

God's Special Time

Kairos Prison Ministry

Quarterly Newsletter of Golden State Kairos

December, 2003

Calipatria State Prison

Chowchilla Valley State Prison

C.I.M. Chino

C.M.F. Vacaville

F.C.C. Victorville

F.C.I. Dublin

F.C.I. Terminal Island

F.P.C. Victorville

Ironwood State Prison

Kairos Outside Desert

Kairos Outside S.F. Bay Area

Kairos Outside Sacramento Valley

Kairos Outside San Diego

Kairos Outside South

R.J. Donovan State Prison

San Quentin State Prison

U.S.P. Lompoc

Kairos #1 at Chowchilla Valley State Prison is Up and Coming

February 13-16, 2004 is the date set for Kairos No. 1 at Valley State Prison in Chowchilla. A committee is in the preparation/organizing phase and details will be forthcoming. Jackie Cuneo has taken on the mantle of rectora for the weekend and is tasked, with God's help, of calling the team together.

Funding is a basic need to nurture this new community. The Committee is asking everyone in the greater Kairos/Kairos Outside Community for a one-time donation of \$10.00 to assist in the start up of the Valley State Prison ministry. Please mail your donation to: Emma Jones, c/o Kairos, Inc., PO Box 813, Pleasanton, CA 94566. Thank you in advance for your generosity and willingness to support California's newest Kairos members.

Big Bear Special Qualifying Weekend a Success

On August 22-23 seven new men joined fourteen "regulars" at an altitude of over 6000 feet in Big Bear for a mountain high and a great introduction to what they will experience at Ironwood State Prison on November 13-16. Seven Christian men from totally different backgrounds came to see how they could prepare themselves to go into a prison to share the love of Jesus with those inside. Each year our Ironwood council conducts an invitational weekend for new candidates, and we expect to offer two weekends next year (January and August) for men who are considering prison ministry. This event was a blessing for new and old; as one of our graduates expressed it, "I waited twenty years for this opportunity, and it (my part in prison ministry) has finally happened."

Tom Green, Ironwood Council

Spanish Kairos Outside, Pomona

"Renew Me Lord Jesus" (Renuevame Señor Jesus) was the theme of my Kairos Outside #26 Spanish Weekend, held July 25 - 27, 2003 in Pomona.

For me it was a beautiful experience that I had. The love that I shared with the others, I felt something very special. I can see how the Lord uses each one of us at that moment. It is hard to be a leader of a group of 60 people, where each one has their own ideas and sometimes even do the things they want. But during the weekend we did what the Lord asked us to do and that way we worked like children of God.

For me everything on the weekend was good. I worked with an excellent team and felt everyone's help. Thanks to God my leaders did a perfect job. In the kitchen the men worked very good, the observing leaders very special. Carmen Manueles, our new leader for the next Spanish weekend in 2004, did an excellent job. We had 19 guests out of 29 that were on the list. Thanks to God they left happy, full of joy, thanking God for the weekend and for being with us. We worked with all our love for one another, trusting that God was with us. We let God guide us because we knew He was with us at every moment. We knew that we were not perfect and that sometimes we would not agree with someone else's ideas. But the good thing was that we worked together as a team and were always blessed by the Lord. We had a good weekend. Angelina Monge

Letter to the Editor! Kairos Websites

Dear Jack:

Great job on the Kairos State newsletter ! I've posted the "Acceptance Before Understanding" issue (September) at <http://www.kairoslompoc.org> . Mike Fay

Ed: People interested in Kairos might check out the Lompoc site from time to time. The site includes a description of the Kairos ministry, recent California State newsletters, photos, links to other Kairos ministries and officers, and other items of interest. Rod Stark also sends word of San Diego's Kairos website: <http://www.kairosofsandiego.org>, with similar features. Also, if you have an item to contribute to the California State newsletter, please forward it to Jack Seybold at gael63@charter.net .

You can help reduce costs

The cost of disseminating God's Special Time, the Kairos newsletter for California, is decreased when subscribers choose to receive it by email rather than U.S. Post. Please consider sending your email address to Bill Donaldson at: journewj@sbcglobal.net (It's also faster!)

Kairos Board of Directors

November 5, 2003

Financial Stability of the Ministry

Leading a volunteer organization often provides challenges and frustrations that cause you to ask yourself if the effort is really worth it. Should I do something else? Why am I doing this? I admit to asking these questions myself and then I remember that this is not so much a choice as it is a calling. If you consider Kairos a choice you may be offended by what I have to say. If you consider Kairos a calling you may still not like what I have to say but you will know what you are called to do. A volunteer organization, more than any other organization, demands strong, clear leadership. It demands that we understand what we are about, what our values are and how we are going to achieve our vision.

Leadership starts with vision - a clear statement that defines what the future will look like. Leadership ends with a servant attitude that models how we are to achieve the vision. The best example of this is Jesus, himself. Jesus' vision was clear:

“Go, make disciples of all nations, baptizing in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.”

Jesus spent three (3) years pouring himself into his disciples and yet ended his earthly ministry serving those he led. At the Last Supper Jesus washed the feet of his disciples and the next day he laid down his life. It is interesting that we see a washbasin used in two completely different ways by leaders during this twenty-four period. First we see Jesus model servant leadership in caring for his Disciples through the washing of their feet and then the very next day, after Pilot's offer to spare Jesus is rejected by the Jews, Pilot washes his hands in a basin to signify that he was walking away from the entire situation. Jesus, the same day laid down his life for his “volunteers” and I think that is the type of leadership that we are called to model. We are to put our hearts and our faith on the line for our volunteers .

Think for a moment of our calling: “For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you visited me.” Jesus was never specific as to which prison, so we can only assume we are called to minister in his name in all prisons. Now think of the Kairos vision statement:

“To bring Christ's love and forgiveness to all incarcerated individuals and their families in the world”. This vision needs to be burned into our heart. The vision needs to be examined in the context that we represent 20,000+ volunteers. As a board, we are here to serve our volunteers not the other way around and that somehow seems similar to what Jesus had in mind when he washed his Disciples' feet. As a board we need to model leadership making sure our volunteers know what we stand for and how we must operate in pursuit of our vision. If, as a board we are not leading, we are waiting to be led. This will not work in a volunteer organization. This type of luke-warm commitment causes financial and operational stress. We must set the pace if we are to be good stewards for the ministry. The Biblical model for this is called First Fruits and refers to the Jewish custom from Exodus where all Jews were to bring the first portion of their harvest to God. What often happens is that we do what we want to do with our money and give God what is left, if there is any. I want this Board to leave a First Fruits legacy not a Me First legacy.

Many of us have made sure that Kairos is strong at the state level. We have given time, money, cookies, and love. But often we

focus on only one institution, or one part of the ministry, ignoring the vision and the big picture. We are called “to share Christ's love and forgiveness with all incarcerated individuals”. Try to imagine anything other than a huge smile on the face of Jesus as we linger with that thought. If God has called you to this ministry it is not a coincidence. People just don't do prison ministry by accident. You have been chosen. In fact, if you look at the values we hold close as a national and even international ministry, you will find being called by God to be the second value mentioned in the strategic plan. This same strategic plan also lists openness to authority of the ministry and support of the 4th day process/movement as other key values. While these values are critical, the fourth value listed in the strategic plan is that of stewardship, and in the end it will define us as a ministry. For this reason, I want you to each think about what stewardship means as a representative of the National Board.

If I had to define stewardship for a National Board Member, I would first state that stewardship impacts every value Kairos holds to. It is not just financial support. If we are being good stewards for the ministry:

We support Kairos values especially as they relate to the authority of the ministry and the institution.

We support our National Staff through the effective communication of the needs of the ministry to our volunteers so that we move in the direction of the vision.

We support the ministry with our resources including time and money and leadership.

Currently, we tend to operate within tight parameters on spending while not consistently providing for the contribution side of the equation. Over the last few years Kairos has functioned with operational shortages that have approached \$100k in two of the last three years, including 2003. In reality, our over-all needs are small when compared to the size of the volunteer base. A few dollars for National is always leveraged to cover an unbelievable amount of actual ministry. It is time, as a board, that we formulate a plan to eliminate the financial stress that Kairos has operated with for so many years. As a Board we must put the ministry on solid financial footing. We must approach this effort with our focus on the vision God has given us. We must share the vision and our values, and put our collective hearts on the line. If you believe the vision, if you have allowed God to burn this vision into your heart, you will not even consider that God would ask us to pull back. This board is supposed to lead and maybe more importantly, serve this ministry. If you value the often endless sacrifices of all of your local volunteers, this Board must now step forward and be part of the solution to solidify our financial footing. The legacy of this board will be incomplete if we have not achieved financial stability allowing for the growth the vision alludes to. This is the challenge, the responsibility, that I am asking each of you to accept. As you might have guessed, the campaign is titled First Fruits.

Each board member is asked to contribute \$20 each month to Kairos National. (Level One)

Each board member will then find ten (10) additional people to match their \$20 contribution. (Level Two)

The board member and each of the ten (10) contributors will then find two (2) more people that will contribute at a \$10 per month level. (Level Three)

We know there will be some situations when a board member will not be able to do this. But, if you cannot give \$20, give \$10, give \$5, but not giving is not an option. If you cannot contribute \$20 per month, we would ask that you find 11 people to contribute at the \$20 level instead of ten (10).

I want everyone to see this as a challenge to share the vision of this ministry with everyone you speak with and as an opportunity to provide undisputed support for the staff and values of this ministry. Let the Kairos vision cause a stirring in your heart that so defines your focus that you cannot consider achieving less than is being asked and in fact, you achieve more.

We need everyone to know and embrace what the 20,000 volunteers represent - an army led by God into the prisons to see lives changed. I see participation in Kairos as an honor. Everyday I go to work where everything I do is measured in terms of the success I generate. Every moment I spend on Kairos I would like to be defined in terms of significance. Significance in the lives of people who may not even know that Jesus loves them and that He wants for each of them to know Him personally.

Twenty dollars does not really seem like much, but the success of First Fruits could easily top \$300K per year and place Kairos in a position to walk through every door God opens for us. As a board we could not leave a stronger legacy than to position the ministry to achieve the vision we aspire to and the values that Kairos represents. Denny Fryman, Chairman-Resource Development Committee

F.C.I. Terminal Island

Kairos at Terminal Island is blessed to welcome Fr. Mike Kirkness as the new head Chaplain. Fr. Kirkness comes to us from U.S.P. Lompoc and has a lot of Kairos experience with the group up North at the penitentiary, and he has promised not to hold that experience against us. Just kidding of course - he fully intends to hold it against us. All kidding aside, I just hope that we can measure up to the great Kairos group from Lompoc.

Our next weekend is slated for March 18-21, 2004. Rector Ben Benson is busy recruiting a team after several delays. Our last Kairos weekend was held with very few on the inside team as most EVERYONE was transferred to other institutions. We have been blessed with a great group of recent graduates who will begin rounding up candidates for the next weekend.

After two very rough years for our program, we are looking forward to getting back on track. Everything is pointing to a return of being able to put on THE Kairos program. Thanks are due to three very patient rectors, both past and present, who hung in there when everything kept changing and going wrong. We were all just about at the end of our rope when things took a turn for the better. Please continue to keep F.C.I. Terminal Island in your prayers.

God Bless, Alan Selmanaj

THANKSGIVING

That time of year is here again, "the Holidays," when everyone gets frantically busy. Often we get carried away with trying to do the best we can for our families in preparing for these holidays and can appear to be less than thankful to those around us.

For me, the most wonderful US holiday is Thanksgiving - a custom with which I was not brought up with, being British, but now, as a US citizen, one I am most grateful for. Not only do we have the

opportunity to give thanks on Thanksgiving for this beautiful land of opportunity, but it also turns our thoughts to thanksgiving in general.

The majority of Americans are grateful for the abundance of food here, for the turkey and pumpkin pie we enjoy on Thanksgiving Day, and we give thanks to the Indians who taught us to share with our enemies as well as our loved ones. For those of us who are Christians though, it is truly a time to give thanks for everything God gave us and reminds us how we ought to give thanks to Him each and every day.

As a Kairos volunteer, we are especially blessed and are privileged to have the opportunity of doing God's will in serving others and are blessed in return with receiving the love back which we give. I am always amazed at how grateful we are to be asked to be on a Kairos or Kairos Outside team, as it gives us a chance to give back the love God has shown us and to express our thanks to him.

Often on team meetings, as at holiday time, we get caught up in trying to do the best we can and forget to give thanks to our fellow team members. As leaders we give thanks and are grateful to everyone on our team and realize that we are all volunteers and are often not perfect. In the stress of the weekend, we need to be cognizant to be grateful and to give thanks to each and every wonderful person, realizing that we are all just servants and in stressful situations we are sometimes less than perfect.

God is so good and bestows us with an abundance of everything we need if we come to Him. I have often prayed for something and when it comes to me much later, I forget to give thanks for the gift. So, at this special time of thanksgiving and, as we look forward to celebrating God's special gift to us at Christmas, I am reminded to start each and every day giving thanks for my blessings.

I thank each and every one for being a part of my life and thank God for Kairos/Kairos Outside.

Be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and playing to the Lord in your hearts, giving thanks always and for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God the Father. Eph.5:18

Doreen Zamacona, Kairos Outside, San Francisco Bay Area

Welcome Home Fundraiser

Here is a praise report on the Welcome Home fundraiser. We had in attendance about 185 guests. We had plenty of items for auctioning. We also had an incredible guest speaker by the name of John Upton who showed a video that was done for 20/20 quite a few years back about rescuing children from Uganda (I think that was the country?) Anyway, he related the commonalities of these children being left without families, friends or even a life. Tossed away from society in a cage without hope. Then Carmen spoke and asked for pledges to the ministry. All in all we exceeded our financial goal that was set before the fundraiser. God blessed us (Welcome Home Ministries). It was a great honor to be the Hostess this year...

THANK YOU to all those that contributed financially and those that also attended and contributed financially, those that contributed spiritually, and those that contributed with the gifts and talents... I truly appreciate it. Please know how much your contributions will be used to further the Kingdom of our Lord and Savior.

Della Ferguson

R. J. Donovan Cookie Story

State budget problems have changed the way Kairos operates at R.J. Donovan. Home-made cookies and food brought in from outside are the two most noticeable changes. The practice at RJD has been to purchase from the institution's "banquet menu" special meals for the Kairos weekend. One special meal each on Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Due to budget problems the banquet larder is empty. As a result the Kairos community at RJD has been able to provide the main dish for each of those three meals. We have been doing Chicken Fajitas Fridaynight, home-made lasagna on Saturday night and roast beef with all the trimmings for Sunday's noon meal.

The Kairos food is now legend on the three facilities at RJ Donovan. Special thanks must go to Tim and Linda Lyons, both long-time Kairos volunteers. When the opportunity was presented, they came up with the menus, provided the cooking expertise and ensured the delivery of the food on time to the institution.

For years we bought cookies from the institution, but the budget cuts and institutional demands on the bakery at RJD have made it possible to once again provide home-made cookies. The wisdom of the "nine old men" is reaffirmed - Nothing says to the residents "Jesus

Those who have address corrections for the Golden State Kairos database should send them to Bill Donaldson at his e-mail address: journewj@sbcglobal.net or mail the change to Kairos, Inc., PO BOX 813, Pleasanton, CA 94566.

loves you" better than a home-made cookie. The Kairos community and the churches of San Diego County have responded with a flood of cookies. San Carlos United Methodist Church baked over 800 dozen for the September weekend. The following note was received with a batch of cookies made for the Spring weekends:

San Diego, Ca.

2/24/03

Dear Friend,

I am an 85+ year-old widow, and today you have made me very happy! You gave me a chance to be involved - in a very small way - in Kairos again.

When I lived in Dayton, Ohio our church was very involved in the Kairos program - both with male and female prisoners. I have baked hundreds of cookies for Kairos and really missed it here in San Diego. Now, thanks to you, I have again been able to contribute my cookies, prayers and love.

When you distribute the cookies - if it is possible - I would like you to tell the recipient that there is a prayer in EVERY cookie for him (or her). I pray that he (or she) will find Jesus through your program and have a new life in His love.

Thank you for the wonderful work you are doing and may God guide you in every breath and moment.

Your's In Christ , A. T. D.

The message for all Kairos volunteers is that what may appear to be adversity just might be an opportunity!

David Neer, Advisory Council Chairman