

PRISON MINISTRY

CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF RICHMOND



PARISH PRISON MINISTRY

OPENING PRAYER: SALT AND LIGHT

God, Source of all light, we are surrounded by the darkness of the injustices experienced by your people, the poor who are hungry and who search for shelter, the sick who seek relief, and the downtrodden who seek help in their hopelessness. Surround us and fill us with your Spirit who is Light. Lead us in your way to be light to your people. Help us to be salt for our communities as we share your love with those caught in the struggles of life. We desire to be your presence to the least among us and to know your presence in them as we work through you to bring justice and peace to this world in desperate need. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, Who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

PRISON MINISTRY – BUILDING BRIDGES

▶ AGENDA

1. Introduction
2. General Overview of Prison Ministry Approach at Diocese
 1. Quick Facts
 2. How you can help ...
 3. Inside the walls ...
 4. Outside the walls ...
 5. Outside the walls - Post Release
3. The Two Feet of Love in Action
4. Awareness Conference – Just Faith
5. Kairos Prison Ministry
6. Resources
7. Questions and Comments



PRISON MINISTRY – BUILDING BRIDGES

► An Introduction

1. Worked with Prison Ministry for about 25+ years.
2. On Diocese of Richmond Commission on Prison Ministry. *
3. On Community Advisory Board at an Intense Reentry Prison.
4. Virginia State Representative for Kairos Prison Ministry.
5. Social Ministry Chairperson for about 15 years.
6. Serve as substitute clergy at US Navy Consolidated Brig.

Bottom Line: Prison Ministry is my PASSION!

***Disclaimer:** This views and opinions expressed are not necessarily the views and opinions of the Diocese of Richmond Office of Social Ministry or my Parish.



PRISON MINISTRY – BUILDING BRIDGES

► Quick Facts

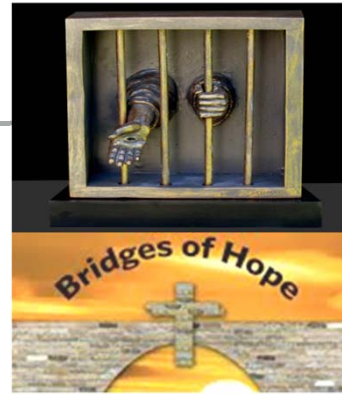
1. There are about 40 State prisons/correctional facilities in our diocese, and a lot more regional jails and federal prisons.
2. 18 of those facilities (45%) have ongoing Catholic services.
 - Mass, Sacraments, RCIA, Visitations, Bible study, etc.
3. OSM has convened a Prison Ministry Commission to help with the vision, planning and goal setting of the Diocesan Prison Ministry.
 - The Commission has conducted a data gathering of all facilities to better understand the needs of the prison population (still analyzing and creating next steps).
 - The Commission has a goal of making sure there is an availability of Sacraments in every facility.
 - The Commission's goal is to further support parishes in their PM work.



PRISON MINISTRY – BUILDING BRIDGES

▶ HOW YOU CAN HELP IN THIS MINISTRY...

1. Visit, write, mentor, coach inmates to prepare them for life outside of jail/prison.
2. Assist in finding housing, jobs, transportation, and addiction treatment for the incarcerated.
3. Promote public policies that enhance the rehabilitation of those who are incarcerated.



PRISON MINISTRY – BUILDING BRIDGES

▶ VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES ... INSIDE THE WALLS

1. On-going support and hope for inmates and their families.*
2. Coaching, teaching, or mentoring.
3. Pre-release planning for reentry.
4. Faith sharing (group or one-to-one).*
5. Scripture study, prayer, reflection.*
6. Sacrament preparation (Baptism, Eucharist, Confirmation, Confession).*
7. Religious resources (bibles, rosaries, magazines, books, videos approved by authorities). *

* Use Dismas Materials



PRISON MINISTRY – BUILDING BRIDGES

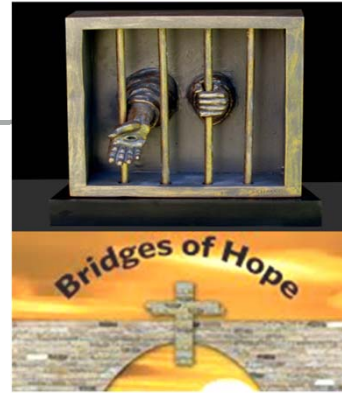
▶ VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES ... OUTSIDE THE WALLS

1. Housing:

- Make contacts to help locate potential properties that would be open to rental and occupancy by the people re-entering society.

2. Employment:

- Recruit individuals and businesses willing to hire people who have been imprisoned.
- Help those who have been incarcerated achieve financial stability and self sufficiency.
- Help the imprisoned understand requirements and rewards of a particular job.



PRISON MINISTRY – BUILDING BRIDGES

▶ VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES ... OUTSIDE THE WALLS

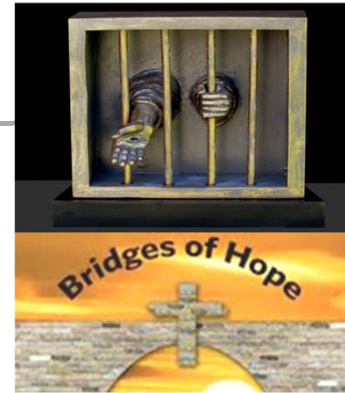
1. Coaches to work with the imprisoned on a short term basis (3-5 weeks) both inside facilities and post release.
2. Training/education for services/skills such as:
 - GED courses
 - Job interview training
 - Budgeting
 - Communication skills
 - Anger Management
 - Family dynamics
 - Addiction Issues
 - Technology



PRISON MINISTRY – BUILDING BRIDGES

▶ VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES ... OUTSIDE THE WALLS ... POST RELEASE

1. Mentors (individuals, couples, teams) to commit up to one year (pre- and post-release) to assist the incarcerated member integrate back into society.
2. Meet with ex offenders once a week after release to address needs in the following areas:
 - Encouragement, support, advice, friendship.
 - Clarification of goals and life strategies.
 - Resources for spiritual, psychological, and personal growth.
 - Resources for help in education, employment, housing, family dynamics.
 - Transportation for DMV and other essential registrations or applications.
 - Mentors do not provide financial support for mentees.



PRISON MINISTRY – BUILDING BRIDGES

▶ INTERESTED?

▶ Please contact:

1. Your Diocese Office of Social Ministry
2. Your parish Social Ministry or Prison/Jail Ministry Coordinator.
3. Mr. Mike Siedlecki (michaelsiedlecki@cox.net)
(757) 650-9735)



PRISON MINISTRY – BUILDING BRIDGES



“The conscience is called by this social teaching to recognize and fulfill the obligations of **justice** and **charity** in society.”

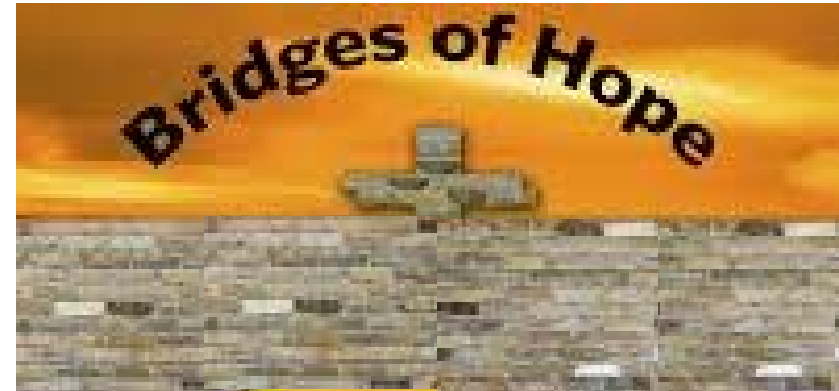
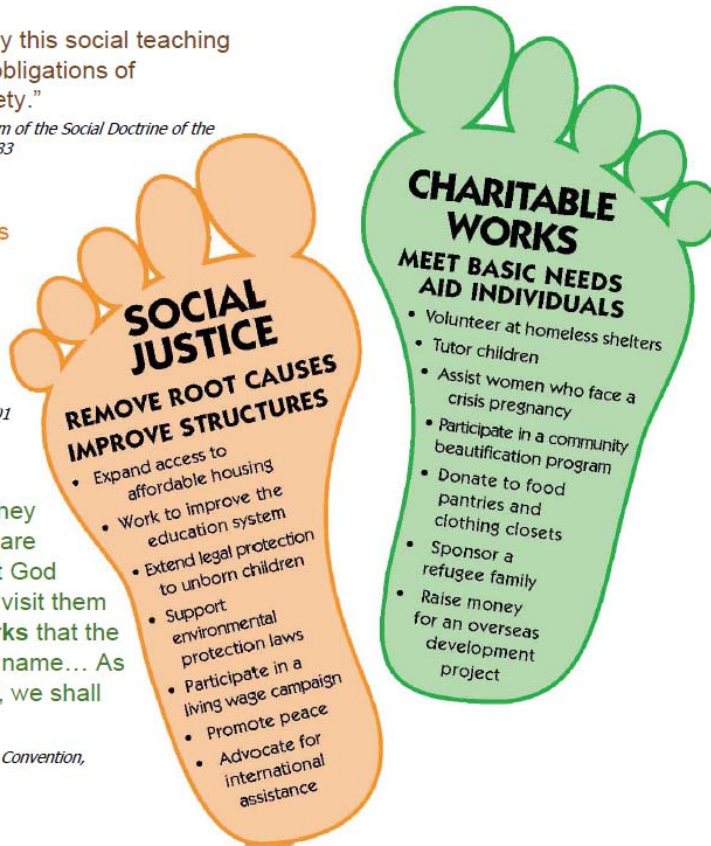
—Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, no. 83

“**Social justice**. . . concerns the social, political, and economic aspects and, above all, the structural dimension of problems and their respective solutions.”

—Compendium, no. 201

“To [those who lack what they need to live a dignified life] are proclaimed glad tidings that God loves them...and comes to visit them through the **charitable works** that the disciples of Christ do in his name... As we can read in Matthew 25, we shall all be judged on this.”

—Pope Francis, Address to Pastoral Convention, 6/17/13



CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF RICHMOND



PRISON MINISTRY – BUILDING BRIDGES

GOD'S POSITIONING SYSTEM (GPS)



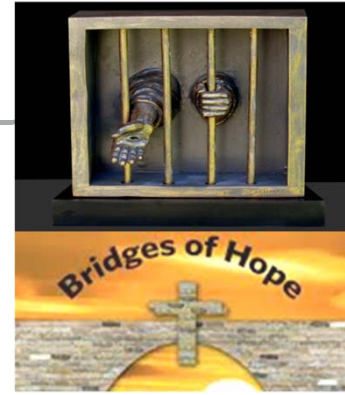
Caritas: Christian Love of humankind; Charity!

“Set your course by the stars, not by the lights of every passing ship.” Omar N. Bradley

“Unless you know where you are going, any map will do!” Unknown Author

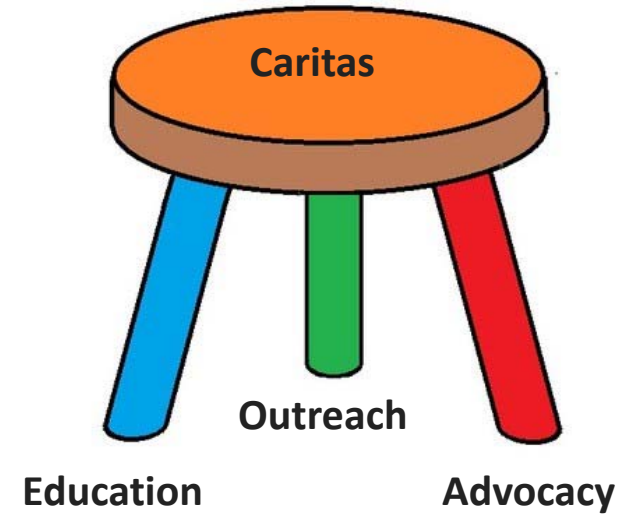
PRISON MINISTRY – BUILDING BRIDGES

AWARENESS CONFERENCES



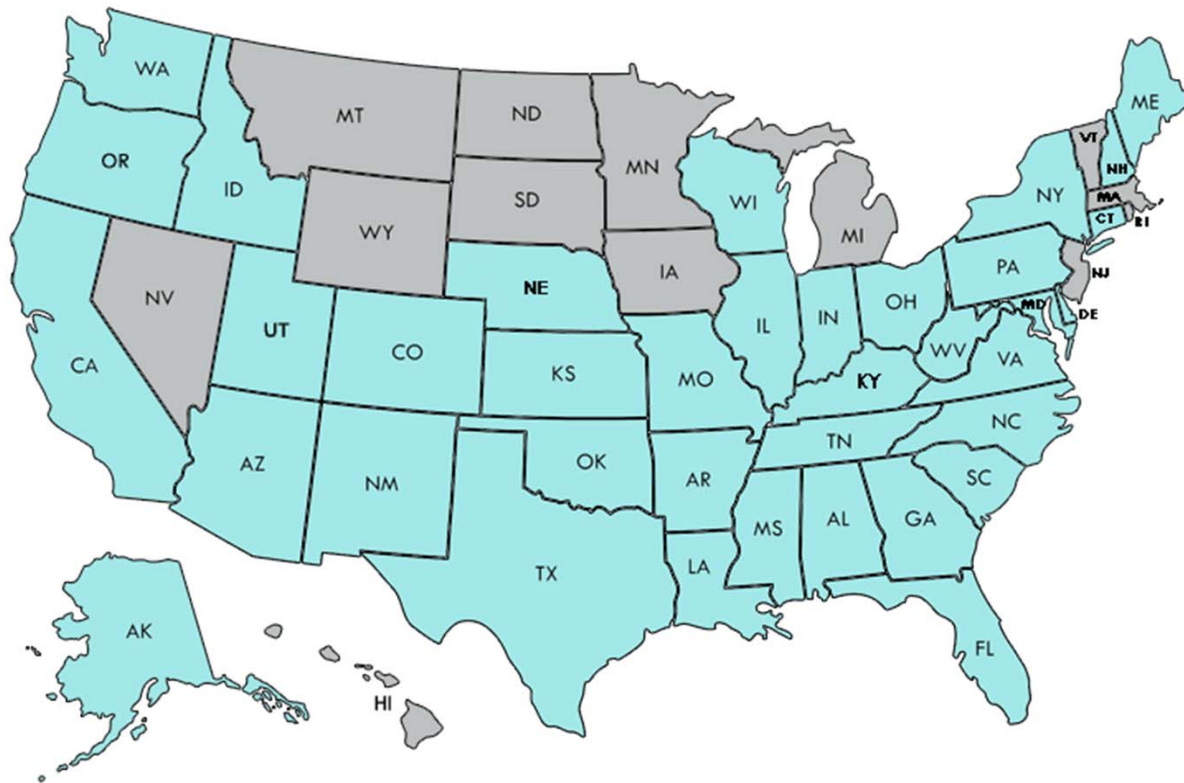
Just Faith Prison Ministry Conference

God is Love
Charity in Truth



KAIROS – INTERNATIONAL PRISON MINISTRY

WHERE WE SERVE



KAIROS – INTERNATIONAL PRISON MINISTRY

ABOUT US



KAIROS – HOLEISTIC PRISON MINISTRY

KAIROS INSIDE

The Kairos Inside program goal is to build a continuing Christian community inside the institution through Prayer and Share accountability groups, and monthly Reunions organized by Kairos Graduates and volunteers. The initial Weekends, held in both male and female institutions, are 3½ days based on a series of talks, discussions, chapel meditations, and music.

Kairos Inside is a prison ministry with a mission to develop a Christian community on the inside of a prison.

It all begins with a 3 ½ day weekend...

[LEARN MORE](#)



KAIROS OUTSIDE

The purpose of Kairos Outside is to demonstrate God's grace and love through Christian support for women who have relative/friends who are or have been incarcerated. The goal is to provide a safe place to encourage the sharing of one's life journey, to create an opportunity for a relationship with God, and to promote participation in Support Groups.

Spouses, parents and relatives of those in prison often "do time" right along with their loved ones.

Kairos Outside lets them know they are not alone.

[LEARN MORE](#)



KAIROS TORCH

Kairos Torch is a mentoring program for incarcerated offenders, ages 25 and under. The Weekend introduces incarcerated youth to Christian concepts as a means of making better choices for their lives. The Weekend is then followed with an established six month one-to-one weekly mentoring program that encourages the youth to remove their masks and see themselves as God sees them.

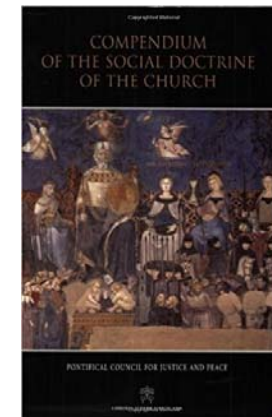
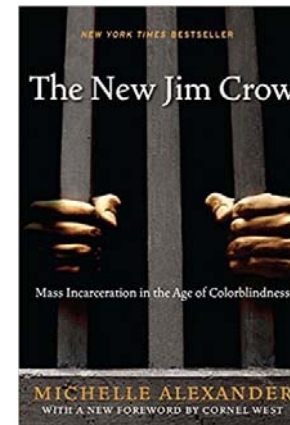
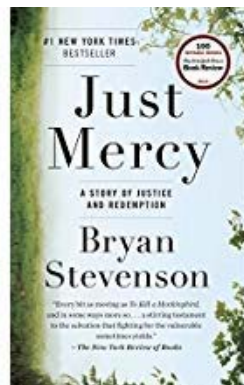
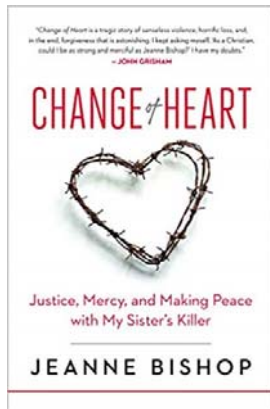
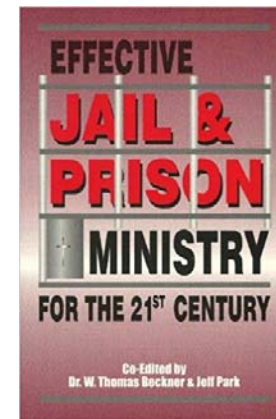
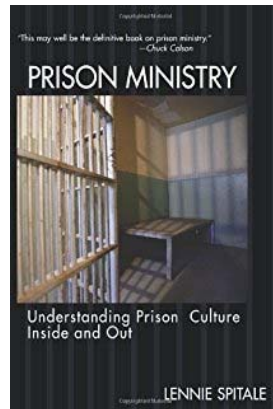
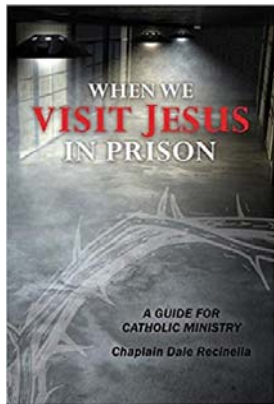
Kairos Torch is a mentoring program for incarcerated youth, ages 25 and under.

The mission is to engage their reasoning skills to help them make better life choices.

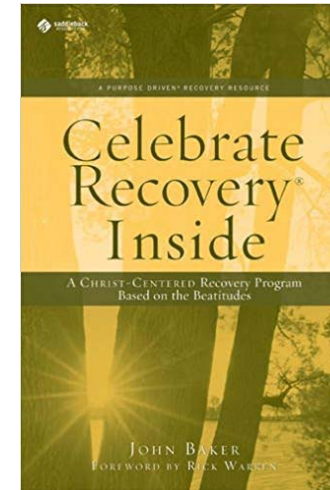
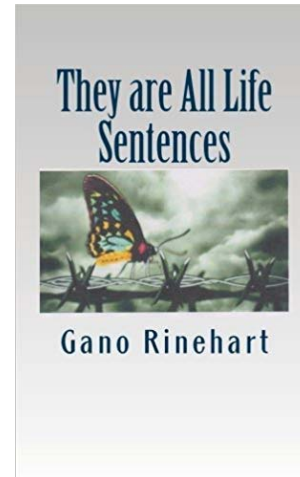
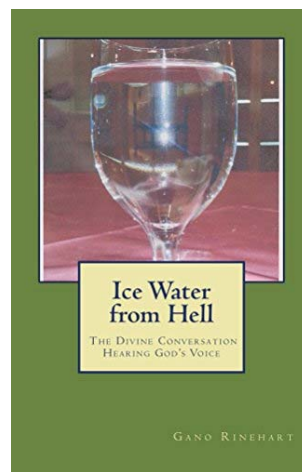
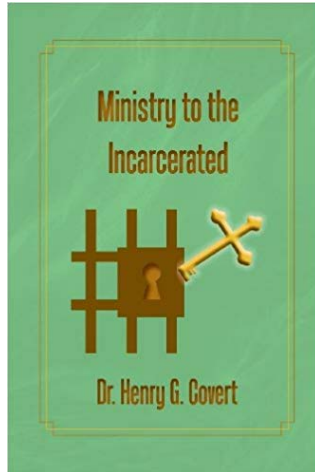
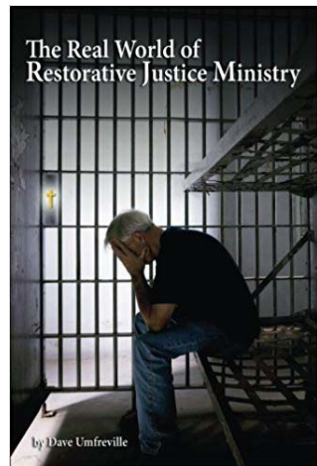
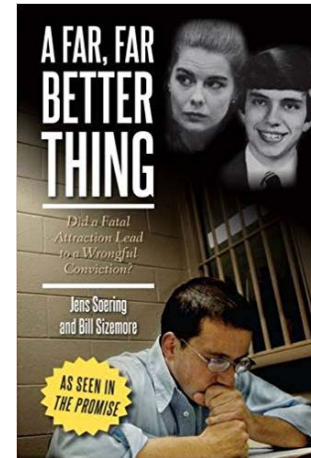
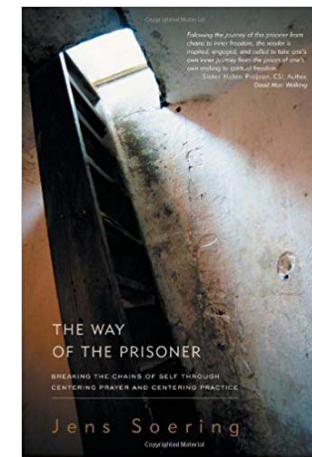
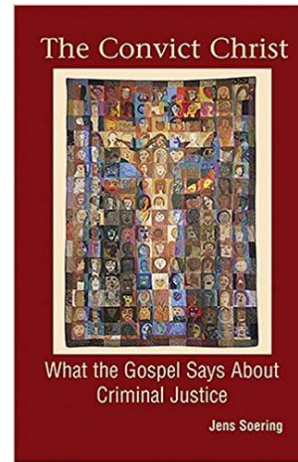
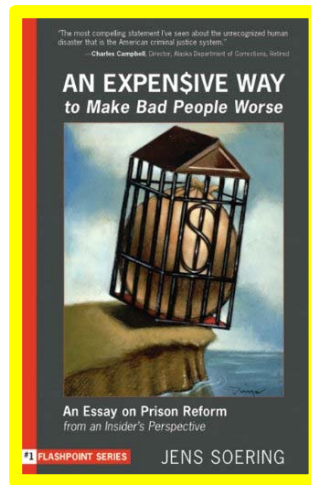
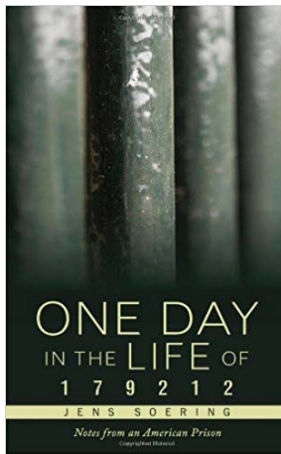
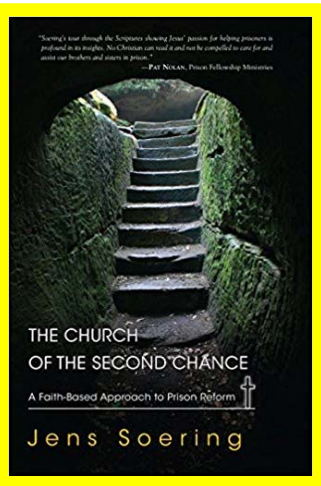
[LEARN MORE](#)



PRISON MINISTRY – RESOURCES

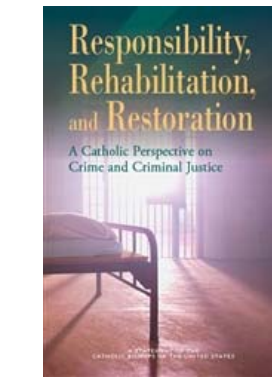
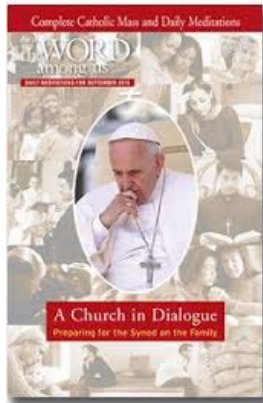
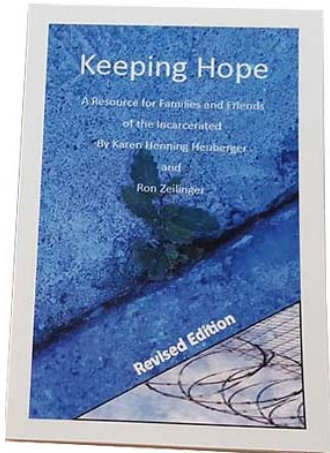


PRISON MINISTRY – RESOURCES

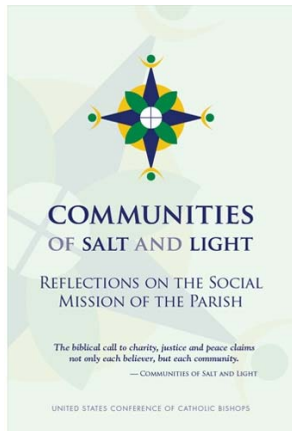
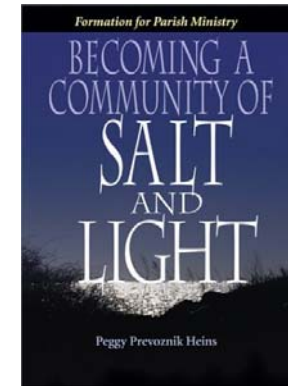
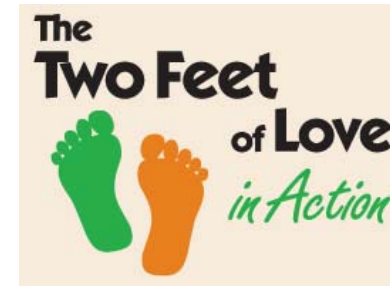


Jens Soering Website

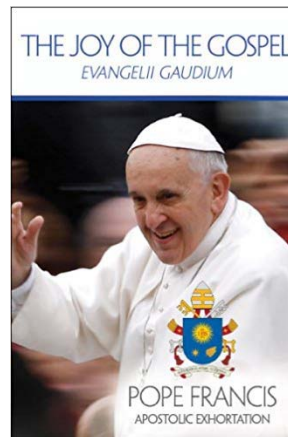
PRISON MINISTRY – RESOURCES



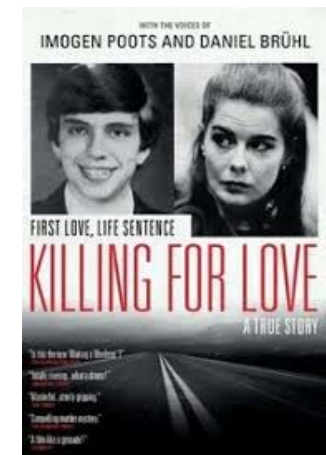
USCCB (Free)



USCCB (Free)



Lynn Litchfield
Grace Inside



PRISON MINISTRY – BUILDING BRIDGES

▶ Parish Prison Ministry Needs (Discussion)

1. What is the most immediate need for prison ministry that OSM and the prison ministry commission can assist you with.



TED Talk: “We Need to Talk about an Injustice” by Bryan Stevenson



TED Talk: “The Future of Race in America” by Michelle Alexander



TED Talk: “There’s More To Life Than Being Happy” by Emily Esfahani Smith



Responsibility, Rehabilitation, and Restoration:
A Catholic Perspective on Crime and Criminal Justice



USCCB Daily Readings



PRISON MINISTRY – BUILDING BRIDGES

▶ Parish Prison Ministry Resources (Dismas)

1. Dismas Faith Study Course Material



A Reason For Hope Part 1: **Sacraments**



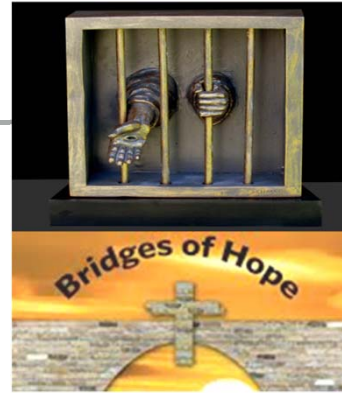
A Reason For Hope Part 2: **Creed**



A Reason For Hope Part 3: **Christian Morality**



Restorative Justice

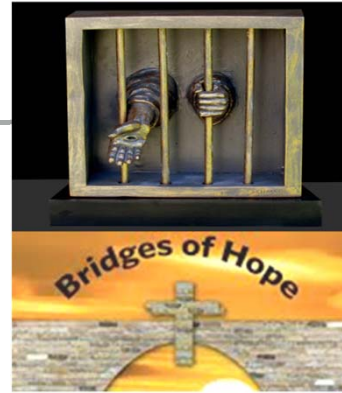


PRISON MINISTRY – BUILDING BRIDGES

Questions?

Comments?

Thank You!



Presentation from Michael Siedlecki

2018 National Catholic Prison Ministry Conference

After several months of participation in a JustFaith Program about prison reform, the Church of the Holy Family in Virginia Beach, VA was moved to form its own Prison Ministry founded on the concept of the three-legged stool – where each leg of the stool is necessary for it to operate solidly. The three legs signified education, outreach, and advocacy.

The new Prison Ministry was on fire and wanted an issue to tackle. They had learned that a crime involving as little as \$200 would cause an offender to be labeled a “felon” which is a label that will stick with the individual for life and affect everything from ability to vote to getting a job. They wrote letters and contacted their representatives and successfully advocated to get the \$200 threshold raised to \$500. They are committed to continuing this work to try to get the threshold raised to \$1000 as it is in most of the other states in the country. As a result of their first effort, and to continue their own education, the members of the Holy Family Prison Ministry reached out to parishes all over the diocese to establish a baseline of which parishes participated in Prison Ministry. They also hoped they might enlist some other parishes to help them with their advocacy. During these phone calls and emails, they learned that 90% of the Prison Ministries in the diocese were involved with outreach only. Holy Family’s Prison Ministry believes strongly that all three legs of the Prison Ministry stool are required if the ministry is really going to make a difference in the lives of the incarcerated. They decided that they wanted to try to bring all those involved in Prison Ministry in the Eastern Vicariate together so they could meet and learn from each other.

To that end, a Prison Ministry Gathering was organized by Jacki Friedsam, Bro Charles Warthen, and Renee McCarthy. It took place on Saturday, April 28, from 8:30 AM until noon. Over 30 individuals from fourteen parishes all over the Peninsula and Southside Tidewater came together for a stimulating morning of getting to know one another, listening, and idea sharing. Mike Siedlecki, the Eastern Vicariate Diocesan Rep for Prison Ministry, also attended and spoke to the group.

The Gathering was divided into two sessions and began with light breakfast refreshments. In the first session, all parishes were invited to share information about things they are doing in their prison ministry. The second session divided the group into two “breakout” discussions. Holy Family’s Prison Ministry felt that many parishes were already doing great work reaching into local jails and prisons through visits, letter writing, and other volunteer work. The “outreach” leg of the stool was fairly solid. However, the education and advocacy legs needed attention, and this became the focus of the second session for both groups.

Education can serve two purposes. It can be a means to encourage more volunteers and it can inform us as voters. If someone doesn’t feel comfortable going into a jail or prison, that person

can still write letters to inmates, legislators, and the media. There is so much we don't know about the criminal justice system and reading quality books like "Church of the Second Chance" and "The New Jim Crow" can be excellent resources.

Regarding advocacy, this is generally thought to be the most difficult leg of the stool, but in some ways, the most important. There are many critical issues within the criminal justice system that need to be addressed. This is best done by approaching people of power and influence like state senators and members of the house of representatives. We discussed how important it is to understand how bills are developed and how they move through committees, and what we can do to influence our elected officials. This is how Holy Family's Prison Ministry helped get the felony threshold raised to \$500. Especially in the area of advocacy, there is strength in numbers. If a representative hears from fifteen constituents about a particular matter, he is likely to pay more attention. Letters to local newspapers can also be powerful tools.

An attendee list with contact information is going to be distributed so those who attended can keep in touch for possible future networking. Everyone agreed that the morning was very worthwhile and they hope to make it an annual event.