TWIN CITIES PRISON MINISTRY MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

December 2024





tcpm.prayers@gmail.com twincitiesprisonministry.org



"I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me." Matthew 25:36



O LORD, HEAR MY PRAYER, LISTEN TO MY CRY FOR MERCY; IN YOUR FAITHFULNESS AND RIGHTEOUSNESS COME TO MY RELIEF.

- Althea's children; Cavin, Skyler, Abriel, Bud, and Paris
- For my parents, Millie and Alfred, and a cure for cancer
- My mom, Emily, hospice for Peggy, my children, Jackson, Carter, Madeleine, and Riley
- Help with addiction for Jennifer and Brandon, 18
- Sherman & Cleo, parents of Brooke
- Jessica, age 9, a friend with cancer
- Kim Rask's cancer surgery
- Bill, Julie, Luke, Anna and Emily, prayers for God's healing
- Daryl, who is in hospital for heart problems
- Alycia's daughter Brooklyn's anxiety
- Althea's father Alfred's cancer, Aunt Millie's cancer
- For marital programs, my wife, who has chemical and addiction issues, and trying to save my marriage
- My ex wife has cancer in her kidney and liver
- Prayers for those who have died tragically and from suicide
- For those who are suicidal
- For the hostages in Israel
- Pray for those who may be deported soon
- Pray for an end to racism and hatred
- Pray for inmates about to be released and those who have housing issues - that they find purpose in life
- Prayers for the new mail system which now funnels all mail to MN Facilities through a 3rd party vendor in Maryland. It is currently taking over 3 weeks to receive mail.
- Prayer in thanksgiving for Scott's return to health
- Pray for my brother with cancer, that he receives comfort and comes home
- Pray to give the mother of my daughter strength to retain custody of their daughter
- Prayers to bless all of the volunteers who visit in prison
- For the Restorative Justice Group who raised money for victims of crime by selling pizza
- James' personal request
- Prayers for our father to bury our mom's ashes.





SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR THE INCARCERATED

Pen Pals, tell your pals about the following publications that will provide free subscriptions.

The requests must come directly from those inside the walls.

Catholic Answers Magazine,

P.O. Box 199000, San Diego, CA 92159-9000

Give Us This Day, P.O. Box 37773 Boone, IA 50037-0773

Our Daily Bread, P.O. Box 2222 Grand Rapids, MI 49501

<u>Loaves and Fishes Magazine</u>, Lighthouse Publishing, P.O. Box 332, Bedford, PA 15522

Lapham Quarterly, 116 E 16th St., Floor 8, New York, NY 10003-2158

Pray for prisoners and their relationship with God, that they will:

- Experience His love
- Accept Christ as Savior
- Allow God to work in them and accomplish His purpose in their lives
- Earnestly seek God and get involved with chapel services and other Christian programming offered within the prison



ATRIBUTE to Deacon Clarence Shallbetter

(September 6, 1938 - November 9, 2024)

In 2002 I found myself in some serious legal trouble. As I sat in a juvenile detention center, my life flashed before my eyes. My limited English made things hard to understand and added another layer of isolation. Overwhelmed with fear, I was certain that this was the end for me. But it was in that dark moment that I met Clarence.

He would regularly visit the detention center to offer prayer for the young men. I saw him come and go week after week and at first, I didn't think much of it. One day, I thought I should sign up for a prayer session, just so I could come out of my cell.

But I'll never forget that first meeting with Clarence. Despite my circumstances and the labels society often places on us, Clarence didn't seem to care about any of that. There was no judgment in his eyes; instead, he guided me in a prayer and helped me ask God for forgiveness. In that moment, a profound sense of peace and hope filled my heart – feelings I hadn't experienced in a very long time.

For the next eight months, this became a routine. Clarence was a guiding presence in my life, offering wisdom and spiritual guidance. He didn't try to fix me; instead, he simply listened and prayed with me. He shared a different perspective on life – one that I was unfamiliar with.

While at the detection center, I underwent several psychological evaluations as the courts assessed whether I should be tried as an adult or qualify for a program called (EJJ) Extended Juvenile Jurisdiction, which offers serious juvenile offenders a final chance. However, the evaluations did not turn out in my favor, and it seemed likely I would be tried as an adult and face prison time.

Clarence had sent a letter to the judge expressing his experiences with me over the past 8 months. The day before my final court hearing, Clarence and I prayed together and asked God for strength, forgiveness, and to let it be his will.

The next day in the courts a miracle took place. The evaluator who had written a damaging report about me stood on the witness stand and said that she had made a mistake in diagnosing me and requested to disregard her inaccurate report. We were all shocked by this turn of events, and by the grace of God I was granted entrance into the EJJ program, I went on a five-year program up in the mountains of Colorado. It was very difficult but the only chance I had.

Even though we were miles apart, Clarence never stopped reaching out. He would send me cards with prayers, always reminding me that someone believed in me – even when I couldn't believe in myself. Those cards kept me going. His words reminded me of God's love and grace. Through his consistent support, I began to believe in something I hadn't believed in for a long time – hope.

Successfully completing the program was a huge milestone. But after being institutionalized, reentering society is difficult. In 2008 as I started to rebuild my life, simple tasks like figuring out the bus system, higher education or just creating a daily routine was difficult and overwhelming. I struggled to find work and put food on my table. Clarence provided small jobs around his house, from cutting the grass to replacing the windows, or gardening in the back yard. Clarence also referred a few of his friends that needed work done, and I was able to make some extra cash. Clarence continued to be a constant reminder of God's love. Over the last 23 years, our relationship grew into a bond often seen between a father and his son. We shared traditions, like making rosettes using his family recipe, and would always make a few boxes to give out to family and friends for Christmas.

Clarence was there for me throughout my journey into the Catholic Church and he also played an important role at my wedding just two months ago.

What stands out most about Clarence is his servant's heart. Whether he's visiting men in prison, sending out cards filled with prayers, or simply being a listening ear, Clarence embodies the Gospel. He didn't just talk about faith — he lived it every day.

Clarence wasn't just a mentor to me; he was an angel sent from God. My family and I will forever be grateful for the love, wisdom, and guidance he shared with us. Though his earthly journey has ended I know he's now rejoicing in eternal life with God. With a heavy heart, I say, "See you later, my friend. Thank you." - Gabriel

Obituary



SOME U.S. PRISONS ARE ABUSING INMATE WELFARE FUNDS

and Making Society's Most Vulnerable Pay for Prison Operations, Staff Salaries, Benefits, and More Read more here.

How are welfare funds funded? By charging incarcerated people and their communities steep prices for phone calls, video calls, e-messaging, money transfers, and commissary purchases. A lot of that money goes back to corrections agencies in the form of kickbacks. Much of this money then flows into special accounts called "Inmate Welfare Funds." These welfare funds are supposed to be used for non-essential purchases that collectively benefit the incarcerated population, such as recreation equipment, entertainment, social and educational opportunities, and other non-essential benefits for that population as a whole. But lax prison policies frequently allow money from these funds to be used for facility construction and maintenance, release-related costs and other goods and services that are supposed to come out of a department's general budget. Most policies are so vague that prison officials enjoy wide discretion to spend incarcerated peoples' money as they please sometimes spending it on luxury perks for staff. For example:

- The San Diego Sheriff's Department in California used welfare funds to pay employee salaries, maintain department vehicles, buy gasoline, pay office expenses and even buy toilets at one jail's recreational yard.
- Fulton County jail in Atlanta, Georgia, spent \$40,000 on gift cards from The Honey Baked Ham Company for a staff holiday party, reserved \$5,000 for a Thanksgiving giveaway, and paid \$2,600 to florists.
- In Minnesota, facility officials refused to purchase cable television for the incarcerated population using funds collected from people convicted of sexual offenses. Curiously, however, officials saw no problem using thousands of dollars of welfare fund money to buy Netflix subscriptions that incarcerated people could not access.
- Arizona's Pinal County Sheriff spent at least \$217,000 on guns, bullets, and vests for law enforcement, while less than \$900 was spent on books for people detained at the jail.



Pope Francis will travel to a Rome prison to open a Holy Door as a "tangible sign of the message of hope" for people in prisons around the world.

Every 25 years, the Catholic Church recognizes a special year to "proclaim" liberty to captives, recovery of sight to the blind, and letting the oppressed go free." A year that proclaims liberation, conversion, and reconciliation to mark a time to re-establish a proper relationship with God.

These Jubilee years each take on a particular theme but are often rooted in forgiveness. Traditionally, these years include gestures of amnesty or pardons. The Jubilee Year 2025 will open at the Vatican on December 24. 2024, and close January 6, 2026 – the feast of Epiphany.

Pope Francis announced the 2025 Jubilee Year in a document, called a "Bull of Indiction," titled "Spes Non Confudit." This title translates in English to: "Hope Does Not Disappoint."

"For all of us, may the Jubilee be an opportunity to be renewed in hope" Pope Francis

