We have written many New Years newsletters since the time God started this Ministry with us. To God be the glory, great things HE has done! Being plucked from the pit of hell to a promise of Paradise makes me smile a lot. God’s humor is evident, as he took me out of Satan’s grip and lead us to a Ministry in and on His turf, but in the prison system. I still remember how really hard being a Christian was. God’s word promised me a help mate, and HE gave me a peach! Yvonne and I grew in our love for each other as we came to understand God’s love for us.

We have prayed that our love would reach every inmate ever involved with this Ministry. The growth of the Ministry continues, and I do not see it slowing down one bit, unless of course this is the year of our Lord’s return. In the meantime, because of YOU, Someone Cares. AMEN!

We have really been blessed ever since we stumbled into Soledad Prison years ago. I went from a grammar school drop out to the speaker and director of a Ministry blessed by God. Each day we are blessed by seeing mail going to and coming from Prison that is changing lives.

I can certainly see a lot of humor through the Paper Sunshine program. Good people raised in the Church are venturing into the cesspools of American prisons, and I’ve seen inmates leading Church members to Christ. (Of course, the reverse is more common.)

But we also see the more common humorless side of things – men, women, boys and girls locked up, too often for a crime they did not commit. Most of them are then severely abused, and sadly have no idea of God’s love.

We have plans to try and change some prison rules that make no sense and are not beneficial to the inmate. For instance, currently pastors or

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lay people are allowed to go into prisons and preach or teach – this is ministry in prison. However, they are not allowed to have one on one time with the inmates in order to reach them on a more personal level – which would be Prison Ministry.

Over time, we’ll share with you some of the one to one meetings we have had, along with the end results. You will be blessed. Prison Ministry is crime prevention.

**Prisons Do Not Exclude God**

Strong are the walls around me that hold me all the day. But they who thus have bound me cannot keep God away. These dungeon walls are dear because the God I love is here. They know who thus oppress me, that it is so hard to be alone. But know not that one can bless me HE comes through bars and stone. He makes my dungeon wall of darkness bright, and fills my heart with exquisite delight. Thy love, Oh God, restores me from sighs and tears to praise. Deep my soul adores thee. None thinks of time or place. I ask not in good or ill, but union with thy holy will. This is that which makes my treasure, ‘tis that which brings me gain, converting woe to pleasure then reaping joy from pain. This is enough for whatever befalls to know that God is all and all.

*By James Prince*
*(Florida Maximum Security Prison)*

**Because You Care**

As I meditate and pray in my prison cell (blessed in a place that most call hell) I see how the Potter molds the clay as He gives me the grace and discernment to say: The worst of times have wrought the best here; in my faith is brought to test. A diamond is made through pressure and time. Priceless are we when so refined. A pearl is conceived by irritating sand, a process bequeathed from God’s own hand. The outcome perceived as something grand. For although we suffer here, through toil or share, God regenerates, reshapes, with loving care.

*By S. Anderson*
*(1941-1987, Died from AIDS)*

**To Give You An Idea**

Years ago, before Christ changed me, a friend of mine and I were chatting in her apartment. We were talking about finding a different way to launder money. Yvonne came in and said, “I have a new washing machine. Would that help?” The worlds she and I grew up in were vastly different, and that is why I am sure that God put us together.
PAPER SUNSHINE INSTRUCTIONS

This program that matches free folks with inmates works like this:

- We send you a packet with an inmate’s application and intro letter.
- You write to the inmate.
- You never give out your home address. This is risk free since you all “live” at our P.O. Box address.
- You place your letter in an envelope and address it to the inmate with their name, number and address. The return address is your name or “pen name” but with our address in Fort Wayne - do not add the ministry’s name “Someone Cares.” (When you write you may tell them about Someone Cares, but omit that from the address please.)
- You stamp and seal your letter to the inmate, then place it in another envelope addressed to us. On this envelope, please write your real name and address in the return address spot.
- Your pen friend must be told to address their letter to YOUR name at our P.O. Box, and NOT to Someone Cares.

If you all follow these simple instructions we should be able to take your letter to your pen friend out of the envelope sent to us, and simply drop it in the mail (please!). Also, we should be able to quickly forward letters from the inmate on to you.

Unfortunately, we have a large stack of letters that we don’t know where to send because there are no names on them.

Yvonne’s Corner

My theory before going to prison to minister was: You do the crime, you do the time. Well, God set me straight real quick. Once I went and met the men, women and children and listened to the many different stories, I realized that some might be guilty, but there were so many who had been abused and raped as children – they didn’t know better and thought it was the only way of life.

We as Christians sometimes live in our own world. I was a minister’s daughter and was very unaware what went on in the real world. The street life where Don came from was so different from the world I knew, it sometimes seemed like a foreign language - a lot of slang and gang talk that I would have to ask Don about.

You see, it is a real mission field right here where we live, and you can help change it. The world around you isn’t always what it seems to be. I discovered that years ago, but I was willing to learn with Don by my side. There have been many times he’s laughed at me and some of my questions, but remember there is no such thing as a stupid question. We are here if you need us, and are happy to help.

Welcome to all the new comers. God will bless you!

A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

- John 13:34-35
FIGHT THE GOOD FIGHT

This world is going through some very serious times, with the economy affecting us all. Conditions in prison were bad before, but are getting worse. Cutbacks are everywhere, but for those in prison it can be especially terrible, making it difficult to come by even a stamp, paper or pen. Your pen friend may want to write to you, but is unable to do so. Do not give up if you aren’t receiving letters, but please contact us.

John was a service station manager who stole $200 to help feed his family. It was still a crime, but he received a very stiff sentence of five years. His innocence, or ignorance, made him prey for gangs. John joined our Pen Friend program, and the gangs pressured him into asking for money using numerous lies. Luckily we caught on and helped him get a transfer.

If your pen friend asks for anything, please do not be offended. If you are able to provide what they ask for, fine, but if you are not able, tell them. Please just do not give up.

Now a mixed blessing and problem is that we just have no way of dealing with is the success of this Ministry. Often we get so much mail we cannot read it before forwarding it, so if you get an offensive letter, please return it to us. We will rematch you and take the offender.

STARS IN THEIR CROWN

We are blessed with 13 Christians in their 90s writing inmates, and there are six folks and two couples writing over 100 inmates, as well as 30 pastors writing to inmates. Sadly we lost 16 folks, which we will someday, soon I pray, see in Heaven.

The last V.O.P radio show we were on was a great success. We got six home-church groups, and all are writing to pen friends. We were asked, and honored the request, to add 513 folks to our prayer list. Last year 63 inmates that we know of were baptized.

We also have received calls, emails or letters from folks asking us to help one of their kin in prison some how. So often a person goes to prison and all turn their backs on them. Some deserve it, but what would Jesus do?

THE GOD SQUAD GROWS

Michelle edits our newsletters then sends them to our new printer, The Printing Press in Fort Wayne – this has added a lot. We have a new bookkeeper who is trying to make me print more often, and she is a blessing. We also now have six charter groups helping us field the flow of mail.

We are overjoyed to have ended last year in the black (we’ll send receipts with next month’s newsletter). We pray all who donated will match what they gave and that God will add an increase.

We are excited as to what God has done and will do for all of us. As I bounce near 78 my health is better than ever, and in fact I no longer take insulin. Please add us and our inmates to your prayer list.

May you all have a blessed New Year, and we pray that you grow in your relationship with Jesus. Don & Yvonne

JESUS ON THE MAIN LINE

We were really blessed by a phone call from the distant past. Terry was listening to us on the VOP radio program in his car and almost drove into a ditch when he heard our names. He was our clerk 25 years ago at Soledad Prison, and since that time we chatted and emailed quite a bit. Some time ago he was paroled and returned to Canada, and we lost track of him.

When he recently called, he thanked us for all that we do (again, we feel that we receive all the credit for what so many of you are also a part of). He said, “The reason your Ministry excelled is that you both really loved us.” Yes, we did and still do. We will be sharing more from Terry later.

A lesson we learned in God’s word is that HE never saw us as we were, or as we are, but as we can be through HIS love. And, He wants us to love others just as He loves us. That’s what we continually strive to do in this Ministry.