



Prison Report

NEWSLETTER OF PARTNERS IN EVANGELISM PRISON MINISTRY

Partners . . . A Light in a Very Dark Tunnel!

Sue Ellen, Arizona

I entered prison for the first time in 2002 at the age of 57, a well-educated, well-traveled woman who never imagined being in this place. For your information, I'm here for securities fraud.

I've learned a great deal in the past three years about how our culture deals with crime and punishment. These women—about 2,400 total—really are the forgotten, voiceless population. Most of their crimes are drug related. They come from backgrounds of abuse and start drugs to escape. Then they start stealing or selling their bodies to pay for the drugs. It's a vicious circle leading nowhere. I know young women who were introduced to drugs by their parents as young as eight or



Courtesy of CNS

nine years old. Nearly half of all the inmate population here doesn't have an eighth-grade education. They have no future and no hope.

Although there are many who enter prison as Catholics, they often become Protestants. Why? Few Catholic volunteers and tiny budgets for activities. Here there are very few resources available for Catholic inmates, no counselors, and no visiting priests.

So it is a blessing to receive *The Word Among Us*, and I'm grateful. Last year I mysteriously received *Step by Step to Calvary: Stations of the Cross for Prisoners*. It is a perfect tool for anyone behind bars. Partners is a light in what can be a very dark tunnel.

GREETING CARDS!

It is that time of year again! Chaplains are requesting Thanksgiving or Christmas cards that their prisoners could send to their loved ones.

If you have any, please send them either to your local Catholic prison chaplain or to us here at Partners.

Your thoughtfulness will bring much joy to others this holiday season.

EXPANDED MINISTRY!

PARTNERS TO REACH OUT TO CATHOLIC SERVICE MEN AND WOMEN

See page 2.

Will You Be a \$100 Fall Partner?

During the remaining months of this year Partners needs your help to renew the subscriptions of 26,000 prisoners for a further six months.

Your tax-deductible partnership gift of \$100 will go toward meeting these expenses.

Partners also wants in the coming months to begin serving some of the 1,500 prisoners on our waiting list.

Every size gift will help!

Partners' Ministry to Service Men and Women



Courtesy of catholicmil.org

Brothers and Sisters,

I am very excited to tell you of our expanded Partners in Evangelism outreach. As you know, the mission of Partners in Evangelism has always been *to help those most in need grow in their faith life as Catholics*. Working with Angela, the Director of the Prison Ministry, you our generous partners have been serving our needy Catholic brothers and sisters in prison (today over 26,000 inmates every month and growing). Now, without ever forgetting its ministry to prisoners, Partners in Evangelism is expanding its mission to reach out to Catholic service men and women. This Advent we will begin by trying to send *The Word Among Us* to as many as 5,000 service men and women in Iraq, Afghanistan, and other areas of need.

We are also particularly excited and heartened because we have heard from many of you who are already our partners—and also from other readers of *The Word Among Us*—encouraging us to move into this ministry! These service men and women might be our sons and daughters, our brothers and sisters, our relatives, our friends, or our neighbors. Or we are just grateful for the sacrifices they are making.

We all know how important it is in our own lives to come into contact with the Lord Jesus every day in prayer

and Scripture. And it is particularly true that our Catholic service men and women in Iraq and Afghanistan share that same desire—especially during this difficult time in their lives. These men and women today are away from home, far from family, and far from their local church. Many are dealing with the stress of combat and the horrors of war. Many are in places or circumstances where our overworked chaplains cannot fully support all of them. In fact, many soldiers are not able to carry a Bible because space is at a premium. For that reason, we believe that those serving in Iraq and Afghanistan will need to receive the complete Mass edition of *The Word Among Us*.

We also know from Catholic chaplains who have served with them that these men and women are thirsting for spiritual guidance. They want to know how to find God in the environment in which they find themselves; and they want to grow with him in those difficult circumstances. We also know that there are never enough chaplains to serve all of them effectively. But working together, we can step into the breach and offer God's love and compassion, his mercy and his daily touch, to our Catholic service men and women. With *The Word Among Us* they will be able to know and experience the presence of God daily. They

can meet God through prayer, and they can expect that God will speak to them through the Scriptures and meditations. As partners together, we can bring them this wonderful gift!

We encourage you, please, to pray for these service men and women, as well as the thousands of men and women in prison. To all of them, our brothers and sisters, we say that our prayers are with you, and God is close to you at this moment!

Bryan Keilty
Director

Ministry to Service Men and Women



Partners in Prayer

Father—we pray for our brothers and sisters in prison who struggle with forgiveness. We ask that every prisoner experience your loving acceptance, forgiveness, and mercy, and in turn forgive themselves and offer forgiveness to others.

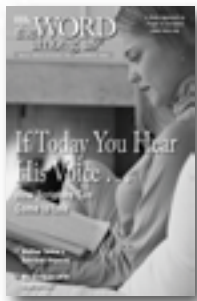
Jesus—we pray for the victims of crime, for correctional officers, for prison chaplains and volunteers, and for the spouses, children, and parents of prisoners. Jesus, we pray that your Precious Blood will protect them from all evil.

Holy Spirit—watch over our expanded ministry to service men and women. We pray that the truths of your love in the Scriptures and in the meditations in *The Word Among Us* will bring comfort and encouragement to our brothers and sisters in combat.

Sponsor a Prison Program

Partners in Evangelism would like to invite you to join our “Sponsor a Prison” program. When you sponsor a prison with the card at your right, your monthly gift of \$10, \$20 or \$40 will guarantee that Catholic inmates receive solid Catholic guidance during their years in prison.

Currently, *Partners in Evangelism Prison Ministry* is sending over



26,000 prisoners
The Word Among Us
each month.

YES, I will help meet the spiritual needs of my brothers and sisters in prison.

- I will sponsor a prison, helping 10 prisoners for \$10 per month.
 I will sponsor a prison, helping 20 prisoners for \$20 per month.
 I will sponsor a prison, helping 40 prisoners for \$40 per month.
 Please accept a one-time donation in the amount of \$ _____

Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Phone (_____) _____

- I want to charge my first month's sponsorship or my one-time contribution to my:
 Visa MasterCard Discover

Amount \$ _____ Card No _____ Exp. Date ____/____

Signature _____

MAIL TO:

USA: Partners in Evangelism, 9639 Doctor Perry Rd., #126, Ijamsville, MD 21754

CANADA: Metanoia Outreach, ATTN: Partners in Evangelism, Box 1107, Station F, Toronto, Ontario M4Y 2T8 (This will insure a tax-deductible receipt for checks only)
 (Fall 2005)



Dear Friend,



What an exciting summer for Partners! As many of you know, I'm always asking the Lord to guide us in the direction Partners should take next. As you'll see from page 2 of this newsletter, the Holy Spirit has pointed us toward a new ministry—to Catholic service men and women! This Advent we will begin by sending monthly copies of *The Word Among Us* to Catholic chaplains in Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere for distribution.

Our general readership will be informed of this expanded ministry in the December issue of the magazine, but I particularly wanted **you** to know about it now. You truly are our partner! We treasure your partnership with us in prayer as well as your generous donations, as together we have reached out with God's love to prisoners. Now I ask for your prayers as

we move ahead with the Holy Spirit's latest promptings—to reach out to service men and women who are far from home and facing the hazards of war!

I am greatly enjoying working with Bryan Keilty. He will carry out most of the responsibilities for this new outreach, while I will continue to focus primarily on the ministry to prisoners. One small change that you will notice will be the renaming of our newsletter. Starting with the winter issue it will be called ***The Partners Report***. In it, Bryan and I will update you with all that is happening in these two Partners outreaches. In the meantime, if you have any questions about either ministry, please don't hesitate to call Bryan (ext. 2136) or me (ext. 2100) at 1-800-775-9673.

During the summer I attended the ACCCA (American Catholic Correctional Chaplains' Association) annual conference. I want to pass on to you their appreciation of the sacrifices

you make in reaching out to prisoners. Through sacrifices such as yours, prisoners continue not only to be changed by God but to be moved to carry out his mission when they are released. At the conference three former prisoners gave their witness. A woman who was incarcerated for ten years has started a program in Baltimore for women re-entering society—she employs only ex-offenders. A man who spent over 40 years in and out of prison is helping at a half-way house. Another man is entering his diocesan Deaconate program this fall.

Do please share with me—and our other “partners”—any stories you may have of the transforming effects of God's love in the lives of prisoners.

In the meantime, I will continue to pray, “Lord, what's next for Partners?”

Your sister in Christ,
 Angela M. Burrin
 Director

www.partnersinevangelism.org

TAX-DEDUCTIBLE!

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Partners in Evangelism

Prison Ministry
9639 Doctor Perry Road, #126
Ijamsville, Maryland
21754



Non-Profit
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PAID
The Word Among Us

Peeling an Onion

By Tony, a prisoner in Nevada

First I would like to thank you for *Step by Step to Calvary: Stations of the Cross for Prisoners*. It has helped tremendously in giving me a better understanding of Jesus' life and death. Now, as your survey requested, here is a short witness of how God has worked in my life "behind bars."

Through divine inspiration, I have learned the difference between being incarcerated, versus being imprisoned. Though they may have the same meaning, the former is only relevant in my life now. I was in prison way *before* I became incarcerated. I was raised in an Italian-Catholic family. However, most of my life, I never really felt a connection or love from God. I was taught to fear God. So I was always afraid of God. Because I knew I was

not perfect, I thought God did not love me. I have felt heavy guilt for most of my life—that is until one day the psychologist here gave me some spiritual books to read.

Little by little, day by day, I started feeling a connection with God. I was thirsty and wanted more. I started going to the Mass here and to some of the other prison ministry services. I continued to read and study everything I could get my hands on pertaining to spirituality.

Over the years, I have shed those layers of guilt and shame I once had—just like the layers of an onion being peeled. Now I know God is in my life every minute of every day. God is closer than the air I breathe. I pray that everyone can peel the onion in their life! ■

PRAYER REQUESTS FROM PRISONERS

- For our soldiers overseas who are giving their lives for us all.
- For healing of addictions.
- For my victims, their family, and God's mercy on me.
- For guidance when I get released next year.
- For corrections officers as they do their very difficult and demanding occupation.
- For reconciliation with one of my brothers.