

God's Special Time

Kairos Prison Ministry

Quarterly Newsletter of Golden State Kairos

June, 2003

Calipatria 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

A Place in Time

There they sit at the top of the hill - guesthouse, kitchen, house-on-the-way, and the chapel. Each building has its own uniqueness, and collectively has impacted all who walked those hallowed halls and ascended or descended the many steps.

Gracefully looking over the entire area at Holy Redeemer Center in Oakland, California is the lovely guesthouse (lovingly referred to as Hotel Holy Redeemer). To everyone who has worked a Kairos Outside or Cursillo and made it their weekend home, this magnificent building is tantamount to a holy place. Work has taken place late into the night, decisions have been made and the alarm rings way too early in the morning.

The renovated kitchen is one of warmth, gaiety, laughter, prayer, as well as a place where fabulous meals have been prepared. When your spirit or your tummy needs massaging, this is where you go. Outside community may come to wash and rub aromatic, soothing oils onto the tired feet of the cooks. Ooo-la-la, how cool is that!! The cooks dress for skits in that little room off from the kitchen. They laugh at each other, rehearse their lines or tunes or steps and then rush off when it's curtain call. This is the kitchen that outside community rushes to get to, and then a mini reunion happens. While you're there, you may happily wash dishes, fill plates, chop veggies, and the list goes on.

Adjoining the kitchen are two dining rooms on either side. The larger one is where team and guests have meals. The decorations around the room and on the tables are cute, funny, breathtaking, awesome, innovative, original, and thematic gifts that are often offered to the guests to take. It's where the skits that were rehearsed in the kitchen are now performed. The second dining room is the gathering place for angels as well as those who arrive for flowers at dawn at o-dark-thirty on Sunday morn.

House-on-the-Way is a cooking, eating, sleeping, meeting, agape-preparing, Filipino gathering, community room kind of a place. Talk about a versatile building, this is it. On the hill, you pass Peter's Place, home of the cooks on a weekend.

The revamped chapel has seen tears, growth, and empowerment as it has given way to melted hearts, strengthened souls, and renewal of spirits. One can sit quietly and gaze around at the stained glass windows and the voluminous altar area as prayers are offered, talks heard, or thoughts tumble through your mind.

In light of the substandard electrical system, and the prohibitive cost to upgrade, it is with profound disappointment we learn that all of the named buildings will be destroyed at the end of June. With it go many hearts, tears and memories. Holy Redeemer is a place in time for all those who have been ministered to, and who have ministered to others.

Kairos Outside

Kairos # 6 Victorville FPC May 1-5, 2003

God has once again blessed a Kairos weekend. The 17 outside team members grew spiritually as we shared at our team meetings and prepared our talks. We started at the facility on Thursday with 22 inside team and 20 candidates. Not one woman dropped out during the weekend and many even chose not to leave the room during breaks.

The prison has added a new chaplain allowing us to have clergy available the entire time and to bring in new unbadged team members on memo. Chaplain Johnson, new to Victorville, has made a Cursillo weekend and therefore is very aware of the Kairos purpose and format.

It was a special joy to see the inside team serving the candidates and enthusiastically welcoming them into their Kairos community. God is at work on the compound at Victorville! How privileged we are to be the ones He uses to introduce the residents to His Son.

Dorothy Schramm, Rectora, Kairos # 6

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!)

FCI DUBLIN - Spanish Kairos #32

My name is Margarita Hernandez; I was blessed to be chosen as a Rector for the Spanish Kairos #32 at the FCI Dublin, California, on February 15,16,17/2003, which theme was "Bajo Tu Mirada Senor Jesus." The translation of the theme is "Under the Look of Your Eyes Lord Jesus," and that is the way we all felt since we had our first meeting. In some cases, when we are working for our Lord, we encountered difficulties, but He always guides us for the better way to serve Him, because He knows all the love and willingness to help that our team felt. Starting with 32 people and a few more in case something happened, we ended with 29 of the outside team, due to different circumstances. This Kairos was the one with fewer people from outside, but with all the love for Him and the incarcerated ladies, we managed without struggling to have 45 candidates, and enjoy the weekend plenty. Still it was a big number of people in the waiting list (50 more). Everything went beautifully. All the candidates were listening to all the talks and lots of them identified themselves with our team. We could feel the presence of the Holy Spirit in everything we did. At the end of our Kairos all the 45 candidates had the opportunity to express themselves. Again we were in the Kairos time (God time). We saw tears, laughter, acts of forgiveness, like some of the candidates standing and going to a person who they, before Kairos, considered an enemy, and asking for forgiveness. We couldn't help but feel all that love in our hearts that made us feel like continuing to work hard with all our hearts for our ministry. I can go on and on with all the details, but I probably will need all the space in the newsletter. The most was all the blessings from the Holy Spirit and the satisfaction that we all felt for serving our Lord and sisters.

Ironwood #9:

Kairos K-9 was held at Ironwood State Prison, Near Blythe, on April 10-13th. We started with 39 candidates and graduated 36. We had 27 Outside team members. It was significant that we had three ex-inmates on the team, and a chaplain who was with two of them when they went through the Kairos weekend at Chino. The candidates really sit up and take notice when these guys speak. They know that these guys have been there and have changed their lives! We also had the team member from Spokane, who was picking up knowledge for use at Walla Walla in Washington. Nice to spread information about the program.

It was a great weekend. The last one is always the best! The candidates were eager to watch, listen, and learn. Some of us were anxious about how things were going, sitting back and wondering if we were working hard enough, but then God took over and started changing lives. We're hard learners!

We had a lot of support from our Christian community with the Prayer Vigil, Community Letters, Children's Shields, Forgiveness Cookies, and close to 100 at the Closing showing support with singing, cheers, tears, and prayers. The graduates responded with emotional testimonies about what the weekend had meant to them. The "Inside Team" were great, showing real servanthood and spirituality. We are happy to have spent the weekend sharing the Love of Christ with all the participants. Our Ironwood K-10 is scheduled for Nov. 13-16, 2003. Dick Williams

F.C.I. Terminal Island

Jim Carlin is ready to lead his team inside Terminal Island beginning June 19 for our next Kairos, #23. The theme will be "I am the Light of the World" from John 8:12. Due to a recent disturbance at the institution almost all of the Kairos inside team have been transferred out to other places. Due to this we will be bringing additional outside men to be table servers and to work in the Agape room on a day-to-day basis. In a way this will be just like a first weekend at a new institution. We are all looking forward to the challenge.

Due to a lot of different problems we have only had one weekend in the past year and a half and this June weekend would have been right on schedule and back to normal and then, boom, no inside community. Rector Jim is not one to be deterred and has kept the team prayerfully focused and has set just the right tone at team meetings. The inside team did get a pretty full slate of guest applications for the next weekend, but we are all wondering how many of them will be left at Terminal Island when the weekend rolls around. By the time you read this the weekend will be long over and the seeds for a new Kairos community will have been planted.

I am going to take just a minute to compliment the Lompoc Kairos community for their excellent web page. I have looked at a lot of Kairos community web pages from all over the country and I have yet to see a nicer one. I have been blessed to get to know webmaster Mike Fay and he has done a GREAT job. The address is <http://www.kairoslomdoc.org/>.

I look forward to giving a glowing report in the next issue on our progress to build a Kairos community inside Terminal Island. Chaplain Abdul and Volunteer Coordinator Kay are pulling for us and have done everything they can to help us put on the best weekend we can. We are still waiting for a new permanent Chaplain. Despite all of the problems there is a real sense of enthusiasm on the team. Look here next issue.

God Bless,
Alan Selmanaj

Kairos Outside Sacramento Valley

Kairos Outside Sacramento Valley held Weekend #2 at Camp Paradise on May 2-4. Although it rained all weekend and we had to change buildings due to some "leaks", it was a wonderful weekend. Kim Gould led a team of about 32 plus about ten or twelve angels to help keep it going. We had fifteen guests and we were all greatly blessed.

Our next weekend is planned for next May although eventually we hope to have two retreats per year. We are looking at a closer area (Nevada City) in June which we hope might work for our retreats.

At the moment, we are embarking on several fund raisers including a community yard sale in Davis on June 7 and a musical fundraiser with Johan as our guest musician in Davis in September at one of our participating churches. Anne Conway

Address Corrections?

Address corrections for the Golden State Kairos database should be sent to Bill Donaldson, e-mail address: journewj@sbcglobal.net or mail to the PO Box on the address page of this newsletter.

San Quentin Kairos XXII

Delays, lockdowns, cancellations are not strange to the Kairos ministry, and certainly not to Kairos XXII, which proved to be "The Light of the World" to 43 inspired residents of San Quentin during this very special St. Valentine's weekend (February 14-17, 2003).

The disruptive and discouraging four-month delay, as well as numerous team adjustments, did not lessen the enthusiasm of this assembly of saints. Team Kairos was blessed with the ability to meet the challenge of abbreviating the traditional minute-by-minute daily prison schedule and welcoming a closely supervised group of candidates previously denied access to the Kairos program.

Dave Peironnet, rector

...and From a Team Member

Once again I'm amazed. I am truly blown away by another Kairos weekend. Kairos XXII was a huge success, in my estimation. I have had the honor and good fortune to have served on two Kairos weekends now, and both times have been unbelievable. After these two wonderful experiences I realized that God's work will not be denied. The men in blue who had agreed to participate on the weekend showed up very guarded, scared, curious, and with their best attitudes.

A lot of these men are determined to not let you even think about getting close. And then the miracle starts to unfold right before my very eyes. These men start to get peeled like an onion, exposing all those feelings and nerves that they have not let themselves get in touch with in many years or even ever at all. You watch God enter into the hearts and souls of these men and they are changed forever, I believe. These once scared, guarded, curious men are now full of hope and confidence, and are developing an inner peace. Some become leaders in Christian discipleship. These men become hungry for Christ. They start relying on the outside community that at one time they couldn't even trust. They start developing relationships with brothers both inside and outside that they have never ever had in their lives. They start to see that God is doing for them what they could not do for themselves. They find out that though I am a free man, our struggles are closely paralleled.

After these two experiences my own faith has grown stronger. I realized that this ministry is paramount in our lives. If any of these men are fortunate enough to make parole, they have a strong support group that will help them to achieve their goals. This movement is much needed to reach all those hungry brothers. I am looking forward to being part of Kairos in the future.

There were a few times during the weekend when I have been caught up in the moment and things are moving right along, and I actually forgot where I was for a brief moment. I can only hope that some of these men in blue forgot where they were for just a brief moment as well.

Jim Morgan

...And More

One of the candidates, a big middle-aged man with gray hair, came to the Kairos weekend with his arms folded and dark glasses on. He kept them on the whole weekend. He barely spoke, and when he did it was only to criticize or mock another candidate. By Monday, however, this man (the glasses on top of his head now) was helping Tony Irving lead the "Community Song" ("Roll over the ocean, roll over the sea..."). No one can withstand God's love.

Bruce Hodgins

Lompoc

Kairos will never be the same! The Antles family (son, father and grand father) were called to USP Lompoc Kairos 19 as a blessed gift from God to everyone present. They lovingly and graciously accepted the roles that the Lord had chosen for them, regardless how painful they might be.

Dave Matthews said, "I wouldn't have missed this one for a million dollars!" I'm glad I didn't! As tales and stories go, some are ours, some are His; here is a story worthy of passing on. When the dust settles, maybe Rich and Rich can share, in some small way, the grace poured upon them.

Mike Owen

What is your Advisory council up to? Encourage your Council members to share with our readers by submitting articles to the newsletter!

Article Guidelines

At the January meeting of the Kairos State Committee, I volunteered to write some guidelines for submissions to the newsletter, in order to encourage contributors and make their task perhaps more manageable.

First of all, I suggest deciding on a focus for your writing. Writing a first paragraph that determines what the rest of the article will center on actually makes the writing easier, pulling together what might have been amorphous or unwieldy. On the sports page, by way of analogy, the account of a basketball game might sound like every other basketball game -- there's a winner, a loser and a score -- unless the writer creates a central point that organizes the rest of the story. For example, this game is the last one of the retiring coach's career; or it's the turnaround game that shows that the team, although losing, is beginning to come together and play consistently. What fact or observation about a Kairos or Kairos Outside weekend made it different, or significant to the writer? Establish that in the first paragraph, and then later paragraphs might begin, at least implicitly, with "For example..."

Secondly, consider other topics for submissions besides accounts of particular weekends. For example, readers might enjoy reading a "personality profile" of a Kairos volunteer or leader, an inmate, graduate or chaplain. Accounts of events such as fundraisers, leadership trainings, advisory council meetings or expansion news might be helpful for volunteers in other areas of the state. What about an opinion piece?

There is no need to be concerned about the length of the article, or about grammar, spelling or punctuation. I can deal with all of that. I try to keep editing to a minimum, and generally articles appear pretty much as they were written.

The deadlines for submissions are February 15, May 15, August 15 and November 15. It is best to submit articles by email addressed to: gael63@charter.net Jack Seybold, editor

Calendar

June

- 13-15 KO San Francisco #30 (Spanish)
- 19-22 FCI TI #23

July

- 19 State Committee (KO Sacramento)
- 25-27 KO Southern Cal #26 (Spanish)

August

- 1-3 National Conference at Williamsburg
- 15-17 KO San Francisco #31
- 15-17 KO San Diego #14

September

- 25-28 Donovan #50, 51, 52

October

- 2-5 Victorville FPC #7
- 2-5 Victorville FCC #7
- 3-5 KO Sacramento
- 9-12 FCI TI #24
- 18 State Committee (KO Desert)
- 10-13 San Quentin #23
- 10-13 Lompoc #20
- 10-13 FCI Dublin (English)

November

- 7-9 KO San Francisco #32 (Spanish)
- 7-9 KO Southern Cal #27
- 13-16 Ironwood #10

CMF Vacaville

The CMF-Vacaville Advisory Council is preparing to have its annual retreat -- a wonderful time to get to all those matters that are tabled throughout the year. The best thing about a retreat for council members is that it gives us an atmosphere of prayer and spirituality in which to develop and apply our Kairos philosophy and do some long-range planning. Please pray for us.

From May 23 - 26, under the leadership of Rector Ben Tatera, Kairos #22 took place at the California Medical Facility in Vacaville. Forty-three candidates began and 42 finished. Those who worked as volunteers were overwhelmed at the participation of the candidates. Nearly half of them had attended prayer and share groups and other activities in the chapel before coming to Kairos; this really set a high standard for the participation of all.

Mike and Jane Walker

Victorville

The Kairos Victorville Women's team is seeking new team workers. Please contact Angela Tasker at 562-402-8335 Ext. 126 (Work).

Deadline for articles for the September newsletter is August 15. Please e-mail submissions to Jack Seybold at gael63@charter.net