
Hollywood Free Paper

David du Plessis Ecumenical Archives

1-1980

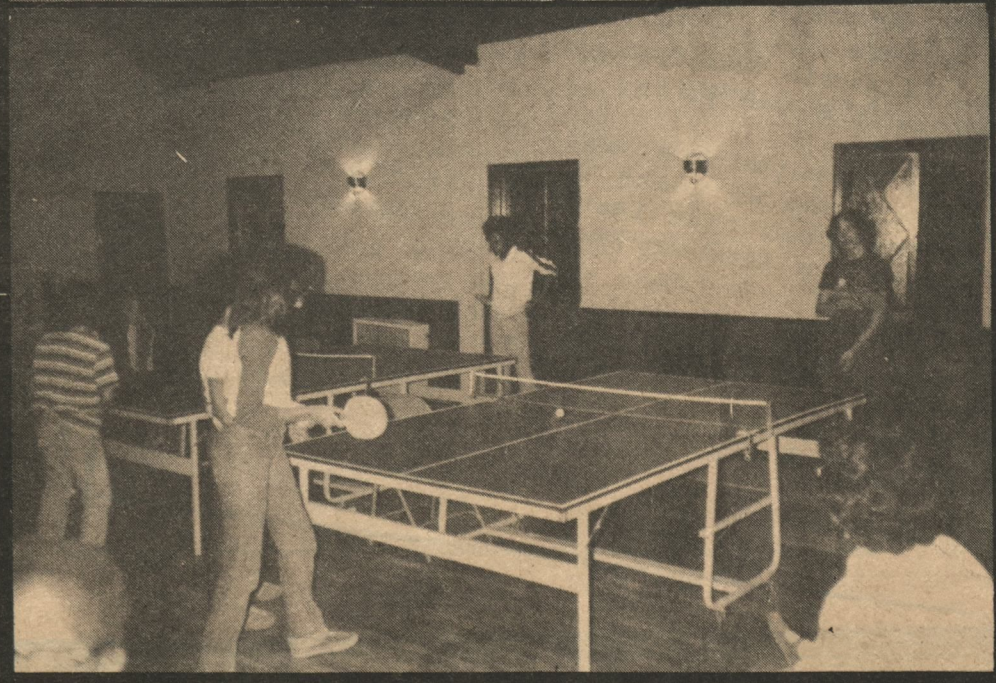
Visit, January 1980

Duane Pederson

Christian Prison Volunteers

Jackson Wilcox

WAS THE FRIEND TO FRIEND



Christian Prison Volunteers
Box 1949 · Hollywood, GA · 90028

Dr. Gordon Bacon and Duane Pederson watching a Ping-Pong tournament at Children's Mission.



HELLO FRIEND!

Hello Friend,
I'm glad you picked up this copy of VISIT. For ten years we were called the HOLLYWOOD FREE PAPER. About a year ago we changed our name to VISIT.

VISIT Newspaper is our way of being able to come right into your house and sit down with you for a VISIT Friend-to-Friend.

Along with VISIT Newspaper, our other two areas of interest are the Visit-By-Mail program and the Children's Mission. Most of my time personally is spent at the Children's Mission but let me tell you about both ministries.

Visit-By-Mail IS a program whose purpose is to encourage each other in our faith in Jesus Christ. Through Visit-By-Mail we introduce men and women in prison to Christian friends outside to Visit-By-Mail each other regularly.

Visit-By-Mail IS NOT an errand service or a 'lonely-hearts' club.

If you are in prison and would like to be included in our next Visit-By-Mail bulletin or if you are a Christian on the outside and would like more information on the Visit-By-Mail program, please write us at our new address:

VISIT-BY-MAIL
BOX 80
SAN JUAN CAPISTRANO, CA 92693

Children's Mission is in Venice, California where I serve as Pastor of Venice Christian Community Church. Another article in this issue of VISIT will tell you about Children's Mission.

Guests are always welcome to come by Children's Mission for a visit. Recent visitors include Dr. Kenneth Geiger, President of Missionary Church from the headquarters office in Fort Wayne, Indiana; also Dr. Gordon Bacon of Wheaton, Illinois who is Field Director of the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE).

As I have shared with you I am sure you are aware of changes and new opportunities that come to us and we thank God for each one of them. It is my prayer that as you read this issue of VISIT you may be encouraged and enlightened as you seek to know Jesus Christ. I would like to hear from you.

God bless you,

Duane Pederson
Duane Pederson



CHRISTIAN PRISON VOLUNTEERS

LETTERS FROM FRIENDS ON THE OUTSIDE



Dear Duane,

I have thanked you many times in my heart, and asked God's blessing on your work.

You are engaged in a wonderful ministry and I'm sure you are greatly blessed by our Lord. I send my blessings also, and my prayers (along with my thanks).

Frances
California

Thank you so much for the list of names you sent me so I could increase my prison ministry.

I am corresponding with all 6 people and will continue as long as my Lord leads me.

God bless,
Sister Leanne

I thank you for an opportunity to share in this ministry. God will surely bless our honest efforts.

Thank you again and God richly bless you and your ministry.

In Christ,
Wanda and Doug

We want you to know how much of a blessing our prisoner is to our family.

He is a new and vibrant Christian, We are so thankful for our correspondence with him which was made possible through VISIT-By-Mail.

In Christ,
David and Terri

I want you to know what a blessing I have received by being a Christian Prison Volunteer myself.

I had never given much thought to our brothers and sisters behind bars until I got together with your ministry, now I want to do more.

Thank God for people like you, and your program and for showing me that it's possible for me to help spread the word of God and love these people in this small way.

God Bless you,
Geniveve

I am very pleased with what I have been doing Visiting-By-Mail. It has been very rewarding as well as meeting another Christian friend. God bless you for the work you are doing.

Deloris
Rubidoux, CA

I would like free information on how I could visit prisoners by mail. The man I was engaged to was in prison before he became a Christian. He went home to be with the Lord a month ago and if it were not for Christian people who cared enough about him to keep him in prayer and tell him about Jesus Christ, Denny wouldn't have the victory over death as he has now! I thank God for Christians like you.

Marcy
PA.

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Editor.....Duane Pederson
Managing Editor.....Jackson Wilcox
Editorial Assistant....Marjorie Wilcox

Photo credit: The picture of Greg Welford was taken by Russ Busby.



A LIFE

Wouldn't
Trade!

BY GREG
WOLFORD

Right here in prison my Lord has given me a rich and exciting life. I wouldn't trade for another even if I had the chance ...But it has taken me a long time to arrive where I now am. And my life is what it is only because the Lord Jesus has done a work in me that neither I, nor anyone else, thought could come about.

After serving Satan for the better part of 20 years, I found myself sitting in jail for the fifth time. I had been involved in an assortment of violence, drugs, sex acts and moral sins. This looked like my last time. That judge promised me that with the eight charges I was facing, I would never again see the outside world.

By this time life had lost all meaning. I had no hope of making anything of myself. To an extent, I didn't care what

happened to me. This world had no real peace in it -- or if there were any, I had sure missed it. In my life I had found only pain, misery and fear. I blamed these things on everything and everyone, except myself and Satan.

During the early part of my life I had been through a bitter experience with what was supposed to be Christianity. So most of my life I stayed away from such "weak and flimsy old wives tales." I figured I could run my own life.

The year before coming to jail I had joined a cult that worshiped Satan. I thought he was stronger than "Almighty God" who had left the world in such a mess. I participated in some cult sessions and after one of them I found a strange being living inside of me; causing me a considerable amount of problems. But I knew very little about spiritual

matters, so I couldn't explain what was wrong with me. The whole thing soon landed me in jail.

After getting my head straightened out from the affects of the drugs and booze I had been using, I found myself in a situation that I did not know how to deal with. I was frightened. But I had no answers for my problems. There were weeks of misery and things got worse

I had too much pride to ask anything of anyone, unless it was just to use him. But now I faced something far bigger than anything I could handle alone. It appeared to be the end of my carefree, run-about life.

Lying on my bed one night, I was pondering the mess my life had become. For all my efforts, I was getting nowhere. Out of sheer desperation I cried out to both Satan and God. I knew Satan's power; I had seen it work more than once. But there was something else that kept tugging at me, telling me that this Jesus I had known as a child could do something with me-- or at least for me. My motives were selfish, but I did something unusual. I called out to Satan and God at the same time! I challenged, "Whichever one of you can change my life and make a new person of me, I will serve for the rest of my life! Just change me!"

I guess there was some meaning in what I said that night. The powerful hand of the living Almighty God reached down and touched me.

God doesn't hear the prayer of the unrighteous. But He does hear the cry for help from a sinner when it is meant from the heart. That night God took me at my word and held me to it!

The next day I had a desire to read the Bible. This was something I had done very few times in my life. I started reading in the New Testament--at least I knew enough to go there.

A couple of days later I was forced to move to a single cell. I was there for a week. During that time I read the Bible and tried to pray. But I really didn't know how to do either. However, God knew the intent of my heart. He knew what I needed.

At the end of the week I heard that there were some Christians--or Jesus freaks--in one of the dorms. So I asked to move in with them. I soon discovered that these men were by no means freaks. They were CHRISTIANS. I had thought all my life that there was no such thing as a real Christian in the world, let alone inside the walls of a jail. But here they were: praising God, and not worrying about what the rest of the world thought.

Soon I was in conversation with them about the Bible and Jesus. I wanted to pray with them that I might have salvation of the Lord. But I had a problem that fought

strongly within me and wouldn't let me speak the words.

Through the power of the Holy Spirit, God revealed to these men what my problem was. Due to my involvement with cults, I had a demon of Hell abiding within me. I thought back and remembered a session with the Satan cult when something entered my body, but I didn't know what was happening. These men laid hands on me and bound the spirit in the name of Jesus. They commanded that it leave me. And because all spirits are subject to the name of Jesus, it had to leave. God actually allowed me to see a black figure

leave my body and to smell the filth of it--something worse than anything I had ever smelled before.

I was freed!

For the first time in years I felt new and alive. God then filled me with His Holy Ghost and with the love and joy of His salvation.

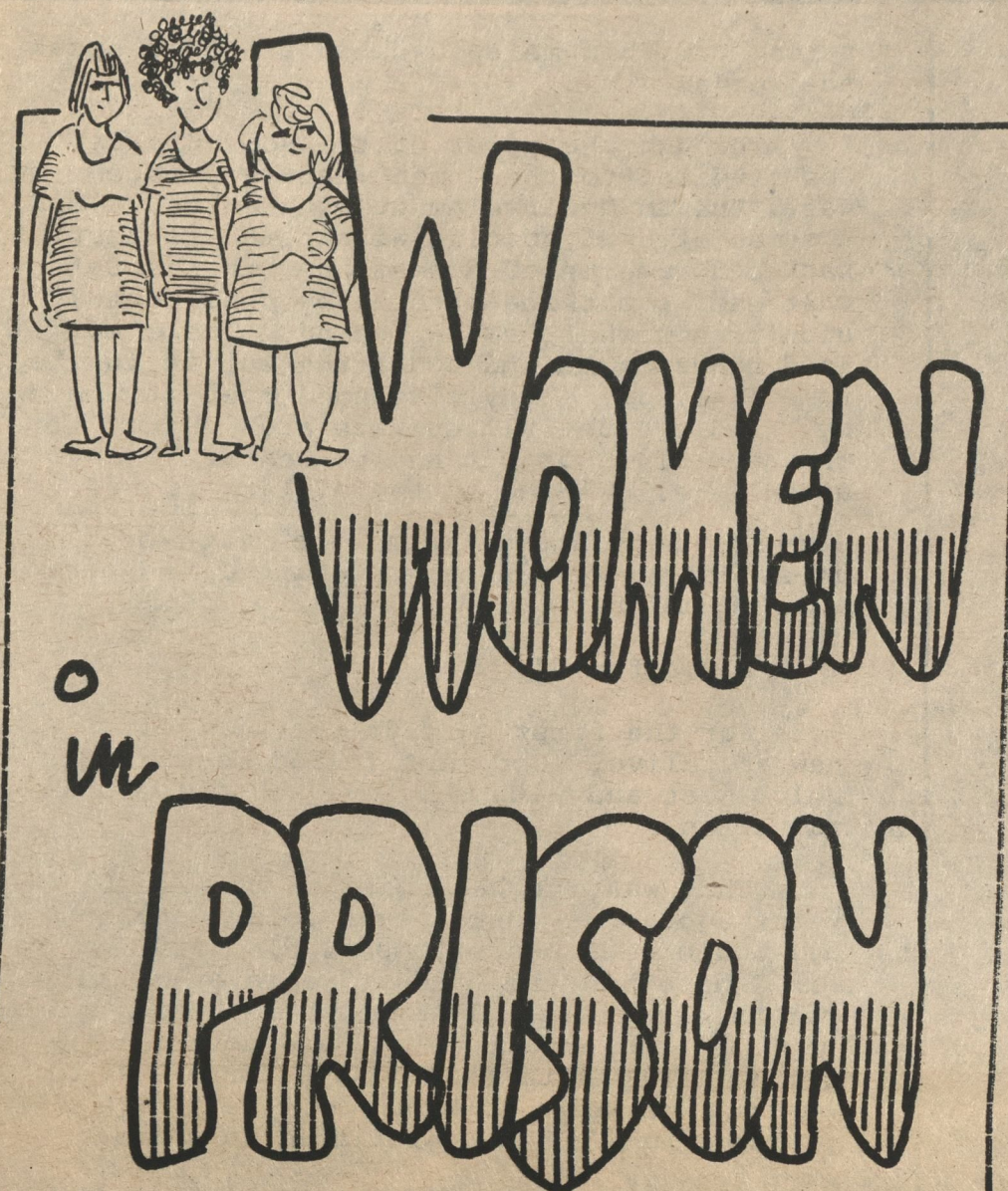
That was the beginning of my life 5 years ago. But Jesus never told me that all would be a bed of roses. In serving Him I have had the hardest years of my life--yet the greatest! I have had to learn the hard way to rely on Jesus, and not on myself. Yet in every situation I have found Him to be true and able to bring me through my problems until He is glorified in them.

I have learned in a real way that the words of our mouths mean more than most believers realize. In praying, I found out that what I ask of God should be specific. When I have asked and doubted not I have been brought through things that I did not realize I was ready for. The confession of the mouth is important. We have the Spirit of the most high God dwelling within us, and Jesus said whatsoever we bind on earth shall be bound in heaven. That has a lot of meaning.

Most of my life I have had little or no patience. About a year and a half after my salvation I asked the Lord to teach me patience--not give, but TEACH. The next day a young man who was quite miserable with himself came to work with me. He took a dislike to me because I was a Christian and he made it a goal to break me. For 5 or 6 months I prayed diligently, studied and bit my lip many times. I learned patience. And he got saved! So Jesus had two victories out of one prayer!

In my weakness I have been made strong in many areas, but only when I have turned to the Lord for strength. When I have taken it upon myself to handle the ways of the flesh and the world I have fallen. And this has happened time after time.

The rich and exciting life the Lord has given to me is something I would not trade for another even if I had the chance. The Lord has called me to a ministry of going to the very ones living the life of sin which I once lived...A ministry to those lost in the bondage of trouble, drugs and sin.



BY CAROL LORTZ

I never dreamed one day I'd sit at a table with a convicted murderess, an armed robber and a junkie. Never! Not that I'm a saint...or even any better a human being than the women who share this table, but my image, the me I present to the world, and to myself, is that of a middle class American housewife, mother of four, with a mild, loving manner and a convincing, innocent smile.

Yet, Here I sit at California Institution for Women...a convicted criminal, a felon, locked away from society as if I were contagious.

It's such a strange feeling, the breaking down of a barrier; getting to know another prisoner. To know her case, the circumstances that brought it all about, the way she feels about the crime she committed and how it has affected her life, the lives of her family, and her very being.

When one hears the word murderer he never contemplates the reason why someone would commit the final act. What was it that drove a young woman to take another person's life? How does she feel after it's done and can't be reversed? Would you ever question why a girl, a young pretty girl, with so much to give and so

much to get from this world, would pick up a gun and say, "I want it NOW. Not tomorrow, or someday. I'll take my chances and get what I can now." Or how would you react to looking into the glazed,



unknowing, uncaring eyes of an addict (turned pusher)...a rather plain, very quiet, and very troubled girl with beautiful long hair and a flair for poetry? This was the girl in detox who cried out, "Lord, if you love me, kill me, because I don't have the guts to do it myself."

The only thought that comes to mind is, "Who am I to judge?" Is my crime any less? Is my destruction any less fatal? Here I am, in prison, while my children are out somewhere doing what children do when the guard is down. And my man? Alone. Playing both father and mother. A role he was never meant to play. A job he's not built to perform...a task too big for one person. How will my crime affect my children's lives? How will it affect mine? How can I return to the roll of disciplinarian and demand honesty, desire respect, hope for fair play from my teenagers? What right have I to ask of them what I failed to give them?

In these, the loneliest moments of my life, I look around at the other women here and wonder if they too were seeking... seeking something they couldn't describe or put a name to, but knew they wanted or needed.

It's strange how such thoughts can confirm your own beliefs. I'm a wife, a mother. I had a home, a family, a career. Kids to feed, a husband to love, a pool to clean and laundry to wash. Why me? What made me do this crime, not only against society, but against myself and those I love? I guess I never thought I'd get caught. Never thought of what the outcome of my dishonesty would do. Never thought I would risk losing my family, my home, my car, the furniture and every single piece of clothing I own. Never thought...even for an instant, what loss of freedom would mean.

Is it true, "Better alone than in bad company?" Not really. I've learned to think and feel what others do. To share

I feel I must say, that prison is not what I expected. There are no bars here, no slamming cells. There is no powdered milk, powdered eggs or bread pudding made from the bread left on the inmates' plates at a previous meal. We wear our own clothes, or some are provided if we don't have any. There are few uniformed officers and most of those in charge are friendly, helpful people, willing to make whatever small effort they can to make things better for the women.

But each woman here has a story of what she's been through...what the small county or city jails were like, and the treatment she received.

Here, at CIW, we can order popcorn to eat while we watch our weekly movie. We can get soda, candy, even marshmallows and hot chocolate. We can buy beach towels, sun glasses, greeting cards and tanning oil. These, however, we get at a tremendous cost. The price...our freedom.

Three years ago I committed a crime. I did it, regretted it and went on to live my life, never quite forgetting it. I rationalized away my guilt...after all, my crime wasn't one of violence...I didn't murder, mame or rape. I only stole. And, again, I rationalized, those I took from could afford the loss...

We're not all murderers, bank robbers or addicts, but we have all been selfish and uncaring...a crime just as bad in the eyes of God.

I've learned that "might have been" and "if only" are the saddest phrases in all language, that time is measured by its effect on us, and that if you're looking for something good in your life, you'll find it in your own being. These things I now know to be true.

Anyone can, even in prison, decide what will become of him, or her, mentally and spiritually.

Before you decide to condemn me or women in prison, remember, that three years ago I was where you are. I enjoyed the good life...steak and lobster, camping trips, bowling and amusement parks with the kids. Three short years ago no one would have suspected me of doing anything against society, the company I worked for, or my family. But I did. And it could be you. Thousands of men and women find themselves behind bars because of a flared temper, a bad habit or a weak moment. I don't have the answer to man's mistakes, but I know that the greatest portion of sin and error is committed, not by rational choice, but by ignorance or just lack of forethought. If every man, woman and child were to act as God tells us we should, if every home would give God the chair at the head of the table, if people would live by the Ten Commandments and would think before they act, the prisons would stand empty, the cell doors would rust and this would be the Kingdom of God.

and try to mend a broken life in whatever small way I can. To give of myself and accept whatever I might learn from another. I'm no better or no worse than my tablemates. Only our crimes are different...and maybe the length of our sentence. Though I feel, at times, caged in...confined to a life of regret, I must remember to outgrow my mistakes! To forgive myself! To erase the past. I've come to realize that I'm what one might call an over-achiever. I was too smart to know I was dumb. I can't help thinking that sin was once a strong word, an ominous and serious word...a word that society has made weak. We can't see the word, but it's face is ever before us. For the murderess is, in reality, a cosmetologist from a small town, a typical middle class housewife, like myself. The girl with the gun...a waitress. Confused, impatient, and needing guidance. The junkie...a lonely, frightened girl. Unwanted, unloved by her parents. And me? Who am I? This place will tell. Time will tell. And my mirror will tell. For there's a fact about mirrors, and that is, that if you take the time to look in one you see yourself as you really are. In here we can't hide from what we really are. It shows...in the mirror of our faces, in our personalities.



There are women in here who have no remorse for what they've done...and women who cry out in the night, tortured by their consciences.

There are women who willingly discuss their wrong-doings. Yes, some even boast. But there are those who won't discuss what it was that brought them here.

There are those who work hard, fill their days and use their time constructively, and those who have not learned the seriousness of being here. Those, I fear for. Those will return.

I think I can safely say every woman here wants out. Wants to be free to go about her life in whatever way she sees fit. The days are counted...recounted. The hours until a visitor arrives are slow. A five minute phone call once a week is a life-line...

THE VENICE CHILDREN'S MISSION



Spaghetti, fruit, burritos and milk is prepared by Maria Palmer, a faithful volunteer worker. Last February the mission served 1153 meals.



Sybil said that this daily meal is the main source of nourishment for the children. "They don't eat at home," she said. "A majority are from one parent families where there is a problem with alcohol or drugs. 85% of these parents are on welfare...There is no one home and no food in the house. If they didn't come they eat nothing but junk food."

There is no charge for the meals or the other programs. Gleaming equipment in the kitchen, a variety of electronic games and sports equipment have been donated by friends and Christian groups ...as well as a beautiful 15 passenger van used for field trips and summer camp. Several churches and groups hold occasional food showers for the mission. The work is

Six hearty meals each week, recreation and Bible study are being used to combat drunkenness, crime and gang activity in a Southern California beach community with a broad reputation for social problems.

The modest green buildings of the Venice Christian Community are located just a few blocks from the famed Venice boardwalk. Now under the pastoral leadership of Duane Pederson, this church has become a home for more than half a hundred children six nights of the week.

In 1974 Sybil Salisbury saw a need in Venice and she had a vision. At a commendable personal sacrifice she started the Children's Mission. The program began with a Saturday Club and the response came from children ranging in age from 2 to 12.

As time went by the work grew. Saturday wasn't enough so an After School Club was added. Sybil saw that the children were not eating properly; instead of an evening meal they would snack on junk food, often stolen from the grocery store next door. So a balanced meal program was begun. Some of the 12 year olds became teenagers, so features were added to appeal to teens.

Today there is an average turnout of 52 every day except Monday. Tuesday through Thursday the doors are open from 4 to 8 p.m. Fridays the hours are 4 to 10. The Saturday Youth Club starts at 10:00 a.m. And the next day Sunday School begins a full day at 9:30 a.m.

There is recreation on ping pong tables and amusement machines which have been given by friends of the mission. Bible study is featured Wednesday nights, Saturday mornings and in Sunday School.

The hearty meal is a focal point of the entire program. Six days a week a balanced menu of meat, fresh vegetables, salad,



The church where people say, **"WE'RE GLAD YOU'RE HERE!"**

Venice Christian Community
 522 Venice Boulevard • Venice, California 90291
 Telephone: (213) 821-6218 (Church)
 (213) 392-6110 (Pastor's Residence)

Pastor
 The Reverend Duane Pederson
 Minister to Youth
 Miss Sybil Salisbury

Schedule:
 Sunday
 10 am Sunday School
 11 am Family Worship
 4:30 Youth Club
 Tuesday-Wednesday-Thursday
 4-8 pm After School Club
 Wednesday
 7 pm Bible Discussion

Friday
 4-10 Movie Night
 Saturday
 Youth Club
 10-1 Pre-teen
 12-4 Teens

carried on without any tax dollar support from federal or state funding.

At the heart of the mission outreach is evangelism. Many boys and girls have been won to Christ and through them parents have been reached. Even non-Christians in the community have grown to respect Children's Mission.

When asked about vandalism, Sybil said, "We have more problems with adults than kids." She pointed to walls that were free of graffiti and said, "We have no problem with painting which is characteristic of youth gangs...We have two gangs in Venice, and some members show up for our programs... Even though they don't profess Christ they have a fear of God, and they say 'you don't harm God's people.'"

Sybil feels that the main attraction of the mission is that it is a refuge providing the love, care and security which others find at home. "Basically through the week it is a place to come and get off the street," she said.



Then she pointed to all of the problems of the street. Children come who have been physically abused...some involved in child pornography. "We have drug problems," she said, "kids smoke pot down to age 5. Some parents even get marijuana and give it to their kids." The influence of the occult is strong in Venice where there are three active Satanic churches. Sybil stated, "There are two things you can buy in abundance on the boardwalk: drugs and occult material."

It's tough being a child or a teenager in Venice. But the Venice Christian Community is doing something about it. Here is one place where the street kids from 2 to 17 can find safety...and people who care...and the love of God.



ALL THE WAY HOME WITH RAY ROGERS

Back in 1976 Raymond Rogers, then an inmate at San Quentin wrote the following testimony:

"The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light; they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death upon them hath the light shined." Amen.

Seven times to State joints with hopelessness, violence and fear as a guide.

Waking up in a cell as a seven-time loser with a brand new robbery with violence will bring the thought of complete hopelessness to any man's mind. Since 17 years of age most of my life was spent in jails, Youth Authority, and joints of all kinds; some of them being Soledad, DVI Tracy, Susanville, Folsom, Vacaville, Chino and San Quentin. This is the third time back to San Quentin. I picked up charges (prior crimes) from simple assault to burglary, robbery, and robbery with grave bodily injury which I am now doing 15 years-to-life on. Praise the Lord! I say, "Praise the Lord" because it took this to turn me from self to Christ in a full and meaningful way.

What brought me to a life of crime? This question has been put before me so many times in the past that I forget my clean-up. I now answer in truth, "Every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed." James 1:14. I have no one to blame but myself; yet it was not I but sin within my life that lead me to destruction of self and others. How many times I prayed, but repentance never came until 2 1/2 years ago. Yes, it is easy to turn over your all to Christ when your all is hopelessness. How thankful I am for the state of hopelessness that brought me to the foot of the Glorious Cross of Jesus. A new life has been given to me in the middle of a mad, mad world. I was dead in sin but by His Grace received life through Jesus Christ our Lord and this

is a more abundant life that is beyond the understanding of those who are not His. As I feed daily upon His Word I receive an inner peace and strength to witness to others. From cell to cell Christ leads me to witness His Great and Glorious Good News that unchains the worst of sinners. I fail and run out of strength often, but Christ is not limited by my short comings and as I submit myself to Him revival becomes a way of life for myself and others about me. How? By the working of Christ within; Praise His Holy Name. Many souls are being drawn to repentance and new birth by the power of Christ Jesus.

What is my goal? There is a verse that my heart cries out to be fulfilled in my unworthy life, "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life to behold the beauty of the Lord and inquire in His Temple." Psalm 27:4.

I thank God for a praying grandmother who is now 95 and rejoicing in the miracles in my life in answer to many tears and prayers. I can recall a time when her

words, which were Christ's Words passed on to me through her, used to burn my ears; but now are sweet music to my soul. I thank God for Pastor Ben Jennings who never lost faith in the Power of God's Word and for years witnessed to me with Christ's love. There are so many to thank but One that truly deserves the thanks of the New Life within my body is Jesus Christ Himself for He is the Source of all those dear Christians.

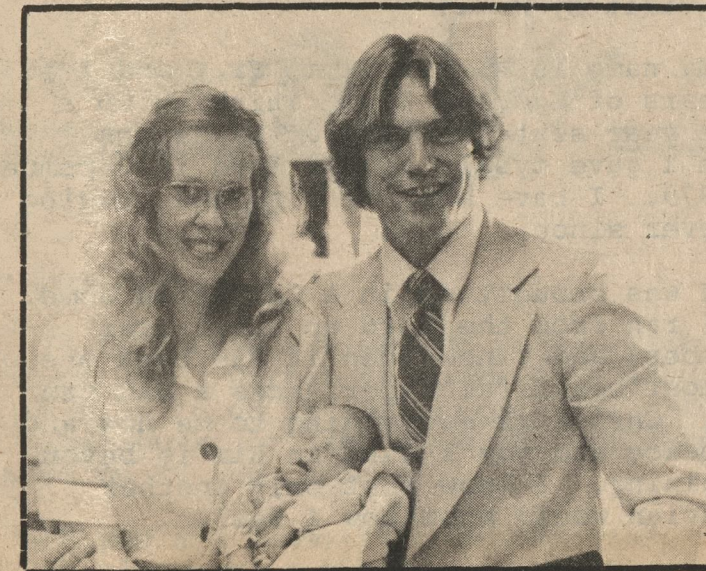
Many ask me what I have planned for the future. I believe the future is in the making today...Christ has given me a part in a beautiful ministry right here in San Quentin and until He has finished with His use of me here, I must remain. I have learned over the past that getting out of prison isn't freedom but letting Christ come in is.

Yes, the flesh of my bones aches to be comforted, as any man's, but I have a Comforter that comforts me in Spirit and in Truth. It is His Life I want to be lived, not mine, and as John the Baptist spoke in John 3:30 I pray Jesus to increase and for myself to decrease for the Glory and Honor of His Name.

I am convinced that Christ Jesus has chosen San Quentin as a testimony to the world that He is Lord and able to change the greatest of sinners into light-bearing saints.

"But thanks be to God, who always leads us in His triumph in Christ, and manifests through us the sweet aroma of the knowledge of Him in every place. Not that we are adequate in ourselves to consider anything as coming from ourselves, but our adequacy is from God."

May Christ Jesus lead His saints throughout the world to pray for more workers in the field of Prison Ministry as truly the crop is white and laborers few.



The good news is that Ray has kept the faith. He and his wife Shirley are now active in a ministry for Jesus which is outside prison walls.

Following his release, Ray began to minister wherever the Lord called him to talk about what Jesus can do with any life committed to Him. Some of the places where Ray has ministered this year are the Modesto Juvenile Hall and Max Unit, the Merced Rehab Center, the Turlock Men's Prayer Breakfast, the Neighborhood Church in Modesto, the German Baptist Church in Modesto, Ripon High School and Modesto Junior College.

Special joy has been added to the lives of Ray and Shirley through the gift of a new life. Last January 26 at 5:30 a.m. Caleb Lee Rogers arrived on the scene.

Shortly after a visit to his grandmother, who is now 99, Ray composed a letter to be sent to some of his friends. He wrote, "Today, as I am sitting on our bed Shirley Ann is playing with Caleb Lee. What a gift they are both to me. Thank you, Jesus. This home our Lord has provided is also a real work of grace..."

And he asked his friends, "Continue to keep the vision of the 'All the Way' Home in your prayers"

Ray has found outside work to do for Jesus. And he is doing it. And God is multiplying his joy.

The Unseen Voice

Reflections of a Beautiful Tomorrow
I have seen in my waking dreams
Be it of this life or a life to come
I know not.

A blinding aura of warmth and love
appeared,
Bathing the universe...or so it
seemed.
He spoke not, but yet I understood,
"T'is mine...and yours...believe
and have faith."
The anxiety and depression was then
lifted from my brow
And was replaced with a feeling of
tranquility.
As I felt it, I smiled and rejoiced,
For he has touched my soul.
Together we can do anything...
For love is the power of life,
Trust and have Faith, and you will
Receive.

Michael
Florida

In Prison Now

I'm in Prison now and doing my time,
I wasn't always a convict you know;
But somewhere down lifes major road,
I lost the true meaning of Love and
Home.
Home isn't just a house and a family,
Love must be there to comfort and
cheer,
Without Love we live in great fear.

I left my first Love as the Bible says,
But Jesus took me back and Loves me
dear.
Through prayer from friends I don't
know,
God said, "Son you're my very own;
My Spirit I give you to make you
strong,
My Word is there to guide you along;
Seek Me first in your life these
days,
And I will keep you from harms way."

I have a Home now no matter what,
'Cause Jesus said, "Ask and it
shall be given you."

Danny
Michigan

God Took Control

Hi! My name is Arthur. Not long ago I had been living a lonely, depressed and sinful life. Yes, I was in total darkness. It was due to this life style that I found myself so lonely and depressed, that one day I was up against the wall. I was ready to end my life. You see my release date was January 19, 1980. I found out January 15, 1980 that this was taken and changed to February 16, 1981. I was so hurt, and also, due to my dealing in vice within the prison, I found my I.O.U.'s were closing in on me. On January 18, 1980 I walked out of my cell wondering if I would live for another mere 24 hours.

In this state of mind, I wasn't very verbal. I just started walking, waiting for the moment to come. The word was out; there was a blade around with my name on it. As I was walking I did not know where I was going, just that I preferred to take the matter to the yard, rather than let it come to my cell in the form of someone dropping a fire bomb on me. At any rate I was ready to die. Although this was my attitude, I continued walking the yard, not knowing where I was heading, just waiting and walking. On this same day, I somehow found myself in the house of the Lord. I just sat there with more problems than I could physically or mentally handle. As I sat there, one of the very people I had done wrong put his hand on my shoulder, but the words he spoke were not directed toward hurting me, instead he said, "Brother you look like you need HELP!"

I said, "Yes, things are falling down on me like hail stones." He said, "Let me pray for you." At first I was ashamed to admit I was in a jam, yet, I didn't have to, he already knew. He asked again, "Let me pray for you." I said, "Okay," and let my tears fall like rain as he prayed. It was there that God took control. On January 20, 1980 I was to receive my certificate of baptism, for I let myself become a child of God, and washed away my old pride and sin nature. I still have a few problems, but God is now walking with me.

Arthur Owens...



I'm Growing

Dear Visit-By-Mail:

My name is Austin Timms Jr., and I am 39 years of age and I am finishing up a three year sentence here at Sandstone where I gave myself to the Lord in December of 1979. I have been serving and growing in Him ever since.

I was brought up in a Christian home, but I ran from the Lord up until last December, and since then it has been one of the most beautiful experiences a man can have. Christ is everything to me now and the peace and joy I find in Him is beyond explaining. I know that only another Christian would know how I feel.

I am a member of the choir here and as active in Church work as the Lord has lead me and I am getting stronger day by day through prayer and the Lord's Word. Through faith I find that I am becoming more affective all praises due to Christ.

I had several interests before I was born again and I still enjoy an occasional chess game but my days are now filled with things that have to do with walking with my Savior.

The Lord saw fit to place me in a cell house right next to the Chapel and I am in the Chapel every day and through my search for reading material I ran across your paper and was blessed by the articles in it.

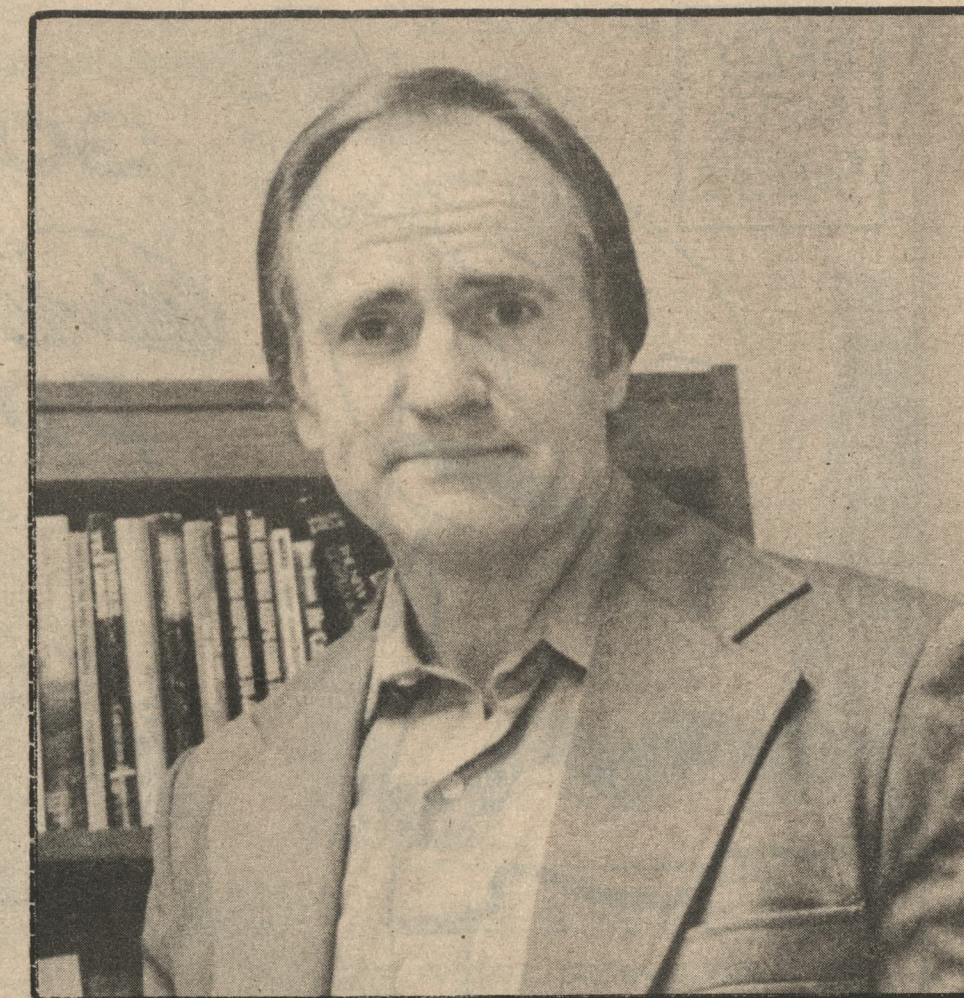
I read your invitation to Visit-by-Mail and would like to become acquainted with Christians on the outside. As I said before I am 39 years of age, Black and I do love sports and chess. My present ambition is to grow as close to Christ as I can and to find out what it is that He wants me to do to serve Him.

I am divorced and so I have no family to go to when I am released to a half way house in July of this year in Chicago, which is where I'm from. So whatever comes out of this I am asking that all of you pray a special prayer that the Lord consecrates my life and prepares me for the great life I know is ahead for me in Christ Jesus.

Yours Prayerfully,
Austin

To the Church behind the Walls of Leavenworth

FROM **Ralph**



Dear Brothers,

It is indeed a pleasure to be under the blood of Jesus Christ in these days when all we have to do is look around us, read the newspapers, or listen to the worldwide turmoil on TV and radio.

As you all know, this expectation has not always been a part of my life. Spending some 26 or 27 years of my life paying off debts to society, I had no time for the Lord. I knew of God, but of course, the soul saving personal relationship of knowing Jesus personally didn't come until I finally came to the end of myself. You all know what I'm saying. All those years of using drugs, seeking to fill the void inside of me had to come to an end. Praise God, He did fill the void and I am so thankful.

You know, looking back over the three years we spent together there behind the walls, I see where all the ups and downs were necessary. They were necessary to allow God to deal in each of our lives, because, as you know, He is the only one that can put a backbone in a jelly fish. I certainly needed character building after constructing my life around drugs.

The times we would not speak to each other, and the division among us, disputing, or whatever. They were all used by God to build us, make us aware of our need of Him. The day I cursed to high heaven on the ballfield, even that was used for God's glory because it made me aware of how Satan can sneak up on us when we let down and allow our emotions to control us.

But through it all brothers, we know that Jesus is with us, and is able to keep us despite our failures.

Since my release a few weeks ago, I've noticed a big difference. In there we could fellowship together, pray together, and there were not so many distractions, it was easier to walk in the Spirit. But out here I have really learned the value of walking by faith. The kind of faith that God is

able to keep you when all around you radios blare, weed is smoked, alcohol used and cursing like crazy is ringing in your ears. And of course the foxy women out to get you. Times when you are just too exhausted to pray or have devotions. Times when others in your room won't give you any slack. When you can't get a job, your money keeps going somewhere. Don't have enough to buy clothes, and etc...When all these things come together and there are no feelings that Christ is around, or for that matter, ever was, then you have to reach out in total blind faith.

How I praise His beautiful love and how He used Leavenworth to put me through boot camp. He did a good job. I've had many opportunities to ease back into my

old ways out here, but I'd rather have Jesus than anything this world has to offer.

I kind of like it out here, brothers, and in His time, you all will be out here too. Keep in mind that the more worldliness you allow in your life inside, the more you'll allow out here. "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much." Luke 16: 10.

Keep praying for me brothers, and I will continue to keep praying for you.OK?

I miss all of you, and remember, I love all of you very much. Ya, even you Tracy.

In His Service,
Ambassador Ralph

READ ACTS 5:12-32

GOD'S ANGEL WHO OPENED PRISON DOORS!



NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH LEADERS BROUGHT SUCH EXCITING MIRACLES AND HEALINGS

THAT MANY SICK PEOPLE WERE PUT OUT IN THE STREET SO THAT PETER'S SHADOW COULD JUST TOUCH THEM AND HEAL THEM!

THE CHIEF PRIEST AND HIS ASSOCIATES DIDN'T LIKE THIS AT ALL!



THEY WERE FILLED WITH JEALOUSY SO THEY CALLED OUT THE TEMPLE POLICE...

... AND SENT THEM TO FIND THE APOSTLES.



... WHO WERE THEN ARRESTED AND THROWN INTO THE PUBLIC PRISON...



PUBLIC JAIL

HOW OFTEN WE IMPRISON OURSELVES THROUGH DRUGS BOOZE CORRUPTION IMMORALITY UNBELIEF LYING CHEATING SIN BUT...

JACKSON WILCOX

GOD SETS US FREE!

... DURING THE NIGHT AN ANGEL OPENED THE PRISON DOORS !!



DO YOU REALIZE THAT WHEREVER YOU ARE, JESUS HAS THE POWER TO THROW OPEN THE DOORS OF YOUR SOUL WHEN SIN HAS MADE YOU A PRISONER?

THE ANGEL HAD A MESSAGE



GO STAND IN THE TEMPLE COURTS AND TELL THE PEOPLE THE FULL MESSAGE OF THIS NEW LIFE

SO AT DAYBREAK THE APOSTLES ENTERED THE TEMPLE COURTS AND BEGAN TO PREACH AND TEACH CHRIST



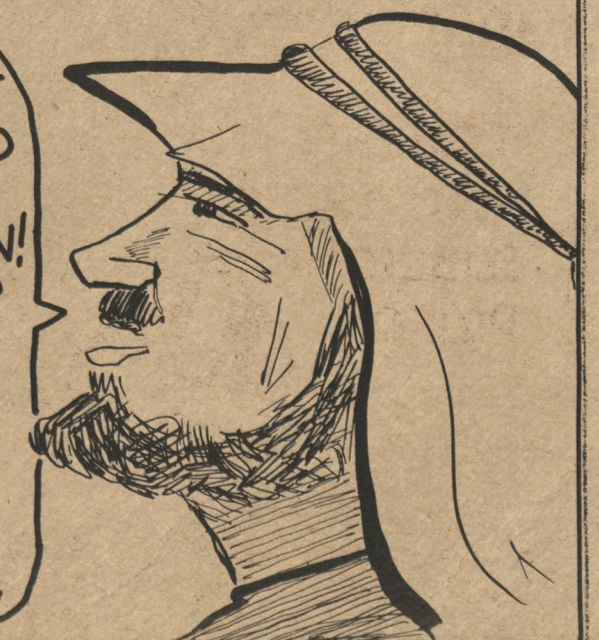
THIS MADE THE HIGH PRIEST AND ALL OF HIS ASSOCIATES FURIOUS!... THE APOSTLES WERE AGAIN ARRESTED AND BROUGHT BEFORE THE ASSEMBLY OF ELDERS. ANGRILY, THE HIGH PRIEST QUESTIONED AND THREATENED GOD'S DEDICATED SERVANTS.

WE GAVE YOU STRICT ORDERS NOT TO TEACH IN THIS NAME. YET YOU HAVE FILLED JERUSALEM WITH YOUR TEACHING



BUT PETER KNEW THE GLORY OF A FREEDOM WHICH NOTHING COULD EVER DESTROY. THE IMPRISONING DOORS ON HIS SOUL HAD BEEN BROKEN OPEN BY JESUS AND HE WOULD NEVER ALLOW THEM TO BE CLOSED AGAIN!

WE MUST OBEY GOD RATHER THAN MEN! THE GOD OF OUR FATHERS RAISED JESUS... AND... WE ARE WITNESSES.



Visit • By • Mail

"...I'm due to go out on work furlough soon but my stay here wasn't as bad as it could have been -- BECAUSE OF VISIT BY MAIL!! Each day brought me mail from all over the United States and Canada. I've made friendships that I can take home with me. I can't thank you enough for being out there and for caring..."

So reads a letter sent to VISIT BY MAIL from an inmate in a women's prison in California.

If you would like to write to a Christian on the outside, VISIT BY MAIL wants to help you. Just write us a letter giving the following:

Your name

Your address

Your age

Your special interests

Anything else that might be a point of contact for you and a friend on the outside.

We will then include your name and the vital information in our next regular bulletin which will be sent to all interested Christians who request it. We then will leave the selection of your name up to the people receiving the bulletin.

VISIT BY MAIL is simply a means to open the way for Christian fellowship through the mails. It is not a lonely hearts club. We want you to remember this. So when you get a letter and then answer, follow the rules of courtesy, good taste and common sense.

Building a new friendship is a two way street. . .everyone has his own thoughts, ideas and problems. Respect your new friend. Remember that real friendship is based on mutual understanding and shared common interests.

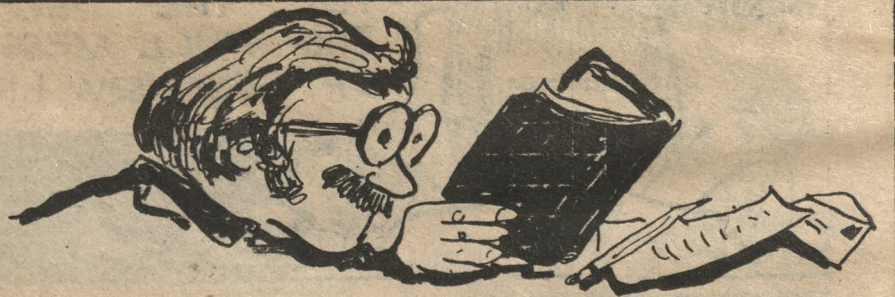
Make it your personal goal to understand and encourage the person to whom you write. Friendships by mail can be positive and unselfish blessings for all who participate.

We care. We're here to help. If you have any questions write to Duane Pederson.

To be listed, send a letter today to:

VISIT-BY-MAIL
Box 80
San Juan Capistrano, CA 92693

Christian Prison Volunteers
Box 1949 • Hollywood, CA • 90028



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WOULD YOU LIKE TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THE BIBLE?

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Your study will be guided by qualified instructors. You will receive personal assistance and counsel.

Write to:

Moody Correspondence School
820 North LaSalle Street
Chicago, IL 60610

EMMAUS CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOL PC
156 North Oak Park Ave.
Oak Park, Illinois 60301

(English and Spanish available from both schools)