



Newsletter

"Setting captives free" Isaiah 61 • Spring 2011

American Catholic Correctional Chaplains Association

President's Blog...

Dear Co-Workers in the Vineyard,

We are looking forward to an exciting conference this year with the good people of Miami. Please note the date of the conference. Schedule, costs and application are inside this newsletter.

ONLY CRUSHED GRAPES, PRODUCE WINE
June 17 – 19, 2011
Residencia Jesús Maestro, MIAMI, FLORIDA



OTHER NEWS

- We have a **newly designed website**. Special thanks to Christine Shimrock and Tom Skemp. The address remains the same: www.catholiccorrectionchaplains.org This is an attractive face for the public to come and meet us. I ask all members to submit articles and pictures to Tom Skemp so we can share them with one another. We are responsible for keep this website up to date.
- **Elections**. Yes, it is that time again. John Boylan is the Chair of the Nominating Committee. Please submit your nominations to him for the office of President and Vice President.
- **Alternative source for funding**. Matthew 25 Payroll Program to benefit Catholic Prison Ministry. A friend of Fr. George Williams, SJ, (now at San Quentin, CA) Steve Caron, CPA and Knight of Malta, has designed this innovative fund raising to assist local Catholic prison ministry, Jesuit Prison Ministry and the ACCCA. Mr. Caron (978-475-9040) needs your help to provide contacts for Catholic parishes and business. More information inside.
- **Certification Chair**. Chaplain Julien Olivier of New Hampshire, has accepted the role as chair of the Certification Committee. Congratulations. Have patience with him as he gets up to speed on all the details.
- **International Commission of Catholic Prison Pastoral Care (ICPPC)**. We are renewing our relationship and membership with our Catholic colleagues around the world. The ACCCA will be present for their quadrennial meeting in Cameroon, Africa.
- Finally, we are accepting nominations for the ACCCA's **St. Maximilian Kolbe Award** for an outstanding member. The nomination deadline is May 1, 2011.

Peace Always,
Paul Rogers



From Our Episcopal Moderator

Dear ACCCA brothers and sisters,

Since accepting the role of Episcopal Moderator of the ACCCA, my only communication with you has been at the gathering two summers ago in Nashville at the annual ACCCA members convention. The death of Fr. Mark Schmieder, was a great loss to us. He was devoted to the work of the Association and had a deep love for all who serve in ministry to the imprisoned.

Since that meeting our president, Paul Rogers, has provided capable oversight for the work of the Association. I am deeply grateful to him and his invitation to offer a few words of encouragement and support to each of you. Your efforts to proclaim the Gospel of hope and joy to the imprisoned, who may find it difficult to see reason to hope, is vital to the mission of the Church. Like the authentic gospel message, our work involves leading others to see, by the light of the Holy Spirit, that each of us has the opportunity to experience the freedom of the children of God, which we come to know through faith.

I am always uplifted by news of the many ministries coordinated or continued by members of the Association that reach out to the imprisoned. It can be difficult to persevere in this work when the ministry at times can seem to be unnoticed or unappreciated or when we face the challenge of working with the imprisoned without adequate resources. Yet prison ministry is integral to the proclamation of the Gospel, as our Lord himself indicated when he inaugurated his own ministry by proclaiming a year of favor: "The spirit of the Lord is upon me, therefore he has anointed me, He has sent me to bring glad tidings to the poor, to proclaim liberty to captives, Recovery of sight to the blind, and release to prisoners. Luke 4:18. We are not discouraged because the Lord grants us the grace and strength to meet the challenges of this ministry with joy and dedication.

In the November 2000 USCCB document, Responsibility, Rehabilitation, and Restoration: A Catholic Perspective on Crime and Criminal Justice, the bishop's expressed the importance to the Church of ministry to the imprisoned and to all affected by crime and the criminal justice system. In the 10 years since its publication the work of each of you who minister to the imprisoned has continued with occasions of growth and at times, consolidation. I encourage you to revisit that document, as you reflect on your own ministry and be reassured of the prayerful support of all in the Church.

"The harvest is rich but the workers are few; therefore ask the harvest master to send workers to his harvest." (Luke 10:2) As we prayer together for the Lord to increase the numbers of those dedicated to prison ministry, be assured of the gratitude of all the bishops for your devotion to this ministry. May God continue to bless you and all your efforts.

Sincerely in Christ,
Most Reverend Barry C. Knestout
Episcopal Moderator

The Convict and the Pulpit

by Fr. Jim Schmitmeyer

There is a story about a man who built a wooden staircase in a convent chapel in Santa Fe, New Mexico. The stranger's arrival was an answer to the nuns' anxious prayers. He constructed an amazing circular stairway without a central post. When he finished the task, the man left without payment or farewell. The sisters concluded that the carpenter was St. Joseph himself.

The people of Sacred Heart Church in Memphis, Texas recently received a new wooden ambo, a handsome, handmade pulpit. Its carved posts, stained and polished, swirl in diagonal patterns unique to the mission furniture of the American Southwest. The ambo's sturdy frame dignifies its mission: to heft and anchor the Word of God in a community of faith.

Like the mysterious builder who appeared at the Santa Fe convent, the carpenter who fashioned this ambo is—and will remain—a stranger to the people of the community for which it was built. But, unlike St. Joseph, the reason the man's background is unknown is that he is a prisoner. He is housed in the T.L. Roach Unit of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice. His name is a series of numbers. His past contains a darkness that, to this day, haunts his deep-set eyes. Let's call him *Joe*.

Over a period of months, "*Joe*" toiled in a tight space in a crowded workshop. To his right, an inmate painted team emblems on ceramic footballs. Across the aisle, other inmates hand-tooled leather and crafted cowboy boots. When I would check on the pulpit's progress, Joe's arms would be coated with sawdust. He'd smooth his hand across planed boards and talk about the absorbency of cedar as opposed to oak. We'd inspect sandpaper, scrutinize stain samples, sketch designs then measure and re-measure dimensions. The project required more time than estimated. Joe often looked tired and his shoulders slumped more each week. In the end, his hard work produced a stunningly beautiful ambo.

I would like to report that Joe found the work spiritually fulfilling, but Joe is a quiet man and not prone to self-revelation. He is a former Marine. His speech is comprised of short phrases delivered in a staccato pattern. Occasionally he'll mention a memory from years back—life on the outside—or refer to a member of the family that disowned him after his trial.

I would like to ask Joe what he pondered as he labored on the ambo week after week. Did he imagine himself at work beneath the gaze of St. Joseph? Did the smell of the lumber make him think of the workshop in Nazareth? Did the ache in his hands seep into this wood that would bear the Word of God who once bore the sins of the world on the wood of the Cross?

Joe was raised in a non-liturgical church. I once asked him why he attended the weekly prison Mass. He said he liked the Catholic notion of sacrament, mainly Confession. Someday he hoped to muster the courage to join up and actually do it.

"The way you describe Confession," he held out his hands and cupped them. *"It's something solid."*

I once read about a pulpit in a European cathedral that had demons carved in its railing. Their snarling faces reminded the preacher, as he ascended the steps, of the wages of sin. Today, when I approach an ambo built by a convict, I too am reminded of the power of sin. But soon, in the grip of my hand, I sense the power of mercy. God's mercy. Its promise flowing down diagonal grooves. Its hope as strong and solid as wood. ■

ALTERNATE SOURCE FOR FUNDING.

The following is from 'Old School' information brochure.

Matthew 25 Payroll Program to Benefit Catholic Prison Ministry

In chapter 25 of the Gospel of St. Matthew, our Lord instructs the People of God to vigilantly remain at the ready, to make the utmost of the resources under their stewardship and to affirmatively meet the needs of the least of our sisters and brothers.

Old School Payroll Services now seeks your engagement in making the most of what your institution commits to the professional outsourcing of payroll processing and related tax administration. With careful management, a portion of these fees can generate a rich spiritual harvest from one of the most underserved yet quickly growing populations in our midst—our brothers and sisters in jails and prisons.

For example, a contribution of merely \$100 generated by a small parish's participation pays for thirty Catholic study bibles, or, scores of Catholic spiritual readings that are very well appreciated by newly sentenced convicts upon their sad admittance to prison life. Arming prisoners with "*the Way, the Truth and the Life*" via such publications fortifies them to resist the many troubling ideologies that thrive behind bars. Providing the authentic teaching of our bishops helps to cast a firm foundation of faith upon which these members of our Church may base their eventual return to our communities. Over 97% of offenders re-enter society, with a very high proportion currently returning to jail within a short period. Working together, the People of God can help to address this crisis.

Steve Caron goes on to say to me personally:

*"I am pleased that you like the idea of that ACCCA members would be responsible for making the final recommendation for the use of funds generated within a specific church province. Hopefully that will encourage the growth of the organization's membership over time. I'm thinking that an 80%-20% split of the charitable proceeds for **local direct support (80%)** and **national administration (20%)** would be both a fair and attractive structure. The national piece would be split between JPM and the ACCCA after paying for the costs of creating and running an electronic community of Catholic prison chaplains and volunteers. In my mind's eye, in such an electronic community I'd like to see ACCCA members as being presented in a special way that duly indicates what should be seen as a leadership position within the Catholic prison ministry community."*

For more information and to submit names please contact:

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Andover, Massachusetts 01810

THE AMERICAN CATHOLIC CORRECTIONAL CHAPLAINS ASSOCIATION
August 1, 2010 Thru August 31, 2010

Treasurer's Report - Teodoro Rael

WELLS FARGO CHECKING ACCOUNT		
Beginning Balance:	\$8,327.27	
Deposits And Credits:		
Aug 11 - Membership Dues Paid (Mr. McCabe)		20.00
Aug 27 - Membership Dues Paid (Mr. Arnouil)		20.00
Aug 31 - Interest Paid		0.12
	Total Deposits	\$ 40.12
CHECKING ACCOUNT ENDING BALANCE \$ 8,367.39		
Withdrawals And Debits:		
Aug 03 - Debit - Paul Rogers - Summer Conference Reimbursement		\$ 705.02
Aug 05- Debit - Paul Rogers - Summer Conf Hotel Expense		1,144.77
Aug 05 - Ck # 1094 Christine Shimrock - Officer Reimbursement, Summer Conf		947.18
Aug 05 - Ck # 1095 Teodoro Rael - Officer Reimbursement, Summer Conf		912.00
Aug 13 - Ck # 1096 Michael Koncik - Officer Reimbursement, Summer Conf		985.00
	Total Withdrawals	\$4,693.97
Checking Account Daily Balance Summary:		
01 August Beginning Balance	\$8,327.27	31 August Ending Balance \$3,673.42

ASSETS:

CHECKING ACCOUNT \$ 3,673.42
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CHECKING ACCOUNT \$3,673.42
 WELLS FARGO INVEST ACCT CERTIFICATE OF DEPOSIT (CD) 16,034.36

Total Assets As Of 31 August 2010 \$19,707.78
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Total Assets As Of 31 August 2010 \$19,707.78

ACCCA SUMMER CONFERENCE

JUNE 17-19, 2011

Miami, Florida

"Only Crushed Grapes Produce Wine"

PROGRAM

Friday, June 17, 2011

12:00 pm	Lunch
1:00 – 2:30 pm	Registration - Hospitality Room Open
3:00 pm	Welcome and Opening Session
5:00 pm	Hospitality
6:00 – 7:00 pm	Dinner
7:00 – 8:30 pm	Session II – Fr. Larry Lucas <i>"Managing Difficult People, Your Volunteers"</i>

Saturday, June 18, 2011

7:30 – 8:00 am	Breakfast
8:00 – 9:00 am	Mass
9:15 – 10:15 am	Session III – Jack Cowley <i>"Remaining Faithful – How Others See Us"</i>
10:15 – 10:30 am	Break (Hospitality Room)
10:30 – 11:45 am	Session IV - Follow-up discussion with Jack Cowley
12:00 – 1:00 pm	Lunch
1:15 – 2:45 pm	Business Meeting,
2:45 – 3:00 pm	Short Break
3:00 – 4:45 pm	Session V – Dale Recinella, <i>"Ministering on Death Row"</i>

DINNER ON OUR OWN, EVENING FREE

Sunday, June 19, 2011

7:00 – 8:00 am	Breakfast
8:00 – 9:00 am	Mass
9:00 – 10:15 am	Session VI – Deacon Edgardo Farias, Miami
10:15 – 10:30	Break
10:30 – 11:45	Session VII – Final Suggestions and President's Farewell
12:00 – 1:00pm	Lunch



**REGISTRATION
ACCCA SUMMER CONFERENCE
JUNE 17-19, 2011**

Juan Pablo II Spiritual Retreat House
and Jesus Maestro Residence,
Miami, Florida

“Only Crushed Grapes Produce Wine”

Send this registration with payment to:

Teodoro Rael, 2522 Calle Delfina, Santa Fe, NM 87505

Registration deadline is *May 1, 2011*. NO REFUNDS AFTER MAY 15.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____ Cell Phone _____

Diocese _____ Ministry Site _____

CERTIFICATION: NO _____ YES _____ YEAR CERTIFIED _____

Registration Fee includes conference, accommodations and meals.

Single Room (\$400) _____ Double Room (\$360) _____ Roommate _____

Commuter Rate (\$75/day – includes lunch) Friday _____ Saturday _____

Transportation : Taxi from airport, airport shuttle. Hotel is 10 minutes from airport.

CEU (\$25) _____ Yes _____ No _____

Nomination for Max Kolbe Award (due May 1)

For more information contact Paul Rogers at accapres@charter.net or 262.627.0636



American
Catholic
Correctional
Chaplains
Association

ACCCA Newsletter

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info@catholiccorrectionalchaplains.org

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Articles are submitted by the ACCCA members and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the entire membership. The goal of this newsletter is to inform, update, and engage in continuing dialogue, the members of the ACCCA, and others in the work of "setting captives free" Isaiah 61.