



Prison Ministry

Each year as autumn approaches, a team of about 16 women along with Father Martin Hyatt, and myself, or another religious begin to meet for four to six evenings to pray, to share the Word of God and to prepare witness talks that will be shared with the women at Framingham State Prison. We realize that this time of prayer is the most important part of our preparation. At the end of October, the "Transfiguration Retreat" is offered at the prison. We are with the inmates on Friday and Saturday.

What struck me the first time I went was the gratitude of these women who realized we were sacrificing a weekend for their benefit. They are receptive, polite, and grateful. Those who come have to sign up and be approved by the prison chaplain. They may be in the prison for three months, a year or for life.

Once they have made the retreat, the team from St. Basil's in Methuen returns every third Friday of the month to pray with them. The women look forward to that evening. Last year I attended one of those prayer sessions on the Friday before Christmas. There were absolutely no signs of the upcoming feast anywhere in the facility. My heart goes out to them each time I see the high walls, the barbed wire, the gray dull rooms, the cold atmosphere. They certainly pay a high price for their mistakes. So many teenagers are among them that you could just as easily think you are in a high school gym.

I have two talks this year, the first: "Knowing God's Love", the second: "Our Merciful God". Father Martin completes the teaching part of the program. Do keep all the team and the women at facility in your prayers.

God Will Direct My Steps...

Proverbs 3:5-6