

## Pastors to Prisoners Organization

A §501(c) (3) California Nonprofit Organization

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### *Yard Pastor Elena Hernandez January 2020 Report*

Thank you very much for your gifts through the Pastors to Prisoners Organization. I appreciate it very much!

The cold weather continues here and there is still some snow flakes on the ground. I am looking forward to the Spring season.

This month was kind of slow due to the snow and the cold weather, but things are catching up now and more programs are back to normal again. Praise God!

I am grateful for the new Chaplain because he has been organizing all the chapels in the five facilities and assigning Clerks, something

that we did not have before. I am looking for a local volunteer that can accompany me on Monday and Tuesday nights to Facilities A and B to give a Bible study.

Usually when volunteers come by themselves, Staff only releases 10 to 20 inmates; but if two volunteers come they can release up to 35 inmates. This is because they are Level IV yards.

In Facility D Level II we can get up to 250 inmates in the chapel and there is no problem. in Facility C Level III we can get up to 50 inmates.

So if anyone is interested in volunteering during the even-

ing,, please let me know.

More volunteers are signing up to come but they only want to come on Saturdays because they come from a long distance. Pray that local volunteers will sign up to come during the week.

It is kind of hard to get more volunteers involved since they live so far from Tehachapi and have to start their drive very early in order to be here at 9:00 a.m.

But God is good and he is merciful enough to provide volunteers as we pray for this need. Thank you!



***“Remember the prisoners, as if chained with them—those who are mistreated— since you yourselves are in the same body.”***

*Heb:13:3*

### *The Devil is Defeated in the Name of JESUS!*

I say this because this last week of January I was called by the Lieutenant in charge of the Investigative Services Unit (ISU) regarding an issue that came up in Facility C.

Someone wrote a 666 sign with a permanent marker on the Catholic Chaplain's cabinet that is in the C chapel. This is a place that is used by all Chaplains, volunteers, different denominations and programs. The Lieutenant asked me if I had an idea who wrote it. I explained to

him that I did not have any idea who could have done such a thing.

What I did not know is that the Catholic chaplain had placed a complaint against me saying that *“I am stealing all his inmates from his congregation”* by announcing my services as Catholic services and inviting them to come to my services.

I was not even aware that this was going on until I was called by the Community

Resources Manager (CRM) to sign a memo saying that I was not to announce my services in any yard as Catholic services. I was surprised to hear the news because I am innocent of this accusation and this is a big lie coming directly from Satan himself.

The devil knows that I am a threat to him and he is trying to get me in trouble, but greater is He that is in me than the one that is in the world. Satan was defeated

on the Cross of Calvary by Jesus, and he does not have any part with the children of God.

Isaias 54:17 *“No weapon formed against you shall prosper. And every tongue which rises against you in judgment you shall condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is from Me,”* says the Lord.

Please keep me in prayer regarding this issue.

## *Day of Peace and Reconciliation*

During this month the Community Resources Manager, Mr. Charles Richey, from the Religious Programs Oversight Unit in Sacramento ordered a DAY OF PEACE AND RECONCILIATION for every institution statewide during the week of January 26 through 31, 2020. The Warden, the Community Resources Manager, the Public Information Officer, Captains and Chaplains organized these events for Facilities A, B, C, D and E.

This was done in an effort to promote peaceful co-existence among the prison population, which is much needed in all the yards. The ceremonies were conducted by the Warden, by all faith chaplains and by the Community Resources Manager. Inmate representatives from the chapels and the Inmate Advisory Council also participated in the ceremonies. Community volunteers from the various faith groups which actively participate in institution religious programs also participated.

Inmates always surprise us, and I was amazed to hear the speeches they gave. Inmates from the Level IV yards also surprised us with the music that they brought. It was a small group of inmates who played guitar and sang Christian songs. Overall these were very positive ceremonies that encouraged the inmates to participate and give the best of themselves. I was very happy to be part of these ceremonies.

## *SUICIDE ALERT*

**SUICIDE**—I wanted to talk to you about suicide because this is a real thing that is happening in people around us that you never imagined that they would even consider this option.

The first week of January five CCI staff members committed suicide and these are things that you don't hear in the news very often, but it is real.

Two weeks ago I was giving a class in one facility where we were talking about people who feel overwhelmed by problems and they give up. One inmate interrupted me and said: *"Sister, I was about to commit suicide last week because I was feeling overwhelmed with so many problems, but I heard someone on the TV saying: 'When God closes all doors, he always leaves one open.' And that comment made me reconsider the idea of taking my life away, and thought to myself that God still has a door open for me." He repented and asked God for forgiveness.*

He explained that he was feeling overwhelmed by the thought that he was never going to see his family again.

The inmates and I prayed for him and encouraged him not to give up.

There are so many hurting people in the world. You see them with a wide smile on their faces but you never know what's going on in their hearts. Many people live a double life these days.

This month something occurred that left me astonished as I heard the news about the homicide of this young woman whom I knew personally and who was part of the CCI family. She was killed by her own son.

This news left me astonished because I knew her and she was a very kind lady who I frequently spoke as we were going in and out of Facility D. I regret today that I never invited her to church or asked her if she knew Jesus as her personal savior or if she needed prayer.

Her husband had passed away two years ago and left her with two daughters and one son. The News didn't give too many details, but the story I heard in the prison was that her son was high on Crystal and asked her for money, but she refused to give him any and kicked him out of the house.

He got very angry and searched on his phone to find ways on how to kill her.

The story I heard was that he killed her and dismembered her and then placed the pieces in a trash bag and started driving on freeway 15 toward Las Vegas.

He was intercepted by a Highway patrol officer because he was going too fast. The young man thought that he was going to be arrested and he started shooting at the officer. More patrols arrived at the scene and he was killed by the Officers.

It is bad news when you hear someone that you knew died, but it is more terrible to find out that this mother was killed by her own son and that he cut her in pieces and threw the pieces away on the freeway.

I regret very much today that I never talked to her about Jesus — she always had a big smile in her face and I thought she probably was a very happy woman with a wonderful family. I never imagined the turmoil that she was living in.

Last year an officer killed another officer because he learned that he was having an affair with his wife. He came directly to his house and killed him. Now he is facing life in a prison. These incidents resonate in my mind and remind me that I should never miss the opportunity of talking to people about the need to reconcile with God.

We are always going to have the problem of incarceration. Prisons existed since the times when Jesus came to this earth. That is why the Apostol Paul wrote in Hebrews 13:3 *"Remember the prisoners, as if you were in prison with them, and the maltreated, as you also are part of the same body."*

Jails and prisons have existed for many years — this is a place of darkness, loneliness and desperation where many men and women commit suicide every year.

God has opened churches inside the prisons through local volunteers to preach his gospel and

that we may bring the good news of salvation.

The church behind bars is like an Emergency Room in a hospital. Inmates come to the chapel when the water has gone up to their necks. They come to church hoping to hear a word of encouragement to assure them that taking their lives away is not good because God is the one that gave us life and he is the only one that can take it away.

That is why volunteers are so important in the correctional setting. Thank you Volunteers!

## *Inmates in Prison*



**Inmates in a Solitary Housing Unit in Lima, Peru at the Lurigancho Prison.**

## *Brother Tom Heyer from Shadow Mountain Church*



**Brother Tom Heyer from Shadow Mountain Church.**

Tom Heyer has been a very unique instrument from God in serving in the prison ministry for more than 50 years. He organizes the Messengers of Love Dinner at Shadow Mountain every year.

He recently went through a very challenging trial in his life as he was diagnosed with skin cancer and then with a cancerous mass adhered to his right kidney.

Many people prayed for him the day he went to surgery. We thank God today for the victory because the cancer was encapsulated in his kidney and the surgeons were able to remove the mass and the kidney and no cancer was detected after they did more biopsis on him. Praise God!

I am very grateful to Tom for his friendship through the years and I know that he has a great passion for the prison ministry.

I celebrate today his life and I pray that he will recover very soon from his surgery. May God continue strengthening him day by day so that he can go back to Donovan prison and teach Bible studies.

God bless you Tom!

**Do all the good you can,  
By all the means you can,  
In all the ways you can,  
In all the places you can,  
In all the times you can,  
To all the people you can,  
As long as you can!"  
Quote by John Wesley**



## Pastors to Prisoners Organization

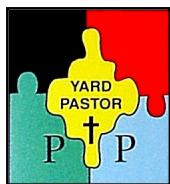
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*We're on the web!*  
<http://pastorstoprisoners.org>

*"Helping broken people put their pieces together."*



*Pastors to Prisoners (PtP) was founded in 1996 and is a privately funded California 501©(3) non-profit prison ministry working to provide ongoing financial support and direction to ordained ministers*

*uniquely burdened and willing to work with the incarcerated as full-time volunteer yard pastors under the direction of state Chaplains in prison facilities.*



This is my car buried in the snow last time it snowed. We are expecting more snow and I just hope my car does not get stuck again.

The cold weather is being hard on everyone, even for the staff that works at CCI; but this is coming from God and we are thankful for the snow and for the rain because we need the snow and the rain so much here in Tehachapi. There were many fires last year and the dams need to be filled again.

I am looking forward for the summer — and then when the summer gets here we will be complaining on how hot it is. This is our nature because we all have a complaining spirit. May God help us to live content with what we have. Amen!

**PRAYER REQUESTS:** Please pray: 1) For salvation especially for the inmates in the Level IV yards; 2) For more volunteers for Facilities; 3) For financial support; 4) For physical strength so I can do front cell ministry Thank you!

**PRAISE REPORT:** I am grateful to God for the Day of Peace and Reconciliation that we were able to hold in all the yards this month.

**GOALS FOR 2020:** 1) Spend more time with my family; 2) Try to improve my health by exercising at least three times per week; 3) Eat more healthy; 4) Take vacations more often; 5) Find an affordable apartment in San Diego; 5) Visit churches in the Kern County area to recruit new volunteers and promote the prison ministry; 6) Spend at least one day during the week doing front cell ministry.

### YEAR-END TAX DEDUCTIBLE DONATIONS:

Your continued financial support is greatly needed. Please mail checks to:

Pastors to Prisoners Organization  
P. O. Box 2757, La Mesa, CA 91943-2757

Please consider supporting me in this ministry.

Thank You!

**The whole purpose of religion is to facilitate love and compassion, tolerance, humility, and forgiveness.**