

THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH IN A WOUNDED REGION

Valley of Tears: The Mission of the Church among the Suffering people of Kashmir

Through a presidential decree on 5th August 2019, the Indian Government revoked the special status granted to Muslim majority Kashmir provided in Article 370 of the Constitution of India. After the resolution concerning this revocation was passed in both the Houses of the Indian Parliament, the Government imposed a crippling curfew, ordered a complete shutdown of communications networks and put the entire political leadership under house arrest. Since the lockdown continues until the present day, the suffering of the people is deepening. What has happened in Kashmir is the direct result of the political ideology of the ruling dispensation, which promotes hatred for Muslims, Christians, Dalits and Tribals.

In the midst of the political, cultural and religious conflict presently causing such havoc in Kashmir, the Catholic Church continues to be at the service of the people by means of its various service centres. The question remains, however, as to how the Church in Kashmir understands her specific mission in the midst of an environment marked by so much division and conflict.

In order to gain a deeper understanding of the contemporary mission of the Church in Kashmir, the author of this article will make personal contact with those serving in the name of the Catholic Church in Srinagar, which is at the heart of the region. The author hopes to reveal the healing and reconciliatory aspects of the Church's mission in this deeply wounded region.

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