yet been announced. The first Holy Door will be opened by Pope Francis at St. Peter's Basilica on Christmas Eve this year to usher in the beginning of the Jubilee Year worldwide. The Archbasilica of St. John Lateran will be the second door opened by Pope Francis - on Dec. 29, the feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph. The Holy Father will then open the Holy Door at the Basilica of St. Mary Major on the solemnity of Mary, Mother of God, on Jan. 1, and then on Jan. 5 he will open the Holy Door at the

Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls. The Dicastery for Evangelization has not yet specified the location or dates for the opening or closing of the Holy Door at a Rome prison. In his papal bull, *Spes Non Confudit - Hope Does Not Disappoint* - the Holy Father expressed his wish that prisoners "look to the future with hope and a renewed sense of confidence" during the Jubilee Year.

All India Prison Pilgrimage

According to the Jubilee 2025 Calendar of the Vatican the jubilee of prisoners is scheduled for 14 December 2025. Anchoring on Pope Francis' teachings PMI plans to organise An All-India Prison Pilgrimage by visiting 1330 prisons and correctional institutions in India during the jubilee year. PMI state, diocesan and unit coordinators shall take necessary steps and make sure that they open the holy doors of prisons in their dioceses and states. This pilgrimage shall be done with spiritual preparations such as chain fasting and prayer and shall be done with innovative activities based on Jesus' teachings highlighting His compassionate and forgiving love towards the lost. PMI plans to have an official inauguration of the Jubilee of Prisoners at the national level and its date will soon be informed. Every state and every diocese also shall have a similar inauguration of the jubilee of prisoners. Let's also think about the 2025 Prison Ministry Sunday Celebration in view of the Jubilee of prisoners. Your valued suggestions and insights in this regard will highly be appreciated.

Pilgrimage to PMI Rehabilitation Centres and Homes for Prisoners' Children

Together with All India Prison Pilgrimage PMI volunteers are invited to make a pilgrimage to PMI rehabilitation centres and homes for prisoners' children so as to encourage and appreciate

the staff and inmates. As the PMI golden jubilee decisions manifested let's strive hard to open new homes for prisoners' children in those states where there are no such institutions. All PMI volunteers are invited to reawaken the existing PMI programs such as Incessant Intercessory Invocation for the Incarcerated, Special Task Forces, Contemplative Wing and Burning Bush Spiritual Banquets. PMI National office would facilitate your visits to PMI rehabilitation centres and homes for prisoners' children. With your gracious visits let's revive all our homes with hope, love and faith.

Conclusion

The theme of the jubilee is "pilgrims of hope" as the pope is calling on all Catholics to renew in the hope of Christ, using St. Paul the Apostle as a guide for this special year. In prisons we come across people who are discouraged, pessimistic and cynical about the future, as if nothing could possibly bring them happiness. May the Jubilee be an opportunity to be renewed in our hope and emanate that hope among prisoners. As Holy Father prayed during the Holy Year, may the light of Christian hope illumine every man and woman, as a message of God's love addressed to all.

Article
Reformative Explorations
10/3 (2024)
Pages 35-41

From Slavery to Discipleship

Sr Santan Nago, FS

Introduction

One of the shortest, Second-Testament (NT), epistles is letter to Philemon, just one Chapter, 25 verses with 335 words. The others being - 2 John, with 245 words; and 3 John with 219 words. This small, sweet, heart-touching letter of Paul has so much to convey us. Philemon was a well-to-do Roman citizen from ancient Colossae. Apparently, during Paul's three-year ministry in Ephesus (A.D. 52–55), Philemon heard the gospel and embraced the new faith and was saved. He began serving Christ in the Colossian community and opened his home for a group of Christians to meet there regularly. Though this was a personal letter to Philemon from Paul, it was also addressed to the entire house church that Philemon led. This beautiful letter can be divided into four parts.

Salutation

The first verse of the letter is a grace-filled salutation. Paul introduces himself proudly that he is a prisoner of Christ Jesus and mentions the presence of Timothy with him. In the second verse he acknowledges Philemon as the beloved co-worker, mentions Apphia, perhaps Philemon's wife and Archippus, the young fellow soldier, their son. To this devout family he sends grace and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Paul Acknowledges and Encourages Philemon's Love and Faith

Through verses four to seven, Paul profusely thanks Philemon for all that he is doing for the church in Colossae, encouraging them in the love and faith he has found in Jesus Christ. Paul goes on assuring Philemon to continue in the partnership of his faith in Jesus Christ and to be more active in understanding and sharing the good that they were receiving in Christ. Paul has heard much good and is full of joy about Philemon from those in Colossae about his goodness and generosity to them and how they have been invigorated in their new faith through him. Paul keeps inspiring and commending Philemon to carry on the good he is doing there, before he comes to making a plea to Philemon.

Paul's Appeal for 'his Child'

Paul is so filled with love and joy for 'his child' in Christ Jesus – Onesimus – that he uses words, many *words, contrasting words, such as – 'I could command you to the do the right thing';* yet *'I would rather appeal to you'* ; '*as an old man*'; '*also as a prisoner of Christ Jesus'* ; '*whose father I have become in my imprisonment'* to convince Philemon to forgive his once run-a-way slave, Onesimus, and welcome him back. Paul reminds Philemon, *that 'earlier he was useless to him'*; but now '*he is indeed useful'; 'to you and to me;* Paul's love for Onesimus is so deep that Paul says, he was sending his own heart back to Philemon. Onesimus was very helpful to Paul in prison that he wanted to keep him back. But Paul being open-minded and just, wished Philemon to use the freedom to do it. Paul also desired a reconciliation between the two and then to send Onesimus to Paul with the same freedom. Paul needed Onesimus with him still he tells Philemon that he could have him for a longer time, forgiven of his wrong- doing, *no more a slave but as a beloved brother in*

Christ Jesus. In verse 17 to 21, Paul requests Philemon to receive Onesimus as he would receive Paul himself. Knowing the wrong Onesimus has done to Philemon, Paul apologies on his behalf, and tells Philemon that he; himself would pay back the loss. In verse 19, Paul reminds Philemon that he too owns Paul for his redemption. Paul once again refreshes Philemon's heart in Christ Jesus that Philemon would obey Paul in what he has appealed on behalf of Onesimus. To make sure all these things take place, Paul tells Philemon to prepare a room for him in his house as Paul would soon be visiting him. This is also to be certain that Philemon does what Paul requested of him.

Final Benediction

In the last three verses Paul sends his blessings in Christ Jesus from the prison and greetings from his co-prisoner Epaphras, and Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, and Luke, his co-workers. Along with Onesimus, Paul was sending Tychicus to Philemon as Paul's letter to Colossians tells us. *Tychicus will tell you all about my activities. He is a beloved brother and faithful minister and fellow servant in the Lord. I have sent him to you for this very purpose, that you may know how we are and that he may encourage your hearts, and with him Onesimus, our faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you. They will tell you of everything that has taken place here.* (Col.4:7-9).

Lessons from Philemon
We can Use our Homes for God's Glory

"*And to the church in your house*" (verse 2). The early church often met in the homes of believers, which was the case for Philemon's church, as well. This serves as a reminder to us that our homes can be used to further the kingdom of God. We can open our houses/homes for small groups, Bible

studies, to break bread and share a meal with others, and for prayer gatherings. The church has always utilized the homes of Christians and this is a lesson that we can continue putting into practice.

We Should Pray for One Another

"*When I remember you in my prayers, I always thank my God*" (verse 4). Often, Paul included in his letters that he was praying for the Christians he wrote to and ministered to. We should continue this example set by Jesus himself and the apostles. We should boldly pray for each other as brothers and sisters in Christ, especially for the last, least and the lost, petitioning to God on behalf of them.

Our Faith is a Blessing to Others

I have indeed received much joy and encouragement from your love, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed through you, my brother (verse 7). The faith we have truly blesses and inspires other believers to walk closely with the Lord. And our faith can also bless nonbelievers by being a witness to them, and urging them to consider faith and turning to Jesus.

We can always Appeal to Others in Love

"*I would rather appeal to you on the basis of love"* (verse 9). Relationships are hard, but Paul's example in the letter to Philemon prompts us to consider appealing to others in love rather than desperation, anger, or haste. Imagine if we appealed to one another and made requests with a clean conscious and pure heart out of love! We would see life-giving changes rather than hurt feelings and strained relationships.

5. We are Encouraged to Love Like Jesus

"I am sending him, that is, my own heart, back to you" (verse 12). The way Paul spoke of Onesimus, who was Philemon's slave,

indicated how deeply Paul loved others. During the time Onesimus had spent with Paul, he became a Christian. Paul included in his letter to Philemon that Onesimus was now a brother in Christ and this was further reason for Philemon to welcome him back with loving arms. We, too, can follow this consistent message throughout the Bible. The message to love our brothers and sisters in Christ, specially the strayed ones, the least and the lost; and to love all people, just as Jesus did.

6. We Should be Promoters of Freedom

"Perhaps this is the reason he was separated from you for a while, so that you might have him back forever, no longer as a slave, but more than a slave, a beloved – especially to me and how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord" (verses 15-16). We cannot ignore what Paul wrote about Onesimus' status as a slave. He wrote that Onesimus was a man and a brother, and this was how he should be viewed and valued. Elsewhere in the Bible (1 Corinthians 7:21), Paul directly wrote that slaves should gain their freedom. Real and lasting freedom ultimately comes through knowing Christ, and it is in becoming free in Christ that we are no longer slaves to the world. This lesson in the book of Philemon reminds us that all are equal in the eyes of God and believers should strongly promote equality and freedom in Christ.

Let us Forgive Like Jesus

"If he has wronged you in any way, or owes you anything charge that to my account" (verse 18). Just as Jesus paid the price for us all, Paul was willing to offer that same sacrifice and take responsibility for whatever Onesimus owed so that he would be fully restored and forgiven by Philemon. Perhaps we may find ourselves in situations where we can pay the debt for

another, or where it is our turn to forgive freely just as Jesus did.

Let's Give one Another the Benefit of the Doubt

"Confident of your obedience, I am writing to you, knowing that you will do even more than I say" (verse 21). Paul's confidence in Philemon was amazing. As a fellow Christian, Paul trusted that Philemon would not simply answer his request, but do even more than what Paul had asked of him. Paul gave Philemon the benefit of the doubt, and that is a vital lesson we can apply to our lives, as well. As Christians we must live our lives worthy of being trusted, and do our best to live out integrity, honestly, and love.

Be Part of a Community of Jesus' Disciples

"Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, sends greetings to you and so do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas and Luke, my fellow workers" (verses 23-24). Paul wrote about many brothers and sisters in Christ who he did ministry with. Paul shared the Gospel with many unbelievers and shared his testimony with anyone who would listen, but he also was part of a community of believers. This is a valuable lesson that all Christians should take heed to follow. Though we need to be out in the world sharing the message of hope found in Jesus, it is essential that we maintain a deep connection to other Christians and live in community with other believers.

It is Important and Good to Bless Others

"*The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit"* (verse 25). Paul ended most of his letters with a blessing and in the book of Philemon, we see Paul doing this. It begs the question, should we bless others like Paul did? Paul modelled righteous

living for us, and we would be wise to follow his example and take the time to bless our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ.

Conclusion

The insights and encouragement Paul gives us through the words and lessons found in the book of Philemon are applicable for our living. It has relevant wisdom and guidance for us today. We can read through these 25 verses to find a wealth of God's truth on how to love, forgive, and treat others. Though this letter, Paul wrote to the entire house church that Philemon led. The issue Paul mentions are common to the human experience and certainly speaks not only to its original community, but to many, many generations thereafter, and continues to do so.

Article
Reformative Explorations
10/3 (2024)
Pages 42-53

Changing Prisons to Help People Change: A Better Path Forward for Criminal Justice

Christy Visher and John Eason[1]

Introduction

Inmates in the Last Mile program at San Quentin State Prison prepare to present their startup ideas in San Quentin, California February 22, 2013. Seven San Quentin inmates presented startup proposals on "Demo Day" at the Last Mile program, an entrepreneurship course modeled on startup incubators that take in batches of young companies and provide them courses, informal advice and the seed investments to grow. Below is the third chapter from "A Better Path Forward for Criminal Justice," a report by the Brookings-AEI Working Group on Criminal Justice Reform. You can access other chapters from the report here.

Prison Culture and environment: Essential to Public Health and Safety While much of the policy debate and public attention of prisons focuses on private facilities, roughly 83 percent of the more than 1,600 U.S. facilities are owned and operated by states. This suggests that states are an essential unit of analysis in understanding the far-reaching effects of imprisonment and the site of potential solutions. Policy changes within institutions has to begin at the state

1 https://www.google.com/search?sca_esv=20a76472aa525adb&sca_upv=1&authuser=0&sxsrf=ADLYWILcYqjoJp9M_yCXdWjBIyKce_LTFQ:1723701565594&q

level through the departments of corrections. For example, California has rebranded their state corrections division and renamed it the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. For many, these are not only name changes but shifts in policy and practice. In this chapter, we rethink the treatment environment of the prison by highlighting strategies for developing cognitive behavioral communities in prison - immersive cognitive communities. This new approach promotes new ways of thinking and behaving for both incarcerated persons and correctional staff. Behavior change requires changing thinking patterns and cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) is an evidence-based strategy that can be utilized in the prison setting. We focus on short-, medium-, and long-term recommendations to begin implementing this model and initiate reforms for the organizational structure of prisons.

Level Setting

The U.S. has seen a steady decline in the federal and state prison population over the last eleven years, with a 2019 population of about 1.4 million men and women incarcerated at year-end, hitting its lowest level since 1995. With the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, criminal justice reformers have urged a continued focus on reducing prison populations and many states are permitting early releases of nonviolent offenders and even closing prisons. Thus, we are likely to see a dramatic reduction in the prison population when the data are tabulated for 2020. However, it is undeniable that the U.S. will continue to use incarceration as a sanction for criminal behavior at a much higher rate than in other Western countries, in part because of our higher rate of violent offenses. Consequently, a majority of people incarcerated in the U.S. are serving a prison sentence for a violent offense (58 percent). The most

serious offense for the remainder is property offenses (16 percent), drug offenses (13 percent), or other offenses (13 percent; generally, weapons, driving offenses, and supervision violations).

Moreover, the majority of people in U.S. prisons have been previously incarcerated. The prison population is largely drawn from the most disadvantaged part of the nation's population: mostly men under age 40, disproportionately minority, with inadequate education. Prisoners often carry additional deficits of drug and alcohol addictions, mental and physical illnesses, and lack of work experience. According to data compiled by the U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, the average sentence length in state courts for those sentenced to confinement in a state prison is about 4 years and the average time served is about 2.5 years. Those sentenced for a violent offense typically serve about 4.7 years with persons sentenced for murder or manslaughter serving an average of 15 years before their release. Thus, it is important to consider the conditions of prison life in understanding how individuals rejoin society at the conclusion of their sentence. Are they prepared to be valuable community members? What lessons have they learned during their confinement that may help them turn their life around? Will they be successful in avoiding a return to prison? What is the most successful path for helping returning citizens reintegrate into their communities?

Regrettably, prison life is often fraught with difficulty. Being sentenced to incarceration can be traumatic, leading to mental health disorders and difficulty rejoining society. Incarcerated individuals must adjust to the deprivation of liberty, separation from family and social supports, and a loss of personal control over all aspects of one's life. In prison, individuals face a loss of self-worth, loneliness, high

levels of uncertainty and fear, and idleness for long periods of time. Imprisonment disrupts the routines of daily life and has been described as "disorienting" and a "shock to the system". Further, some researchers have described the existence of a "convict code" in prison that governs behavior and interactions with norms of prison life including mind your own business, no snitching, be tough, and don't get too close with correctional staff. While these strategies can assist incarcerated persons in surviving prison, these tools are less helpful in ensuring successful reintegration. Thus, the entire prison experience can jeopardize the personal characteristics required to be effective partners, parents, and employees once they are released. Coupled with the lack of vocational training, education, and reentry programs, individuals face a variety of challenges to reintegrating into their communities. Successful reintegration will not only improve public safety but forces us to reconsider public safety as essential to public health.

Despite the toll of difficult conditions of prisons, people who are incarcerated believe that they can be successful citizens. In surveys and interviews with men and women in prison, the majority express hope for their future. Most were employed before their incarceration and have family that will help them get back on their feet. Many have children that they were supporting and want to reconnect with. They realize that finding a job may be hard, but they believe they will be able to avoid the actions that got them into trouble, principally committing crimes and using illegal substances. Research also shows that most individuals with criminal records, especially those convicted of violent crimes, were often victims themselves. This complicates the "victim" - "offender" binary that dominates the popular discourse about crime. By moving beyond this binary, we propose cognitive behavioral therapy, among a host of therapeutic approaches, as part of

a broader restorative approach. Despite having histories of associating with other people who commit crimes and use illegal drugs, incarcerated individuals have pro-social family and friends in their lives. They also may have some personality characteristics that make it difficult to resist involvement in criminal behavior, including impulsivity, lack of self-control, anger/defiance, and weak problem-solving and coping skills. Psychologists have concluded that the primary individual characteristics influencing criminal behavior are thinking patterns that foster criminal activity, associating with other people who engage in criminal activity, personality patterns that support criminal activity, and a history of engaging in criminal activity. While the context constrains individual behavior and choices, the motivation for incarcerated individuals to change their behavior is rooted in their value of family and other positive relationships. However, most prison environments pose significant challenges for incarcerated individuals to develop motivation to make positive changes. Interpersonal relationships in prison are difficult as there is often a culture of mistrust and suspicion coupled with a profound absence of empathy. Despite these challenges, cognitive behavioral interventions can provide a successful path for reintegration.

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)

Many psychologists believe that changing unwanted or negative behaviors requires changing thinking patterns since thoughts and feelings affect behaviors. Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) emerged as a psycho-social intervention that helps people learn how to identify and change destructive or disturbing thought patterns that have a negative influence on behavior and emotions. It focuses on challenging and changing unhelpful cognitive distortions and behaviors, improving emotional regulation, and developing personal coping

strategies that target solving current problems. In most cases, CBT is a gradual process that helps a person take incremental steps towards a behavior change. CBT has been directed at a wide range of conditions including various addictions (smoking, alcohol, and drug use), eating disorders, phobias, and problems dealing with stress or anxiety. CBT programs help people identify negative thoughts, practice skills for use in real-world situations, and learn problem-solving skills. For example, a person with a substance use disorder might start practicing new coping skills and rehearsing ways to avoid or deal with a high-risk situation that could trigger a relapse.

Since criminal behavior is driven partly by certain thinking patterns that predispose individuals to commit crimes or engage in illegal activities, CBT helps people with criminal records change their attitudes and gives them tools to avoid risky situations. Cognitive behavioral therapy is a comprehensive and time-consuming treatment, typically, requiring intensive group sessions over many months with individualized homework assignments. Evaluations of CBT programs for justice-involved people found that cognitive restructuring treatment was significantly effective in reducing criminal behavior, with those receiving CBT showing recidivism reductions of 20 to 30 percent compared to control groups. Thus, the widespread implementation of cognitive behavioral therapy as part of correctional programming could lead to fewer rearrests and lower likelihood of incarceration after release. CBT can also be used to mitigate prison culture and thus help reintegrate returning citizens back into their communities.

Even the most robust CBT program that meets three hours per week leaves 165 hours a week in which the participant is enmeshed in the typical prison environment. Such an

arrangement is bound to dilute the therapy's impact. To counter these negative influences, the new idea is to connect CBT programming in prison with the old idea of therapeutic communities. Therapeutic communities -either in prison or the community were established as a self-help substance use rehabilitation approach and instituted the idea that separating the target population from the general population would allow a pro-social community to develop and thereby discourage antisocial cognitions and behaviors. The therapeutic community model relies heavily on participant leadership and requires participants to intervene in arguments and guide treatment groups. Inside prisons, therapeutic communities are a separate housing unit that fosters a rehabilitative environment. Cognitive Communities in prison would be an immersive experience in cognitive behavioral therapy involving cognitive restructuring, anti-criminal modeling, skill building, problem-solving, and emotion management. These communities would promote new ways of thinking and behaving among its participants around the clock, from breakfast in the morning through residents' daily routines, including formal CBT sessions, to the evening meal and post-dinner activities. Blending the best aspects of therapeutic communities with CBT principles would lead to Cognitive Communities with several key elements: a separate physical space, community participation in daily activities, reinforcement of pro-social behavior, use of teachable moments, and structured programs. This cultural shift in prison organization provides a foundation for restorative justice practices in prisons. Accordingly, the recommendations include:

Short-Term Reforms
Create Transforming Prisons Act

To begin transforming prisons to help prisons and people change, a new funding opportunity for state departments of

correction is needed. We propose the Transforming Prisons Act (funded through the Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Assistance) which would permit states to apply for funds to support innovative programs and practices that would improve prison conditions both for the people who live in prisons and work in prisons. This dual approach would begin to transform prisons into a more just and humane experience for both groups. These new funds could support broad implementation of Cognitive Communities by training the group facilitators and the correctional staff assigned to the specialized prison units. Funds could also be used to broaden other therapeutic programming to support individuals in improving pro-social behaviors through parenting classes, family engagement workshops, anger management, and artistic programming. One example is the California Transformative Arts which promotes self-awareness and improves mental health through artistic expression. Together, these programs could mark a rehabilitative turn in corrections.

Accelerate Decarceration Begun During Pandemic

While we work to change policies and practices to make prisons more humane, we also need to work towards Decarceration. The COVID-19 crisis has enabled innovations in diverting and improving efforts to reintegrate returning citizens in the U.S. During the pandemic, many states took bold steps in implementing early release for older incarcerated persons especially those with health disorders. Research shows that returning citizens of advanced age and with poor health conditions are far less likely to commit crime after release. This set of circumstances makes continued diversion and reintegration of this population a much wiser investment than incarceration.

Medium-Term Reforms Encourage Rehabilitative Focus in State Prisons

In direct response to calls to abolish prisons and defund the police, state prisons should move away from focusing on incapacitation to rehabilitation. To assist in this change, federal funds should be tied to embracing a rehabilitative mission to transform prisons. This transformation should be rooted in evidence-based therapeutic programming, documenting impacts on both incarcerated individuals and corrections staff. Prison good-time policies should be revisited so that incarcerated individuals receive substantial credit for participating in intensive programming such as Cognitive Communities. With a backdrop of an energized rehabilitative philosophy, states should be supported in their efforts to implement innovative models and programming to improve the reintegration of returning citizens and change the organizational structure of their prisons.

Foster Greater Use of Community Sanctions

As the country with the highest incarceration rate in the world, current U.S. incarceration policies and practices are costly for families, communities, and state budgets. Openly punitive incarceration policies make it exceedingly difficult for incarcerated individuals to successfully reintegrate into communities as residents, family members, and employees. A long-term policy goal in the U.S. must be to reduce our over-reliance on incarceration through shorter prison terms, increased reliance on community sanctions, and closing prisons. The COVID-19 pandemic revealed that decarceration poses minimal risk to community safety. Given this steady decline in the prison population and decline in prison building in the U.S. since 2000, we encourage other types of development in rural communities to loosen the grip of prisons in these areas.

Alternative development for rural communities is important because the most disadvantaged rural communities are both senders of prisoners and receivers of prisons with roughly 70 percent of prison facilities located in rural communities.

Long-Term Reforms

Embrace Rehabilitative/Restorative Community Justice Models

Public safety and public health goals can be achieved through Community Justice Centers—these are sites that act as a diversion preference for individuals who may be in a personal crisis due to mental health conditions, substance use, or family trauma. Recent research demonstrates that using social or public health services to intervene in such situations can lead to better outcomes for communities than involving the criminal justice system. To be clear, many situations can be improved by crisis intervention expertise specializing in de-escalation rather than involving the justice system which may have competing objectives. Community Justice Centers are nongovernmental organizations that divert individuals in crisis away from law enforcement and the justice system. Such diversion also helps ease the social work burden on the justice system that it is often ill-equipped to handle.

Encourage Collaborations between Corrections Agencies and Researchers

Researchers and corrections agencies need to develop working relationships to permit the study of innovative organizational approaches. In the past, the National Institute of Justice created a researcher-practitioner partnership program, whereby local researchers worked with criminal justice practitioners (generally, law enforcement) to develop research projects that would benefit local criminal justice agencies and

test innovative solutions to local problems. A similar program could be announced to help researchers assist corrections agencies and officials in identifying research projects that could address problems facing prisons and prison officials (e.g., safety, staff burnout, and prisoner grievance procedures).

Recommendations for Future Research

Some existing jail and prison correctional systems are implementing broad organization changes, including immersive faith-based correctional programs, jail-based 60-to-90-day reentry programs to prepare individuals for their transition to the community, Scandinavian and other European models to change prison culture, and an innovative Cognitive Community approach operating in several correctional facilities in Virginia. However, these efforts have not been rigorously evaluated. New models could be developed and tested widely, preferably through randomized controlled trials, and funded by the research arm of the Department of Justice, the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), or various private funders, including Arnold Ventures. Correctional agencies in some states may be ready to implement the Cognitive Community model using a separate section of a prison or smaller facility not in use. Funding is needed to evaluate these pilot efforts, assess fidelity to the model standards, identify challenges faced in implementing the model, and propose any modifications to improve the proposed Cognitive Community model. Full-scale rigorous tests of the Cognitive Community model are needed which would randomly assign eligible inmates to the Cognitive Community environment or to continue to carry out their sentence in a regular prison setting. Ideally, these studies would observe the implementation of the program, assess intermediate outcomes while participants are enrolled in the program, follow participants upon release and examine

post-release experiences in the post-release CBT program, and then assess a set of reentry outcomes at several intervals for at least one year after release.

Conclusion

Prison culture and environment are essential to community public health and safety. Incarcerated individuals have difficulty successfully reintegrating into their communities after release because the environment in most U.S. prisons is not conducive to positive change. Normalizing prison environments with evidence-based programming, including cognitive behavioral therapy, education, and personal development, will help incarcerated individuals lead successful lives in the community as family members, employees, and community residents. States need to move towards less reliance on incarceration and more attention to community justice models.

Article
Reformative Explorations
10/3 (2024)
Pages 54-78

Prison Reform and Social Change in India

Kaustubh Rote[1]

Introduction

Punishing the offenders is the primary function of all civil societies. Prisons are known to have existed throughout history. Existence of prisons can be traced back to the ancient period. It was believed that rigorous isolation and custodial measures would reform the offenders. Experience, however, belied this expectation and often imprisonment had the opposite effect. With the development of behavioural sciences, it began to federalize that reformation of offenders was not possible by detention alone. Prisons are not normal places. The prisoners are deprived of freedom and personal contacts with family and friends. The utility of prison as an institution for rehabilitation of offenders and preparing them for normal life has always been a controversial issue. There are quite a large number of offenders who are otherwise well behaved and are persons of respectable class of society but they fall prey to criminality on account of momentary impulsiveness, provocation or due to situational circumstances. There is yet another class of prisoners who are otherwise innocent but have to bear the rigours of prison life due to miscarriage of justice.

Obviously, such persons find it difficult to adjust themselves to the prison surrounding and find life inside the prison

1 https://niu.edu.in › sla › FM-Jul14-LSC-Koustubh

most painful and disgusting. The real purpose of sending criminals to prison is to transform them into honest and law-abiding citizens by inculcating in them distaste for crime and criminality. But in actual practice, the prison authorities try to bring out reformation of inmates by use of force and compulsive methods. Consequently, the change in the inmates is temporary and lasts only till they are in the prison and as soon as they are released, they again get attracted towards criminality. It is for this reason that the modern trend is to lay down greater emphasis on the prisoners so that they can be rehabilitated to normal life in the community. This objective can be achieved through probation and parole. The sincerity, devotion and tactfulness of the prison officials also help in the process of offender's rehabilitation. In India, prison reforms did not emerge out of social movement but were necessarily an outcome of the worst conditions of treatment faced by the political sufferers in prisons during the period of their imprisonment. They repeatedly launched protests with the prison authorities and made all possible efforts to see that the rigours of prison life are mitigated and prisoners are humanly treated.

Meaning of Prison

Donald Taft commented that prisons are deliberately so planned as to provide unpleasant compulsory isolation from society. A prison according to him characterises rigid discipline, provision of bare necessities, strict security arrangements and monotonous routine life. Life inside the prison necessarily pre-supposes certain restrictions on the liberty of inmates against their free will.

Prisons in India

A well organised system of prisons is known to have existed in India from the earliest time. It is on record that Brahaspati laid

great stress on imprisonment of convicts in closed prisons. However, Manu was against this system. It was a common practice to keep the prisoners in solitary confinement so as to afford them an opportunity of self-introspection. The object of punishment during Hindu and Mughal period in India was to deter offenders from repeating crime. The recognised modes of punishment were death sentence, hanging, whipping, flogging, branding or starving to death. The prisoners were ill-treated, tortured and subjected to most inhuman treatment. They were kept under strict control and supervision. Thus prisons were places of terror and torture and prison authorities were expected to be tough and rigorous in implementing sentences.

The British colonial rule in India marked the beginning of penal reforms in this country. The British prison authorities made strenuous efforts to improve the condition of Indian prisons and prisoners. They introduced radical changes in the then existing prison system keeping in view the sentiments of the indigenous people. The prison administrators who were mostly British officials, classified the prisoners into two heads namely, violent and non- violent prisoners. The Prison Enquiry Committee appointed by the Government of India in 1836 recommended for the abolition of the practice of prisoners working on roads. Adequate steps were also taken to eradicate corruption among the prisons' staff. An official called Inspector General of Prisoners was appointed for the first time in 1855, who was the Chief Administrator of prisons in India. His main function was to maintain discipline among the prisoners and the prison authorities. Conditions of prisoners were harsher than animals in India and prisoners were treated with hatred. There was no uniform civil code to give punishment. The meaning of the punishment itself was to crush the prisoner. Jailors were cruel persons. But in 1835, some thought of reformation arose.

The second Jail Enquiry Committee in 1862 expressed concern for the insanitary conditions of Indian Prisoners which resulted into death of several prisoners due to illness and disease. It emphasised the need for proper food and clothing for the prison inmates and medical treatment of ailing prisoners. Prisoners' Act was enacted to bring uniformity in the working of the prisoners in India. The Act provided for classification of prisoners and the sentences of whipping was abolished. The medical facilities which were already available to prisoners in 1866 were further improved and better amenities were provided to women inmates to protect them against contagious diseases. It must be stated that the freedom movement had a direct impact on prison conditions in India.

Why Promote Prison Reform?

A sentence of life imprisonment deprives a person from his right to liberty. Imprisonment affects the prisoner and also his family living in poverty. When an income generating member of the family is imprisoned the whole family has to suffer and adjust to the loss of income. The family has to suffer financial loss because they have to engage a lawyer, arrange food for the prisoner, transport to prison to visit the prison etc. Prisons have very serious health implications. There are some prisoners who are suffering from various diseases before entering to the prison or they get effected after coming in the prison. Hence there is no healthy atmosphere in the prison. It is overcrowded; there is no fresh air, absence of proper and nutritious food etc. Imprisonment disrupts relationships and weakens social cohesion, since the maintenance of such cohesion is based on long-term relationships. When a member of a family is imprisoned, the disruption of the family structure affects relationships between spouses, as well as between parents and children, reshaping the family and

community across generations. Mass imprisonment produces a deep social transformation in families and communities.

Taking into account the above considerations, it is essential to note that, when considering the cost of imprisonment, account needs to be taken not only of the actual funds spent on the upkeep of each prisoner, which is usually significantly higher than what is spent on a person sentenced to non-custodial sanctions, but also of the indirect costs, such as the social, economic and healthcare related costs, which are difficult to measure, but which are immense and long-term. The size of the pre-trial prisoners is higher than that of the convicted prisoner. Pre-trial detention period is the most open period for the abuse of criminal justice process. Although pre-trial detainees should be presumed innocent until found guilty by a court of law, and treated as such, conditions in pre-trial detention are often much worse than those of prisons for convicted prisoners.

The Problem of Overcrowding in Prisons

It is a known fact that prisons in India are overcrowded. As a result of this there is no separation of offenders of serious offences and minor offences. Hence hardened criminals may spread their influence over minor criminals. Persons who have committed offences for the first time come into contact with hardened criminals and hence is likely to become professional criminals. The methods to reduce the burden of overcrowding of jail are release on bail; impose fine, release on probation or parole. The system of remission, leave and premature release may also be useful in tackling the problem of overcrowding in the prison.

Development of Thought

Custody, Care and Treatment are the three main functions of a modern prison Organisation. The notion of prison discipline was to make imprisonment deterrent. Gradually, the objective of imprisonment changed from mere deterrence to deterrence and reformation. This led to the abandonment of some of the barbaric punishments and introduction of the system of awards for good work and conduct in the form of remission, review of sentences, wages for prison labour, treatment in open conditions, parole, furlough, canteen facilities etc. Revision has now been made to meet adequately the basic needs of food, clothing, medical care etc. Educational and vocational training programmes along with training in scouting etc., have been introduced in jails. Custodial requirements for individuals are now at some places determined on the basis of their antecedents, conduct and performance etc.

The earlier penological approach held imprisonment, that is, custodial measures to be the only way to curb crime. But the modern penological approach has ushered in new forms of sentencing whereby the needs of the community are balanced with the best interest of the accused. There is need to use the alternatives to imprisonment such as warning, probation, suspension of sentence, fine and release on personal bond etc. Classification of offenders on the basis of sex, age, criminal record, social background is an essential feature of modern prison system.

Prisoners Reforms: Prior Independence and Post-Independence

The modern prison system in India was originated by TB Macaulay in 1835. A committee namely Prison Discipline

Committee, 1836 was appointed, which submitted its report in 1838. The committee recommended increased rigorousness of treatment while rejecting all humanitarian needs and reforms for the prisoners. Following the recommendations of the Macaulay Committee between 1836-1838, Central Prisons were constructed from 1846. The contemporary Prison administration in India is thus a legacy of British rule. It is based on the notion that the best criminal code can be of little use to a community unless there is good machinery for the infliction of punishments. In 1864, the Second Commission of Inquiry into Jail Management and Discipline made similar recommendations as the 1836 Committee. In addition, this Commission made some specific suggestions regarding accommodation for prisoners, improvement in diet, clothing, bedding and medical care.

Accordingly, the Government of India appointed the All-India Jail Manual Committee In1957 to prepare a model prison manual. The committee submitted its report in 1960. In 1957, the Eighth Conference of the Inspector Generals of Prisons also supported the recommendations of Dr. Reckless regarding prison reform. The report made forceful pleas for formulating a uniform policy and latest methods relating to jail administration, probation, after-care, juvenile and remand homes, certified and reformatory school, borstals and protective homes, suppression of immoral traffic etc. The report also suggested amendments in the Prison Act 1894 to provide a legal base for correctional work.

The Indian Jail Reforms Committee 1919-20 which was appointed to suggest measures for prison reforms was headed by Sir Alexender Cardio. It visited many prisons and came to the conclusion that prisons should have not only deterring influence but they should have a reforming effect on inmates.

As a measure of prison reform, the Jail Committee further recommended that the maximum intake capacity of each jail should be fixed, depending on its shape and size. A Jail Reform Committee, 1946 was constituted in the year 1946 for the formation of jails. This committee gave the suggestions as:

a) The child offenders should be treated differently

b) Modern jails should be constructed

c) The classification of offenders should be scientific such as; Women offenders Habitual offenders.

Prison Reforms after Independence of India

After independence of India, the work on the reformation of jails speeded up. It was accepted that prisoners are also human beings and have their rights. So in 1956 the punishment of transportation (Kala-pani) was substituted by the imprisonment for life. In 1949 Pakawasha Committee gave the permission to take work from the prisoners in making the roads and for that wages shall be paid. The treatment of prisoners on psychological and psychiatric basis received some attention as a measure of prison reform during 1950's. As G. B Vold rightly observed, "the rehabilitation activities of the modern prison are generally of two kinds, namely (1) psychological and psychiatric treatment and (2) Educational or vocational training programmes.

The Government of India invited Dr. W. C. Reckless, a technical expert of the United Nations on Crime prevention and treatment of offenders, to make recommendations on Prison reforms in 1951. Later on the Committee was appointed to prepare an All India Jail Manual in 1957 on the basis of the suggestions made by the Dr. Rackless. The

All India Jails Manual Committee 1957-59 was appointed by the government to prepare a model prison manual. The committee was asked to examine the problems of prison administration and to make suggestions for improvements to be adopted uniformly throughout India. The report was presented in 1960. They not only enunciated principles for an efficient management of prisons, but also laid down scientific guidelines for corrective treatment of prisoners.

Mulla Committee

All India Committee on Jail Reforms 1980-83 was constituted by the government of India under the chairmanship of Justice Anand Narain Mulla. The committee suggested setting up of a National Prison Commission as a continuing body to bring about modernisation of prisons in India. The basic objective of the Committee was to review the laws, rules and regulations keeping in view the overall objective of protecting society and rehabilitating offenders. It recommended a total ban on the heinous practice of clubbing together juvenile offenders with hardened criminals in prisons. To constitute an All India Service called the Indian Prisons and Correctional Service for the recruitment of Prison Officials. After-care, rehabilitation and probation should constitute an integral part of prison service. The Mulla Committee submitted its report in1983. Some other recommendations of Mulla Jail Committee were as follows:

1. The conditions of prison should be improved by making adequate arrangements for food, clothing, sanitation and ventilation etc.

2. The prison staff should be properly trained and organised into different cadres.

3. The media and public men should be allowed to visit prison so that they may have first-hand information about the conditions inside prison and be willing to co-operate with prison officials in rehabilitation work.

4. Lodging of undertrials in jails should be reduced to bare minimum and they should be kept separate from the convicted prisoners.

5. The Government should make an endeavour to provide adequate resources and funds for prison reforms.

Juvenile Justice Act, 1986

In the year 1986, a Juvenile Justice Act was enacted and observation homes, special homes, and juvenile homes were constituted. This was where the neglected children and juvenile delinquents can be admitted and the juvenile delinquent cannot be tried with the non-juvenile delinquent offenders and cannot be kept within the prison. Many provisions were made regarding the orders that could be passed against the juvenile offenders and what cannot be passed against the juvenile offenders. Under this Act, juvenile meant a boy below the age of 16 years and a girl below the age of 18 years.

Krishna Iyer Committee

In 1987, the Government of India appointed the Justice Krishna Iyer Committee to undertake a study on the situation of women prisoners in India. It has recommended induction of more women in the police force in view of their special role in tackling women and child offenders.

Prison Reforms

Nowadays imprisonment does not mean to break stones or grind chakkies but the sense has changed. Undoubtedly, the

condition of modern prison system is far better than that in the past but still much remains to be done in the direction of prison reforms for humane treatment of prisoners. The following modification in prison administration can be suggested for improving the efficiency of these institutions:

1) The maintenance of prison establishment is an expensive affair. It is in fact a burden on the public. Therefore the offender should be confined to the prison for only a minimum period which is absolutely necessary for their custody. The elimination of long-term sentences would reduce undue burden on prison expenditure. It is further suggested that where the term of imprisonment exceeds one year, a remission of one month or so per year be granted to the inmate so as to enable him/her home town and meet the relatives. This will help in the rehabilitation process after release to face the outside world courageously casting aside the stigma attached on account of imprisonment.

2) The women prisoners should be treated more generously and allowed to meet their children frequently. This will keep them mentally fit and respond favourably to the treatment methods. The woman who falls prey to sex offence should be treated with sympathy and their illegitimate children should be assured an upright life in society. Women prisoners should also be allowed to meet their sons and daughters more frequently, particularly the attitude in this regard should be more liberal in case of under-trial prisoners. Women prisoners should be handled only by women police or prison officials. The idea of setting up separate women jails exclusively for women.

3) The prisoners belonging to peasant class should be afforded an opportunity to go to their fields during harvesting season on temporary 'ticket on leave' so that they can look after their agriculture. This would enable them to keep in touch with their occupation and provide means of living to the other members of their family. Thus the unity of family life can be maintained which would help rehabilitation of the prisoner after his release from jail.

4) Prisoners be allowed to meet their close relatives at fixed times and be allowed certain privacy during such meeting. The meeting under supervision of prison guards are really embarrassing for inmates as well as the visitors and many thoughts on both sides remain unexpressed for want of privacy. The rights of prisoners to communicate and meet their friends, family, relatives and legal advisers should not be restricted beyond a particular limit.

5) The present system of limiting the scope of festivals and other ceremonial occasions merely to delicious dishes for inmates need to be changed. These auspicious days and festivals should be celebrated through rejoicings and other meaningful programmes so that the prisoners can at least momentarily forget that they are leading a fettered life.

6) The existing rules to the restrictions and scrutiny of postal mail of inmates should be liberalised. This shall infuse trust and faith among inmates for the prison officials.

7) The prison legislation should make provision for remedy of compensation to prisoner who are

wrongfully detained or suffer injuries to callous or negligent acts of the prison personnel. It is gratifying to note that in recent decades the Supreme Court has shown deep concern for prisoners' right to justice and fair treatment and requires prison officials to initiate measures so that prisoners' basic rights are not violated and they are not subjected to harassment and inhuman conditions of living.

8) The education in prisons should be beyond three R's and there should be greater emphasis on vocational training of inmates. This will provide them honourable means to earn their livelihood after release from jail. The facilities of lessons through correspondence courses should be extended to inmates who are desirous of taking up higher or advanced studies. Women prisoners should be provided training in tailoring, doll making, embroidery etc. The prisoners who are well educated should not be subjected to rigorous imprisonment, instead they should be engaged in some mental cum manual work.

9) On completion of term of sentence, the inmates should be placed under an intensive 'After Care'. The process of After Care will offer them adequate opportunities to overcome their inferior complex and save them from being ridiculed as convicts. Many non-penal institutions such as Seva Sadans, Nari Niketans and Reformation Houses are at work in different places in India to take up the arduous task of After Care and rehabilitation of criminals.

10) There is dire need to bring about a change in the public attitude towards the prison institutions and their management. This is possible through an

intensive publicity programmes using the media of press, platform and propaganda will. It will certainly create a right climate in society to accept the released prisoners with sympathy and benevolence without any hatred or distrust for them. The media men should be allowed to enter into prison so that their misunderstanding about prison administration may be cleared. [In Prabhu Dutta v. Union of India, the petitioner a newspaper correspondent filed a petition to interview two condemned prisoners Ranga and Billa for which permission was refused by Tihar Jail authorities. The Supreme Court allowed the interview upholding right of the press to have access to prison inmates].

11) Last but not the least, the existing Prison Act, 1894 which is more than a century old, needs to be thoroughly revised and even re-stated in view of the changed socio-economic and political conditions of India over the years. Many of the provisions of this Act have become obsolete and redundant.

The Supreme Court, in its landmark decision in Ramamurthy v. State of Karnataka, had identified nine major problems which need immediate attention for implementing prison reforms. The court observed that the present prison system is affected with major problems such as:

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.

Reform in Prison Labour Scheme

The objectives of 'prison labour' have varied from time to time. The Indian Jail Reforms Committee of 1919-20 recommended that the main objective of prison labour should be the prevention of further crime by the reformation of criminals, for which they were to be given instruction in up-to-date methods of work enabling them to earn a living wage on release. The other objectives were to keep the offenders be fully engaged to prevent mental damage and to enable them to contribute to the cost of their maintenance. Work was allotted to prisoners on the basis of their health, length of sentence prior knowledge of a trade, and the trade which was most likely to provide a living wage on release. After independence, punitive labour such as extraction of oil by manual labour was abolished and more useful programmes were introduced to train offenders as technicians. Some effort has also been made during the last three decades to train prisoners largely drawn from among agriculturists in modern methods of agriculture and animal husbandry but, for want of land, only limited progress could be made in this direction. Initially, payment of wages to prisoners was opposed on the ground that they were already a burden on the State.

Gradually, the need for providing some motivation to prisoners was realized and it was considered that some monetary reward would develop interest in work and provide the necessary incentive, more so if the prisoner was allowed to use the earnings on himself or his family. After independence, in some of the open prisons, prisoners are paid wages at market rates out of which they pay to State their cost of maintenance. There is now a growing realization that such liberal system of

wages would provide greater incentive for higher and better production. Maharashtra was the first State to introduce in 1949 a very comprehensive system of wages. The Apex Court in State of Gujarat & another, Hon'ble High Court of Gujarat (AIR 1998SC 3164) observed, "Reformation and rehabilitation is basic policy of criminal law hence compulsory manual labour from the prisoner is protected under Art. 23 of the Constitution. Minimum wages must be paid to prisoners for their labour after deducting the expenses incurred on them".

Reformation of Under-trial Prisoner

The undertrial prisoners are rightly not obliged to work under the law but remaining unemployed is not only against their own interest but also a national waste. A policy of persuasion rather than coercion to engage under trial prisoners in work was thus advocated and if they chose to work, they were to be paid wages. But in practice when they opt to work, they are employed on prison services and are in lieu thereof given labouring diet and no wages. Recently, the criminal law has provided that the period of detention as under trial shall be counted towards the sentence of imprisonment. This will mitigate some hardship but will not by itself encourage under trials to volunteer for work. Quite a large number of undertrial prisoners are detained in jails for long periods as they are unable to afford fees of lawyers to defend them. In recent years the government has given some attention to this problem and efforts are being made to give free legal aid to the poor. If this facility is extended to a large number of poor persons, it would not only in the long run result in the shortening of the period of detention of under trials but might in some cases result in acquittal also.

Reformation of Women Prisoners

The women prisoners should be treated more generously and allowed to meet their children frequently. This will keep them mentally fit and respond favourably to the treatment methods. A liberal correctional and educational programme seems necessary in case of women delinquents. Particularly, the women, who fall prey to sex offences, should be treated with sympathy and their illegitimate children should be assured an upright life in the society. The idea of setting up separate jails for women provides the free environment for providing special treatment to them. The first women jail was established in Maharashtra at Yerwada. Conformity with strict prison discipline is no guarantee that the prisoner has really transformed into a law-abiding citizen.

Probation

The term "Probation" is derived from the Latin word 'probare' which means 'to test' or 'to prove'. Probation offers an opportunity for the probationer to adjust himself to normal society thus avoiding an isolation and dull life in prison. Probation is a conditional release of an offender under supervision. The system of probation involves conditional suspension of punishment. The Central Correctional Bureau observed the year 1971 as "Probation Year" all over the country. Probation seeks to socialize the criminal, by training him to take up an earning activity and thus enables him to pick up those life-habits, which are necessary for a law-abiding member of the community. This inculcates a sense of self-sufficiency, self-control and self-confidence in him, which are undoubtedly the essential attributes of a free-life. The Probation Officer would guide the offender to rehabilitate himself and also try and keep him away from such criminal tendencies. The Probation of Offenders Act, 1958 contains

elaborate provisions relating to probation of offenders which are made applicable throughout the country. The Act provides four different modes of dealing with youthful and other offenders in lieu of sentence subject to certain conditions. These include:

1) Release after admonition.
2) Release on entering a bond on probation of good conduct with or without supervision, and on payment by the offender the compensation and costs to the victim if so ordered, the courts being empowered to vary the conditions of the bond and to sentence and impose a fine if he failed to observe the conditions of the bond.
3) Persons under 21 years of age are not to be sentenced imprisonment unless the court calls for a report from the probation officer or records reasons to the contrary in writing.
4) The person released on probation does not suffer a disqualification attached to a conviction under any other law.

Thus it would be seen that the provisions of the Probation of Offenders Act are not confined to juveniles alone, but extends to adults also. Again, the provisions of the Act are not only applicable to the offences committed under Indian Penal Code but they extend to offences under other laws such as the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1947; the Prevention of Food Adulteration Act, 1954 etc.

Parole

One of the most important but controversial devices for reducing pressure on prison institutions is the selective

release of prisoners on parole. Parole has a dual purpose, namely protecting society and at the same time bringing about the rehabilitation of the offenders. The parole system is an excellent way to allow prisoners to rehabilitate and get in touch with the outside world. Parole is a legal sanction that lets a prisoner leave the prison for a short duration, on the condition that she/he behaves appropriately after release and reports back to the prison on termination of the parole period. The conditional release from prison under parole may begin any time after the inmate has completed at least one-third of the total term of his sentence but before his final discharge. Release on parole is a part of the reformative process and is expected to provide opportunity for the prisoner to transform him/herself into useful citizen. Parole is thus a grant of partial liberty or lessening of restrictions to a convict prisoner, but release on parole does not, in any way, change the status of the prisoner. Parole is a penal device which seeks to humanise prison justice. It enables the prisoners to return to the outside world on certain conditions. The main object of the parole as stated in the Model Prison Manual are:

a) To enable the inmate to maintain continuity with his/her family life and deal with family matters

b) To save the inmate from the evil effects of continuous prison life.

c) To enable the inmate to retain self-confidence and active interest in life.

It must be noted that a parole is different from a "furlough". While parole is granted to a prisoner detained for any offence irrespective of the duration of imprisonment, a furlough is only granted to prisoners facing long sentences, five years or more. Furlough is matter of right, but parole is not. However, an abuse of the system is a drag on the country. The urgent

need of the hour is for police officials to acknowledge that the parole system is being misused and find ways to ensure that parole laws are properly enforced in prisons across the country.

Open Prisons

Taking inspiration from Anglo-American developments in the correctional field of penology, the Indian penologists were convinced that India also cannot tackle its crime problem by putting criminals in prison cells. The institution of open prisons seems to be viable alternative to harsh imprisonment system. The whole thrust in these open-prison institutions is to make sure that after release the prisoners may not relapse into crimes and for this purpose, they are given incentives to live a normal life, work on fields or carry on occupation of their choice and participate in games, sports or other recreational facilities. These are the minimum-security prisons. In this liberal remissions are given to extent of 15 days in a month. The State of Uttar Pradesh was first to set up an open-air camp attached to Model Prison at Lucknow in 1949. Other States, like Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Gujarat, Punjab, Kerala etc. are also set up open-air camps.

Remission

Prisoners get remissions periodically for good conduct and work. Special remissions are also given for specific special services. The sentences are reviewed from time to time according to various rules and the prisoners are released before time if they satisfy the prescribed conditions.

Work Release

Work release is considered to be a very effective reformation tool in modern criminal justice. In this method, the prisoner is allowed to work for pay in the society for part time basis.

This gives him/her an opportunity to mix up with the society in a normal manner without any limitations. The control of the prison authorities in, however not completely taken away since he/she has to work within the permitted parameters and during non-working hours, has to return to the concerned correctional institution. The correctional authorities collect his earnings which are paid to the prisoner on the completion of sentence. However it differs from parole as inmates continue to live in and subject to control of jail authorities except the working hour. This helps the prisoner to adjust in the situation at the work place after the lease.

Overcrowding of Prisons

There has been a continuous record of overcrowding in jails. The position is further complicated by frequent agitations resulting in confinement of a large number of political prisoners, who claim special treatment. Overcrowding results in restlessness, tension, inefficiency and general breakdown in the normal administration. Recently, the Supreme Court of India took exception to the unduly long detention of a large number of under trial prisoners and the Central and State governments have now started taking vigorous steps to remedy this situation

Social Change

The basic premise of most efforts to reform prison system is that this can be done without any fundamental transformation of the structure of the society as a whole. The liberal perspective on reform is that fundamental changes in the prison system are possible without fundamental changes in the rest of the society, while the radical perspective is that fundamental changes in prison can come about only through radical changes in the society itself. The attitude of the

society need to be changed in respect of prisoners. Prison constitutes important institution which protects the society from criminals. Prison confines people against their will. The cause of social change is the psychology of humans. A person is by nature a lover of change. He/she is always trying to discover new things in every sphere of life and is always anxious for novel experiences. As a result of this tendency traditions, customs, etc. of every human society are perpetually undergoing change. A human being is able to apply new customs and methods to replace the old traditional customs that are being formed. Change is the law of life when change does not occur at the appropriate time, revolutions take place. The causes of social change are diverse, and the processes of change can be identified as either short-term trends or long-term developments. Change can be either cyclic or one directional.

The mechanisms of social change can be varied and interconnected. Several mechanisms may be combined in one explanatory model of social change. The object of Criminal Law is to protect the society from crime and criminals. It is, Therefore, the duty of every court to award proper sentence having regard to the nature of the offence and the manner in which it was executed or committed, etc. It is expected that the courts would operate the sentencing system so as to impose such sentence which reflects the conscience of the society and the sentencing process has to be stern where it should be. Law relating to prisoners is the main area where the instrumentality of law has proved social change in the punishment of offenders. The journey was started from the Giasuddin in 1977. The law indicates that the germs of the crimes are within the society, then why to punish the offenders, in fact they should be reformed and rehabilitated. He is like a sick person and by becoming a prisoner, he/she does not cease to be a person. Justice Krishna Iyer has stated

that 'prisoners are built with the stones law'. The prisoners have many rights while serving their sentence, some of them are:

a) Reading and writing books in jail
b) Liberal use of parole
c) Segregation of prisoners
d) Right to interview
e) Releasing the prisoner on temporary bail to perform sacred ceremonies
f) Release on bail of under trial prisoner under NDPS, etc.

Mahatma Gandhi has rightly said that, Prisons should be changed into hospitals to give treatment to offenders, to bring them on the correct line. Officers of the jail should be changed into doctors. The offenders shall feel that officers of the jail are their friends. Imprisonment disrupts relationships and weakens social cohesion, since the maintenance of such cohesion is based on long-term relationships. When a member of a family is imprisoned, the disruption of the family structure affects relationships between spouses, as well as between parents and children, reshaping the family and community across generations. Mass imprisonment produces a deep social transformation in families and communities.

Vipassana and Social Change

The technique of Vipassana is a path leading to freedom from all suffering; it eradicates the craving, aversion and ignorance which are responsible for all our miseries. Those who practice it remove, little by little, the root causes of their suffering and steadily emerge from the darkness of former tensions to lead happy, healthy, productive lives. There are many examples bearing testimony to this fact Several experiments have been conducted at prisons in India. In 1975, S.N. Goenka

conducted a historic course for 120 inmates at the Central Jail in Jaipur, the first such experiment in Indian penal history. The Rajasthan and Gujarat studies indicated definite positive changes of attitude and behaviour in the participants, and demonstrate that Vipassana is a positive reform measure enabling criminals to become wholesome members of society. In 1995, a massive course was organised for 1000 prisoners in Tihar jail with far-reaching effects. Vipassana was adopted as a prison reform technique in the largest jails of India. A detailed report of the scientific studies carried out to assess the impact of Vipassana meditation on the prisoner's mental health proves that Vipassana is capable of transforming criminals into better human beings. The individual is the key: he or she must be treated with love and compassion; one must be trained to improve oneself - not by exhortations to follow moral precepts, but by being instilled with the authentic desire to change. One must be taught to explore oneself, to initiate a process which can bring about transformation and lead to purification of mind. This is the only change which will be enduring.

Rehabilitation

The assumption of rehabilitation is that people are not permanently criminal and that it is possible to restore a criminal to a useful life, to a life in which they contribute to themselves and to society. A goal of rehabilitation is to prevent habitual offending, also known as criminal recidivism. Rather than punishing the harm out of a criminal, rehabilitation would seek, by means of education or therapy, to bring a criminal into a more peaceful state of mind, or into an attitude which would be helpful to society, rather than be harmful to society. The assumption of rehabilitation is that people are not permanently criminal and that it is possible to restore a criminal

to a useful life, to a life in which they contribute to themselves and to society. A goal of rehabilitation is to prevent habitual offending, also known as criminal recidivism. Rather than punishing the harm out of a criminal, rehabilitation would seek, by means of education or therapy, to bring a criminal into a more peaceful state of mind, or into an attitude which would be helpful to society, rather than be harmful to society.

Conclusion

To ensure good discipline and administration, an initial classification must be made to separate male from females, the young from the adults, convicted from the unconvinced prisoners, civil from criminal prisoners and from casual from habitual prisoners. The main object of prison labour is prevention of crime and reformation of the offenders. And the other main object is to engage them so as to prevent mental damage and to enable them to contribute to the cost of their maintenance. The undertrial prisoners constitute a majority of population in prison than convicted prisoners. The undertrial prisoners are presumed to be innocent and most of them are discharged or acquitted after immeasurable physical and mental loss caused to them by detention due to delay in investigation and trial. The courts have in recent years been giving serious thought to the human rights of prisoners and have, on that ground, interfered with the exercise of powers of superintendents of jails in respect of measures for safe custody, good order and discipline. Research into crime and the criminal is still in its infancy. The immediate need of research is to evaluate the existing methods of treatment and to suggest new approaches to the prevention of crime. The value of probation, open prisons, parole and home leave as reformatory measures need to be established. Prisoners constitute important institutions which protect the society from criminals. The obstacles in prison reforms are resource allocation, the deterrent functions of punishment, the notion of rehabilitation, and internal control.

Article
Reformative Explorations
10/3 (2024)
Pages 79 - 85

Impact of Jesus' Imprisonment in Prison Ministry

Sr Amala DC

Introduction

Jesus' experience of imprisonment His trial, arrest, and crucifixion offer a profound lens through which we can understand suffering, justice, and compassion. By reflecting on this experience holistically, we are invited to see imprisonment not only as a physical confinement but as a journey through pain, solidarity, forgiveness, and hope. For volunteers in Prison Ministry, this approach is transformative, as it opens pathways to minister with empathy, resilience, and love to those society often forgets. The holistic approach guides volunteers to address the many dimensions of incarceration, from physical and emotional needs to social and spiritual support, embodying Jesus' own mission of healing and reconciliation.

Jesus' Life in the Prison: A Reflection

The life of Jesus Christ, while never spent in a literal prison during His earthly ministry, can be deeply associated with the experience of captivity, both spiritual and physical. Throughout the Gospels, Jesus is portrayed as one who identifies with the marginalized, the oppressed, and those held captive by sin and suffering. His mission was to proclaim freedom to prisoners not just in a literal sense but in a deeper, more profound spiritual context.

The Prison of Human Sin

From the moment of His incarnation, Jesus entered into the "prison" of human existence. He took on the limitations of the human condition: hunger, thirst, pain, and even death. This can be seen as His willingness to join humanity in its bondage to sin. Jesus embraced the burdens of humanity, knowing that His mission was to break the chains of sin and death that had held humankind captive since the fall of Adam and Eve. As St. Paul wrote in his letter to the Philippians, "Though he was in the form of God, he did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant" (Philippians 2:6-7). This "emptying" of Himself is a profound form of imprisonment Jesus willingly subjected Himself to the constraints of humanity to offer freedom.

Jesus in Gethsemane and His Arrest

The night before His crucifixion, Jesus experienced a form of captivity that foreshadowed His eventual imprisonment. In the Garden of Gethsemane, He wrestled with the weight of the world's sin, praying in deep agony. It was here that He was arrested like a common criminal, despite His innocence. Betrayed by Judas, Jesus was taken into custody, setting in motion the events that would lead to His trial and crucifixion. In this sense, Jesus experienced the unjust imprisonment that many in history have endured condemned without cause, held captive by systems of power that seek to silence truth and justice.

Jesus Before Pilate and Herod

After His arrest, Jesus was shuffled between the Roman governor, Pilate, and the Jewish King Herod. Though physically imprisoned, He stood as the ultimate symbol of

spiritual freedom. His silence before His accusers spoke volumes about His inner strength and His submission to the Father's will. Jesus' trials were a mockery of justice, and yet He bore them with grace, revealing the power of love and sacrifice over the violence and injustice of the world.

The Cross: The Ultimate Prison of Death

The cross itself can be seen as a form of imprisonment. Jesus was nailed to it, His movement restricted, His body bound by the pain of crucifixion. Yet, paradoxically, it was in this moment of greatest captivity that Jesus achieved the greatest act of liberation for humanity. Through His death, He conquered the ultimate prison death itself. The Gospel of Luke records Jesus quoting from the prophet Isaiah at the beginning of His ministry, saying, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon 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" (Luke 4:18). This declaration was fulfilled on the cross, where Jesus opened the way for all people to be freed from the prison of sin and death.

Jesus' Descent into Hell

According to the Apostles' Creed, after His crucifixion, Jesus "descended into hell." In this mysterious event, Jesus entered the prison of the dead, the place where souls were held captive before His resurrection. This descent is often understood as His triumphant proclamation of victory over death and His liberation of the righteous who had died before His coming. In this sense, Jesus entered the darkest prison imaginable the prison of death and hell itself, only to break its power forever.

Liberation through Resurrection

The resurrection of Jesus is the ultimate symbol of freedom from the prison of death. When He rose from the dead, He shattered the chains of sin, death, and the devil. His victory is not just a personal one but is extended to all who believe in Him. As Paul writes in his letter to the Romans, "For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his" (Romans 6:5). In His resurrection, Jesus offers the promise of freedom to all who are held captive whether by sin, oppression, addiction, or despair. His empty tomb is a powerful image of the doors of the prison being thrown open, offering new life and hope.

Jesus the Prisoner: Values for Prison Ministry Volunteers

Throughout his life and ministry, Jesus embraced the outcast, the sinner, and the marginalized. As we reflect on Jesus as a prisoner, we recognize his profound connection with those whom society has often rejected. For prison ministry volunteers, contemplating Jesus in this light provides valuable lessons and guidance for the work of accompanying prisoners and their families. Jesus' final days, from his arrest in Gethsemane to his trial and crucifixion, illustrate the vulnerability, suffering, and rejection that many prisoners face today. He was betrayed by a close companion, denied by his followers, and abandoned by the crowd that had once hailed him. Wrongfully accused and subjected to unjust legal proceedings, Jesus' experience resonates deeply with those who are imprisoned unjustly or who suffer under flawed systems of justice. In his silent endurance of humiliation and pain, Jesus exhibited the profound strength of patience, compassion, and forgiveness. His words from the cross "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34) epitomize the radical mercy that prison ministry volunteers are called to offer.

Key Values for Prison Ministry Volunteers

Compassion

Compassion lies at the heart of Jesus' ministry and is essential for any volunteer working in prison ministry. Compassion means seeing beyond the crime or stigma of a prisoner to recognize their inherent dignity as a child of God. Jesus himself consistently reached out to those on the margins tax collectors, sinners, and the oppressed showing us that no one is beyond redemption. Volunteers are called to offer hope and understanding to prisoners, their families, and children, embracing them with the love that Jesus demonstrated.

Non- Judgmental Presence

Jesus said, "Do not judge, or you too will be judged" (Matthew 7:1). Prison ministry calls for a non-judgmental attitude, meeting individuals where they are without labeling them by their mistakes. Just as Jesus invited Zacchaeus down from the tree without condemning his past (Luke 19:1-10), so too should prison ministry volunteers be sources of healing and acceptance, creating space for prisoners to begin their journey of rehabilitation.

Forgiveness

One of the most challenging yet central values of prison ministry is the call to forgiveness. Jesus modeled forgiveness when he prayed for his persecutors and offered it freely to the repentant thief on the cross (Luke 23:43). Volunteers must embody this spirit of forgiveness, encouraging inmates to seek reconciliation with themselves, with God, and with those they have wronged. This path of forgiveness can be transformative, bringing healing to the incarcerated and their communities.

Solidarity

Jesus' life was a constant witness to solidarity with the suffering. His arrest, torture, and death were not merely individual events but acts that united him with the oppressed, particularly prisoners. Prison ministry volunteers are called to walk in solidarity with the incarcerated, becoming their voice and advocate. By standing with them in their suffering, volunteers reflect the love of Christ, who shares in the pain and struggles of the least among us.

Hope

Jesus' resurrection is the ultimate sign of hope, symbolizing that even in the darkest moments, new life is possible. Prison ministry volunteers bring this message of hope to those in despair, whether they are prisoners who have lost their freedom or children who feel abandoned. Through counselling, prayer, and accompaniment, volunteers offer the hope of personal renewal and the possibility of a future beyond incarceration.

Humility

Humility is a hallmark of Jesus' life, from his birth in a manger to his death on a cross. Prison ministry volunteers are called to approach their work with humility, recognizing that the grace of God is what ultimately transforms lives. They are there not to judge or impose but to serve, recognizing that they too are in need of God's mercy and grace.

Healing

Jesus' ministry was one of healing - not just physical, but emotional and spiritual. Prison ministry volunteers are invited to bring healing to the deep wounds of those in prison. This healing extends beyond the prisoner, reaching families

and communities that are often affected by incarceration. Volunteers can act as agents of reconciliation, helping prisoners rebuild relationships with their families and with society.

Conclusion

Jesus' life and death resonate deeply with those who are physically imprisoned today. He identifies with their suffering, offering them hope and spiritual freedom. His message of love, forgiveness, and redemption is as relevant to prisoners in the modern world as it was 2,000 years ago. In Matthew 25:36, Jesus says, "I was in prison, and you came to visit me." This powerful statement reminds us that when we care for those in prison, we care for Christ Himself. His life calls us to work for the freedom and dignity of all, especially those who are imprisoned by physical, social, or spiritual forces. Just as Jesus transformed His imprisonment into an opportunity for redemption, so too can we, through acts of mercy, transform the lives of prisoners and offer them the hope of new life in Christ. Jesus, as the prisoner who endured suffering and rejection, offers a powerful model for prison ministry volunteers. His compassion, non-judgmental presence, and unwavering commitment to forgiveness and hope provide a framework for accompanying the incarcerated. In the footsteps of Jesus, volunteers are called to see beyond the labels of "criminal" or "prisoner" and recognize the sacred worth of every person. As they serve, they reflect Christ's love and mercy, helping to bring light to even the darkest places.

Article
Reformative Explorations
10/3 (2024)
Pages 86 - 98

Uncovering the Dark Psychology Behind Serial Killers

Andy[1]

Introduction

Serial killers are among the most vilified, misunderstood, and feared members of our society, but have you ever stopped to wonder why they do the terrible things they do? From the organized, calculated slayer to the seemingly motiveless murderer, these faceless monsters hardly ever reveal their true intentions. But as much as we might dread it, delving into the dark psychology behind these tragic acts can actually be a fascinating, if not a tad troubling, endeavour. Let's begin exploring the hidden drives that lurk in the minds of serial killers and try to answer the unanswerable: why? There is no definitive answer to this question as the motivations of serial killers are complex and vary from individual to individual. Factors that have been linked to the development of a serial killer include psychological issues, family dysfunction, past traumas and mental illness.

Understanding Serial Killers

Serial killers are some of the most notorious criminals in the world and have puzzled psychologists, law enforcement officers, and other experts for decades. Most people struggle

1 https://carrollcole.com/news/uncovering-the-dark-psychology-behind-serial-killers/

to understand why someone would commit such heinous acts, but it is important to note that not all serial killers fit neatly under one psychological umbrella. Understanding these individuals requires taking into consideration a variety of factors - including family background, mental health, and even sexuality - in order to gain insight into their criminal behaviour. Studies have suggested that serial killers often come from difficult family backgrounds, including physical and emotional abuse. This type of childhood trauma could potentially lead a person to act out violently against another person as an adult. Additionally, a psychological disorder or mental illness could also be a potential factor in understanding serial killers. Mental illness may cloud judgement and make it more difficult for individuals to distinguish between right and wrong or good versus bad behaviour. Finally, there is debate about whether or not serial killers are sexually motivated in committing their crimes. While theories suggest some sexual thrill may be gained from the act of killing, experts agree that sex is not necessarily a motivator for every serial killer. In fact, many victims show no signs of sexual assault or any kind of sexual manipulation by the killer beforehand. Ultimately, understanding the mind of serial killer requires complex analysis of their motivations behind each individual case. To fully comprehend the dark psychology behind serial killers we must investigate what could be motivating them in addition to the factors which influence their criminal behaviour. In the next section we will explore what may be driving these individuals to commit such heinous acts and how we can use this knowledge to potentially prevent future murders.

What Motivates Them?

The single question that most often lies in the minds of individuals who have become fascinated by the mysteries and

horrors of serial killers is: What could possibly motivate such behaviour? Serial killers often demonstrate inexplicable levels of cruelty and depravity, far beyond what could simply be called an aberration of mental illness. As such, many experts feel there must be some form of identifiable motivation behind their crimes. The motivations of offenders can take many forms, and it can vary between individuals even within a single crime category. However, a few general categories remain prominent among serial offenders, which include thrill-seeking, power/control, and attention seeking. Power/control motivation is generally considered to be the most common form amongst serial killers. This can take many forms, from the desire to dominate or humiliate victims to engaging in elaborate criminal timelines that reflect a level of planning and control beyond the actions of a typical offender. Furthermore, these murderers often repeat certain aspects of their crime over multiple victims or take sadistic satisfaction in controlling the outcomes of their victims' lives as well as their own. Thrill-seeking motivation is also very common amongst serial offenders, with some experts claiming that every individual has an innate psychological urge towards risk-taking activities. Such killers may seek out danger for its stimulation value rather than attempting to gain any tangible personal benefit from the actions. While this type of offender can potentially present an even more intractable problem for those wishing to understand serial murders, its prevalence cannot be denied or ignored when looking at criminal profiles. On the other hand, attention-seeking behaviour is less commonly seen but observed in certain cases. This kind of motivation generally takes place after a certain amount of notoriety has already been gained and can also include situations in which the blame for a particular crime is mistakenly placed on someone else (often dubbed as "copycat" kills). Here it appears that the

perpetrator sees themselves as getting retribution or fulfilling some sort of quest so as to bring about justice or recognition for their actions. Despite all our understanding about these motivations however, no single theory or explanation can fully encompass why some individuals develop into violent criminals while others simply do not. It's clear that a range of factors—environmental, psychological, social—are all present in different combinations across each individual case, meaning that the motivations of serial offenders are ultimately unknowable until they are studied more closely on an individual basis. With this in mind let us now turn our attention to exploring the characteristics associated with being a serial killer.

Characteristics of Serial Killers

Serial killers are some of the most infamous and perplexing individuals in the criminal justice system. They often hold an almost mystic allure due to their capacity for brutality and lack of apparent motive. While it is important to understand the psychological foundations behind serial murder, it is equally important to know the distinct capabilities and characteristics, if any, that set serial killers aside from regular murderers. Over the years, researchers have identified certain traits that are present in many serial killers. Perhaps the most prominent trait of serial killers is a history of psychological issues or childhood traumas. Serial killers often come from abusive or traumatic home environments where they may be victims of physical, emotional, or sexual abuse (among other formative factors). Additionally, common themes such as harsh punishment and neglect can manifest themselves in personality features such as grandiosity, manipulation/deceitfulness, superficial charm, impulsivity, and overconfidence – which could lead to impulsively acting out on violent fantasies. However, research

has shown that although early trauma may be common among serial killers it does not necessarily always play a role in their proclivity for violence; instead some research suggests that tendencies toward violence may instead develop from biological alterations in brain functioning. Many studies have proposed biological evidence for criminal behaviour linked directly to genetics – including systems that are known to be involved in aggression pathways. These systems include dopaminergic regulation in response to reward stimuli and serotonin regulation related to impulse control. It is suggested by this research that certain types of brain abnormalities can lead an individual towards violent behaviour.

Though there has been strong debate over the causes and characteristics of serial killing over the last century, what generally remains undisputed is that these individuals constitute a special population due to their particularly heinous acts-which lends itself well toward speculation about neurological underpinnings and social dynamics behind their criminal actions. Next we will explore how serial killers differ from other murderers in terms of motives and mindset. According to the FBI, psychopathy plays a key factor in serial killers due to their inability to display remorse or empathy. A study by the University of Oxford found that a "genetic disposition" is responsible for up to 40% of "variance in violent offending." A report from the National Centre for Biotechnology Information (NCBI) states that up to 25% of serial killers demonstrate unusual reaction or behaviour towards violence or cruelty during childhood.

Crucial Points

Serial killers have typically been found to have psychological issues or childhood traumas in their past. On top of this, there have been biological alterations linked to criminal behaviour

and violent behaviour which may be present in serial killers. It is also thought that serial killers may differ from other murderers in terms of motives and mind-set. Research is on-going in order to better understand the unique characteristics of serial killers.

How are they Different from Other Murderers?

Serial killers are a particularly notorious and disturbing form of murderers. Some might say that all people who commit murder must have psychopathic tendencies; however, it is important to remember that not all murderers are created equal, or even similar. So how are serial killers different from other Murderers? One key difference between serial killers and other murderers is the sheer volume of victims they may have. Whereas other murderers may be convicted of one or two murders, serial killers often rack up multiple victims before they are caught. This could be due to their sometimes-higher levels of intelligence, as well as their proficiency in avoiding detection by authorities. Another key difference between serial killers and other murderers lies in motivations for crime. While many other perpetrators of murder cite wrath, fear, feelings of ownership, or even revenge as motivators, some believe serial killers act out of compulsion or personal gain. Their repeated offenses may be seen as an addiction or hobby – something done solely for pleasure – and not necessarily to satisfy any specific emotions or goals. However, this debate is not limited to those factors alone; differences such as psychological makeup, lifestyle choices, and weapon preferences have been studied at length to differentiate the various types of criminals over time. As new research emerges about the psychology behind criminal behavior traits, it is becoming easier to see how certain characteristics make up a typical serial killer and separate them from other

murderers who utilize different methods for different reasons. To further explore the intricate details about serial killers, we can answer questions regarding their psychopathic nature; the psychological makeup that makes these individuals who they are and drives them to commit these heinous acts. The following section will explore the psychopathic qualities present in those who commit serial murder.

Psychopathic Nature of Serial Killers

Serial killers are unique in that they exhibit certain traits that separate them from the rest of society. One of the most telling features of serial killers is their psychopathic nature. This can be a contentious subject, as some experts argue that psychopathy is merely a behavior while others assert that it is an overarching pattern that informs many aspects of the individual's life and actions. On one hand, a psychopathic personality type can be used to explain why a person would commit the types of violent and remorseless acts which are characteristic of serial killers. A psychopathic individual generally possesses traits such as egocentricity, narcissism, lack of empathy or remorse, enhanced impulsivity, superiority complexes, and selfishness. These psychopathic tendencies also make them more prone to criminal activities like murder and other violent crimes. On the other hand, many have argued that psychopathy cannot be used to predict behavior; rather, it is only an indication of tendencies on a psychological level. They base their argument upon the fact that many individuals with strong psychopathic tendencies do not act upon them when it comes to crimes like murder. Others have proposed that psychopathy should instead refer to those who not only possess these characteristics but display predatorial behavior towards others as well – making it an overlap between personality type and volitional decisions made throughout

life. No matter what side of this debate one falls on, there is no denying the presence and influence of psychopathy in serial killers. There is simply too much research connecting psychopathy with violent behaviour to shrug off – leading us into the next section about looking for signs of psychopathy in those who may become violent offenders down the line.

Signs of Psychopathy

The signs of psychopathy can vary broadly, and the condition affects individuals differently. To understand the dark psychology behind serial killers, it is important to understand what characterizes psychopathy. Many experts believe that psychopaths have a range of characteristics or traits that indicate a "lack of conscience". These qualities can include callousness towards the feelings of others, lack of empathy, impulsiveness, and risk-taking behaviour. Contrary to popular belief, however, not all psychopaths are violent criminals. It is believed that many psychopaths have the ability to control their impulses and live seemingly normal lives without displaying their malicious tendencies or wreaking havoc around them. The American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM-5) uses criteria such as remorselessness, a lack of remorse or guilt following hurtful acts, as well as reckless disregard for the safety of self or others, irresponsibility and an unconcerned attitude towards education or work commitments in order to diagnose someone with psychopathy.

On the other hand, there is an on-going debate regarding the use of different criteria in determining if someone has psychopathy. Some specialists argue that psychopathy is more circumstantial and should take into consideration external factors like economic status or social training – specifically whether one was exposed to violence early on in life – when

making a diagnosis. This line of thinking suggests that environmental factors also play a large role in some cases of psychopathy, which could explain why some psychopathic serial killers had tough childhoods filled with physical abuse and neglect before becoming violent criminals as adults. Therefore, accurately analysing the signs of psychopathy requires complex interpretations in both diagnosed individuals and potentially those who display similar behavioural traits but may not officially fit diagnostic criteria for psychopathy. In order to truly explore the dark psychology behind serial killers it is necessary to gain insight into what motivates them along with any general patterns among them. This leads us into our next section discussing methods of studying serial killer minds.

Studying Serial Killer Minds

The study of serial killer minds is an intriguing area of research, and one that has gained considerable public interest. While much of the research in this field is focused on profiling and other forensic techniques, it can also lead to a greater understanding of the motivations behind their actions. There are two major perspectives when considering this research: One is the clinical approach which seeks to find some underlying psychological issue(s) that may be contributing to their behavior; the second perspective is the sociological approach, which looks at external factors such as culture, media, and family structure to identify potential causes for these behaviours. Those who take a clinical approach may argue that understanding the mental state of killers can help shed light on why they do what they do. However, sociologists point out that much of our knowledge about serial killers is filtered through popular culture and the media. This creates an incomplete picture of the real people behind these

horrendous acts. Additionally, this type of research typically focuses on a small percentage of killers and does not account for the large number of people who have committed similar crimes without being labelled as "serial" killers. Others argue that there is value in gaining insight into the psyche of serial killers because it allows us to recognize certain warning signs before violence occur. Understanding triggers can help inform prevention strategies and allow us to take steps to avoid similar tragedies in the future. Ultimately, this debate raises important questions about how best to approach complex issues like serial killing, and how our society deters violent behavior before it begins. As we move forward with this discussion, it will become increasingly important to understand what researchers are finding in terms of diagnosing and treating these individuals. This leads us into our next section where we will look at just what researchers uncover when attempting to uncover the dark psychology behind serial killers.

What Do Researchers Find?

The field of psychology is constantly uncovering new insights into the dark minds of serial killers. Researchers have identified several important traits which appear to be prominent in perpetrators of such heinous acts. Studies suggest that serial killers often possess a disinhibition towards violence, a lack of empathy, and a reliance on manipulation to achieve their ends. Those who gravitate toward criminal behavior such as cold-blooded murder are typically considered to be suffering from some sort of mental disorder, most likely an antisocial personality disorder (ASPD). This implies that they may not view the world in the same way as the majority of people, nor do they feel bound to abide by any moral code or sense of justice. These individuals also often come from unstable or difficult backgrounds, leading to a distorted worldview

and inability to form meaningful connections with others. On the other hand, some experts assert that not all serial killers have a diagnosable mental illness and instead may just be inherently evil or motivated by power or control. This argument discounts the idea that biological or environmental factors could influence someone's decision to commit such atrocities and instead points to a malevolent desire on the part of certain individuals to practice extreme violence and terrorize those around them. The debate over whether one's environment can shape them into a killer versus an "evil gene" has yet to be definitively resolved by science, but it is clear that there is more than one factor at play in these extreme cases. To better understand what drives someone toward heinous crimes like serial killing, it is necessary to look beyond surface-level assessments and delve deeper into their psyche. This leads us naturally into our next section examining the evil mind of serial killers.

The Evil Mind of Serial Killers

The evil mind of serial killers is a concept that has consistently plagued psychologists and researchers for years, who are forever on the pursuit of understanding why these criminals commit such atrocious acts. While there is no specific typology applied to all serial killers, key indicators have been highlighted within research, which piece together the personality traits shared amongst them. Though the neurological implications of a murderous mind may never be fully understood, it's clear from research into the profile of a serial killer that mental illness does play a contributing role in some cases. One of the foremost considerations when exploring the evil mind of serial killers is psychopathy. First identified by British Physician Dr. William Cope in 1891, psychopathy falls under an umbrella categorization of Antisocial Personality Disorder (APD), and

it's characterized by a lack of remorse or empathy, impulsiveness, and aggression. According to forensic psychologist Scott A. Bonn, "Serial killers are often psychopathic instead of suffering from some form of psychosis…the psychopathy construct is more applicable to their behavior because they don't appear to be disorganized, disturbed individuals with poor impulse control. Rather, many - not all - serial killers are highly organized individuals performing calculated murder with precision." This evaluation indicates an underlying intent to those murders and suggests an inherent tendency towards immoral contents – perhaps the very root and manifestation of evil within offenders that renders their actions so heinous and kills their victims so tragically. Alternatively, contrasting opinions put forward that many serial offenders suffer from paranoid schizophrenia or possess acute narcissism both of which can also; linkable reasons as to why they do not form social relationships, experiences feelings such as jealously or envy when observing others enjoying life or respect authority figures or law enforcement officers and demonstrate violent behavior consequent to failure or disappointment in life. It is thought that psychological issues such as these can lead people down the path towards becoming more violent which in turn can lead towards murdering those around them over issues such as dominance rather than through intentional malicious intent. In light of this opinion it may be argued that psychological issues may have led people down a dark road however carrying out acts where intentional malice is evident suggests an underlying evil agenda can be inferred.

Conclusion

Although much about the evil mind of serial killers will remain hidden behind its own veil of darkness, concerning what drives them to fulfil such horrific deeds, research into the psychological predispositions and patterns remain valuable

pieces of evidence shedding light onto this perplexing phenomenon. With case-by-case individual factors examined alongside associated commonalities amongst many different serial killer profiles today, it remains totally up for debate how much evil intention goes into these crimes – even if the ultimate act itself cannot be argued away from anything but pure malevolence and danger.

Article
Reformative Explorations
10/3 (2024)
Pages 99 - 114

My Journey with Brethren Behind Bars

Sr Adele Korah SCCG

Introduction

Recalling the past of my journey with the brethren behind the bars, I raise my grateful heart to the Almighty who gave me the call to this beautiful ministry in the prison. I look back to the days when I received the call from the Lord, to follow Him as a bearer of His light. I marvel at the love of predilection He bestowed on me by His call. From my childhood days. I had a longing in my heart to follow the Lord and to serve the least and the lost. I am the third one among thirteen children of my parents. Three of us were blessed with the gift of religious vocation as we were brought up in a devout Catholic family. My parents regularly attended holy Mass daily along with all of us. As I grew up, I felt every Eucharistic celebration as a heavenly experience and never a routine. I was deeply touched by the love of Jesus who deigned to come down to the earth out of his infinite love and laid down his life to save the whole world. His love is so intense and therefore he does not want a single soul to be lost. That is why He chose me to serve the brethren who are gone away from the Good Shepherd and are caught up in the thorny bush of crimes.

My Personal Vocation

When I dwelt deeply on the love of Jesus in my prayer, I felt that when Jesus breathed his last, He was breathing into

me telling me, "Now it is your turn Adele, to live as I lived, carrying my love and light to others, especially to the sinners who have not known my love for them so that they too may be saved." I considered it as a personal call for me from the Lord. I prayed daily after Holy Communion, "Jesus, help me to carry your light to the many people who are living in the darkness of sin and ignorance."

Future Prospects Surrendered to Accept the Call of God

When I finished my High School studies, I expressed my desire to become a religious. But my father who was very fond of me told me that he desires to see me as a doctor. He said, *"I will send you to study medicine and after you become a doctor, I will give you in marriage to a doctor and build a clinic for you both."* That was his dream for me, but Jesus' dream for me was totally different. Somehow, I managed to get the permission of my parents to join the Religious Congregation of Sisters of Charity. Though I desired to be a missionary in the North and go to remote villages and share the Good News of Jesus to bring many to God's Kingdom, my request was not accepted. Hence, I joined the Congregation of Sisters of Charity in the Province of Mangalore, soon after my graduation.

A Sister of Charity

After the completion of the period of Formation I made my First Profession. I was sent to teach in Schools and later on to take charge of a D Ed College for training students who have completed P.U.C to become teachers. I was asked to teach in a regional medium- Kannada. When I approached my Provincial Superior and explained to her my inability to teach in a language I never knew, I was told to learn the language. She motivated me saying, *"An obedient person will speak of victories, as God's folly is better than the wisdom of the wise."* Hence, I had to learn

the regional language of Karnataka. I had to start learning the letters of the Alphabet. God blessed my obedience and in a short time I was able to teach Science, Psychology and Principles of Teaching to my students in Kannada. Though I was happy to be a teacher in the D. Ed College of Education, I was not satisfied by just teaching secular subjects. Lord inspired me to organize retreats for my student - teachers so that all my students will have an experience of the love of God and become bearers of Good News of God's love as teachers. My longing to share the unconditional love of Christ to people and to save those living in the darkness of sin was surging in my heart. I made visits to the prison in Mangalore during the season of Lent and Advent. There I met criminals who never repented of their crimes. I was fortunate to get needed help from priests who were ready to come along with me to the prison to offer a possibility of Confession for the Catholic prisoners and to give them Holy Communion. The student - teachers who accompanied me, entertained the prisoners and made them happy.

Involvement in Evangelization

Whenever I could take leave from School, I joined the evangelizing team and helped in preaching retreats in various places. I felt great fulfillment in sharing the Word of God, helping people to experience deeply God's love and guiding them to live in the light and love of God. With the permission of my Provincial Superior, I had the rare privilege of serving in the field of Evangelization as a member of a Retreat Team in various parts of India, including Andaman & Nicobar Islands. After my retirement from the field of education in Mangalore and spending some years in Nepal and on my return to Mangalore, I had the privilege of participating in the Provincial Chapter of our Province of Mangalore. During

the chapter we were asked to suggest a new ministry for our Province. With all my enthusiasm I suggested Prison Ministry as our new venture. That was accepted in our Province as our new mission.

Orientation Program in Prison Ministry

I was sent to participate in an Orientation Seminar on Prison ministry organized for those who desire to enter as volunteers in the ministry to prisoners. I had the privilege of sharing the insights I got with the Provincial Superior and her Council. They suggested that an orientation should be given to all the Superiors, Sisters in charge of Educational Institutions of our Province, as well as the junior Sisters. There was an enthusiastic participation of all in the awareness program, conducted with skits and talks. Thus, an awareness of the need for starting Prison Ministry was disseminated to all. My Provincial sent me with a blessing saying, *"Train yourself and train more sisters for this Ministry"*. She also asked me to give orientation on Prison Ministry to several groups in the Provincial House, including the Provincial Council, Superiors of the Mangalore Province, Heads of Educational Institutions and even Junior Sisters.

My Entry in to Prison Ministry-My Dream Mission

In the year 2004, God opened the door for me to fulfill my childhood dream to be a bearer of the light of Christ to those living in darkness. After that I was sent to Bangalore to start the ministry in the Central Prison. My Provincial Superior started a Congregational fund for the Sisters of Charity Prison Mission, of which the Provincial is the President and the signatory of the Society. This fund is utilized for the welfare of the rejected brethren in the prison and the accounts are audited in the Provincial house of the Sisters of Charity in Mangalore.

Life in the Prison Quarters

During the first year of my full-time ministry in the prison, I stayed in the staff Quarters, provided by the Director General of Prisons, Government of Karnataka for the Religious Sisters who serve in the prison and worked hand in hand with late Sr. Carmelita, a veteran and experienced sister from St. Ann's Congregation. I felt privileged to work with her and learn from her how to serve the prisoners. Both of us worked selflessly for the welfare of the inmates of the prison without counting the cost. We visited several police stations as well as courts to assist the prisoners who needed our help.

Adjusting to live with Inconvenience

That was the year when I lived in practice the principle of the Prison Ministry, namely, *'Inconvenience is our convenience.' T*here was no cooking facility in the Government Quarters; we had to depend on the food prepared in the jail for prisoners. Sr. Carmelita would go early in the morning to the prison to get her bottle for insulin injection and return with a box of breakfast for both of us. We were happy and quite satisfied with it. There wasn't a proper washroom for us. We had to use one outside the room even at night. The broken Indian commode on cleaning it, I discovered that it was brown due to the thick coat of dirt on it. I scrubbed it hard saying a prayer in my heart to accept my sacrifice for the transformation of the prisoners who are living in sin. There was no running water available in the room, but we had to collect from outside in buckets. Yet, I didn't mind the difficulties because of the fire Holy Spirit had kindled within me which gave me a thirst for saving souls.

Entry in to Central Prison Bangalore

I was welcomed to enter the prison by the D.I.G. Sri B.S. Abbai and to begin the ministry along with more volunteers for the Release, Reformation and the Rehabilitation of the unfortunate brethren languishing in the prison. I was permitted to enter the prison without any restriction and was free to visit the inmates of both men and women section. Whenever I met the brethren behind to bars, I felt it was Jesus whom I was meeting, because Jesus said, *"When I was in prison you visited me" (Mt. 25: 36)*. Jesus reminded me to see him and serve him in every brother or sister in the prison.

Prisoners are My Brothers and Sisters

I considered all the inmates of the prison as my brothers and sisters in pain and are in need of love, acceptance and understanding. That was a helpful thought to continue meeting their needs whether it was convenient for me or not to reach out to them. I recall, once when I was coming out of the prison to have my lunch, a lady came to me and said, *"Sister, my son is missing from home since a month. Could you please enquire whether he is arrested and brought to the prison?"* I was hungry and was eager to have some food in the quarters and return later to the prison. I was about to leave in a hurry, but I felt that I should understand the anxiety of a mother without minding my hunger. I asked myself, *"If it was my brother who was missing at home and if my mom had requested me for this favor would I not do the needful immediately?"* I felt that my service will be genuine when I consider that the brethren inside are my brothers and sisters. So I rushed back to prison and searched for the name of her son in the record section and found out his name among those who are under trial. When I returned to her and informed her that her son was inside, the lady pleaded for a letter to her parish priest who would help her to

bring the son out from prison if she gets the fact confirmed. The lady went away peacefully when I offered her the letter she needed.

All the Inmates are not Criminals

People who see me going into the prison, especially the police constables, ask me, *"Sister, don't you have any other place to go? Why do you want to serve these criminals?"* In answer I asked them, *"Who made them criminals?"* None of them was born a criminal. First of all those within the prison are not all criminals. Majority of them are under trial. They were brought inside the prison walls, but have not been declared by the court guilty of the crime they have been accused of. Several of them do not know why they were brought in, because they were arrested on the way back home after their work. Even if many of them had a sinful past, I felt that as a follower of Jesus who came to seek sinners, I am called to continue the ministry of the Good Shepherd and bring back the lost to their Saviour who wants no one to be lost. Whenever, I entered the prison, I found that many inmates were waiting for someone to listen to their woes. I met persons who were full of guilt and remorse. They wanted to unburden themselves by expressing to someone who would listen to them. So I spent hours with those who wanted to pour out all their suppressed feelings of pain and guilt. They would speak to me as to their own mothers explaining all that happened in their lives which brought them to the prison. Many of them would cry out saying, *"Please give me another chance to live again"*.

Opportunity to Listen and to Comfort

I recall how a person who was arrested after he had killed his wife by smashing her head with a gas cylinder in a moment of frustration, was unable to sleep at night because whenever he

closed his eyes, he could see only his blood-stained hands and he was weeping bitterly. Persons who have committed heinous crimes of murder become restless. But after listening to them patiently without any judgment and after some sessions of counseling, they gradually accept their failings and regain peace. I have heard some saying, *"If I had this understanding earlier, I wouldn't have reached this state."*

Inner Freedom from Christ the Redeemer

My mission in the prison is geared towards Release, Reformation, Reconciliation, Rehabilitation, Redemption and Reintegration of the brethren behind the bars. I had the opportunity of helping several of them to experience an inner release from the fetters of guilt, sinfulness, anger, lack of forgiveness, hatred and being driven by a desire for vengeance on those who were the cause of their imprisonment. I used to spend time listening to their tales of woes, besides praying with them and guiding them with appropriate Word of God. The Lord of love and forgiveness touched the lives of many and set them free from their bondage gradually. *"If the son makes you free, you will be free indeed"* (John 8:36). Those who are open to accept themselves and open themselves to the healing touch of God gradually go through a process of inner transformation and take a firm decision to turn from their criminal life. To help such persons to return to the Good Shepherd and to help them to continue living a renewed life, was indeed noteworthy.

Regular Group Meetings in a Spirit of Prayer

I took this initiative in the year 2004, believing that prayer is the foundation of the ministry for the last, least, and lost**.** It has helped many brethren to begin leading a value-based life by turning away from a life of crime. When I started weekly

prayer meetings, in the hall provided by Prison authorities, several inmates found a platform for sharing their past life of crime and their guilt and shame. At the same time those were the moments when the black sheep met their Good Shepherd, whose unconditional, healing touch and forgiving love brought them to a renewal of life. I remember the time several inmates spent during our weekly prayer meeting, recalling the painful incidents and circumstances that made them move away from their homes.

Power of God's Word Experienced

As they started reading and listening to the life-giving WORD of God, they started experiencing the love and the light of the Saviour and were liberated from their inner bondage of hatred towards their enemies. '*Faith comes from what is heard and what is heard comes from the heart of Christ*' (cf. Rom 10:17). I witnessed before me, how the Lord who laid down His life for the salvation of all, touched the lives of the lost sheep who had gone away from Him and from the right path. Those who were caught up in the thorny bush of crimes were able to meet their Savior in the regular prayer meetings held in the Prison chapel. 'When God's Word, active and alive was broken before them, their hearts were opened to meet their Good Shepherd' (cf. Hebrew 4:12). Gradually they were blessed by the Holy Spirit with the grace of repentance to give up their sinful ways and to be transformed, beginning a new life in the light of God.

Transformation of self is possible only by the grace of God. I am convinced of the fact that no human being can transform a hardcore criminal, but all things are possible for the one who believes in the grace of God. God is faithful to his promises: *"I shall give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I shall remove the heart of stone from your bodies and give you a heart of flesh instead"*

(Ezekiel 36:26). As the brethren started reading and listening to the lifegiving Word of God, they started experiencing the love and the light of the Saviour and were liberated from their inner bondage of hatred towards their enemies.

Reformed and Transformed as Catalysts

I found many persons who are full of hatred towards persons who made their life miserable, but their hearts turned towards them all in forgiveness when they listened to God's Word (cf. Eph. 4: 24-32). One of them admitted after the prayer saying, *"Until now I was contacting people who could help me to set the houses of my enemies on fire, but now I know that God wants me to forgive them and pray for them." "I realize that it was good that I came in to the prison or else I would have continued to live a life of crime"* was an expression of another. Persons who accept their failings in the counselling sessions and come to understand what led them to criminal activities showed drastic changes in their conduct. A few of them became catalysts within the prison and were turned to be powerful agents to find out others who need to be brought for counselling and prayer.

Ministry Extended to Released Prisoners

I consider myself a fulltime volunteer of Prison Ministry chosen by Christ to assist people in need, at any time or hour of the day. Once at 8.00 p.m. when I had just finished dinner, I received a call from a released prisoner that he was in trouble as he and his brother were in danger of being arrested and put in prison because his brother an alcoholic had quarreled with a person on the street and a group has called police to arrest him. I contacted Rev. Fr. Sony C.P. for help and he willingly accompanied me to the spot to assist those who phoned to me. When I saw that the police was trying to arrest him and take him under custody, I pleaded with the police

not to send the man to the prison but to permit me to admit him in a Rehabilitation Center for his reformation rather than imprisonment. The Police replied to her, *"If you plead like a mother begging help for her son, how can I refuse you? Please take him and do what you think is best."* I was greatly relieved when Rev. Fr. Sony accepted to take him to his Rehabilitation Center immediately, though it was in the night. The accused was taken to the Rehabilitation Center instead of the Central Prison.

Ministry as the Need Arise

I had another unique experience when a prisoner approached our Convent, after his release from the prison. Wilson a released prisoner came and knocked at the door of our convent at 8.00PM I was then living in a rented house and we were only two sisters in the house. Wilson was very much scared of being caught by the police on the road as he had heard from his friends of several cases of constables catching, accusing of another crime and putting them back into prison at night. Knowing our residence he came seeking help. Watching his scared and fear filled face, I took courage to go along with my sister companion to the Renewal Retreat Center which was not very far. The Director of the Center was so very helpful to accept him in the same night. He also got an opportunity of attending three days' retreat at the Center. Then Wilson returned to meet us with a grateful heart. He returned home with renewed spirit to begin a new life.

God's Touch Brings New Life

The greatest joy I felt during my ministry in the prison was when I had witnessed criminals who are touched by God's forgiving love give up their life criminal life and choose to walk in the right path. Jesus said, *"I tell you that there will be*

more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance" (Lk. 15;7). This joy which I experienced in my ministry was greater than the joy I felt when I received Janaseva Award from C.R.I Bangalore or award from 'Namma Bengaluru' for my services to the citizens of Karnataka through the Prison Ministry.

Christian Inmates Receive Sacraments as Adults in Prison

During my ministry in the prison, I have met many inmates who were baptized Christians in their childhood, but had never read the Bible nor received any other Sacraments. Some of them who had fallen into a life of crime were gradually transformed during their life in the prison, when they participated in the prayer meetings in the prison chapel regularly. They received the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Holy Eucharist and Confirmation for the first time in the prison. I remember the life of some among them who were murderers, drug addicts and alcoholics before entering the prison. When they experienced God's love and healing touch, they started responding to the call of God to walk in a new path according to the living Word of God.

Medical Support to Patient in the Prison Hospital

When I met a heart patient in the prison hospital I came to know from the C.M.O. of Prison Hospital that he needed an open heart surgery. Hence with the permission of the Prison officials I got him shifted to Narayana Hrudayalaya. Dr. Devi Shetty, the Director arranged for the open-heart surgery at his own cost. Patients in the prison hospital lack proper clothes for change and food supplement. With the permission of the CMO of the Prison Hospital, we supplied protein food, fruits and clothes to the bed- ridden patients who were in need. With

the support of generous benefactors we were able to equip the prison hospital with all the needed facilities for physiotherapy, including ttreadmill, wheel chairs, walkers, walking sticks etc. We also got the assistance of physiotherapists from the local Physiotherapy Hospitals. With this additional facility several bed-ridden partially paralyzed prisoners were able to regain their health condition. Several Medical Camps for diabetes, eye check up with free supply of spectacles; De-addiction Camps for the alcoholics and drug-addicts were helpful to the brethren, specially to the convicted prisoners.

Assistance to Prisoners who Suffer from Terminal Illness

Once when I visited the Prison hospital I found a cancer patient who was in a serious condition. Doctors told me that no more treatment can be given in the prison for his cure. I felt that he needed better care and no one could give it, just by visiting and giving some extra fruits or nutrients as he spends his last days in the prison. So with the permission of the Director General, I was able to provide him a place in Karunashram Cancer Hospital where the patients are given tender care by the sister nurses until the end of their lives. They provided an escort and the prison vehicle to admit him in Karunashram. I informed his dear ones and he also got the opportunity to get their comforting presence near him in his last days. I could admit some HIV patients too in Snehadan Centre run by Camillus Fathers after their release.

Development of Juvenile Inmates and Youth in the Prison

When I noticed that a large number of youth in the prison are wasting their time, I was inspired to start a class in spoken English and also started classes to prepare them for graduation. There was a good response and I was overjoyed

to see several of them answering examinations and securing Bachelor's degree. I arranged guest lecturers so that they were motivated to answer post graduate examinations too. After their release from the prison, they got themselves qualified to get suitable employments.

Coaching in Games and Sports

The youth who were not interested in higher education were given opportunities to have sports and games in the playground. I was fortunate to get in touch with Mr. Elvis Joseph who had started Bangalore School of Sports. He willingly came along with me to the prison every morning before 8.00 a.m. and he gave coaching to the youth in sports and games. He trained a Cricket Team, named: "*God loves me team*" and coached them. The team were able to defeat a college Team when a match was conducted in the prison ground. They won a trophy and certificates too were given, by the Superintendent of the prison, during a function. The Football Team named 'Emmanuel Team' too won the match with the team of college students. In these Physical Training Programmes and through various competitions and cultural programmes, the hidden talents of the youth were displayed and their energy was channeled to constructive activities.

Education of Prisoners' Children and Support for Rehabilitation

Many inmates who were facing problems to educate their children were helped by making arrangements for meeting the expenses of their children's education. Some of the boys were shifted to Kolbe Home run by the National Coordinator of P.M.I. where they are cared for and educated. I continue to extend support to the families of released prisoners for providing assistance to obtain driving license, to repair autos,

purchase of sowing machine, renting a house to stay after their release, placement in jobs, paying medical expenses of their parents and children and for the purchase of groceries for daily needs. So far we have been able to support several released prisoners who lost their jobs and are approaching us for help. This is made possible through the Mission fund started by Our Provincial Superior.

Release of Prisoners

Prisoners who have repented of their past crimes and offences, who have been reconciled with their enemies, have shown a marked change in their conduct are helped to be released from the prison. The fine and court fees of such prisoners are paid in the prison office or in the court. There are several prisoners who are under trial and are languishing in the prison. Legal aid is arranged for several of them and are helped to be released. Whenever there was a need, I have been able to accompany the relations of such prisoners to the court. As a member of the Prison Advisory Board I have been able to recommend the release of brethren who have made amendments and have shown remarkable changes in their conduct. We have been able to give bail to the convicted prisoners who have spent more than two decades in the prison, through Supreme Court so that they could serve their aged and sick parents giving them relief.

Support to Released Prisoners

With the financial help made available by our Province, we continue to support the families of released prisoners and the needy prisoners before and after their release. Even during the locked down period several released prisoners who lost their jobs approached us and were supported. When a released prisoner has no one to accept him/her the prison authorities

inform me. I go to the prison gate and receive them or inform the Directors of Rehabilitation Centers and see that they are settled in safe places. When a disabled prisoner was lying outside the prison after his release from the prison, with the support of other volunteers we have accompanied him to the bus stand and helped him to return to his home town.

Animation for New Volunteers

Prison Ministry is in need of more volunteers. "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. So ask the Lord of the harvest to send more labourer in to his harvest" (Luke 10:2). Besides praying we need to train more volunteers through orientation programmes. I join the National Coordinator and the Team to conduct the programme in various Novitiates, Seminaries and Spirituality Centers like, Adhyathmika Vidya Peeta, Sanyasa, and to several religious houses of Formation as well as at Mater Dei - Goa to conduct orientation course to the students of Theology. Along with the National Coordinator we have been to Nepal to start Prison Ministry in the prisons of Nepal and to give orientation for new volunteers.

Conclusion

"God never left me in want." Mother Theresa started her ministry with a five rupee note, they say, but I had not a single rupee in my pocket, when I entered the ministry, yet the good Lord supplied all the needs of my ministry through the help of my Congregation. With St. Paul I can say, 'My Lord will fully satisfy every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.' I believe in the Principles of Prison Ministry: "God's Providence is our bank balance". Providence of God never fails one who puts her trust in an all-loving God who has chosen us to seek and serve the last, least and lost behind the bars.

Reformation & Reintegration
Reformative Explorations
10/3 (2024)
Pages 115 - 121

Prisoner Transformed Counsellor

Sr Santan Nago FS

Introduction

As a teenager he was arrested for taking drugs, drinks, gambling, street-fighting and was taken to juvenile jail. Going to jail as a teenager, was a playful experience for him. They were six of them, all friends, and James Radhakrisna Gnanasegaran, as he was called liked this new experience. Earlier, he was studying in a good school and the school atmosphere was nice and peaceful. But somehow, he was the rowdy boy of that school, as he himself admitted to it. It is during those secondary school days that he joined boys on the street, got involved in all the wrong doings, including fights with the others and James Radhakrisna became their gang leader.

Migration

It was in the mid-1960s that Gnanasegaran's family had migrated from Nagapatanam, South India, to Singapore and started a jewelry business in Thanjongpaga, Singapore. James was born in Singapore into this devout Hindu family. When James was about four years old, there arose some racial problems in Singapore, between two major races and James' father being afraid for their safety, took the whole family back to India. After about two and a half years in India and when their son was seven and half years old, they returned to Singapore, continued their business and the little boy started

school again. While studying at the primary level, everything was going well as the school was good and peaceful. But as James stepped into secondary school, many things changed, unfortunately not for the better. In his testimony he says, the *school atmosphere was nice and peaceful, so I became the rowdy of that school and that is the place where it all started.*

Glamorous Life

The Gnanasegaran family was a family of good people; *But* he says, *I was the black sheep of that family from very young age; my mind was in the streets*. In those days Singapore was not a good place for an Indian child to be brought up. When one steps on to the street it was all there – gangsters, drinks, drugs, gambling – everything could be found on the streets. So slowly, step by step James got into that life and he thought it was good, glittery and glamorous life. He enjoyed it and got stuck to it. Being in the gang he did all sorts of things. He had beaten up few people and was rounded up by the police along with his six friends. Not knowing that he was going to be arrested, he went and joined the army. About three months in the army camp, the police came after him and James was arrested. He was given nine months imprisonment and six strokes of the cane which was his first experience in prison. After that he went again to the army and continued. His mother was worried of him and she thought marriage may change him, so the parents got him married at an early age. He settled for it and the couple was blessed with four children – first girl followed by three boys. Things were going well and James was working in ship repairs works for a company. It was not in the shipyard but a lot of work off shore and life was going on smoothly for several years. His wife, Indraini was a good and loving person, but as he later said, *as a husband I was not much for the family. I did not take care of my wife, my children or the*

family. When I was in prison also, she was there to take care of them and my wife brought up the children well and made them respectable kids

Second Arrest

Then James got arrested again in 1982. This was not a fresh case but a continuing of his past incarceration. That was one of the problems that left behind and he was sent to prison again for nine months, this time there were no strokes. About 18 days before his release his family members informed him about his mother's death. His relatives wanted to ask for a day's release, so that he could perform the funeral rites for his mother. But he did not want to go. The reason was as he explained*, I did not want to go because I did not give my mother a peaceful life and she was always worried about me and I did not want to bring shame to her in her last hours on earth.*

System of fighting - Triads

Going back to earlier years, as a young boy of nine or ten years, James was helping his father at his jewelry shop. His father used to send him to different places to purchase gold, with a lot of money. A few times he was robbed by the Chinese boys. That is the time he decided not to let this happen to him, so he had to be in that system of fighting. As there were many jewelry shops in that area - Serangoon Road - now called 'little India', things like robbery and fights were rampant. In the beginning, it was for defense, but later turned out to be worse. He fell into the Triad societies - Boxer movements. A Triad is a Chinese transnational organized crime syndicate based in Greater China with outposts in various countries having significant overseas Chinese populations. The triads originated from secret societies formed in the 18th and 19th centuries. It later spread to Hong Kong, Malaysia and Singapore. In this triad fighting he had a few boys around me and at that time it

all seemed like hero-worship, it was trendy and he enjoyed it. He got involved deeper and deeper in the triad fights so much that things got out of control. Much later he began to realize that his own gang and others did not respect him but began to fear and despise him.

Self-realization

During that time, he began losing faith in the Hindu religion and for a short period he lived as an atheist, just wanting to live his life by himself. He began to recall how it all started and reached the present state. It was at the age of 16, he had started smoking and drinking marijuana and after his second term in prison he continued doing it. It became a habit and then an addiction and in 1998 he was too deep into it. In his own words he said, *I became a hardcore person doing anything not for money or anything else, but just that I could do something. I had become corrupted and a kind of evil person. I had become an evil person, not born an evil person but slowly transformed into an evil person by then, a hardcore person.* While still in prison and in the company of other inmates, he felt lonely. The officers and jailors were busy with their duties and had their own problems. There was no one to talk to. He felt lonely and kept searching for something deep and divine within himself.

Third Term in Prison

Again, on 22 August 1998, he was arrested and brought to the CID for 14 days, produced in court and was given 45 years prison term. But as one of the sentences was supposed to run concurrent with the rest of the two sentences, he got 30 years imprisonment. When he was in prison for the third and the longer term, it was not the same, it was different. Everything was taken away from him and he felt everything was crumpling around him. The first six years were very turbulent time. The

whole prison was a very crowded place. It was a small cell with three or four boys, and even with boys around, he felt very lonely. It is during those difficult years, he got divorced from his wife as he explained the reasons; *I did not want my children visiting me in prison every now and then, because they would be asked why they were going to the prisons and I did not want that stigma on them. So I separated from my wife and stopped the children from coming to the prison. Another reason for the first 20 years I was away from the family so I had faded from their lives.* After the eight and half months, he was transferred to another place at Changi prison. He was very rude to everyone even the officers and he himself didn't realize what sort of life he was living for those six years. He was sent to a segregation cell, where one is always inside and allowed to be out only for basic needs. There was no time for exercise, nothing to look forward to. All was sad and gloomy. After some time, he would be taken to the general place and then back to the segregation cell. This continued for six times and each time the segregation period would be for three months, in the lock up. Then he would join the others in the cell for another two months. This continued till his term was completed.

Turning Point

This sort of treatment made him feel miserable and he didn't know whom to turn to. It was at that point in his life, he turned to the Lord Jesus. He began to seek the Lord in earnest and gradually came to his senses. Recalling his earlier life, before marriage he had met his to-be-wife when she was just a teenager and later, they were married. The first date he had with her was at the old folk's home - St Teresa' Home. She had asked him to accompany her to the Blessed Sacrament church, in Queen's Town in Thompson Road. She was already involved in the Catholic moments at that time and with her

he had attended the church services, but since he was not a baptized Catholic, he did not receive communion. But he got closer to the church. At the end of 1999, one of the ASBs – (Assistant Superintendent of Prisons), Mr Sami Victor, a Catholic, asked him whether he was a Catholic, because he had cancelled the word Hindu. He had said that he believed in the Catholic faith but was not baptized. So Mr Sami Victor invited him to attend counseling sessions in the prison, which he readily joined. He was provided with a Bible and other things. He agreed to it and from that day forward he started attending the sessions and developed a good friendship with Mr Victor. Day by day he was growing in the faith and that is when he told himself he had to step out of the stupid circle.

In the year 2003, he finished his last segregation and after the days with the general population, he met Brother Jimmy. He developed a friendship with Brother Jimmy too. Later he signed for Prison Ministry Counseling sessions and in 2007 he was baptized. In 2006, during Christmas time, when he was in the cluster A1hall preparing the room for counseling, he saw a lady in white, who came and sat next to him, that was none other than Sr Enrique. He said of her, *Sr Enrique was the angel who touched my life, who changed my life. She asked me many questions and the way she talked to me using such kind words, it was something like burning arrows poking into me.* He felt he did not deserve this person's merciful words and her love. He knew he was a very evil person and suddenly he started crying so he told his friend, that something was happening to him and that he wanted to go back to the cell and wanted to be alone. The friend encouraged him and told him to go through it and to experience the feeling. Later, he went to the General Headman and told him, *I cannot serve two masters anymore, I don't want to have anymore, I don't want to have any connections with any of the gangs anymore. I want to be out.*

A Transformed Person

He looked at him and made sure he wanted to do something different and the Headman sent him to serve the Lord. He left the gang, went and cleaned the room, leaving nothing of the offensive things in the cell. The following week he expressed his desire to be baptized and they arranged a crash course for him and after completing the course, he was baptized. His life began to change and he expressed his wish to Brother Jimmy to be a prison counselor. Brother taught him how to do counseling in the prison and later he was also guiding the seminarians, who came to the prison for service. When the seminarians came for service at the prison, Sr Enrique would tell them, g*o upstairs a boy will guide you, and that bald-headed boy was myself. From that time, I learnt how to do counseling*. As the date of release was drawing near, he approached the prison officers and told them, *I will come back to the prison and they got a shock, why do you want to come to the prison, I told them, I want to be a counselor*. They were happy for it. From then on James became more confident for his new ministry. He was initially accommodated at Half-way house, then he found some job and got his own accommodation. He was released on a Saturday and the following day – Sunday – he went and sat next to Brother Jimmy at the Risen Christ church, attending the Holy Mass. Since then, James is a changed person. A long journey indeed, from a hardcore prisoner to a dedicated counselor.

Reformation & Reintegration
Reformative Explorations
10/3 (2024)
Pages 122 - 126

Freedom Through Reconciliation

Sr Adele Korah SCCG

Introduction

A Mother's attachment to her children is very strong. Parents separated from their kids go through anxiety. A mother who is forcefully separated from her kids go through a traumatic situation, excessive worry and fear of losing them forever. They keep worrying all the time but they do not realize that by worrying they are unable to find solutions to their problems. Worrying is like sitting on a rocking chair. It just makes her do something but it doesn't get her anywhere. There are mothers who go through the fear of imaginary situation of her children like, being taken by child lifters and so on. Umpteen fears arising in their mind prevent them from falling asleep. I found some of them day-dreaming about their husband neglecting the children's care, and all possible imaginations clouding their mind, leave them sleepless. It was in such a situation that I met Laxmi in the women Section of the Central prison. Fear about her future left her in a stupor.

Traumatic Situation in Laxmi's Life

Laxmi was living happily with her husband Madhu and their two kids. Madhu was a driver in a Government Transport bus and their financial situation was good. Madhu would return home every evening with groceries and fruits needed for them all. Laxmi was loved and cared for by her husband and

naturally had found happiness and contentment in her life. On some days a lady by name Malini used to visit their family bringing them some gifts. Laxmi welcomed her as a friend to her house. After a few months, Laxmi felt that Madhu was developing a closer relationship with the lady visitor who was coming frequently to their house. Laxmi felt something fishy about her visits and her behaviour with her husband was questionable. Once she found her husband visiting Malini's house with some gifts for her.

Jealousy Leads to Violence

Laxmi could not stand her sight anymore**.** Resentment and bitterness were churning within her towards the lady who entered her happy family, building a wall between Laxmi and Madhu. She was sowing seeds of weeds in a beautiful farm, built by her for the joy and wellbeing of her family. The unhappy situation in the family made her bitter and she felt lost. Doubts crept into her mind about her husband's relationship with Malini and in suspiciousness Laxmi became vigilant and watchful about every movement of her husband. Hatred against the new comer into her happy and harmonious family, causing this distressing situation affected her deeply. She felt that it was she who had to take the required step to stop Malini's entry into their family, disturbing her peace.

That Hellish Day

Laxmi drew up a secret plan in her mind. She did not want to destroy the life of Malini as she was having her husband and children. All the same, she wanted to thwart her enemy's way to her house and prevent her free movements for visiting their family. Several plans were brewing in her mind but finally she decided to prepare hot oil and pour it on her face. The evil desire grew within her and on a day, when Malini was alone

in her house Laxmi went to the house of Malini carrying a cup of very hot oil. Filled with hatred Laxmi tried to pour the oil on Malini's face, but her hand slipped and the oil fell on her chest, causing severe burns. Though she felt contented in harming her enemy, in her heart she felt bad and started feeling remorse because she had caused pain to a woman who is a mother and wife.

Laxmi's Imprisonment

When Malini's husband returned home he found Malini writhing with pain from burns. Malini narrated the event of Laxmi's unexpected visit to her and the consequence of the rude treatment meted out to her. Her husband gave a complaint to the police and Laxmi was arrested under 307 I P C. Madhu visited Laxmi just once with her kids. Naturally Laxmi was lonely and felt herself abandoned, deserted by all. She repented of her impulsive action. She felt the desire to meet her children but all the efforts to contact her husband was all in vain. After several months, I felt sympathy for her pitiful condition and the helplessness of her kids and I took the necessary action to help Laxmi to get a bail after a period of nearly one and half years.

Case Compromised

When I consulted her advocate, I was told that the case could be compromised if all the people concerned cooperated. Hence I met the people of both the parties on the next court date. I took time to prepare Laxmi to repent sincerely for her impetuous and rash action and for the pain he had caused her. When I placed before the opposite party the situation of the children of Laxmi, Malini accepted and agreed for compensation, on condition that Laxmi's husband paid the amount fixed for compromising the case. Initial condition is

reconciliation with God for ruining the health of a person and reconciliation with the person whom she hurt. Laxmi asked pardon of God and of Malini, and got reconciled. With tear-filled eyes and sobbing in repentance she begged pardon of Malini and sincerely expressed her remorse for the harm she had done to her in her impulsive and imprudent action. Without much delay Laxmi was released from prison. Reconciliation brings freedom to one's heart.

Laxmi's Release and Return

After receiving her release order, two of us sisters accompanied Laxmi to her house in the afternoon. We reached the house late in the evening. Laxmi was returning home with exuberant joy and with great expectation to meet her husband and children after spending 15 months in prison. But the reaction of Madhu her husband was most unexpected. He asked me, "who told you to release her and bring her back? I tried to convince him to accept her back as she had asked forgiveness from all. Since her husband did not give any answer, I told him, "If you don't want her in your house where else can she go? Do you expect me to take her back and keep her in a Rehabilitation Centre? Laxmi's children started crying aloud and started clinging to their mother. At that crucial moment, at the sight of his children holding firmly to their mother's legs and weeping, their father's heart melted and gave consent for her stay. Madhu's sister ran out of their house in anger. We were happy to see that after so much of arguments, for the sake of their kids, Laxmi was accepted in the house.

Conclusion

We left the house as we found Laxmi peaceful, petting and caressing her children whom she missed for long. I felt consoled to see that our efforts in reuniting the family was

successful though with much resistance. We realized how hard it is to reintegrate a released prisoner back to the family and to the society. It is a very important to keep in touch with the relations of the inmates of the prison. Keeping contact with their loved ones, by phone and visiting the family goes a long way in making the return of a prisoner smoother. Contacting the relations by phone calls is helpful. When prisoners are released if they are not helped to reinsert themselves in the family and society, there is every possibility of their going back to a life of crime to sustain themselves. We, the volunteers need to reach out to them whenever possible. ,Remember those in prison, as if you were there yourself. Remember also those being mistreated, as if you felt their pain in your own (Hebrews13:3). St. Paul entrusted Onesimus the released prisoner to Philemon telling him, "I am sending him, that is my own heart back to you, "welcome him as you would welcome me" Philemon 6:17). By our welcome and acceptance, they will be healed of the stigma of a prisoner and will be able to insert themselves back to their families and the society.

Documentation
Reformative Explorations
10/3 (2024)
Pages 127 - 150

C'est La Confiance

Apostolic Exhortation On Confidence in the Merciful Love of God for the 150th Anniversary of the Birth of Saint Therese of the Child Jesus and the Holy Face

Pope Francis

1. *"C'est la confiance et rien que la confiance qui doit nous conduire à l'Amour"*. "It is confidence and nothing but confidence that must lead us to Love". [1] 2. These striking words of Saint Therese of the Child Jesus and the Holy Face say it all. They sum up the genius of her spirituality and would suffice to justify the fact that she has been named a Doctor of the Church. Confidence, "nothing but confidence", is the sole path that leads us to the Love that grants everything. With confidence, the wellspring of grace overflows into our lives, the Gospel takes flesh within us and makes us channels of mercy for our brothers and sisters. 3. It is confidence that sustains us daily and will enable us to stand before the Lord on the day when he calls us to himself: "In the evening of this life, I shall appear before you with empty hands, for I do not ask you, Lord, to count my works. All our justice is stained in your eyes. I wish, then, to be clothed in your own *Justice* and to receive from your *Love* the eternal possession of *yourself*". [2] 4. Saint Therese is one of the best known and most beloved saints in our world. Like Saint Francis of Assisi, she is loved by non-Christians and nonbelievers as well. In addition, she has been recognized by UNESCO as one of the most significant figures for contemporary humanity. [3] We would do well to

delve more deeply into her message as we commemorate the 150th anniversary of her birth in Alençon (2 January 1873) and the centenary of her beatification. [4] Yet I have not chosen to issue this Exhortation on either of those dates, or on her liturgical Memorial, so that this message may transcend those celebrations and be taken up as part of the spiritual treasury of the Church. Its publication on the liturgical Memorial of Saint Teresa of Avila is a way of presenting Saint Therese of the Child Jesus and the Holy Face as the mature fruit of the reform of the Carmel and of the spirituality of the great Spanish saint.

5. The earthly life of Saint Therese was brief, a mere twenty-four years, and completely ordinary, first in her family and then in the Carmel of Lisieux. The extraordinary burst of light and love that she radiated came to be known soon after her death, with the publication of her writings and thanks to the countless graces bestowed on the faithful who invoked her intercession. 6. The Church quickly recognized her great significance and the distinctiveness of her evangelical spirituality. Therese met Pope Leo XIII during a pilgrimage to Rome in 1887 and asked his permission to enter the Carmel at the age of fifteen. Not long after her death, Saint Pius X, sensing her spiritual grandeur, stated that she would become the greatest saint of modern times. Therese was declared Venerable in 1921 by Pope Benedict XV, who, in praising her virtues, saw them embodied in her "little way" of spiritual childhood. [5] She was beatified a century ago and then canonized on 17 May 1925 by Pope Pius XI, who thanked the Lord for granting that she be the first Blessed whom he raised to the honour of the altars and the first Saint whom he canonized. [6] In 1927, the same Pope declared her the Patroness of the Missions. [7] Therese was proclaimed one of the patron saints of France in 1944 by Venerable Pius

XII, [8] who on several occasions developed the theme of spiritual childhood. [9] Saint Paul VI liked to recall that he was baptized on 30 September 1897, the day of her death, and on the centenary of her birth he wrote a Letter on her teaching to the Bishop of Bayeux and Lisieux. [10] On 2 June 1980, during his first Apostolic Journey to France, Saint John Paul II visited the Basilica dedicated to her, and in 1997 declared her a Doctor of the Church. [11] He also referred to Therese as "an expert in the *scientia amoris*". [12] Pope Benedict XVI returned to the subject of her "science of love" and proposed it as "a guide for all, especially those in the people of God who carry out their ministry as theologians". [13] Finally, in 2015, I had the joy of canonizing her parents, Louis and Zelie, during the Synod on the Family. More recently, I devoted one of my weekly General Audience talks to Saint Therese, as part of a cycle of catecheses on apostolic zeal. [14]

1. Jesus for Others

7. In the name that Therese chose as a religious, Jesus stands out as the "Child" who manifests the mystery of the Incarnation, and the "Holy Face" of the one who surrendered himself completely on the Cross. She is "Saint Therese of the Child Jesus and the Holy Face". 8. The name of Jesus was constantly on her lips, as an act of love, even to her last breath. She had also written these words in her cell: "Jesus is my one love". It was her interpretation of the supreme statement of the New Testament: "God is love" (*1 Jn* 4:8.16).

A Missionary Soul

9. As with every authentic encounter with Christ, this experience of faith summoned her to mission. Therese could define her mission in these words: "I shall desire in heaven the same thing as I do now on earth: to love Jesus and to

make him loved". [15] She wrote that she entered Carmel "to save souls". [16] In a word, she did not view her consecration to God apart from the pursuit of the good of her brothers and sisters. She shared the merciful love of the Father for his sinful son and the love of the Good Shepherd for the sheep who were lost, astray and wounded. For this reason, Therese is the Patroness of the missions and a model of evangelization. 10. The final pages of her *Story of a Soul* [17] are a missionary testament. They express her appreciation of the fact that evangelization takes place by attraction [18], not by pressure or proselytism. It is worthwhile reading her own words in this regard: "*Draw me, we shall run after you in the odour of your ointments*. O Jesus! It is not even necessary to say: *When drawing me, draw the souls whom I love!* This simple statement, 'Draw me' suffices. I understand, Lord, that when a soul allows herself to be captivated by *the odour of your ointments*, she cannot run alone; all the souls whom she loves follow in her train; this is done without constraint, without effort, it is a natural consequence of her attraction for you. Just as a torrent, throwing itself with impetuosity into the ocean, drags after it everything it encounters in its passage, in the same way, O Jesus, the soul who plunges into the shoreless ocean of your Love, draws with her all the treasures she possesses. Lord, you know it, I have no other treasures than the souls it has pleased you to unite to mine". [19] 11. In this passage, Therese quotes the words of the bride to the bridegroom in the Song of Songs (1:3-4), following the profound interpretation found in the writings of the doctors of Carmel, Saint Teresa of Avila and Saint John of the Cross. The bridegroom is Jesus, the Son of God who united himself to our humanity in the Incarnation and redeemed it on the Cross. There, from his open side, he gave birth to the Church, his beloved bride, for which he gave his life (cf. *Eph* 5:25). What is striking is that Therese,

conscious of her own impending death, did not approach this mystery merely as a source of personal consolation, but in a fervent apostolic spirit.

The Grace that Sets us Free from Self-Absorption

12. We see something similar when Therese speaks of the working of the Holy Spirit, which immediately takes on a missionary hue: "That is my prayer. I ask Jesus to draw me to the flames of his love, to unite me so closely to him that he live and act in me. I feel that the more the fire of love burns within my heart, the more I shall say *'Draw me'*: the more also the souls who will approach me (poor little piece of iron, useless if I withdraw from the divine furnace), the more these souls *will run swiftly in the odour of the ointments of their Beloved*, for a soul that is burning with love cannot remain inactive". [20] 13. In the heart of Therese, the grace of baptism became this impetuous torrent flowing into the ocean of Christ's love and dragging in its wake a multitude of brothers and sisters. This is what happened, especially after her death. It was her promised "shower of roses". [21]

2. The Little Way of Trust and Love

14. One of the most important insights of Therese for the benefit of the entire People of God is her "little way", the path of trust and love, also known as *the way of spiritual childhood*. Everyone can follow this way, whatever their age or state in life. It is the way that the heavenly Father reveals to the little ones (cf. *Mt* 11:25). 15. In the *Story of a Soul*, [22] Therese tells how she discovered the little way: "I can, then, in spite of my littleness, aspire to holiness. It is impossible for me to grow up, and so I must bear with myself such as I am, with all my imperfections. But I want to seek out a means of going to heaven by a little way, a way that is very straight,

very short, and totally new". [23] 16. To describe that way, she uses the image of an elevator: "the elevator which must raise me to heaven is your arms, O Jesus! And for this, I had no need to grow up, but rather I had to remain *little* and become this more and more". [24] Little, incapable of being confident in herself, and yet firmly secure in the loving power of the Lord's arms. 17. This is the "sweet way of love" [25] that Jesus sets before the little and the poor, before everyone. It is the way of true happiness. In place of a Pelagian notion of holiness, [26] individualistic and elitist, more ascetic than mystical, that primarily emphasizes human effort, Therese always stresses the primacy of God's work, his gift of grace. As a result, she could say: "I always feel, however, the same bold confidence of becoming a great saint, because I don't count on my merits, since I have *none*, but I trust in him who is Virtue and Holiness. God alone, content with my weak efforts, will raise me to himself and make me a *saint*, clothing me in his infinite merits". [27]

Apart from all Merit

18. This way of speaking is in no way opposed to the traditional Catholic teaching on the increase of grace, namely, that once gratuitously justified by sanctifying grace, we are changed and enabled to cooperate by our good works in a process of growth in holiness. Through this "elevation", we can possess real merits by virtue of the development of the grace received. 19. Therese, for her part, wished to highlight the primacy of God's action; she encourages us to have complete confidence as we contemplate the love of Christ poured out to the end. At the heart of her teaching is the realization that, since we are incapable of being certain about ourselves, [28] we cannot be sure of our merits. Hence, it is not possible to trust in our own efforts or achievements. The Catechism chose to quote

the words that Saint Therese addressed to the Lord: "I will appear before you with empty hands", [29] in order to express that "the saints have always had a lively awareness that their merits were pure grace". [30] This conviction gives rise to a joyful and tender gratitude. 20. It is most fitting, then, that we should place heartfelt trust not in ourselves but in the infinite mercy of a God who loves us unconditionally and has already given us everything in the Cross of Jesus Christ. [31] For this reason, Therese never uses the expression, common enough in her day, "I will become a saint".

21. Even so, her boundless confidence encourages all who feel frail, limited and sinful to let themselves be elevated and transformed in order to reach greater heights. "If all weak and imperfect souls felt what the least of souls feels, that is, the soul of your little Therese, not one would despair of reaching the summit of the mount of love. Jesus does not demand great actions from us, but simply *surrender* and *gratitude*". [32] 22. This insistence of Therese on God's initiative leads her, when speaking of the Eucharist, to put first not her desire to receive Jesus in Holy Communion, but rather the desire of Jesus to unite himself to us and to dwell in our hearts. [33] In her *Act of Oblation to Merciful Love*, saddened by her inability to receive communion each day, she tells Jesus: "Remain in me as in a tabernacle". [34] Her gaze remained fixed not on herself and her own needs, but on Christ, who loves, seeks, desires and dwells within.

Daily Abandonment

23. The confidence that Therese proposes has to do with more than our individual sanctification and salvation. It has an integral meaning that embraces the totality of concrete existence and finds application in our daily lives, where we are often assailed by fears, the desire for human security, the need

to have everything under control. Here we see the importance of her invitation to a holy "abandonment". 24. The complete confidence that becomes an abandonment in Love sets us free from obsessive calculations, constant worry about the future and fears that take away our peace. In her final days, Therese insisted on this: "We who run in the way of love shouldn't be thinking of suffering that can take place in the future; it's a lack of confidence". [35] If we are in the hands of a Father who loves us without limits, this will be the case come what may; we will be able to move beyond whatever may happen to us and, in one way or another, his plan of love and fullness will come to fulfilment in our lives.

Fire Burning in the Night

25. Therese experienced faith most powerfully and surely in the midst of the dark night and especially amid the darkness of Calvary. Her witness culminated in the final months of her life, in the great "trial against the faith" [36] that began at Easter of 1896. In her account, [37] she directly relates this period of testing to the painful reality of the atheism of her time. The last years of the nineteenth century were the "golden age" of modern atheism as a philosophical and ideological system. When she wrote that Jesus allowed her soul "to be invaded by the thickest darkness", [38] she was evoking the darkness of atheism and the rejection of the Christian faith. In union with Jesus, who took upon himself all the darkness of the sin of the world when he willed to drink from the cup of the Passion, Therese came to appreciate its underlying sense of despair and sheer emptiness. [39] 26. Yet darkness cannot overcome the light: Therese had been conquered by the One who came as light into the world (cf. *Jn* 12:46). [40] Her account reveals the heroic nature of her faith, her triumph in spiritual combat with the most powerful temptations. She

felt herself a sister to atheists, seated with them at table, like Jesus who sat with sinners (cf. *Mt* 9:10-13). She interceded for them, ever renewing her own act of faith, in constant loving communion with the Lord: "I run toward my Jesus. I tell him I am ready to shed my blood to the last drop to profess faith in the existence of *heaven*. I tell him, too, that I am happy not to enjoy this beautiful heaven on this earth so that he will open it for all eternity to poor unbelievers". [41]

27. Together with faith, Therese experienced a deep and boundless trust in God's infinite mercy: "confidence that must lead us to Love". [42] Even in her darkness, she experienced the complete trust of a child that finds refuge, unafraid, in the embrace of its father and mother. For Therese, the one God is revealed above all else in his mercy, which is the key to understanding everything else that can be said of him: "To me he has granted his *infinite mercy* and *through it* I contemplate and adore the other divine perfections! All of these perfections appear to be resplendent *with love*, even his Justice (and perhaps this even more so than the others) seems to me clothed in *love*". [43] This is one of the loftiest insights of Therese, one of her major contributions to the entire People of God. In an extraordinary way, she probed the depths of divine mercy, and drew from them the light of her limitless hope.

A Most Firm Hope

28. Before entering the Carmel, Therese had felt a remarkable spiritual closeness to one of the most unfortunate of men, the criminal Henri Pranzini, sentenced to death for a triple murder for which he was unrepentant. [44] By having Masses offered for him and praying with complete confidence for his salvation, she was convinced that she was drawing him ever closer to the blood of Jesus, and she told God that she was

sure that at the last moment he would pardon him "even if he went to his death without *any signs of repentance"*. As the reason for her certainty, she stated: "I was absolutely confident in the mercy of Jesus". [45] How great was her emotion when she learned that Pranzini, after mounting the scaffold, "suddenly, seized by an inspiration, turned, took hold of the *crucifix* the priest was holding out to him and *kissed* the *sacred wounds three times!*" [46] This intense experience of hoping against all hope proved fundamental for her: "After this unique grace, my desire to save souls grows each day". [47] 29. Therese was conscious of the tragic reality of sin, yet she remained constantly immersed in the mystery of Christ, certain that "where sin increased, grace abounded all the more" (*Rom* 5:20). The sin of the world is great but not infinite, whereas the merciful love of the Redeemer is indeed infinite. Therese testifies to the definitive victory of Jesus, through his passion, death and resurrection, over all the powers of evil. Filled with confidence, she dared to explain: "Jesus, allow me to save very many souls; let no soul be lost today… Jesus, pardon me if I say anything I should not say. I only want to give you joy and to console you". [48] This now leads us to consider another aspect of the breath of fresh air that is the message of Saint Therese of the Child Jesus and the Holy Face.

3. I Will be Love

30. As "greater" than faith and hope, charity will never pass away (cf. *1 Cor* 13:8-13). It is the supreme gift of the Holy Spirit and "the mother and the root of all the virtues". [49]

Charity as a Personal Attitude of Love

31. The *Story of a Soul* is a testimonial to charity, in which Therese offers us a commentary on Jesus' new commandment: "that you love one another as I have loved you" (*Jn* 15:12). [50] Jesus thirsts for this response to his love. Indeed, he "did not fear

to *beg* for a little water from the Samaritan woman. He was thirsty. But when he said 'Give me to drink', it was the *love* of his poor creature that the Creator of the universe was seeking. He was thirsty for love". [51] Therese wished to respond to the love of Jesus, to offer him love in return for love. [52] 32. The symbolism of spousal love emphasizes the mutual self-gift of the bridegroom and the bride. Thus, inspired by the Song of Songs (2:16), Therese writes, "I think that the Heart of my Spouse is mine alone, just as mine is his alone, and I speak to him then in the solitude of this delightful heart to heart, while waiting to contemplate him one day face to face". [53] Although the Lord loves us together as a people, at the same time charity works in a most personal way: "heart to heart". 33. Therese possessed complete certainty that Jesus loved her and knew her personally at the time of his Passion: "He loved me and gave himself for me" (*Gal* 2:20). As she contemplated Jesus in his agony, she told him: "You saw me". [54] In the same way, she said to the Child Jesus in the arms of his Mother: "With your little hand that caressed Mary, you upheld the world and gave it life, and you thought of me". [55] So too, at the beginning of the *Story of a Soul*, she contemplated the love of Jesus for all humanity and for each individual, as if he or she were the only one in the world. [56]

34. The act of love – repeating the words, "Jesus I love you" – which became as natural to Therese as breathing, is the key to her understanding of the Gospel. With that love, she immersed herself in all the mysteries of the life of Christ, making herself his contemporary and placing herself within the Gospel together with Mary and Joseph, Mary Magdalene and the apostles. Together with them, she penetrated to the depths of the love of the Heart of Jesus. Let us take one example: "When I see Magdalene walking up before the many guests, washing with her tears the feet of her adored Master,

whom she is touching for the first time, I feel that *her heart* has understood the abysses of love and mercy *of the Heart of Jesus*, and, sinner though she is, this Heart of love was not only disposed to pardon her, but to lavish on her the blessings of divine intimacy, to lift her to the highest summits of contemplation". [57]

The Greatest Love in Supreme Simplicity

35. At the end of the *Story of a Soul*, Therese presents us with her *Act of Oblation to Merciful Love*. [58] Once she surrendered completely to the working of the Spirit, she received, quietly and unobtrusively, an abundant outpouring of living water: "rivers, or better, the oceans of graces that flooded my soul". [59] This is the mystical life that, apart from any extraordinary phenomena, offers itself to all the faithful as a daily experience of love. 36. Therese practised charity in littleness, in the simplest things of daily life, and she did so in the company of the Virgin Mary, from whom she learned that *"to love is to give everything. It's to give oneself"*. [60] While preachers in those days often celebrated Mary's grandeur in ways that made her seem far removed from us, Therese showed, starting with the Gospel, that Mary is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven because she is the least (cf. *Mt* 18:4), the one closest to Jesus in his abasement. She saw that, if the apocrypha are full of striking and amazing feats, the Gospels show us a lowly and poor life lived in the simplicity of faith. Jesus himself wanted Mary to be the example of a soul that seeks him with a simple faith. [61] Mary was the first to experience the "little way" in pure faith and humility. Consequently, Therese did not hesitate to write: "Mother full of grace, I know that in Nazareth You live in poverty, wanting nothing more. No *rapture, miracle or ecstasy Embellish your life, O Queen of the Elect!*… The number of little ones on

earth is truly great. They can raise their eyes to you without trembling. It's by *the ordinary way*, incomparable Mother, That you like to walk to guide them to heaven". [62] 37. Therese does tell us of certain moments of grace experienced amid the simplicity of daily life, like the sudden insight she had when accompanying a sick and somewhat irascible sister. Even so, those experiences of a more intense charity came about in the most ordinary ways. "One winter night I was carrying out my little duty as usual; it was cold, it was night. Suddenly I heard off in the distance the harmonious sound of a musical instrument. I then pictured a well-lighted drawing room, brilliantly gilded, filled with elegantly dressed young ladies conversing together and conferring upon each other all sorts of compliments and other worldly remarks. Then my glance fell upon the poor invalid whom I was supporting. Instead of the beautiful strains of music I heard only her occasional complaints, and instead of the rich gildings I saw only the bricks of our austere cloister, hardly visible in the glimmering light. I cannot express in words what happened in my soul; what I know is that the Lord illumined it with rays of truth, which so far surpassed the dark brilliance of earthly feasts that I could not believe my happiness. Ah! I would not have exchanged the ten minutes employed in carrying out my humble office of charity to enjoy a thousand years of worldly feasts". [63]

In the Heart of the Church

38. From Saint Teresa of Avila, Therese inherited a great love for the Church and was able to plumb the depths of this mystery. We see this in her discovery of the "heart of the Church". In a lengthy prayer to Jesus, [64] written on 8 September 1896, the sixth anniversary of her religious profession, the saint confided to the Lord that she felt

driven by an immense desire, a passion for the Gospel that no vocation, by itself, could satisfy. And so, in seeking her "place" in the Church, she turned to chapters 12 and 13 of the First Letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians. 39. There, in Chapter 12, the apostle employs the metaphor of the body and its members to explain that the Church embraces a great variety of hierarchically ordered charisms. Yet this description was not enough for Therese. She continued her search and read the "hymn to charity" in Chapter 13. There she came upon the eminent answer to her question, and wrote this memorable page: "Considering the mystical body of the Church I had not recognized myself in any of the members described by Saint Paul, or rather I desired to see myself in them *all*. *Charity* gave me the key to my *vocation*. I understood that if the Church had a body composed of different members, the most necessary and most noble of all could not be lacking to it, and so I understood that *the Church had a Heart, and that this Heart was burning with love. I understood it was love alone* that made the Church's members act, that if *Love* ever became extinct, apostles would not preach the Gospel and martyrs would not shed their blood. I understood that *Love comprised all vocations, that love was everything, that it embraced all times and places… in a word: that it was eternal!* Then, in the excess of my delirious joy, I cried out: O Jesus, my Love... my *vocation*, at last I have found it… *my vocation is Love*! Yes, I have found my place in the Church, and it is you, O my God, who have given me this place; in the heart of the Church, my Mother, I shall be *Love*. Thus I shall be everything, and thus my dream will be realized". [65]

40. This heart was not that of a triumphalistic Church, but of a loving, humble and merciful Church. Therese never set herself above others, but took the lowest place together with the Son of God, who for our sake became a slave and

humbled himself, becoming obedient, even to death on a cross (cf. *Phil* 2:7-8). 41. This discovery of the heart of the Church is also a great source of light for us today. It preserves us from being scandalized by the limitations and weaknesses of the ecclesiastical institution with its shadows and sins, and enables us to enter into the Church's "heart burning with love", which burst into flame at Pentecost thanks to the gift of the Holy Spirit. It is that heart whose fire is rekindled with each of our acts of charity. "I shall be love". This was the radical option of Therese, her definitive synthesis and her deepest spiritual identity.

A Shower of Roses

42. After centuries in which countless saints expressed with great fervour and eloquence their desire to "go to heaven", Saint Therese could acknowledge, with utter sincerity: "At the time I was having great interior trials of all kinds, even to the point of asking myself whether heaven really existed". [66] At another time, she said: "When I sing of the happiness of heaven and of the eternal possession of God, I feel no joy in this, for I sing simply what *I want to believe*". [67] What had happened? Therese was hearing God's call to put fire into the heart of the Church more than to think of her own personal happiness. 43. The transformation that was taking place enabled her to pass from a fervent desire for heaven to a constant, burning desire for the good of all, culminating in her dream of continuing in heaven her mission of loving Jesus and making him loved. As she wrote in one of her last letters: "I really count on not remaining inactive in heaven. My desire is to work still for the Church and for souls". [68] And in those very days she said, even more directly: "My heaven will be spent on earth until the end of the world. Yes, I want to spend my heaven in doing good on earth". [69]

44. In those words, Therese expressed her most assured response to the singular gift that the Lord was granting her, the remarkable light that God was shedding upon her. In this way, she arrived at her ultimate personal synthesis of the Gospel, one that began with complete trust and ended in total abandonment for the sake of others. She had no doubt about the fruitfulness of that abandonment: "I think of all the good that I would like to do after my death". [70] "God would not have given me the desire of doing good on earth after my death, if he didn't will to realize it". [71] "It will be like a shower of roses". [72] 45. She had come full circle. *"C'est la confiance"*. It is trust that brings us to love and thus sets us free from fear. It is trust that helps us to stop looking to ourselves and enables us to put into God's hands what he alone can accomplish. Doing so provides us with an immense source of love and energy for seeking the good of our brothers and sisters. And so, amid the suffering of her last days, Therese was able to say: " *I count only on love*". [73] In the end, only love counts. Trust makes roses blossom and pours them forth as an overflow of the superabundance of God's love. Let us ask, then, for such trust as a free and precious gift of grace, so that the paths of the Gospel may open up in our lives.

4. At the Heart of the Gospel

46. In *Evangelii Gaudium*, I urged a return to the freshness of the source, in order to emphasize what is essential and indispensable. I now consider it fitting to take up that invitation and propose it anew.

The Doctor of Synthesis

47. This Exhortation on Saint Therese allows me to observe that, in a missionary Church, "the message has to concentrate

on the essentials, on what is most beautiful, most grand, most appealing and at the same time most necessary. The message is simplified, while losing none of its depth and truth, and thus becomes all the more forceful and convincing". [74] The luminous core of that message is "the beauty of the saving love of God made manifest in Jesus Christ who died and rose from the dead". [75] 48. Not everything is equally central, because there is an order or hierarchy among the truths of the Church, and "this holds true as much for the dogmas of faith as for the whole corpus of the Church's teaching, including her moral teaching". [76] The centre of Christian morality is charity, as our response to the unconditional love of the Trinity. Consequently, "works of love directed towards one's neighbour are the most perfect manifestation of the interior grace of the Spirit". [77] In the end, only love counts. 49. The specific contribution that Therese offers us as a saint and a Doctor of the Church is not analytical, along the lines, for example, of Saint Thomas Aquinas. Her contribution is more synthetic, for her genius consists in leading us to what is central, essential and indispensable. By her words and her personal experience she shows that, while it is true that all the Church's teachings and rules have their importance, their value, their clarity, some are more urgent and more foundational for the Christian life. That is where Therese directed her eyes and her heart.

50. As theologians, moralists and spiritual writers, as pastors and as believers, wherever we find ourselves, we need constantly to appropriate this insight of Therese and to draw from it consequences both theoretical and practical, doctrinal and pastoral, personal and communal. We need boldness and interior freedom to do so. 51. At times, the only quotes we find cited from this saint are secondary to her message, or deal with things she has in common with any other saint, such as prayer,

sacrifice, Eucharistic piety, and any number of other beautiful testimonies. Yet in this way, we could be depriving ourselves of what is most specific about her gift to the Church. We forget that "each saint is a mission, planned by the Father to reflect and embody, at a specific moment in history, a certain aspect of the Gospel". [78] Indeed, "to recognize the word that the Lord wishes to speak to us through one of his saints, we do not need to get caught up in details… What we need to contemplate is the totality of their life, their entire journey of growth in holiness, the reflection of Jesus Christ that emerges when we grasp their overall meaning as a person". [79] This is all the more true in the case of Saint Therese, since we are dealing with a "Doctor of synthesis".

52. From heaven to earth, the timely witness of Saint Therese of the Child Jesus and the Holy Face endures in all the grandeur of her little way. In an age that urges us to focus on ourselves and our own interests, Therese shows us the beauty of making our lives a gift. At a time when the most superficial needs and desires are glorified, she testifies to the radicalism of the Gospel. In an age of individualism, she makes us discover the value of a love that becomes intercession for others. At a time when human beings are obsessed with grandeur and new forms of power, she points out to us the little way. In an age that casts aside so many of our brothers and sisters, she teaches us the beauty of concern and responsibility for one another. At a time of great complexity, she can help us rediscover the importance of simplicity, the absolute primacy of love, trust and abandonment, and thus move beyond a legalistic or moralistic mindset that would fill the Christian life with rules and regulations, and cause the joy of the Gospel to grow cold. In an age of indifference and self-absorption, Therese inspires us to be missionary disciples, captivated by the attractiveness of Jesus and the Gospel.

53. A century and a half after her birth, Therese is more alive than ever in the pilgrim Church, in the heart of God's people. She accompanies us on our pilgrim way, doing good on earth, as she had so greatly desired. The most lovely signs of her spiritual vitality are the innumerable "roses" that Therese continues to strew: the graces God grants us through her loving intercession in order to sustain us on our journey through life. Dear Saint Therese, the Church needs to radiate the brightness, the fragrance and the joy of the Gospel. Send us your roses! Help us to be, like yourself, ever confident in God's immense love for us, so that we may imitate each day your "little way" of holiness. Amen.

Given in Rome, in the Basilica of Saint John Lateran, on 15 October, the Memorial of Saint Teresa of Avila, in the year 2023, the eleventh of my Pontificate.

FRANCIS

---

[1] SAINT THERESE OF THE CHILD JESUS AND THE HOLY FACE, Letter 197 to Sister Marie of the Sacred Heart (17 September 1896): *Letters II*, p. 1000. The English citations of the Saint's writings are taken from the translations of her works published by the Institute of Carmelite Studies (ICS), Washington, D.C.: *Story of a Soul* (1996); *Letters I: 1877-1890* (1996); *Letters II: 1890-1897* (1988); *Prayers* (1997); *Poetry* (1996); *Her Last Conversations* (1977).

[2] Prayer 6, *Act of Oblation to Merciful Love* (9 June 1895): *Prayers*, p. 54; *Story of a Soul*, pp. 276-277.

[3] For the two-year period 2022-2023, UNESCO recognized Saint Therese as a person to be celebrated on the 150th anniversary of her birth.

[4] 29 April 1923.

[5] Cf. *Decretum super Virtutibus* (14 August 1921): AAS 13 (1921), 449-452.

[6] *Homily for the Canonization* (17 May 1925): AAS 17 (1925), 211.

[7] Cf. AAS 20 (1928), 147-148.

[8] Cf. AAS 36 (1944), 329-330.

[9] Cf. PIUS XII, *Letter to Mgr François-Marie Picaud, Bishop of Bayeux and Lisieux* (7 August 1947); *Radio Message for the Consecration of the Basilica of Lisieux* (11 July 1954): AAS 46 (1954), 404-407.

[10] Cf. *Letter to Mgr Jean-Marie-Clément Badré, Bishop of Bayeux and Lisieux on the occasion of the Centenary of the Birth of Saint Therese of the Child Jesus* (2 January 1973): AAS 65 (1973), 12-15.

[11] Cf. AAS 90 (1998), 409-413, 930-944.

[12] Apostolic Letter *Novo Millennio Ineunte* (6 January 2001), 42: AAS 93 (2001), 296.

[13] *Catechesis* (6 April 2011), *L'Osservatore Romano* (7 April 2011), 8.

[14] *Catechesis* (7 June 2023): *L'Osservatore Romano* (7 June 2023), 2-3.

[15] Letter 220 to l'Abbé Bellière (24 February 1897), *Letters II*, p. 1060.

[16] Ms A, 69v: *Story of a Soul*, p. 149.

[17] Cf. Ms C, 33v-37r: *Story of a Soul*, pp. 253-259.

[18] Cf. Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* (24 November 2013), 14, 264: AAS 105 (2013), 1025-1026.

[19] Ms C, 34r: *Story of a Soul*, p. 254.

[20] *Ibid*., 36r:, *Story of a Soul*, p. 257.

[21] *Last Conversations, Yellow Notebook* (9 June 1897, 3), p. 62.

[22] Cf. Ms C, 2v-3r: *Story of a Soul*, pp. 207-208.

[23] *Ibid*., 2v: p. 207.

[24] *Ibid*., 3r: p. 208.

[25] Cf. Ms A, 84v: p. 181.

[26] Cf. Apostolic Exhortation *Gaudete et Exsultate* (19 March 2018), 47-62: AAS 110 (2018), 1124-1129.

[27] Ms A, 32r: *Story of a Soul*, p. 72.

[28] This was explained by the Council of Trent: "Whoever considers himself, his personal weakness, and his lack of disposition may fear and tremble about his own grace" (*Decree on Justification*, IX: DS 1534). It is taken up by the Catechism of the Catholic Church, which teaches that it is not possible to have certitude by looking to ourselves or our own actions (cf. No. 2005). The certitude born of trust does not come from ourselves, nor can our own consciousness ground that security, which is not based on introspection. In the words of Saint Paul: "I do not judge myself. I am not aware of anything against myself, but I am not thereby acquitted. It is the Lord who judges me" (*1 Cor* 4:3-4). Saint Thomas Aquinas explains it in the following way: since grace "does not perfectly heal man" (ST I-II, q. 109, art. 9, ad 1), "in the intellect there remains the darkness of ignorance" (*ibid*., resp.)

[29] Prayer 6 (9 June 1895): *Prayers*, p. 54.

[30] Catechism of the Catholic Church, No. 2011.

[31] This was also clearly stated by the Council of Trent: "No devout man should doubt God's mercy" (*Decree on Justification*, IX: DS 1534); "All should place their firmest hope in God's help" (*ibid*., XIII: DS 1541).

[32] Ms B, 1v: *Story of a Soul*, p. 188.

[33] Cf. Ms A, 48v: *Story of a Soul*, pp. 104-105; Letter 92 to Marie Guérin (30 May 1889): *Letters I*, pp. 567-569.

[34] Prayer 6 (9 June 1895): *Story of a Soul*, p. 276.

[35] *Last Conversations, Yellow Notebook* (23 July 1897, 3): p. 106.

[36] Ms C, 31r: *Story of a Soul*, p. 250.

[37] Cf. Ms C, 5r-7v: *Story of a Soul*, pp. 211-214.

[38] Cf. *ibid*, 5v: *Story of a Soul*, p. 211.

[39] Cf. *ibid*., 6v: *Story of a Soul*, p. 213.

[40] Cf. Encyclical Letter *Lumen Fidei* (29 June 2013), 17: AAS 105 (2013), 564-565.

[41] Ms C, 7r: *Story of a Soul*, pp. 213-214.

[42] Cf. Letter 197 to Sister Marie of the Sacred Heart (17 September 1896): *Letters II*, p. 1000.

[43] Ms A, 83v: *Story of a Soul*, p. 180.

[44] Cf. Ms A, 45v-46v: *Story of a Soul*, pp. 98-101.

[45] *Ibid*., 46r: *Story of a Soul*, p. 100.

[46] *Ibid*.

[47] *Ibid*., 46v: *Story of a Soul*, p. 100.

[48] Prayer 2 (8 September 1890): *Prayers*, p. 38.

[49] *Summa Theologiae*, I-II, q. 62, art. 4.

[50] Cf. Ms C, 11v-31r: *Story of a Soul*, pp. 219-250.

[51] Ms B, 1v: *Story of a Soul*, p. 189.

[52] Cf. Ms B, 4r: *Story of a Soul*, p. 195.

[53] Letter 122 to Céline (14 October 1890): *Letters II*, p. 709.

[54] PN 24, 21: *Poetry*, p. 128.

[55] PN 24, 6: *ibid*., p. 124.

[56] Cf. Ms A, 3r: *Story of a Soul*, pp. 14-15.

[57] Letter 247 to l'Abbé Bellière (21 June 1897): *Letters II*, p. 1133.

[58] Cf. Prayer 6 (9 June 1895): *Prayers*, pp. 53-55; *Story of a Soul*, pp. 276-277.

[59] Ms A, 84r: *Story of a Soul*, p. 181.

[60] PN 54, 22: *Poetry*, p. 219.

[61] PN 54, 15: *ibid.*, p. 218.

[62] PN 54, 17: *ibid.*, p. 218.

[63] Ms C, 29v-30r: *Story of a Soul*, pp. 248-249.

[64] Cf. Ms B, 2r-5v: *Story of a Soul*, pp. 190-200.

[65] Ms B, 3v: *ibid.*, p. 194.

[66] Ms A, 80v: *Story of a Soul*, p. 173. This was not a lack of faith. Saint Thomas Aquinas taught that in faith, both the intelligence and the will are operative. The adherence of the will can be very solid and well rooted, while the intelligence can be darkened. Cf. *De Veritate* 14,1.

[67] Ms C, 7v: *Story of a Soul*, p. 214.

[68] Letter 254 to Père Adolphe Roulland (14 July 1897): *Letters II*, p. 1142.

[69] *Last Conversations, Yellow Notebook* (17 July 1897), p. 102.

[70] *Ibid.* (13 July 1897, 17), p. 102.

[71] *Ibid.* (18 July 1897, 1), p. 102.

[72] *Last Conversations, Yellow Notebook* (9 June 1897, 3), p. 62.

[73] Letter 242 to Sister Marie of the Trinity (6 June 1897): *Letters II*, p. 1121.

[74] Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* (24 November 2013), 35: AAS 105 (2013), 1034.

[75] *Ibid.*, 36: AAS 105 (2013), 1035.

[76] *Ibid.*

[77] *Ibid*., 37: AAS 105 (2013), 1035.

[78] Apostolic Exhortation *Gaudete et Exsultate* (19 March 2018), 19: AAS 110 (2018), 1117.

[79] *Ibid*., 22: AAS 110 (2018), 1117.

Documentation
Reformative Explorations
10/3 (2024)
Pages 151 - 159

Prison and Penal Reform: The Need for Change

United Office on Drugs and Crime[1]

Why is prison and penal reform so important? This page lays out the need and key arguments for change. Ultimately, what happens in prisons affects all of us.

1. Reform is Essential to Protect the Human Rights of Prisoners

People are sentenced to imprisonment as punishment in itself, not for additional punishment. While being deprived of their basic right to liberty, prisoners retain other human rights, with the exception of those which are restricted by the very fact of being in prison. Prison reform is necessary to ensure that this principle is upheld and that the human rights of prisoners protected. This in turn improves prisoners' prospects of rehabilitation and their social reintegration upon release. Human rights-based arguments are the premise on which many UN standards and norms have been developed, and are often central to arguments about the need for prison and penal reform. However, rights-based arguments are not always sufficient to encourage prison reform programs in countries with scarce human and financial resources. There are, however, other powerful arguments such as the detrimental impact of ill-managed imprisonment on many

1 https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/justice-and-prison-reform/prison-reform-and-alternatives-to-imprisonment.html

categories of offenders, their families and communities as well as the significant socio-economic costs that result from an overreliance on imprisonment.

2. Reform Mitigates the Negative Impact of over Incarceration

Imprisonment disproportionately affects people living in poverty – and it affects not only the individual who is imprisoned, but their family and wider community too. When an income-generating member of the family is imprisoned, the rest of the family must deal with the associated emotional impact and stigma, the loss of their income and possibly new expenses that must be met, such as the costs for a lawyer, transport for prison visits and so on. The impact can be especially severe in developing countries where the State may not provide financial assistance to those living in poverty, and where it is not unusual for one breadwinner to financially support an extended family network. This severe stigma makes prisoners vulnerable to an endless cycle of poverty, further marginalization, re-offending and re-imprisonment. Imprisonment therefore contributes to the impoverishment of the prisoner, their families and even future generations. This in turn harms the wider community, creating future victims and hampering future economic performance. Prison and penal reform helps to reduce imprisonment to a measure of last resort and to promote community-based measures, thereby also reducing prison overcrowding and improving prison conditions. Anchoring rehabilitation and social reintegration as a key feature of offender management benefits not only those who have come in conflict with the law, but also their families and the wider community. Remember that the vast majority of prisoners will eventually return to society.

Reform Helps to Improve Prison and Community Health

Prisoners are likely to have existing health problems on entry to prison, as they are predominantly from poorly educated and socio-economically deprived sectors of the general population, with compromised access to adequate health services. In addition, being imprisoned may have very serious health implications, in particular in prisons which are overcrowded, where nutrition is poor, sanitation inadequate and access to fresh air and exercise often unavailable. Mental health disorders, HIV infection, tuberculosis, hepatitis B and C, sexually transmitted diseases, skin diseases, malaria, malnutrition, diarrhoea and injuries, including self-harm, are the main causes of morbidity and mortality in prison, with prevalence being typically much higher than in the outside community. The notion that "Prison health is public health" illustrates that prisons are not isolated from wider society. The high turn-over of prisoners and prison staff, together with the fact that the vast majority of prisoners will eventually be released means that health conditions in prisons unavoidably have an impact on community health. Adequate healthcare for those in prisons is therefore essential to protect and improve prisoners' health while at the same time contributing to healthy communities.

Reform Protects Family and Community Relations Across Generations

Incarceration has severe knock-on social effects on families and the community. Social cohesion is based on long-term relationships, and the disruption associated with imprisonment of a person negatively impacts bonds between spouses, between a parent and their child, and even between family members who are not imprisoned. This disruption reshapes family and community structures across generations. Mass

imprisonment has the potential to produce long-term and deep social transformations that affect entire communities, often linked with a disproportionate on marginalized groups. Prison reform is essential to support prisoners to maintain constructive bonds with the outside world, thereby reducing disruption and supporting social reintegration prospects and mitigating, as much as possible, the negative impact on the prisoner's family. In parallel, wider penal reform efforts aim to reduce the scope of incarceration, including by treating offenders in the community as much as possible, thereby protecting communities from the serious and long-lasting impact of mass incarceration.

Reform Saves Public Resources and Money

Imprisoning a person is expensive. The costs of the upkeep of a prisoner are generally significantly higher than what is spent if a person was to be sentenced for a non-custodial measure, such as probation or community service. But the costs do not end there. When considering the costs of incarceration at large, account needs to be also taken of indirect costs, such as those relating to social, economic and health aspects. These are difficult to measure, but are immense and long-term. Prison and penal reform that is grounded on evidence-based approaches to the management of offenders and that exploits the full potential of alternatives to imprisonment can save governments vast amounts of money and allows to re-direct such resources towards social, treatment and other services benefitting the community at large.

Prison and Penal Reform: UNODC's Work

UNODC works with over 50 Member States around the world to reduce the scope of imprisonment, strengthen prison management and improve prison conditions, and foster the

social reintegration prospects of offenders. This page lays out our approach and provides an overview of our current areas of work.

An Integrated and Multi-Disciplinary Approach to Prison and Penal Reform

It is of utmost importance that prison reform is not regarded in isolation from broader criminal justice reform. UNODC believes that effective prison and penal reform is dependent on the improvement and rationalisation of criminal justice policies, including crime prevention and sentencing policies, and on the treatment and care available to vulnerable groups in the community. Prison reform efforts should therefore always take into account the needs relating to the reform of the criminal justice system as a whole and employ an integrated, multi-disciplinary strategy to achieve sustainable impact. Thus, reform initiatives will usually also need to encompass criminal justice policies and legislation at large as well as institutions other than the prison service, such as the police, prosecution and the judiciary. An integrated approach also takes account of areas that are typically not regarded as part of the criminal justice system. These include, for example, the treatment of drug use disorder in the community or psycho-social counselling programmes, to which certain offenders may be diverted rather than being imprisoned, thereby ensuring that services in prison are not overstretched.

Addressing over Incarceration and Prison Overcrowding

Prison overcrowding affects constitutes an acute global human rights, health and security crisis. It affects a solid majority of prison systems worldwide and stands out as the greatest contributor to violations of international minimum prison standards. Yet punitive criminal policies, as well as a shortage

of social protection services in the community, continue to contribute to a continuous growth of the prison population in many countries. While overcrowding can be temporarily decreased by building new prisons, practice shows that trying to overcome the harmful effects of prison overcrowding through the construction of new prisons does not provide a sustainable solution. In addition, building new prisons and maintaining them is expensive, putting pressure on valuable and limited resources. Instead, numerous international instruments recommend a rationalization in sentencing policy, including the wider use of non-custodial measures. The use of alternatives to imprisonment also reflects a fundamental change in the approach to offenders and their place in society, changing the focus of penitentiary measures from punishment and isolation, to prevention, restorative justice and social reintegration. When accompanied by adequate support for offenders, it assists some of the most vulnerable members of society to lead life without having to relapse back into criminal behaviour patterns. In many cases, the implementation of penal sanctions and other measures within the community, rather than through a process of isolation from it, are more effective in preventing in reoffending ad therefore also offer a better protection of society from crime. Supporting the introduction and implementation of non-custodial sanctions and measures is therefore a key element of UNODC's work in the area of prison and penal reform.

Enhancing Prison Management and Conditions

In order for a prison system to ensure safe, secure and humane custody and to be managed in a fair and human rights-compliant manner, national legislation, policies and practices must be guided by international minimum prison standards and related safeguards. Prison authorities have a

responsibility to ensure that the supervision and treatment of prisoners is in line with the rule of law and that the period of imprisonment is used to prepare individuals for their social reintegration upon release. In reality, however, prisons tend to be under-resourced and often struggle to ensure decent prison conditions or to provide for even the most basic and life sustaining needs of prisoners. National prison laws and regulations are often outdated and in need of reform. In many countries, the prison administration is under the authority of police or military institutions and managers and staff have received no tailored training as regards the distinct and demanding role of prison officers. Prison officers are typically held in lower regard than other public officials working in the criminal justice system. They tend to have lower salaries and fewer career opportunities. This not only leads to difficulties in recruiting qualified staff, but also has negative consequences on their morale and performance. Information collection and management systems are also inadequate in many prison systems worldwide, hindering the development of sound policies and strategies based on reliable, factual data.

Safety and security are core elements of a prison system that require the significant attention of prison managers. In this regard, related prison management practices, such as the classification of prisoners according to individually assessed risks and needs, corresponding sentence plans and the prisoners' subsequent allocation to a suitable prison regime, are indispensable prerequisites. But very often, the extent to which tailored management approaches are implemented for prisoners with specific needs on the one hand, and those that may pose particular risks on the other, are lacking. All of the above deficiencies increase the risk of torture, ill-treatment and other human rights violations in prisons. Widespread corruption and security breaches, including

continued criminal activity while imprisoned, can also have a destabilizing effect well beyond prison walls. Guided by international minimum prison standards, UNODC assists countries in revising national prison legislation, in developing tailored training programs for prison officials, in improving prison conditions, in ensuring prison and safety and security, and in strengthening the institutional capacity of prison administrations to apply core prison management practices. Gender-responsive approaches are mainstreamed throughout UNODC's technical assistance in this regard.

Fostering Rehabilitation and Social Reintegration

One of the principles objectives of UNODC in the area of prison and penal reform is to contribute to the successful social reintegration of prisoners into society upon their release. Rehabilitation and social reintegration support should start as early as possible within the criminal justice process in order to have maximum effect. Diversion from the criminal justice process to appropriate treatment programs, for example, or other non-custodial measures are key in this regard. Incarceration, by itself, does not have a reformative effect. On the contrary, it exacerbates many of the challenges faced by individuals who have come into conflict with the law. If a person is sentenced to imprisonment, purposeful and constructive activities while incarcerated are therefore vital to prepare a prisoner for re-entry to society, including education, vocational training, work and more specialized programmes that address root causes of offending Following release, interventions to support former prisoners and continuing care in the community can build on this. The rehabilitation and social reintegration of prisoners is a societal task that cannot be fulfilled by prison services alone. More than any other aspect of prison management, this is an area for which the

support of relevant government entities – complemented by the active involvement of civil society – is critical. Such cross-institutional cooperation ensures that services are provided in accordance with the standards applicable for similar services in the community, and are continued in the community upon release, as required. UNODC offers key advice and support in this area, ranging from the development prison-based rehabilitation programs and related material or infrastructure support to the planning and implementation of continuum of care and post-release support in the community.

Healthcare

Prisoners are entitled to receive the same quality of medical care that is available in the community. However, this right is rarely realised in prisons, where healthcare services are usually inadequate. Prison health services are typically severely underfunded and understaffed, and often work in complete isolation from national health authorities, including national HIV and national tuberculosis (TB) programmes. In many cases, the gender-specific health needs of women are inadequately addressed. The right to health not only includes access to gender-responsive preventive, curative, reproductive and palliative health care, but also access to the underlying determinants of health, such as safe drinking water and adequate sanitation; safe food; adequate nutrition and housing; safe health and dental services; healthy working and environmental conditions; as well as health-related education and information. Technical assistance provided by UNODC in this area is based on the premise that prison and penal reform and health in prisons are interrelated, and that an integrated strategy needs to be adopted to address the high prevalence of communicable and non-communicable diseases in prison settings, in close cooperation or integrated into the public health system.

Documentation
Reformative Explorations
10/3 (2024)
Pages 160 - 174

Prison Statistics India 2022

Executive Summary[1]

Prisons – Types & Occupancy

Year	No. of Prisons	Actual Capacity of Prisons	No. of Prisoners at the end of the year	Occupancy Rate at the end of the year
2020	1,306	4,14,033	4,88,511	118.0%
2021	1,319	4,25,609	5,54,034	130.2%
2022	1,330	4,36,266	5,73,220	131.4%

1. The total number of prisons at national level has increased from 1,319 in 2021 to 1,330 in 2022 having increased by 0.8%. 2. The 1,330 prisons in the country consist of 574 Sub Jails, 428 District Jails, 148 Central Jails, 91 Open Jails, 42 Special Jails, 34 Women Jails, 10 Borstal Schools. 3. Other than the above Jails. 3. The highest number of jails was reported in Rajasthan (146) followed by Tamil Nadu (142), Madhya Pradesh (132), Andhra Pradesh (106), Odisha (92) and Uttar Pradesh (77). These Six (6) States together cover 52.3% of total jails in the country as on 31st December, 2022. 4. Delhi has reported the highest number of Central jails (14) in the country. States/ UTs like Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, A & N Islands, DNH & Daman Diu, Ladakh and Lakshadweep have no central jail as on 31st December, 2022. 5. Uttar Pradesh has reported the highest number of District jails (64). States/UTs like Goa, Chandigarh, DNH & Daman Diu, Delhi, Lakshadweep

1 NCRB.

and Puducherry have no District Jail as on 31st December, 2022. 6. Tamil Nadu has reported highest number of Sub-jails (104). States/UTs like Arunachal Pradesh, Goa, Haryana, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, Chandigarh, Delhi and Ladakh have no sub-jail in their States/UTs, as on 31st December, 2022. 7. Only 16 States/UTs were having Women Jails (34 Women Jails) with a total capacity of 7,080 in India. These States/UTs (Number of Jails) (Capacity) are – Rajasthan (7) (998), Tamil Nadu (5) (2018), Kerala (3) (232), Andhra Pradesh (2) (280), Bihar (2) (202), Gujarat (2) (410), Punjab (2) (608), Uttar Pradesh (2) (540), Delhi (2) (680), Karnataka (1) (100), Maharashtra (1) (262), Mizoram (1) (96), Odisha (1) (55), Telangana (1) (260), Tripura (1) (25) and West Bengal (1) (314) and the rest of 20 States/UTs have no separate Women Jail as on 31st December, 2022.

8. The actual capacity of prisons has increased from 4,25,609 in 2021 to 4,36,266 in 2022 (as on 31st December of each year), having increased by 2.5%. Number of prisoners lodged in various jails has increased from 5,54,034 in 2021 to 5,73,220 in 2022 (as on 31st December of each year), having increased by 3.5% during the period. 9. Out of the total capacity 4,36,266 in 1,330 prisons in 2022, the Central Jails of the country were having the highest capacity (1,97,052) followed by the District Jails (1,68,981) and the Sub Jails (47,270). Among the other types of jails, Special Jails, Women Jails and Open Jails were having a capacity of 7,573, 7,080 and 6,043 inmates respectively as on 31st December, 2022. The highest number of inmates were lodged in District Jails (2,64,534) followed by Central Jails (2,46,155) and Sub Jails (45,679) as on 31st December, 2022. The number of inmates in Women Jails was 4,258. 10.Uttar Pradesh has reported the highest capacity in their jails (capacity of 67,600 inmates in 77 jails contributing 15.5% of total capacity) followed by Bihar

(capacity of 47,750 inmates in 59 jails contributing 10.9% of total capacity) and Madhya Pradesh (capacity of 29,715 inmates in 132 jails contributing 6.8% of total capacity).

11.Out of the 5,73,220 prisoners, 5,49,351 were male prisoners, 23,772 were female prisoners and 97 were transgender. 12.The occupancy rate has increased from 130.2% in 2021 to 131.4% in 2022 (as on 31st December of each year). 13.The highest occupancy rate was in District Jails (156.5%) followed by Central Jails (124.9%) and Sub Jails (96.6%). The occupancy rate in Women Jails was 60.1% as on 31st December, 2022. 14.Uttar Pradesh has reported the highest number of prisoners (1,21,609) in its jails contributing 21.2% followed by Bihar (64,914), Madhya Pradesh (48,857), Maharashtra (41,070), Punjab (30,801) and West Bengal (28,789) as on 31st December, 2022. These States together are contributing around 58.6% of total prisoners in the country. 15.Delhi has reported the highest occupancy rate (184.5%) followed by Uttarakhand (183.3%) Uttar Pradesh (179.9%), Meghalaya (167.2%), Madhya Pradesh (164.4%) and Maharashtra (161.4%) as on 31st December, 2022. 16.The capacity in 34 Women Jails was 7,080 with the actual number of prisoners in these Women Jails was 4,258 (Occupancy Rate: 60.1%) which includes (18) Transgender inmates also as on 31st December, 2022. The capacity of Women Inmates in other types of Jail (i.e. except Women Jails) was 24,077 with the actual number of women inmates in these jails was 19,532 (Occupancy Rate: 81.1%) as on 31st December, 2022. 17.Uttarakhand has reported the highest female occupancy rate (166.5%) followed by Bihar (146.8%) and Uttar Pradesh (128.2%). However, the highest number of female inmates were confined in the jails of Uttar Pradesh (4,809) followed by Bihar (2,938) and Madhya Pradesh (1,911).

Prisoners – Types & Demography

Year	No. of Convicts	No. of Undertrial Prisoners	No of Detenues	No. of Other Inmates	Total No. of Prisoners
2020	1,12,589	3,71,848	3,590	484	4,88,511
2021	1,22,852	4,27,165	3,470	547	5,54,034
2022	1,33,415	4,34,302	4,324	1,179	5,73,220

1. During the year 2022, a total of 18,04,787 inmates were admitted in various jails of the country and the admission of inmates has decreased by 0.1 % over 2021 (18,06,823 inmates). 2. A total of (5,73,220) prisoners were confined as on 31st December, 2022 in various jails across the country. The number of Convicts, Undertrial inmates and Detenues were reported as 1,33,415, 4,34,302 and 4,324 respectively accounting for 23.3%, 75.8% and 0.8% respectively at the end of 2022. Other prisoners accounted for 0.2% (1,179 prisoners) of total prisoners.

3. Convicted Prisoners

a. The number of convicted prisoners has increased from 1,22,852 in 2021 to 1,33,415 in 2022 (as on 31st December of each year), having increased by 8.6% during the period. b. Out of total 1,33,415 convicts, the highest number of convicted prisoners were lodged in Central Jails (64.9%, 86,545 convicts) followed by District Jails (27.9%, 37,163 convicts) and Sub Jails (2.1%, 2,861 convicts) as on 31st December, 2022. c. Uttar Pradesh has reported the maximum number of convicts (20.4%, 27,209 convicts) in the country followed by Madhya Pradesh (16.3%, 21,761 convicts) and Maharashtra (6.0%, 7,998 convicts) at the end of 2022. d. Among the 1,33,415 convicts, 138 were civil convicts.

4. Undertrial Prisoners

a. The number of undertrial prisoners has increased from 4,27,165 in 2021 to 4,34,302 in 2022 (as on 31st December of each year), having increased by 1.7% during this period. b. Among the 4,34,302 undertrial prisoners, the highest number of undertrial prisoners was lodged in District Jails (52.1%, 2,26,386 undertrials) followed by Central Jails (35.8%, 1,55,528 undertrials) and Sub Jails (9.8%, 42,652 undertrials) as on 31st December, 2022. c. Uttar Pradesh has reported the maximum number of undertrials (21.7%, 94,131 undertrials) in the country followed by Bihar (13.2%, 57,537 undertrials) and Maharashtra (7.6%, 32,883 undertrials) at the end of 2022. d. Among the 4,34,302 undertrial prisoners, only 44 were civil inmates.

5. Detenues

a. The number of detenues has increased from 3,470 in 2021 to 4,324 in 2022 (as on 31st December of each year), having increased by 24.6% during this period. b. Among the 4,324 detenues, the highest number of detenues were lodged in Central Jails (80.0%, 3,458 detenues) followed by District Jails (15.4%, 665 detenues) and Special Jails (2.4%, 104 detenues) as on 31st December, 2022. c. Tamil Nadu has reported the maximum number of detenues (49.2%, 2,129) in the country followed by Jammu & Kashmir (12.6%, 546) and Gujarat (7.7%, 334) at the end of 2022.

6. Women Prisoners with Children

a. There were 1,537 women prisoners with 1,764 children as on 31st December, 2022. b. Among these women prisoners, 1,312 women prisoners were undertrial prisoners who were accompanied by 1,479 children and 198 convicted prisoners who were accompanied by 230 children.

7. Age-group of the Prisoners

a. As on 31st December, 2022 the maximum number of inmates (2,56,169 inmates, 44.7%) were belonging to the age group 18-30 years followed by the age group 30-50 years (2,43,809 inmates, 42.5%). b. 73,236 inmates (12.8%) were belonging to the age group above 50 years. c. Only 6 inmates belonged to the age group of 16-18 years.

8. Education

a. Among the 5,73,220 prisoners, literacy profile of 2,28,369 (39.8%) prisoners was Below Class X, 1,38,130 (24.1%) prisoners were Class X & above but below Graduation, 41,432 (7.2%) prisoners were having a Degree, 11,347 (2.0%) prisoners were Post Graduates and 7,063 (1.2%) prisoners were Technical Degree/Diploma holders. b. A total of 1,46,879 (25.6%) prisoners were Illiterate.

9. Domicile of Origin of Prisoners

a. Among the 5,73,220 prisoners as on 31st December, 2022, around 90.5% (5,18,515 inmates) of prisoners belonged to the State followed by prisoners belonging to the Other States (8.4%, 48,422 inmates) and prisoners belonging to the Other Country (1.1%, 6,283 inmates). b. Among the 1,33,415 convicts, 93.1% convicts (1,24,238 inmates) belonged to the State while 6.0% (7,996 inmates) and 0.9% (1,181 inmates) belonged to the Other States and Other Country respectively. c. Haryana has reported most number of other State domicile convicts (13.5%, 1,082 convicts) followed by Madhya Pradesh (13.4%, 1,072 convicts) and Punjab (7.5%, 601 convicts) as on 31st December, 2022. d. Among the 4,34,302 undertrial prisoners, 89.7% (3,89,677 inmates) belonged to the State while 9.2% (39,919 inmates) and 1.1% (4,706 inmates) belonged to the

Other States and Other Country respectively. e. Uttar Pradesh has reported the highest number of undertrial prisoners of other states (13.3%, 5,306 inmates) followed by Haryana (11.8%, 4,725 inmates) and Delhi (9.8%, 3,898 inmates) at the end of 2022.

Foreign Prisoners

Year	No. of Prisoners at the end of the year	No. of Foreign Prisoners	Share of Foreign Prisoners
2020	4,88,511	4,926	1.0%
2021	5,54,034	5,565	1.0%
2022	5,73,220	6,283	1.1%

1. The number of prisoners of foreign nationality (as on 31st December of each year) has increased from 5,565 in 2021 to 6,283 in 2022, having increased by 12.9% during this period. 2. The percentage share of foreign prisoners out of total prisoners has increased from 1.0% in 2021 to 1.1 in 2022 (as on 31st December of each year). 3. Among 6,283 prisoners of foreign nationality at the end of 2022, 5,198 were Males, 1,070 were Females and 15 were Transgenders. 4. Among these foreign national prisoners, 18.8% (1,181 inmates) were Convicts, 74.9% (4,706 inmates) were Undertrials and 0.5% (31 inmates) were Detenues. 5. Among the foreign convicts, the highest number of foreign convicts were from Bangladesh (53.5%, 632 convicts) followed by Nepal (16.9%, 200 convicts), xv Myanmar (7.8%, 92 convicts), Nigerians (6.4%, 76 convicts) and Pakistanis (6.3%, 74 convicts) at the end of 2022. 6. West Bengal has reported the highest number of foreign convicts lodged in their jails (39.9%, 471) followed by Uttar Pradesh (8.1%, 96) and Mainpur (6.0%, 71) at the end of 2022. 7. Among the foreign Undertrials, the highest number of foreign undertrials were from Bangladesh (40.4%,

1,902 undertrial) followed by Nigeria (18.4%, 864 undertrial) and Nepal (12.5%, 589 undertrial) at the end of 2022. 8. West Bengal has reported the highest number of foreign undertrial lodged in their jails (30.3%, 1,424) followed by Delhi (14.3%, 672) and Maharashtra (12.1%, 570) at the end of 2022.

Prisoners – Type of Offences

1. Convicts

a. Among the convicts under IPC crimes (1,17,296) lodged in various jails in the country, around 86.1% of convicts have committed Offences affecting Human Body (1,00,947 inmates) and around 9.4% of convicts have committed Offences against Property (11,076 inmates) as on 31st December, 2022. b. Among the convicts of Offences against Human Body, the highest number of inmates were convicted for Murder (63.2%, 63,798 convicts) followed by convicts of Rape (18.0%, 18,138 convicts) and convicts of Attempt to Murder (7.1%, 7,172 convicts) as on 31st December, 2022. c. Among the convicts of Offences against Women, the highest number of inmates were convicted for Rape (76.2%, 18,138 convicts) followed by convicts of Dowry Deaths (16.6%, 3,939 convicts) as on 31st December, 2022. d. Among the convicts under SLL crimes (15,981) lodged in various jails in the country, the highest number of inmates were convicted under Liquor & Narcotics Drugs - Related Acts (52.3%, 8,352 convicts) followed by convicts of Arms/Explosive - Related Acts (11.7%, 1,863 convicts) and convicts under Crime against SC/ST - Related Acts (4.5%, 718 convicts) as on 31st December, 2022. Xvi. e. Among 1,29,009 convicts who were admitted during the year 2022, the number of habitual offenders were 2,471 (1.9% of convicts admitted).

2. Undertrials

a. Among the undertrial prisoners under IPC crimes (3,26,825) lodged in various jails in the country, around 63.7% (2,08,299 inmates) of undertrial prisoners have committed Offences affecting Human Body followed by prisoners of Offences against Property (28.4%, 92,917 inmates) as on 31st December, 2022. b. Among the undertrial prisoners of Offences against Women, the highest number of inmates were undertrial for Rape (64.2%, 47,138 inmates) followed by undertrials for Dowry Death (21.3%, 15,657 inmates) at the end of 2022. c. Among the undertrial prisoners under SLL crimes (1,07,433) lodged in various jails in the country, the highest number of inmates were undertrial under Liquor & Narcotics Drugs - Related Acts (67.2%, 72,217 inmates) followed by undertrial inmates under Arms/Explosive - Related Acts (13.5%, 14,470 inmates) and undertrial inmates under Crime Against SC/ST – Related Acts (4.4%, 4,779 inmates) at the end of 2022.

Prisoners – Sentences & Incarceration

1. Convicts

a. A total of 544 prisoners, who had been sentenced for Capital Punishment, were lodged in various jails of the country as on 31st December, 2022. Out of these 544 prisoners, 190 prisoners were sentenced for capital punishment during the year 2022. b. Among the 1,33,415 convicted prisoners, the number of prisoners who were sentenced to Life Imprisonment were 75,629 accounting for 56.7% of total convicts. This is followed by 15.6% of total convicted prisoners (20,836) who were sentenced for 10 - 13+ years of imprisonments and 6.7% of total convicted prisoners (8,901) who were sentenced for 7- 9 + years of imprisonments.

2. Undertrials

a. Among 4,34,302 undertrial prisoners, around 69.0% of prisoners were confined for periods up to 1 year (2,99,503 prisoners), as on 31st December, 2022. Out of this, most number of undertrial prisoners (1,39,245 prisoners) were confined for up to 3 months accounting for 46.5%. This is followed by 85,358 undertrial prisoners who were confined for 3-6 months and 74,900 undertrial prisoners who were confined for 6-12 months. b. However, there were also 63,502 undertrial prisoners (14.6% of total Undertrials) confined for 1 to 2 years followed by 33,980 undertrial prisoners (7.8% of total Undertrials) confined for 2 to 3 years and 25,869 undertrial prisoners (6.0% of total Undertrials) confined for 3 to 5 years as on 31st December, 2022. c. Also there were 11,448 undertrial prisoners (accounting for 2.6% of total undertrial prisoners) who were confined for more than 5 years.

Prisoners – Releases, Transfers and Movements

The release of convicts has increased by 34.9% (from 93,077 in 2021 to 1,25,533 in 2022) and the release of undertrials has increased by 5.4% (from 14,68,627 in 2021 to 15,48,143 in 2022).

1. Convicts

a. A total of 1,25,533 convicts were released (including 711 convicts getting transferred to other States/UTs) during the year 2022. b. Out of 1,25,533 convicts released, 41.2% of convicts (51,680) were released after completion of conviction period during 2022. c. A total of 10,760 convicts were released subsequent to the acquittal on appeal from Higher Courts. d. A total of 5,035 convicts were released before completion of

sentence awarded. e. A total of 110 convicts were pardoned for their offence committed.

2. Undertrials

a. A total of 15,48,143 undertrial prisoners were released during 2022, out of which 95.0% of undertrial prisoners (14,70,848) were released on bail. Percentage share of Undertrials Released on Bail remained same at 95.0% in 2021 and 2022. b. A total of 35,119 undertrial prisoners were released based on acquittal on first instance and 17,484 undertrial prisoners were released subsequent to the acquittal on appeal. c. No undertrial prisoners were extradited to foreign countries during 2022. d. A total 537 undertrial prisoners were released under Section 436A of CrPC during 2022.

3. Detenues

a. A total of 8,903 detenues were released during 2022, out of which, 15.3% detenues (1,358) were released on completion of detention period and 72.8% detenues (6,480) were released before completion of detention period.

4. Movements

To Courts

a. A total of 36,48,995 times, inmates were taken to the Courts on legal proceedings. Among all the States/UTs, Bihar has reported the highest number of movements of inmates to courts (8,51,977) followed by West Bengal (4,51,356), Delhi (3,29,962) and Uttar Pradesh (2,89,459) during 2022.

To Hospitals

a. A total of 4,60,684 times, inmates were taken to the Hospitals. Among all the States/UTs, Chhattisgarh has

reported the highest number of movements of inmates for medical assistance (49,812) followed by West Bengal (47,072) and Maharashtra (33,398) during 2022. b. There were 9,084 prisoners, who were suffering from mental illness as on 31st December, 2022.

Deaths and Illness in Prisons

Year	Total No. of Deaths in Prisons	No. of Natural Deaths	No. of Un-natural Deaths (incl. Suicide)
2020	1,887$	1,642	189
2021	2,116$	1,879	185
2022	1,995$	1,773	159

1. Number of deaths in prisons has decreased from 2,116 in 2021 to 1,995 in 2022, having decreased by 5.7%. 2. Number of deaths due to natural causes has decreased from 1,879 in 2021 to 1,773 in 2022, having decreased by 5.6%. 3. Out of 1,773 Natural Deaths furnished by the States, 1,670 inmates have died due to illness and 103 inmates have died due to ageing. 4. Out of 1,670 deaths due to illness, 25.6% (428) inmates have died due to heart-diseases and 11.4% (190) inmates have died due to lung diseases. 5. Number of un-natural deaths in prisons has decreased by 14.1% from 185 in 2021 to 159 in 2022. 6. Among the 159 un-natural deaths of inmates, 119 inmates have committed suicide, 4 inmates were murdered by inmates, 10 inmates died in accidents and 1 inmates died due to assault by outside elements during 2022. For a total of 63 inmate deaths, cause of the death is yet to be known.

Jail Breaks, Escapees & Clashes/Group Clashes in Prisons

1. A total of 257 prisoners escaped during 2022 where 98 escapees (38.1%) had escaped from police custody and 159 escaped from judicial custody. 2. A total of 113 escapees were re-arrested during 2022. 3. There were 4 incidences of jail break occurred during 2022. 4. 45 instances of clashes/group clashes occurred during 2022.

Rehabilitation and Welfare of Prisons

1. A total of 1,622 convicted inmates were rehabilitated during 2022. 2. A total of 3,159 inmates were given financial assistance on their release during 2022. 3. A total of 1,83,320 inmates were provided legal aid during 2022. 4. The number of prisoners benefitted from Elementary Education, Adult Education, Higher Education and Computer Course were 46,786, 39,888, 12,780 and 5,169 respectively during 2022. Also 42,769 inmates were imparted various vocational trainings by the jail-authorities during 2022. 5. A total of 67,628 inmates had been given medical counselling and 64,899 inmates had been given legal counselling by NGOs during 2022. 6. The total value of goods produced by inmates during 2022 was ` 267.03 Crore. 7. There were 741 NGOs who were working exclusively for prison reforms and 202 NGOs who were working exclusively for welfare of women during the year 2022. However, some NGOs may be working in many States. 8. A total of 418 complaints were received by National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) during 2022. A total of 327 complaints (including previous year pending complaints) were disposed-off during 2022 with a disposal rate of 78.2%. 9. A total of 503 complaints were received by State Human Rights Commission (SHRC) during 2022. A total of 304 complaints (including previous year pending

complaints) were disposed-off during 2022 with a disposal rate of 60.4%.

Prison Staff - Strength & Training

1. The sanctioned strength of jail-staff was 91,181 while the actual strength was 63,578 as on 31st December, 2022 due to vacancies not being filled up. Among the jail-staffs, the sanctioned strength of Officers (DG/Addl. DG/IG, DIG, AIG, Supdt. etc.), Jail-cadre Staff (Head Warder, Head Matron, Warder, etc.) and Correctional Staff (Probation Officer / Welfare Officer, Phychologist / Psychiatrist, etc.) were 7,520, 67,642 and 1,468 respectively, while the actual strengths were 5,410, 48,707 and 820 respectively. 2. The sanctioned strength of Medical Staff was 3,570 while the actual strength was 2,125 as on 31st December, 2022. 3. The actual strength of woman jail officers/staffs was 8,674 (including 295 medical officers/staff).4. Out of the 63,578 jail staffs, 20.7% (13,180) staffs were trained under various Refresher/Specialised/Re-orientation courses during 2022.

Prison – Budget & Infrastructure

1. The total budget for the financial year 2022-23 for all prisons in the country was `8725.0 Crore. The actual expenditure was `7781.9 Crore which is 89.2% of total annual budget for FY 2022-23. 2. A total of ` 2528.45 Crore was spent on inmates during FY 2022-23 which is almost 32.5% of total annual expenditure of all prisons for FY 2022-23. 3. Almost 52.5% (` 1326.41 Crore) of total expenses on inmates were spent on Food followed by 5.3% (` 134.98 Crore) on medical matters, 1.5% (` 38.41 Crore) on Clothing, 0.8% (` 21.14 Crore) on Welfare activities and 0.4% (` 9.91 Crore) on Vocational/Educational trainings. 4. Among all the States/ UTs, out of total expenditure, Haryana (100.0%, 406.6 Crore) and Mizoram (100.0%, ` 0.3 Crore) has spent the highest

share of expenditure on inmates followed by Andhra Pradesh (98.5%, ` 194.17 Crore) and DNH & Daman Diu (86.5%, ` 1.37 Crore) during the Financial Year 2022-23. 5. Among the 1,330 prisons, 309 prisons were renovated/expanded during 2022. 6. Among the 1,330 prisons, 1,150 prisons were having Video Conference facility as on 31st December 2022. 7. A total of 39,333 quarters were available against the actual staff strength of 63,578 as on 31st December, 2022, thus achieving satisfaction rate of 61.9%.

Book Review
Reformative Explorations
10/3 (2024)
Pages 175 - 177

Behind Bars: Prison Tales of India's Most Famous' Lifestyle

Sunetra Choudhury

Introduction

Prison life has always been a subject of public intrigue, especially when it involves renowned personalities. This curiosity peaked when actor Sanjay Dutt walked out of Yerwada Central Prison (YCP) after serving his sentence related to the 1993 Mumbai blasts. His daily salary of Rs 45, his stint as Radio YCP's most popular jockey, and his newfound love for Munshi Premchand's literature were widely reported. While this interest might seem voyeuristic, it underscores a fundamental question: Are prisons truly corrective institutions, or do they perpetuate more crime? Journalist Sunetra Choudhury, in her book Behind Bars, attempts to answer this question through the stories of 13 prisoners.

Condition Inside the Prison

The book chronicles life inside Indian jails through the experiences of men, women, a transgender individual, and a juvenile prisoner. It provides a glimpse into various facets of prison life, including overcrowded cells, custodial torture, and the defence mechanisms prisoners develop to survive. Some find solace in prayers, others in writing, teaching, or spiritual internalization. However, nine of the 13 stories focus on Tihar Jail, limiting insights into other lesser-known prisons in the country.

Star-Studded Case Studies

Behind Bars features a star-studded list of case studies, including Indian politicians like Amar Singh, A. Raja, and Pappu Yadav, controversial arms dealer Abhishek Verma and his supermodel wife Anca, and former Star TV CEO Peter Mukerjea. The author interacted with these individuals firsthand, asking difficult questions and gaining appreciable insights into their jail stints. The book highlights how prisons are more comfortable for the rich, showing that money can buy comfort even in a cramped cell. VIP inmates often do not have to compromise on their luxuries, such as air conditioning and gourmet food.

Horrific Torture Details

The book also includes three case studies of individuals from humble backgrounds who faced severe abuse while in custody. These cases shed light on the harsh realities of life in judicial custody, including gross violations during arrests, manipulated narco-analysis tests, and abuse by jail doctors. One subject described the horrific torture they endured, including being stripped, starved, and subjected to physical abuse. These shocking truths provide a stark contrast to the experiences of the wealthy inmates.

Stark Differences Between the Rich and the Poor

Behind Bars effectively highlights the differences in the incarcerated lives of the rich and the poor, the educated and the illiterate, and the young and the old. The rich can continue to enjoy their luxuries, while the poor are subjected to harsh conditions. The educated can navigate the legal system, while the illiterate languish without support. The young can stand

up to jail mafias, while the old live in constant fear. The book also includes interesting anecdotes about Charles Sobhraj and Nirbhaya's rapists, adding depth to the narrative.

Conclusion

Behind Bars is a commendable initiative that opens a dialogue about life in Indian jails, which requires urgent attention. The book's smooth-flowing narrative and the author's commendable access to charge sheets, court orders, and research studies build credibility and faith in the content. However, a more holistic view, including interviews with the subjects' families and jail authorities, would have added depth. Additionally, issues such as homosexual rape in prisons, lack of conjugal visits, smuggling of weapons and drugs, custodial escapes, and the function of crime syndicates deserve more elaboration. Overall, Behind Bars is a respectable effort to shed light on the realities of prison life in India, highlighting the stark differences between the experiences of the rich and the poor. It is a necessary read for anyone interested in understanding the complexities of the Indian prison system and the urgent need for reform.

Sr Santan Nago FS

Book Review
Reformative Explorations
10/3 (2024)
Pages 178 - 180

My Years in an Indian Prison

Mary Tyler

Mary Tyler's *My Years in an Indian Prison* offers a harrowing account of life behind bars in Hazaribagh Jail. Tyler, a human rights lawyer and trade union worker, chose to stand with marginalized people rather than pursue a career as a mathematician after graduating from IIT Delhi. Her book provides a stark portrayal of the inhuman conditions in Indian prisons and the systemic issues that plague the justice system.

Horrors of Jail Life

Tyler's narrative reveals the unbelievable cruelty that prisoners endure. Her account reflects the background and nature of her co-prisoners' crimes and the inhuman atmosphere in Indian jails. Charged alongside fifty-one others, including her husband Amalendu, Tyler spent five years in jail awaiting trial. Her description of the suffocating atmosphere, where even the presence of police brought a breath of the outside world, highlights the isolation and despair experienced by inmates.

The Condition of Women in the Prison

Tyler's depiction of the condition of women in prison is particularly distressing. She describes overcrowded cells where women and children are packed together, unable to move without difficulty. The single latrine, the stench from the open drain, and the lack of basic hygiene facilities paint a grim picture of the daily struggles faced by female prisoners.

Tyler's account of Saibunissa, a Muslim woman jailed along with her family, is a touching example of how generations of families wither away in jails. Saibunissa's story underscores the harsh realities of life in prison and the impact on families left behind.

Corruption in Indian Prisons

Tyler's book also sheds light on the rampant corruption within Indian prisons. She describes how the Head Warder would extort money from prisoners, threatening them with solitary confinement if they did not comply. The jail authorities, according to Tyler, are an unassailable pantheon who lord over the prisoners, with food and clothing often developing mysterious leaks before reaching the inmates. Tyler's account of a woman politician receiving special treatment in jail further illustrates the disparity in how prisoners are treated based on their social status.

A Library of Man-Made Miseries

Tyler's book is a powerful indictment of the Indian prison system. She argues that prisoners should be treated as human beings, not ostracized and insulted. The inhumane conditions in Indian jails, where prisoners are denied basic necessities and subjected to cruelty, only serve to harden their hearts and perpetuate a cycle of crime. Tyler's vivid descriptions of the odour-filled cells and bug-infested rags highlight the urgent need for prison reform.

Conclusion

My Years in an Indian Prison is a compelling and eye-opening account of the harsh realities of life in Indian jails. Tyler's narrative provides a voice for the voiceless and calls for urgent action to improve prison conditions. Her book is a stark

reminder of the systemic issues that plague the justice system and the need for a more humane approach to incarceration. Tyler's work is a valuable contribution to the literature on prison life and a call to action for policymakers and society as a whole.

Sr Santan Nago FS

Book Review
Reformative Explorations
10/3 (2024)
Pages 181 - 183

From Phansi Yard: My Year with the Women of Yerawada

Sudha Bharadwaj

Phansi Yard Diaries is a remarkable document of life observed from the Phansi Yard or Death Row of the Yerawada Women's Jail in Pune. Authored by Sudha Bharadwaj, an extraordinary individual who chose to be a trade union worker and human rights lawyer over a career as a mathematician after graduating from IIT Delhi, this book offers a unique perspective on the lives of marginalized people.

Country Heroes in Prisons

Incarceration has produced some striking texts, with notable examples including Mohandas Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Abul Kalam Azad, and Antonio Gramsci. These historical figures used their time in jail to produce original discourses in political thought and action, insights into the past and present, and great scholarship. Gandhi's acclaimed autobiography, penned from his cell in Yerawada Central Jail, is a testament to the profound reflections that can emerge from imprisonment. Similarly, Sudha Bharadwaj's luminous prison diary offers a humanist reflection on the lives of 76 prisoners, both convicted and undertrial, like herself.

Author's Imprisonment

Sudha Bharadwaj was imprisoned in the Phansi Yard along with Prof. Shoma Sen, who was the head of English

Literature at Nagpur University. Both women were placed in the condemned cell due to charges under the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA), a law widely criticized as an "unlawful law." Bharadwaj, 58, was a visiting professor at the National Law University, Delhi, when she was apprehended by the police and taken to Pune. Sen, many years her senior, remains in prison. Along with other intellectuals and human rights activists, including Father Stan Swamy, Bharadwaj and Sen were imprisoned in the infamous Bhima-Koregaon case, reflecting the regime's desperation to incarcerate champions of the poor in tribal areas and working-class movements.

Prison Experiences

Bharadwaj's prison diaries are surprisingly free of bitterness. She writes with an even tenor, describing her cell as "a cage with a view." This perspective allowed her to keenly observe her fellow women prisoners, who came from various strata of society and formed a unique sorority despite their differences. Bharadwaj captures their womanliness with grace, camaraderie, and ease of writing, elevating the mundane to the extraordinary. Her work serves as a rich ethnographic document, vividly portraying the lives of these women. Bharadwaj's sensibility as a writer shines through in her matter-of-fact observations. She states, "My prison notes are impressionistic snapshots, true to the moment, with no claim to being complete histories…. Observing women, listening to them, writing about them, and about life in a women's jail, helped me. This became my work. It gave me a sense of purpose. It calmed me. It helped me understand where I was, and didn't leave any scope for self-pity." The feminist dimension of her work is evident throughout the book, particularly in the section on "Work," where she records the daily grind in captivity with a natural sense of commitment and elegance.

Conclusion

Phansi Yard Diaries offers a poignant and insightful look into the lives of women living in a state of un-freedom. While there is a sense of sameness and loneliness in following these real-life stories, Bharadwaj's work transcends these limitations. Her observations and reflections provide a powerful testament to the resilience and humanity of her fellow prisoners. This book is a valuable contribution to the literature on prison life and will undoubtedly outlive the present day, serving as a lasting reminder of the strength and dignity of those who endure incarceration.

Sr Santan Nago FS

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.

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**