

SPIRITUAL
NEWSLETTER



COLLINS BAY
PENITENTIARY
FEB. 1988

ISSUE

VIEWS OF A VOLUNTEER

In this newsletter, we're used to seeing articles written by inmates, so I suggested, and Larry apparently agreed, that it might provide a little change of pace to print a few comments from an "outsider". The problem arose when I realized that I didn't have any firm ideas of what to say, and I thought to myself: "Do I really have anything worthwhile to say?". Once committed, though, I couldn't back out, and I felt that at least I could give some indication of a volunteer's thoughts and feelings.

I first became involved with Collins Bay as a volunteer in chapel programs (primarily through music) in August or September 1984. Then later, I got involved in Kairos weekends, and in "Fourth Day" - the followup to Kairos. The first time I came into the penitentiary, I must admit that I had the same feelings as most other people who have not been inside: a little nervous. Again like most others, it didn't take me long to realize that there are no fundamental differences between the people inside and those outside. I quickly became comfortable as I got to know some of the inmates, and I have obviously enjoyed my visits, since I've kept coming in for almost four years now.

Unfortunately, it seems that the majority of people on the street either never think of the prisons, or, if they do, feel that inmates are "different". Maybe this shouldn't be a total surprise, when you consider that I and a number of other volunteers once had similar feelings. Most outsiders will change their feelings only if they experience a visit inside a prison, or if they hear about it from someone they know. Generally in the past, I haven't gone out of my way to talk to outsiders about my prison involvement (although I haven't avoided it either). Recently, though, I've made a point of mentioning it more often, when an opportunity presents itself. Who knows, a few people might even change their minds!

As I said previously, I have enjoyed coming into Collins Bay, and I hope that, along with other volunteers, I have helped some inmates to feel a little more in touch with the outside world. But it doesn't end there: from a purely selfish point of view, I think I have also gained a lot. Not only have I met a number of people that I liked, but I think that I have learned a lot, and gotten to know myself better in the process.

Congratulations to all those involved in producing this newsletter, or involved in any way in Christian movements. I'm sure that prison environments can be changed by Christ, and I think it shows at Collins Bay.

God bless,
Terry Lynch.



Happy Valentines



Laying in a cell at night....listening to the sounds of the night and the cellblockdifferent sounding coughs, soft or loud snores, someone dropping something and muttering in the quietness, the careful opening of a squeaky drawer and the soft padding sounds of the guard as he makes the hourly walk and his wavery silhouette slips by the bars of your cell. Seldom are you alone but at this time of night, you are truly alone with the thoughts of your mind and heart. Among the many topics that may filter through a man's mind, are those that bring the picture images of the people he loves. His wife, his mother, father, children, brothers, sisters, girlfriends and special people in his life. Laying there in the black ink softness of the night, you picture their smiles, their eyes and you imagine the sound of their laughter and you whisper to yourself "tomorrow I am going to write to her, or them, and say that I love and care. Let them know just that. Nothing else; just that."

But when daylight softly seeps into the cell and the door comes banging open, another day starts in prison. The rush for meals, with the lineups and waiting. The long hours locked up in a shop or the area that we work in. Counts. Lock ups. Maybe an interview. If you have a special interest group or therapy group, you have to attend in the evening. Suddenly it is the eleven o'clock lock down and count again. But it's twenty four hours later. The letter hasn't been written and the message hasn't been sent to those we love. Not because we didn't mean to or because our feelings of love towards our special people are false. We just get caught up in the routine of prison life and doing time. That's the way prison works. Don't ask me why, but it does - from the east coast to the west and from California to here. I've seen it in every prison. The daily "grind", "routine", or "system" eats you up and a lot of letters that should get written or sent, don't get written and sent. We think that "She or they know that I love her or them"..... well, yes, maybe "she" or "they" do know we love them, but we should still "tell" those special people in our lives that we do love them and care about them.

So this message is sent out to all the "Sweethearts and Special people" of the prisoners in this place....."We thank you and we love you for the many things you do for us. Visits in both cold and hot weather - rain and snow. Letters & cards with love and encouragement in them. Letters of support and friendship. And the dozens of things that are done for us, out of love for us. We do not tell you "Thank you and we love you" nearly enough, but we do. Happy Valentines Day and have a nice visit.



“ LOVE ”

is life's finest achievement

Larry Harvey
Editor
Spiritual Newsletter



T H E L E G E N D O F T H E V A L E N T I N E

The legend says ST. VALENTINE
Was in a prison cell
Thinking of his little flock
He had always loved so well
And, wanting to assure them
Of his friendship and his love,
He picked a bunch of violets
And sent them by a dove.....

And on the violets' velvet leaves
He pierced these lines divine
That simply said, "I LOVE YOU"
And "I'M YOUR VALENTINE"....
So through the years that followed,
From that day unto this,
Folks still send messages of love
And seal them with a kiss....

Because a SAINT in prison
Reached through prison bars one day
And picked a bunch of violets
And sent them out to say
That FAITH and LOVE can triumph,
No matter where you are,
For FAITH and LOVE are GREATER
Than the strongest prison bar.



Thanks be to God



LORD TEACH US TO PRAY

(CHORUS)

Lord, teach us to pray, its been a long and cold December kinda day,
With our hearts and hands all busy, in our private little wars,
We stand and watch each other now from sep'rate shores....we lose the way.

1. I need to know to'day the way things should be in my head,
I need to know for once now the things that should be said,
I've got to learn to walk around as if I were not dead,
I've got to find a way to learn to live.
(chorus)....please read between each verse.
2. I still get so distracted by the colour of my skin,
I still get so upset now, when I find that I don't win,
I meet so many strangers, I'm so slow to take them in,
I've got to find a way to really live.
(Chorus)....please read
3. I stand so safe and sterile as I watch a man fall flat,
I'm silent with a man who'd like to know just where I'm at,
With the aged and the lonely I can barely tip my hat,
I need to see the sins of "I don't care..."
(Chorus)....please read
4. I stand so smug and sure before the people I've outguessed,
To let a man be who he is, I still see as a test.
And when it all comes down to "must", I'm sure my way is best;
I've got to find what "room" means in my heart.
(Chorus)....please read
5. I walk and fall, myself, alone,- can't tolerate a guide,
And when the camps split up, I'm sure to put you on my side.
And dare someone to challenge me and swear I will not hide,
I've got to find a better way to live.
(Chorus)....please read
6. I mouth so many things, take so little time to weigh,
I've let it all slip by in the sweep of yesterday,
I can't believe you mean it all to grace me on my way,
I've got to find a way to really live.

Lord, teach us to pray, we still believe that we can find a better way,
Teach us to pray; we lose the way. Teach us to pray.

"That which we have seen and heard declare
we unto you, that ye also may have fellow-
ship with us; and truly our fellowship is
with the Father, and with his Son Jesus
Christ. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship
one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all
sin. I John 1 : 3, 7

} By Joe Wise
{ From: World Library
{ of Sacred Music
{

Through our prayers, Brothers & Sisters, we find that: "the fruit
of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness,
goodness, faith." Galatians 5 : 22



P artakers of His promise in Christ
 (Ephesians 3:6)
R econciled to God by the death of His Son
 (Romans 5:10)
I nfants in Christ
 (1 Corinthians 3:1)
S anctified by God and preserved in Christ
 (Jude 1:1)
O ffspring of God
 (Acts 17:29)
N ew creations in Christ
 (2 Corinthians 5:17)
E ternal life, given by God, in His Son
 (1 John 5:11)
R edeemed to God by the blood
 (Revelation 5:9)
S aved according to His mercy
 (Titus 3:5)

TUBE

A QUESTION.

Have I had to travel
 this long hard road,
 while others strode so easily.

Have I had to spend these
 many years locked up,
 while others roamed so freely.

Have I had to shed the tears
 like an ocean,
 while others woke with a smile.

Have I had to break the hearts
 of my family,
 while others only felt their pride.

Just to make me realize?

Larry Harvey



Wham

"I'm an agnostic!"

A LOVE STORY

It happened on February 14, 1945. Valentines Day--of all days!

I was waiting for an appointment with the noose. I'd had it! I couldn't take it any more and put myself in the psychiatric ward, hoping beyond hope that the doctor's and Jesus' help could somehow make it easier.

Then, in the next cubicle--I hate to think of it as a cell--a man came in who had attempted suicide. I'll call him "Paul". Still strong with our Lord, I felt Him calling me to act--and act I did. I did not let Jesus down, nor He me. I struck up a conversation with Paul.

Me: How's it going, Paul?

Paul: Terrible.

Me: Aw, it'll be alright. You must have faith, Paul.

Paul: Me? Faith?? I have no faith. I'm not even a Christian. My wife's sleeping with another man. My son just was killed in an accident. I have nothing left. (He cries)

Me: You have Jesus, Paul. He'll always love you. He'll never leave you.

Paul: him! He doesn't care about me, if he exists.

Me: No, Paul. He cares. He loves you. He's real. You must have faith.

Paul: (He ponders a long while) Prove it! Prove He's real!

Me: I could give you all the proof you'd want, and it would all be meaningless. There is no proof. You must have faith.

Paul: What's all this "faith" bullshit. Get away from me you creepy Christian before I loose my temper!

With this, I left Paul to let him reflect. I've never seen him again, not to this day. Yet, the last I heard, he was working at a Christian mission in Columbia helping all the kids ravaged by the savage drug trade there.

What happened on February 14, 1945--Valentines Day--was a bright pinpoint of light in a field of darkness. When people were bloodily, cruelly killing each other, Jesus, our blessed, beautiful Lord, was at work. It is a love story between me and Paul and Jesus.

And guess what?? I'm still HERE! And so is Jesus!! You must have faith!

Ian

"PRISONER IS MISSIONARY CANDIDATE."

Reprint from: New Life Inside Vol. 1, No.2

Dear Mr. Paul;

We recently received an application from you for service under our missionary board. It is our policy to be frank and open-minded as possible with all our applicants. We now have an exhaustive case history of your activities.

Frankly we are surprised that you have been able to pass as a bona fide missionary. We are told that you are afflicted with a severe eye disorder which is certain to be an insurmountable obstacle and handicap to an effective ministry. Our board requires 20/20 vision, both eyes, for all applicants.

Is it true that you have a prison record? Certain people report that you did two years time at Caesarea and were also imprisoned at Rome. You are also accused of making so much trouble for the business men of Ephesus that they refer to you as "the man who turned the world upside down." Such sensationalism has no place in our mission, and we continue to deplore your lurid "over-the-wall-in--a-basket" episode at Damascus.

We are appalled at your obvious lack of gentlemanly behaviour. Diplomatic men are not stoned and dragged out of the city gate or assaulted by furious mobs like you have been. Have you ever suspected that gentler words might gain you friends?

Your ministry has been far too flighty to be successful: first into Asia Minor, then Macedonia, then Greece, then Italy and now you are considering a wild goose chase into Spain. Concentration is more important than spreading one's own powers. You cannot win the whole world by yourself; you are just one little man.

In a recent sermon you said "God forbid that I should glory in anything except the cross of Christ." It seems to us that you also might glory in our heritage, our denominational program, the unified budget, etc. And also, who do you think you are trying to tell people that you long to impart some spiritual blessing to them? Are they not educated enough to care for themselves?

Dr. Luke reports that you are a little man, bald, frequently sick and always so worried about your little churches that you sleep very poorly. He also reports that you fidget around the house half the night praying. A healthy mind in a robust body is necessary in all our applicants.

You wrote recently to Timothy that you had "fought a good fight." Fighting is hardly a recommendation for a missionary. No fight is a good fight. Jesus came not to bring a sword but peace. You boast that you fought with wild beasts at Ephesus. What on earth do you mean?

It hurts me to tell you this, Brother Paul, but in all my 25 years experience I have never met a man so opposite to the requirements of our Foreign Mission Board. If we accept you, we would break every rule of modern missionary practice.

Sincerely,

Heady N. Highminded
Director, Faithless Mission

(The above was written about the Apostle Paul in the New Testament. God often chooses those people others never would!)

" And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." Jeremiah 31 : 34

+++++

Say, didn't Jesus wear sandals, have long hair and a beard like a some prisoners and didn't the Romans call him a Rebel? Isn't that interesting!



A MEDITATION

by Cardinal Newman

God has created me to do him some definite service; He has committed some work to me which he has not committed to another. I have my mission - - I may never know it in this life, but I shall be told it in the next.

I am a link in a chain, a bond of connection between persons. He has not created me for naught. I shall do good, I shall do his work. I shall be an angel of peace, a preacher of truth in my own place while not intending it -- if I do but keep his Commandments.

Therefore, I will trust him, whatever, wherever I am. I can never be thrown away. If I am in sickness, my sickness may serve him; in perplexity, my perplexity may serve him; if I am in sorrow, my sorrow may serve him. He does nothing in vain. He knows what he is about. He may take away my friends, he may throw me among strangers. He may make me feel desolate, make my spirits sink, hide my future from me - still he knows what he is about.

Submitted by Chuck McCartney,
a very special brother.

If, instead of a gem
or even a flower, --
we could cast the gift
of a lovely thought
into the heart
of a friend;,,,,,,
that would be giving
as the Angels give.

by G. Macdonald

My Prayer.

Oh Lord,
You have worked miracles before,
And I ask you to work one once more.

Or is that selfish Lord,
To ask you to change my life.

Not just for me, Lord...
but for me and my family.

Larry

When....
When I hold a child,
and hear him laugh and smile,
I hear God laugh,
and see him smile.

Do you?
L. H.





Spiritual Newsletter



Collins Bay Penitentiary
P.O.Box 190
Kingston, Ont, K7L 4V9

January 11th, 1988

To: Ms. Y. Latta, Warden; A/W Mr. J. Blackler; A/W Mr. Boswell
Rev. John Flindall; Rev. L. Withers, - Prot. Chaplaincy Dept.
Deacon B. MacDonald; Fr. Bill Steacy, - R.C. Chaplaincy Dept.
Mr. Wink Wilson, Social Development Department

RE: Family Ecumenical Church Services

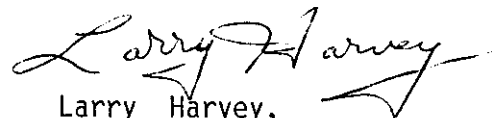
It has been requested that I draw up this proposal on behalf of the Christian brotherhood and groups, here at Collins Bay and I therefore request that the following be considered for approval by the Administration of Collins Bay.

Under Commissioner's Directive #750, Titled "Religious Services and Programs", the "Policy Objective" reads; "To ensure recognition of the Spiritual dimension of life by actively encouraging inmates to express their spirituality and exercise their religion when this does not affect the good order of the Institution; to provide ministry to inmates, staff and families."

We request that quarterly Family Ecumenical Church services be considered, approved and formulated. We are not asking for a type of Social; we are asking for an Ecumenical church service where inmates and family members are allowed to partake of the Sacraments together. Possibly on a Sunday afternoon, from 1:30 to 4:30 pm. The family guests and inmates could be in the Chapel by 2:00 and the service could start right at 2:00 and be completed by approximately 3:30 or whenever the Chaplains conclude the service. This type of sharing with the families is felt to be important by us prisoners and we feel there is a real need for this type of church service and activity.

We request your assistance, co-operation and guidance in this matter, and we look forward to your reply. I remain

Sincerely yours


Larry Harvey,
Editor,



"Seek and thee shall find"

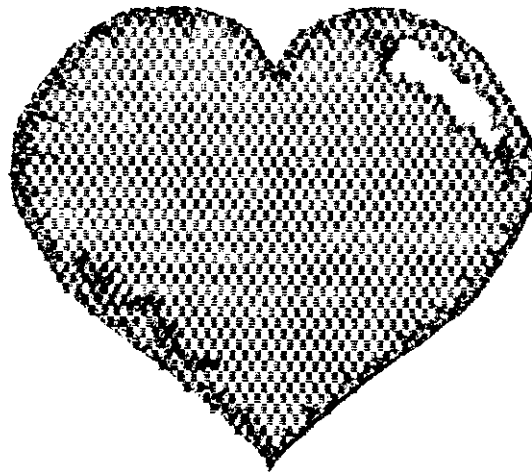


"Remember those who are in prison, as though you were in prison with them" Heb. 13:3

A little boy of about eight years
was kneeling and saying his prayers;
he asked God for a special need-
Oh! how much he wanted a ten speed.

For thirty days he would wash the dishes....
if God made good of his wishes,
saying thanks, he climbed under the blanket
thinking of his new bike he hoped to get.

He thought of washing dishes everyday..
that it was a big price to pay;
once again he bowed his head
asking God if he could change what he had said.



Thirty days of dishes was too much to do-
would seven days make his wish come true ?
one more time he hopped in bed to sleep
concerned with this promise he now had to keep.

Jumping out of bed he ran out of his room
down the hallway to his parents bedroom,
grabbed the statue of Virgin Mary and ran out the door
and hid it under the clothes in his dresser drawer.

Once again he got down on his knees
told God to forget his previous pleas;
he warned God that he would never see his mom again
if he did not get a ten speed bike for him.

JUBE

CLUB NOTICES

Salvation Army Group - This group meets every monday evening from 6:30 to 9:30 and invites you to come down to the classroom area, behind the library, for a cup of coffee and some fellowship. There is guest speakers, Testimonies, musical instruments and some good singing. Major Mills also is in every tuesday afternoon for private counselling, interviews and bible study.

Bible Study Group - this group meets every tuesday afternoon from 1:30 to 3:30. Major Mills, John Rice & John Walton lead this study.

4th Day Group - This group meets every other Thursday evening from 6:30 to 9:30. If you want to share in good christian singing, hear testimonies, teachings and guest speakers.

King's Rangers - this group meets every friday evening from 6:30 to 9:30 and works with many Christian & Community Projects.

R.C. Mass - Mass is held every Saturday morning at 9:00 and we have Fr. Bill Steacy, Deacon Bernie MacDonald and different community volunteers each week.

Prot. Church Service - Service & Mass is held every Sunday afternoon. Rev. John Flindall and community volunteers and guest speakers always make it interesting to attend.

Full Gospel Group - this group meets every sunday evening from 6:30 to 9:30 and share in Bible teachings, prayer, singing, guest speakers and fellowship.

"Broken Pieces"- This T.V. prison outreach ministry, is run by Pastor John Rice, from the Congregational Mission Church. "Broken Pieces" is a T.V. program shown at 6:30 pm Thursday evenings on Cabel 13, and reshown on sunday mornings at 11:30 am and is directed towards prisoners and prison topics. Check it out, you may find it interesting and rewarding.

UP COMING EVENTS

Spiritual Weekend - "KAIROS" - May 21st, 22nd & 23rd. Open to the prison population, with a large number of community volunteers and Christian Brothers & Sisters interested in the prison ministry.

Gospelfest - a highlight of the christian community within the walls of Collins Bay Penitentiary. A day filled with Gospel singing Groups, Testimonies, teachings and a wonderful day of fellowship. This is scheduled for August 13th, 1988.

It is written in ancient manuscripts "You are what you learn"think that is true in modern times????? If so, you are all invited to come down to one of the above groups - or all of them- and learn of the teachings of the bible & Jesus Christ.



We waste too much time criticizing the faults of those whose strong points we could be praising.



Perseverance is a virtue, but sticking to your guns when you're out of bullets is pigheaded!

God's Prescription for Prosperity.

Last weekend I was laying on my bunk in my cell, listening to the T.V. Evangelists and the following was the main test of Dr. Schular's message.

God's prescription for prosperity & success.

- 1/ Clarify your creed.
 - (a) What do you "believe" in?
 - (b) What would you die for?
- 2/ Find a need.
 - (a) Set your goals.
- 3/ Strive to succeed.
 - (a) Give "fully" of yourself.
- 4/ Prepare to lead.
 - (a) Be a thoughtful person - think!
 - (b) Be prepared to make decisions.
- 5/ Expect to bleed.
 - (a) There is no gain without pain.
- 6/ Resist Greed.
 - (a) Be thankful with what you have.
- 7/ Live to feed.
 - (a) Feed the hungry & needy.
 - (b) Feed the spiritual needs of yourself & others.
- 8/ Give.
 - (a) Give your heart to the Lord.
 - (b) Give your love to the Lord.
 - (c) Give of your talents.
 - (d) Give to others.

If you wish the Spiritual Newsletter from Collins Bay Penitentiary sent to you "free", please send in your name & address and please "PRINT". The Spiritual Newsletter is free but any contributions to help pay for the paper & postage is gratefully received & may God bless you for this contribution.

(name)

(address)

(city & postal code)

** Editor - Larry Harvey

** note: all correspondence should be sent to "The Editor"

** Spiritual Newsletter
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"CENSORSHIP"

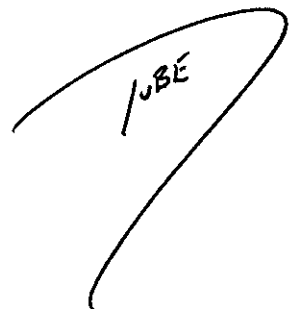
In the recent Christmas issue of The Spiritual Newsletter an article on Millhaven appeared. Some labelled the contents "POLITICAL" and "NOT PROPER FOR THIS NEWSLETTER". As a matter of fact it has been SUGGESTED and REQUESTED that future issues should be censored.

As the author of that article, I am the first to admit that you may have been left with an upsetting and appalling picture of life within Millhaven. I am also prepared to agree that the Spirit of Christmas was far removed from the words I used to describe conditions in Millhaven. But let us remember that what we may find offensive to read, others are forced to live on a daily basis.

I disagree with any censorship that acts to obstruct the truth. If we are to write about life inside prison (any prison), then we must do so in truth. It would be a slap in the face to our brothers and sisters within prison walls if the Spiritual Newsletter did not report the facts. If we are to print and distribute a "SPIRITUAL NEWSLETTER", we must allow "THE SPIRIT" to lead us. Attempting to paint a pretty picture would be false and "UN-SPIRITUAL". It would obscure the reality of the conditions within our prisons. It is essential to recognize that any attempt to censor the "SPIRIT OF TRUTH" would strike at the very heart of the "SPIRITUAL NEWSLETTER". What then of its purpose? How then could we grow?

For me, it is a blessing and a privilege to be able to read both the positive and the negative comments on life and society as presented by the authors of the Bible. One cannot read the Bible without becoming aware of the darkness held within these pages; pages which were written to reveal the light of truth. The authors of the Bible were led by the SPIRIT, yet both sides were revealed. This same SPIRIT and TRUTH must be allowed the freedom of expression in the pages of The Spiritual Newsletter.

"For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth) and find out what pleases the Lord. Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them." EPHESIANS 5:8-11



LUBE