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Winter 2024



Director's Report October 2023

As Yogi Berra famously said many years ago "It's like déjà vu all over again". This past year has been almost a replay of the last two years. As we enter our 23rd year of weekly Bible studies, we pray that we can soon start at all the institutions that we had classes before the disruption caused by the COVID virus. Due to the COVID virus, we have not been allowed to enter Federal, State, or County facilities with few exceptions. It will be a few more weeks or months until we can restart our programs. October 2023 Pastor Dave Bunnell and two volunteers will be teaching the Threshold at FCI Loretto to two groups of inmates. Last year, what should have been a 6 month program, took 9 months to complete due to weeks when volunteers were not allowed to enter the facility.

When we return for our traditional weekly Bible classes, we will need to rebuild from scratch. Many men have been released or transferred. However, our programs are well known and have been well attended in the past. We believe the men will return once classes start again.

Another challenge will be getting new volunteers to "visit those in prison" and "remember those in prison as if you were their fellow prisoners". Our

volunteers are getting older, and we lost one to a nursing home and one of the very first passed away. Recruiting volunteers is often a difficult challenge, but once they answer the call, they return year after year. Very few quit.

Prison Outreach Ministry operates with two part time staff. We generally have 10-15 volunteers who have donated in excess of 3,600 total hours in a normal year. We serve an average of 5-8% of the target population.

Our needs remain the same every year. This is in addition to prayers that we can restart our programs, we ask for prayers for the inmate population. We always have a need for Spanish speaking volunteers to allow us to better serve the Hispanic inmates. Every year we need financial assistance to purchase study materials and Bibles both English and Spanish versions.

Our vision is to continue to offer weekly Bible studies at all the facilities which we have been in the past. As was suggested by and the help of a former inmate, we are trying to develop an aftercare program for sexual offenders after their release. This will be done via a zoom format to reach across the entire country. This may be a blessing which has come out of the pandemic.

Sincerely

Randy Datsko, Missionary/ Director

Prison Outreach Ministry

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Thank you for your ongoing
and faithful support

Contact us at:

www.wpapom.org

W PA Conference Advance Special

Your church can contribute
to the Prison Ministry
Our # is CC003300



Randy Datsko is our Missionary Director who not only leads studies in Loretto but can also be scheduled to speak to your church or organization by calling our office at 814-849-2612 or by calling him directly at 814-659-7562.

*Please consider
becoming a monthly
supporter of WPA
Prison Outreach Ministry*

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www.wpapom.org .

