

Everyone Can Help Inmates

We, and every prisoner we try to help, must learn to pray habitually every day in order to have the intimate, family relationship with God that is offered to us in Jesus Christ. Deeper understanding of God who is Love is acquired only by those who love God and enjoy entering into the conversation of love(prayer) with him as often as possible.

Many Catholic men and women love God so much that they join religious orders and enter convents and monasteries in order to live in communities which recognize prayer as their most important activity. Our Catholic Church, in many of its most fervent members, is praying every moment of every day. Their desire to serve God, supported by their intense prayer life, produces constant and fervent loving thoughts, words and deeds. God and all of his beautiful creation is served in love by those whose devotion is nurtured by their frequent loving, prayerful conversation with God.

The source and the very heart of every good and beautiful work of merciful love produced by the Catholic Church is powered by prayerful celebration of the Eucharist.

Catholic prisoners many times don't know what Catholic services are provided for them in their prison. Their relatives and others who visit them should find out from the chaplain what Catholic services are available in the prison, and what the inmate must do to be able to participate in Catholic services.

Father Paulsen celebrates Holy Mass and hears confessions every week in the following prisons.

Gurney Unit : Saturdays in the gym at 7:45 a.m.(open call)

Powledge Unit: Sundays in schoolroom #3 at 2 p.m.(open call)

George Beto Unit: Mondays in the auditorium at 8:30 a.m.(send I-60 to chaplain for lay-in)

Michael Unit: Tuesdays in 7 gym at 12:30 p.m.(send I-60 to chaplain for lay-in)

Coffield Unit: Wednesdays in chapel at 12:00 p.m.(open call)

We strongly recommend that an inmate send an I- 60 to the chaplain for admittance to the RCIA program in order to be in the chapel for Holy Mass.

Beneficial and effective bonding in the love relationship with God and his Catholic Church in the Eucharist, for any participant, must be supported by good habits of private prayer, and a good moral life.

St. John the evangelist is the only one of the New Testament writers who describes himself, as the one Jesus loved. John showed greater love for Jesus than the other apostles, and that is why he delighted in the love of Jesus for him, more than any of the others. He is the only one of the 12

apostles who was with Jesus, when Jesus was crucified. John is the only one of the apostles who died a natural death. He never had to prove his faith and love for Jesus Christ, by suffering the death of a martyr.

We should want Jesus to know our love for him so much, that neither he, nor anyone else would ever think that we would have to perform some exceptional act, to prove the love we have for God.

Encourage prisoners to study the life of St. John, and other great Saints to learn, and be inspired to be the best friends of Jesus possible in this world. We must first become familiar with the lives of the Saints, in order to most effectively, encourage prisoners to study about them, and imitate them, in their ways of showing great love for Jesus Christ.

We, as **Catholic people, who hate crime (serious sin)**, and who want to take positive action to heal the criminal(sinner); can do great work to prevent crime, by providing people in prison with the great treasure of Catholic literature.

For reasons of security, most prisons will not allow books to be given to prisoners, or mailed to prisoners from family or friends. **The way to give books to individual prisoners**, or to Catholic chaplains to distribute to inmates in their prisons, is to **have the books mailed to the prisoners from the bookstores**.

The following books have given spiritual nourishment, and hope, to some of the most sincere and serious of Catholic prisoners:

The "Imitation of Christ" by Thomas a Kempis, "Confessions of St. Augustine", "True Devotion to Mary" by Montfort, "The Way of Perfection" and "The Interior Castle" by St. Theresa of Avila, "The Practice of the Presence of God" by Brother Lawrence, "33 Doctors of the Church" by Fr. Christopher Rengers, Butler's "Lives of the Saints", "Glories of Mary" by St. Alphonsus Ligouri, "Introduction to the Devout Life" by St. Francis DeSales, "The Oxford Bible Atlas", Books written by Bishop Sheen, Books written by Thomas Merton.

Studying Scripture, prayer, living the Christian life as much a possible, and reading these great Catholic spiritual classics listed above helped Father Paulsen to enter the Catholic Church by baptism at age 37.

These books may be purchased from Catholic bookstores, Amazon.com, or Tan Books and Publishers, Inc. Have the books mailed directly from bookstores to individual prisoners, or to Catholic chaplains who can make them available to Catholic prisoners.

Fr. Paulsen's books, especially "When I Was in Prison" have given many people in prison encouragement, and the hope needed, to begin living a good Christian life while in prison, and ways to continue living that life, after their release from prison.

We highly recommend the following Bibles, for Catholic prisoners to study, and use to defend their Catholic faith, in jails and prisons:

"The New Catholic Answer Bible"

Fireside Catholic Publishing

Wichita, Kansas

www.firesidecatholic.com

"The Catholic Study Bible"

New American Bible, second edition

Donald Senior and John J. Collins, editors

Oxford University Press

www.oup.com

The best approach to helping Catholic prisoners is to make possible for them, ways to help themselves become better friends to God, in Jesus Christ. As mentioned above, good Catholic literature will nourish their souls, fill their hearts and minds with good thoughts and desires, which will incline them to pray more, and to make a greater effort to follow Christ, in word and deed.

They should also be given **the means to study their Catholic faith**, and be better prepared to cooperate with the grace of the sacraments and actual grace. Some excellent materials, **free of charge to prisoners**, for study are provided by:

Knights of Columbus, Supreme Office, 78 Meadow St., New Haven, CT 06519-1759. Courses are in English only. Certificates are awarded upon completion of courses.

Catholic Home Study Service, P.O. Box 363, Perryville, MO 63775-0363 Courses are in English only. Excellent books by Father Oscar Lukefahr, and workbooks. Certificates are awarded upon completion of courses.

Deacon Ken Finn, **St. Dismas Guild**, P.O. Box 2129, Escondido, CA 92033. The Bread of Life Catholic Bible Study in English or Spanish. Provides, in addition to a book for Bible study, a Catholic Bible, and a Catechism of the Catholic Church.

Some **other excellent correspondence courses are available to prisoners**. They are **more challenging and not free**.

Father John A. Hardon, S.J. wrote these courses for Blessed Mother Teresa's Order, the Missionaries of Charity, at the request of Pope John Paul II.

Basic Catholic Catechism Course-prerequisite for the advanced course (16 lessons) costs \$40 plus shipping charge.

Advanced Catholic Catechist Course(36 lessons) costs \$65 plus shipping charge. Note: "The Imitation of Christ" by Thomas a Kempis and "The Christian Faith" by Neuner and Dupuis will be helpful, and possibly even necessary, to obtain, for anyone taking this course.

Order the courses from: Eternal Life, 902 W. Stephen Foster Ave, Bardstown, KY 40004
Toll-Free Telephone Number 1-800-842-2871.

We recommend that someone else with a close relationship to the prisoner, who may even have purchased the courses for the inmate, also take the courses. This can make future visits and letters more interesting, and also provide a way to deepen a love relationship.

An inmate can take some excellent, but expensive courses, for degrees in theology from The Catholic Distance University, 120 E. Colonial Hwy, Hamilton, VA 20158-9012 Telephone Number: 1-540-338-2700 e-mail: cdu@cdu.cdu website: www.cdu.edu