



TITUS HOUSE MINISTRIES

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GOOD MORNING! As I write to you I picture my audience adjusting to La Pasada, or waiting in prison for release, dreaming of release in four years, waiting at home for one's spouse to be released, perhaps rushing to work trying to picture why your husband was sentenced to such a long period of time. Some of you are actually wondering why you have lived so long, why God doesn't take you home but experiencing the joy of supporting and praying for ministries like ours.

WHY JUSTICE? I talk with people who believe inmates and newly released inmates have no rights, they should have had more brains in the first place! We got the most feedback from last month's letter about Don's experience at his church. Is it OK to refer to former prison inmates when they are in a public place, calling them "sex offenders", isolating them from others, making special rules as to where they can live, travel, work? Don was also told he could not partake of the social hour after Mass and have a donut and some coffee. I have a very rebellious streak in me so I went and got two donuts for us to eat in the car! Does justice apply only to "good" people? Does decency relate to justice?

THANK YOU!!! We let you know our needs for car repair and several of you responded immediately. Thank you for helping Don shape up his truck. My car is getting prepared for the winter we know is coming. I was surprised this morning to see my breath in the air as I checked on my dogs.

RSOL BECOMES LIBERTY AND JUSTICE COALITION. The president is Rick Dean and along with Larry and Lloyd they are preparing for the upcoming legislative session. Rick says a man needs a roommate if you are looking for an apartment. Call Rick at 409-3661.

VOICE ON THE PHONE - Last Tuesday evening at La Pasada I met a man just released from Chapparral prison. I said, "I am the voice on the phone." It is very enjoyable to talk perhaps for more than a year to such a person and then suddenly meet him. If you have done your mentoring sheets please call me! I am sorry to limit out-of-NM calls to once a month but the cost of a phone call from Louisiana, for example, is several dollars. In state calls are usually 65 cents. We are now up to about 15 states asking about Titus House.

BLESSINGS FROM BILL -- It's time to stop complaining and negative talk! I know, there's nothing good about prison. But we poison our minds and foul our nest by negativity. God is a gospel, not a disaster. Joy is our strength. Lighten up! Say something edifying, even if it means saying a lot less. Read a psalm instead of writing a grievance!

LA PASADA EVANGELISTIC CRUSADE – On August 12th we put on an exciting program in La Pasada's parking lot – ice cream cones, clothing give-away, Magic With a Message by Don, great music by Isaac Candelaria, Don's brother and a great message from Pastor Rod Compton of Tijeras Baptist Church. The rules of La Pasada forced us to speak to the men first, then they returned to their building, and the women came out and we went through our program again – from ice cream which melted too fast, magic show, music and message. When Pastor Rod asked who would like to receive Christ 6 guys and 5

girls answered the invitation. We gave them each a Four Spiritual Laws booklet and we are following up with encouragement to them. My daughter, Connie, here for a week from New York City, got enthusiastically involved in this venture even though she was to catch a plane at 6:00 AM the next morning! Also thanks goes out to Doug who is one of our Board member who drove all the way from Los Lunas to help out.

Emory wanted to give a shout out to all those at Chaperral. He wanted to let you know that he is doing well at La Pasada. Emory attends our Tuesday night bible study.

CIRCLE OF CONCERN: Will be held on Sunday, September 7th at 6-7:30, Foothills Church, Tramway and Candelaria NE – 6PM to 7:30. Be there! There were many house hold items donated to *Titus House* that we would like to give to those who need them. A few were taken by those who attended the *Circle of Concern*. We would like to thank Jack, Doug, and Teller for their generous donation. This is one part of what we do at these meetings. Again I would like to encourage you to attend and be of help in helping others.

A REPORT FROM DON JOHNSTON

I attended the ***Criminal Justice Reform Subcommittee*** (CJS) held in Albuquerque this last week along with personal friends from *CURE-Sort* (Citizens United For The Rehabilitation Of Errants-Sex Offenders Restored Through Treatment).

Several items on their agenda were of most interest to me and hopefully to you. Let me share a little with you. Representatives from *Crossroads and Maya's Place* which help women reintegrating into the community after incarcerations with a place to live and support, spoke to the Senators of the CJS. They explained how their program is successful and can save taxpayers money. I was glad to hear this because this is a step in the right direction where maybe the public one day can help men who were sex offenders (SO) in transitional living. The one problem they and us SOs have is getting these programs established into "their" neighborhoods.

Next were spokespeople from *Probation and Parole*. They gave an overview and discussed the technical violations of probation and parole (PP). They said they have about 19,000 who are on PP. They stated the hierarchy of the reason for the violation of PP. From what I gathered was 1. New Charges, misdemeanor/felony. 2. Failing to report (absconding). They stated the number one reason people abscond is they had used drugs. They stated that this was too bad because their P.O. they have an option to only sanction them with community service for the first two times they violated and then the third time 7 days in jail. I spoke with Larry our paralegal on our *Titus House Board* about this. He stated for SOs there is a No Tolerance Policy, which means straight to jail. We need to change Governor Susana's position on this or vote her out. I believe that God would want us make things happen, not watch things happen, or one day wake up and say "what happened"? Come Lord Jesus and save us from the evil around us. Let us all pray for God's will to be done.

I spoke to a Ms. Freeman (after her talk to the senators) who looks at all the parole plans. I tried to intercede for one person out in prison in Clayton who violated for being with an old girlfriend that he shouldn't have. She told me how people who are on the 5-20 parole who violate, that the law reads they do not have to be seen by the Parole Board and they could do their 5-20 in prison. She stated when the

law was written that she believed that the legislators did not mean this. Therefore she **does** get SOs before the Parole Board. I spoke to Larry about this and he is working with the senators to change the wording.

Next what followed was Transitional Living and Information Technology Needs for the NMCD. They started out with the need of updating their outdated Window XP database at the cost of 14 million. There were a number of reasons to do this but what I found interesting was how they would be able to track recidivism properly, cross reference offenders or programs, offer risk and needs assessments and most important for me was calculate sentencing dates and good time projections. We all know how some caseworkers can make mistakes and take a long time to calculate. Maybe this could help them, but it does seem like a lot of \$.

Next was Gregg Marcantel, Secretary, NMCD who spoke of how they want to build a transitional living housing called the *Bullock House* in Los Lunas Campus (on prison grounds) with no fences. It would house 17 women. It would be split into two sections. Section 1-Pre-Release: Six months from release more freedom than an institution, focusing on in-house programming, identification paperwork, Medicaid, and post-release plans. Second section would be Post-Release, living on the second side of the home, working in the community and programming at night in the home. Mr. Marcantel stated it cost \$104 to house a person in prison where this would cost \$50 a day. This was true with Crossroads and Maya House. Let us pray that funding for this and for SOs would be made available. They talked about having transitional housing across the state.

They had a time for the public to speak. I represented *Titus House Ministries* and told them how we have housed a few reformed sex offenders who were off of parole and probation (because I am a SO felon) in our motor home. I also informed them what other things we do for FORMER sex offenders whose recidivism rate which is 3-5%. I also stated that if the judge mandates an SO to Community Custody Program because of a parole violation that there is NO program that will accept SOs except La Pasada which cost \$600 a month. I've talked to two SOs at MDC who were ordered to CCP but could not find a place that would accept SOs. I spoke about the 5-20 year program and what Ms. Freeman told me. I stated it was unfair for a minor violation an SO is not given a chance for community service that they are sent straight to jail (do not pass go, do not collect \$100).

Well anyway that is my report to all my brothers on the other side of the wall. We also are very much appreciative of the kindness and sincere involvement of our volunteers and donors.

Blessings,



Don & Alice