



SOMEONE CARES PRISON MINISTRY NEWSLETTER



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Quietly Changing Lives

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IT IS REALLY TRUE
GOD LOVES YOU.

BECAUSE OF YOU,
SOMEONE CARES.

Published monthly by
Someone Cares Prison Ministry
P.O. Box 11245
Fort Wayne IN 46856
Phone: 260-387-7423
Email: sdapm@someonecares.org
UPS : 3431 Cedar Run
Fort Wayne, Indiana 46818

Don & Yvonne McClure
Co-Founders

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THANKFUL FATHER

One day we received this phone call. "Is this Don McClure?" the caller asked. Yes, I replied. "My name is Tony and I want to thank you for saving my son's life!" I beg your pardon, I exclaimed. "About twenty years ago you and your wife were at San Quentin and met my son. He got involved with your Ministry. In doing so he left a prison gang and lived. He came home and was totally changed. He got his mother and I going to Church with him. He was my last son as my other two were killed, one here on the street the other in prison. God Bless you for all you do from someone who cares."



IF IT IS NOT BROKEN

The prison system is terrible, The Court system is worse. Years ago I read an article I wish I had kept which told the story of ten men whose offenses were about the same. We do believe the rich get richer and the poor get prison. Four of these men had good attorneys, one of the four got no sentence, the other three light sentences, and the rest received up to ten years. The unbalanced sentences illustrate the lack of justice in the "justice system." We are overjoyed to see the President doing something to clean up the prison system and the unfair sentences. Still we say, Do the crime, do the time.

WHO IS IN CHARGE?

Inmate gangs run some prisons. Gang members control drugs, alcohol and much else. Years ago the prison had a shake down and the gang members were found to have many kinds of weapons, mostly knives (AKA shanks). Gang members also pay guards for favors. It makes prison life even more terrible for inmates. Due to overcrowding there are often three grown men in a cell - three bunks to one toilet. Some prisons, if they have a Chapel, use it to house inmates. When we were at San Quentin they built a tent city with mud and ocean breeze. In times past inmates had facilities and were able to play basketball, hand ball or work out on good equipment. They often had a large area and a track to run on. Now they are usually allowed outdoors for an hour a day, sometimes less.

Letters From The Inside

MY Name is Inmate A32476.

I have been down a long time and I deserve being here. This prison is in Kentucky. Large walls surround me. I come from an upper class family and for my protection I pay gang members, it has worked a long time.

My Name is Willie.

I was sentenced to die. I deserve it. Thanks to Jesus this world is not my home. I study a lot and keep to myself. It is rumored that the death penalty is going to be stopped. I'm not sure if that will be a blessing, being a Christian makes it tough. Few prisons have church services for death row. Some have special folks well trained visiting. Soon and very soon we will be going to our new home.

I'm Barbara and I Was Not a Christian.

I ran away at the age of 15. Like so many I ended up in the Big City. Turned out by a pimp my life became hell. Selling myself fearing death I made 25% of the going rate of selling my body. I also got hooked on drugs, got arrested and sentenced to ten years for prostitution and drugs. I am lucky to be sent to a prison where Yvonne was the Chaplain. I got into a Bible study and attended Church. She also got me a Pen Friend. I am now a Christian. I am also in school and going to get my GED.

VISIT OUR WEB PAGE

We ask each of you to go online to check out our website at www.someonecares.org, and encourage others to do so as well. There are many newsletters to read under the "Archives" tab, going all the way back to 1998. There are stories and poems, happiness and joy, sorrow and pain. Also you'll see that you can easily make a donation online by clicking on the "Donate" button on the home page. You can securely make a payment through either credit card or PayPal, either a one-time gift or set it up monthly. (But if you are in Canada, please mail us your money since the rate of exchange is terrible.)



Letters From Pen Friends

It Is Time For Me to Retire.

I joined with you a zillion years ago and have been truly blessed. We have written a dozen inmates and it was I who received the blessing. My eyes are bad and my health worse. I got Church members to take care of my guys. God bless your ministry.

Mary

How Do You All Do It?

The years have flown by and think what a blessing it has been. I got discouraged when some have not written back. But I called, all you worked it out or got me a new inmate. My advice is yours: build a friendship and share Jesus slowly. Inmates do try to use us. I got involved with some of my instars family. God put some of my efforts headed in the right direction. You said you were going to quit some of your ads, please use the enclosed funds to not do that. Keep on keeping on.

Geraldine

ALL FAITHS CHAPEL



When we started at Soledad there was too much confusion. Our motto was and still is, "Don't let your doctrine be a barrier, but a bridge to JESUS." We got all the volunteers together and the inmates made a sign to put over the door which read "ALL FAITHS CHAPEL." It stayed there for years.



SO MUCH TO DO

We received a large donation to enhance this Ministry from Michelle and Bob Johnson. One of our intentions has been to put all of our information on how to do Prison Ministry together on DVD. It would include the Dress Out Program to provide inmates with decent clothes upon their release if they have been in prison for a long time. (States vary on how this can be done.) California inmates receive \$200 upon release if they have no clothes. You might wonder what happens to the

clothes an inmate wears when first entering prison? The prison sells them! Another reason a Dress Out Program is important to inmates is that they are paroled to the county of commitment where they were sentenced, even if they know no one there.

Many inmates have never finished school. In California we taught remedial reading using the Bible and our students received their GEDs. It is sad the things that do so much good and cost so little, and yet they don't offer these services. All states provide GED material, but not all have someone to grade the final exams.

We pray that Jesus returns soon, knowing HE hears our prayers. We pray that it will be His will that more folks would join with us so every ear will hear and every knee will bow. We know HE put Yvonne and I together, and when this all started we knew we would be able to do all HE set before us. This world is really a mess, and crime is part of that mess.

RONNA'S COMMENTS

I would just like to ask all of our Christian pen friends, if you have been blessed by writing to an inmate please share your stories with us.

Also I came across a letter that I thought I would share with you. This is from a Christian pen friend that was not happy with the letters she was getting from her inmate pen friend.

I have been feeling very uncomfortable with your letters lately. You are way over stepping your bounds in our letter writing. So as of today this will be my last letter to you. I have informed Someone Cares that I no longer wish to receive letters from you, so they will not forward any mail. The purpose is to uplift each other and get you through a hard time in your life and hopefully spread some cheer. This program is not to get together with the person on the other end, we are not to send money or give out our phone numbers and real addresses. It is completely confidential!

The reason I've shared this with you is because I have had a few calls from Christian pen friends wanting to know what to say and so. I hope this helps.

Blessed be to all of you.



If you have something from an inmate you think we should share in our newsletter, send it our way.

If you know of anyone doing Prison Ministry, send them our way.

I was told by one man that he joined us to become a pen friend because we asked.

And we are still asking 40 years later.

JAKE'S CORNER

Hey there folks, my Grandfather has given some thought to these programs that he ran years ago. Me personally, I want to hear what you think about them. How would you like to go into the prison and visit your inmate once a month? Go and actually get to know them, see them and hear what they have to say instead of reading it...

I think that's a fantastic idea if inmates don't try to take advantage of it. And if they do, you have to know how to handle it. Let us know, give us a call and we will be happy to direct you in the right direction, if not handle it for you. As far as the Dress Out Program, the process is that we all find clothes, shoes, warm coats and gloves, anything that doesn't have holes in them, then store them for when the inmate gets out. He or she may not have a place to go but they will have warm clothes, something that they can call their own.

It is a lot to ask of an individual or even a church to find clothes and store them. But what would you feel like if you were tossed out into this world with literally nothing? No home, no food, no money, and only the clothes you have on your back. We may not be able to give them a home but we can give them something to start with.

The way I see it, the inmate that you are writing to is getting out, they tell you their out date, and if you are comfortable you suggest you want to see them or meet them when they get out. Give them the clothes and an invitation to your church. If it were me getting out of prison and someone said they wanted to give me warm clothes and an invitation to their church I would feel blessed that I had something and maybe that feeling of being blessed would rub off on another ex con that got out, or one of his buddies from the inside hears about how Someone Cares had effected his life. You may pick a program you like and donate to it

I want to hear what you think, folks. Write us a letter letting us know your thoughts. You are the anchor of this Ministry.

God bless,
Jake