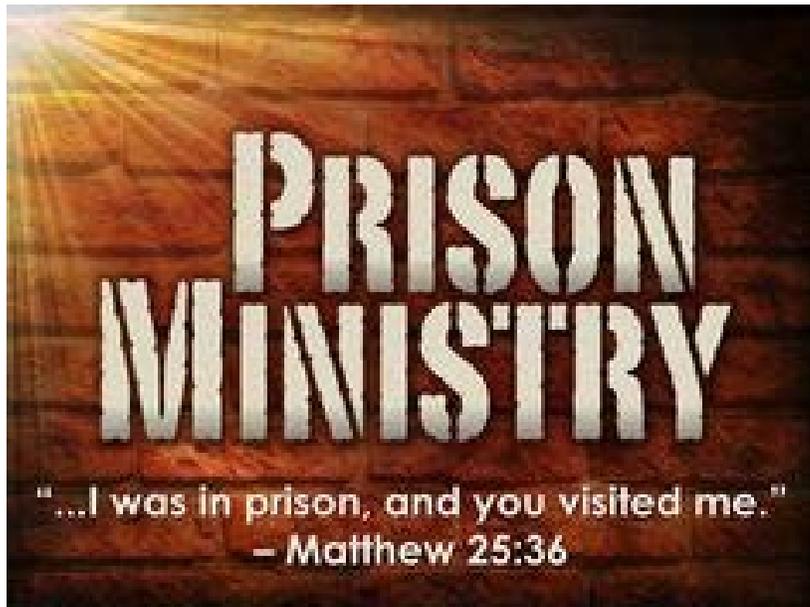


The Principles of Prison Ministry - How Restorative Justice Speaks to other Ministry



History and Overview

- There are eight federal Institutions in the Kingston area
- Chaplains work in all of these institutions and rely on volunteers
- The course was the initiative of Sister Peggy Malcolm (Sister of Charity) who is a retired chaplain and who saw the need for volunteers to be properly trained for this ministry
- This course, is delivered over a 6-week period (typically one session a week). It has been growing and enjoying success these past 18 years



Content of the Course

The course covers topics relevant for people planning on volunteering in prison ministry including:

- “The call to ministry“, communication’s skills and boundaries, profile of a prisoner, restorative justice, security issues, ministry to families, reintegration, self care and meeting people in a prison environment
- Experts on various subject matters are invited to speak on the major themes
- The volunteers come from various faith and religious backgrounds
- Advertising for the course is done in the bulletins, by chaplains, by word of mouth and, after all these years, by reputation

What Volunteers Provide:

- Presence: attending/assisting with Mass or Liturgy of The Word that takes place in the Institutions
- Teaching various skills sets such as:
 - Art(painting and knitting), music (guitar, keyboard, singing)
 - Courses in faith and spirituality
 - Life skills and restorative justice
 - Alternatives to Violence
 - Philosophy
 - Freeing the Human Spirit (Yoga)
 - Families In Corrections
 - Support in the Community – The Dismas Organization and Community Chaplaincy
- Accompaniment for authorized activities into the community such as attendance at Mass in a parish, community engagement support groups offered in the community, support upon release from an institution



Key Lessons Learned/Best Practices

- Committee organizes the Prison Ministry Course and provides support and facilitation of the six week programme
- Understanding the need for volunteers in various institutions
- Understanding the needs of your volunteers
- At the end of the course evaluations and input on the course are essential to understanding what worked and how to improve
- Communication with other agencies and community groups are essential for collaborative ministry
- Providing time for dialogue, sharing and networking.
- Providing time to gather with volunteers and potential volunteers during the year for community building ,learning opportunities and support

How can this Prison Ministry Grow to Fill Needs in Your Community

- Provincial and Federal Institutions
- Families of those incarcerated
- Children of those incarcerated that attend schools in your area
- Halfway Houses
- Community Chaplains
- Find ways to make connections in your community to provide welcoming Faith Communities for reintegration support



Practical Applications for Other Ministries

- Understand the rule set of the environment in which you are operating (ex. Prison, Hospital)
- Building Relationships and Trust with other Community Partners
- Sense of community for volunteers (in this case Prison Ministry Volunteers)
- Working with and leveraging the strengths of other faith communities

How can the Example of Prison Ministry and the Lessons Learned be Applied in your Ministry?

- Decide on a ministry area for exploration
- What are the needs of that ministry?
- What kind of formation or training would enable that ministry?
- Are there any lessons from Prison Ministry that can be utilized to enable this specific ministry?
- We are open to assisting (follow through)for those interested in adapting or implementing the programme

