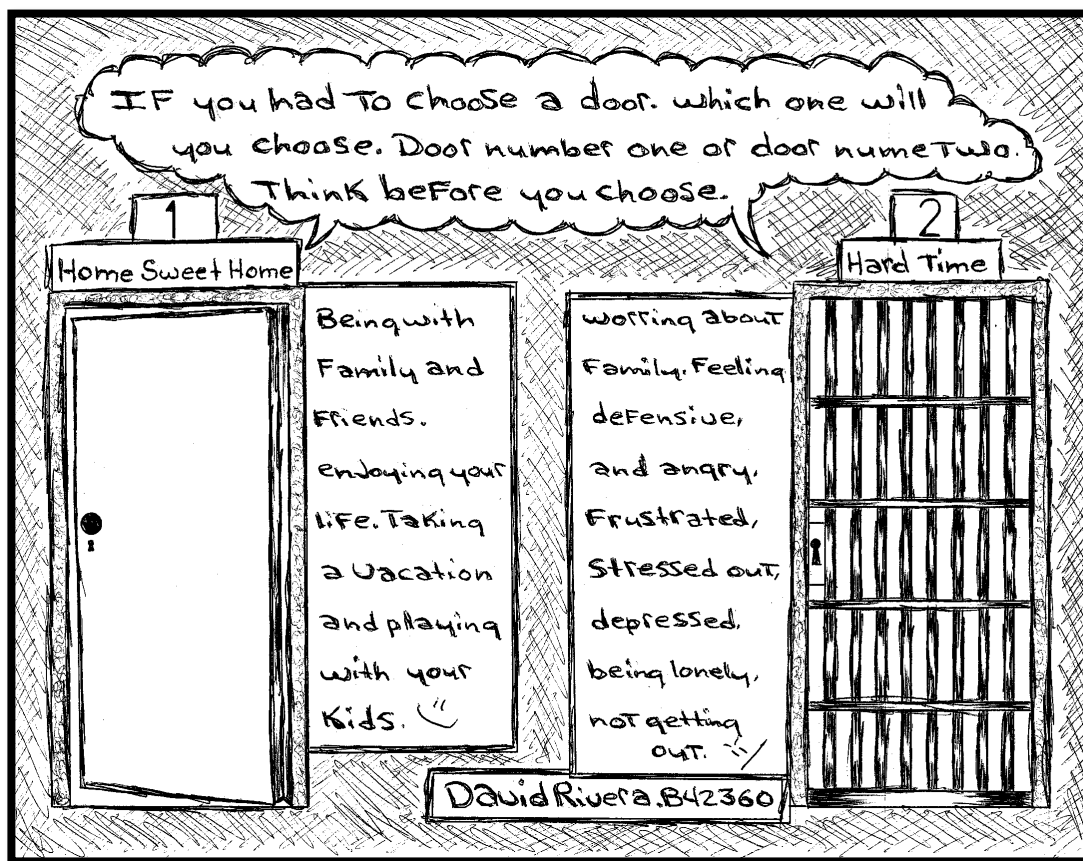


MAKING CHOICES

Precious Blood Ministry of Reconciliation
Kolbe House Jail Ministry
Volume 21 Issue 3 September 30, 2019



MAKING CHOICES

Making Choices

Kolbe House at Assumption

2434 S. California Ave.
Chicago, IL 60608

Publisher

Kolbe House Catholic
Jail Ministry

Editorial Team

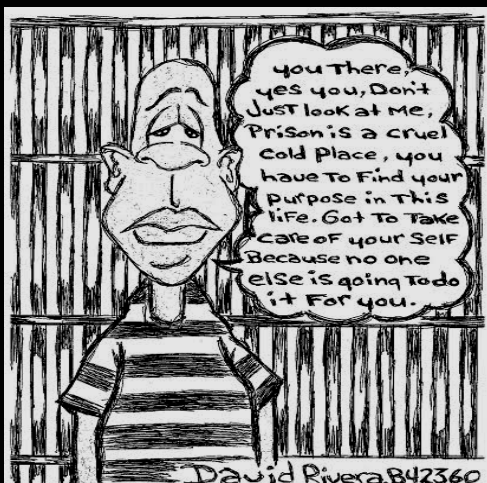
Fr. Dave Kelly
Lamonte Lay

Making Choices

Combines the voices of those who are incarcerated at Cook County Juvenile Temporary Detention Center, Cook County Jail and institutions throughout the state.

It is published as a means to give a voice to those who wish to speak out.

It is a project of Kolbe House,
the Catholic Jail Ministry of the Archdiocese of Chicago
and Precious Blood
Ministry of Reconciliation



My Life

By Salvador Suriano
Pinckneyville C.C.

Everyday I think about my road to success, but I'm constantly dodging bullets and laying my friends to rest. So I sit here and wonder what road I'm heading up next.

Jail is calling and death is near, I try to stay focus, but it's hard enough staying alive.

AK47's, Mac 11's, Glocks and 9's, wake up every day with murder on my mind.

On these streets it's kill or be killed, you win or you loose, so I pack the steel to reassure I don't loose.

All out gun battles and never ending wars, heard the cries of mothers and fathers because their son fell victim to the score.

It's real in the field, I embrace the only life I know, everyday wondering will I be next to go.

Got much love for my hood and that's a well known fact. Got much love for the streets, but they don't love me back. At times I wish I had listened to my mother, the one who knew best, but I gave my all to these streets and got nothing but regrets.

Conflicted between right and wrong, still I continue to fight a war that's makes no sense at all. But that's just how it is where I'm from, on the streets of Humboldt Park, Augusta Blvd.

POETRY FROM WITHIN THE WALLS

Number One

By Ulyesses Richardson
Tiptonville , TN

Men compete to be number one,
the very best. But I came in first
one day, it was no contest.

I waited patiently until the time
was right, then raced with blind-
ing speed to the finished sight...

Then paced and paced until the
decision came through,
A golden hair baby girl and con-
gratulations too.

Ecstatic with joy, and thanking
God above, I became number
one, the first man she ever loved.

The Truth

By Angel P.
CCJTDC

Truth be told I walk in a crowd
only to hide my face.

Truth be told what I done is not
right and I'm bettering myself
more every single day and night.

Truth be told we all must teach
but only after we learn,
and we all must preach to whom
it may concern.

Truth be told none of us are cold.
None of us are 100% tough, just
that our environment has been
greatly rough.

Truth be told... Think about your
truth. Think about your hidden
potential and be something not
just nothing.
Who knows you could be the next
Babe Ruth now that, my friend, is
the truth.

Believe in you!

MAKING CHOICES



Soulmates

By Kathryn Clover

Soulmates never dissipate, and they never part. The spiritual bond that connects the two, is connected heart to heart.

It matters not dead or alive, the bond cannot be broken. And you feel the pain of the other, even when words are not spoken. You can deny in your head, but never in your heart, what God puts together no man can tear apart.

Soulmates never dissipate and they never part. The spiritual bond that connects the two, is connected heart to heart.

Sure you may have another lover, husband or maybe a wife, but the internal bond you and your soulmate share was meant before the existence of your life.

Flesh will perish, we all must die. But the spirit of a soulmate continues, because your soulmate lives within you.

For man was not meant to live alone, so your soulmate you must embrace. To ignore the existence of your soulmate is to doubt your very own faith.

Soulmates never dissipate and they never part. The spiritual bond that connects the two is connected heart to heart.

In My Mind

By Bryon O'Dell
Lawrence C.C.

Often I sit on my bunk trapped in my mind, I think about my son, my family, my women and time.

Sometimes I think I'm losing it. Other times I think my minds already lost. But most of the time, I feel empowered and determined to make it at any cost.

On occasion, I feel loneliness. Prison brings that quite often, but I try to stay positive because instead of being stuck in this cell it could be a coffin.

I don't cry because I know this is temporary. Soon these doors will open and the end to all this strife, and with that will come my second chance at life.

Expecting A Letter

By Brandon Hornback
Whiteside county Jail

The strangest thing happened to me today, an invisible mailman passed my way... He gave me something that wasn't quite there, and get invisible mail, now that's quite rare!

So as I opened this nothing, real, real wide to my surprise, there was less than nothing inside!
The penmanship was so neat and clean..
So clean in fact, it couldn't be seen!

The scent was so sweet as I recall, so sweet in fact, there was no scent at all!
See, right now is the time I needed you...
But the letters that you promised never came through.

Next time, you should think twice and pay full attention to my advice.
Paying it forward with empty lies comes with an untold price. Cause even though I'm behind this wall for now, we both know things could change somehow...
Like ..it could be me out there where life is so much better; and it could be you here —
"Expecting a letter"

I'm Tired

By Joey Tilson
Graham C.C.

I'm tired of being locked down twenty three and one.
I'm tired of not being able to hold Jaden, my son.

I'm tired of these people telling me what to do!
I'm tired of hearing "Wacky, your girl ain't being true".

I'm tired of living this crazy a** life. I'm tired of being locked up as the years just pass me by.
I'm tired of living my life as a lie.

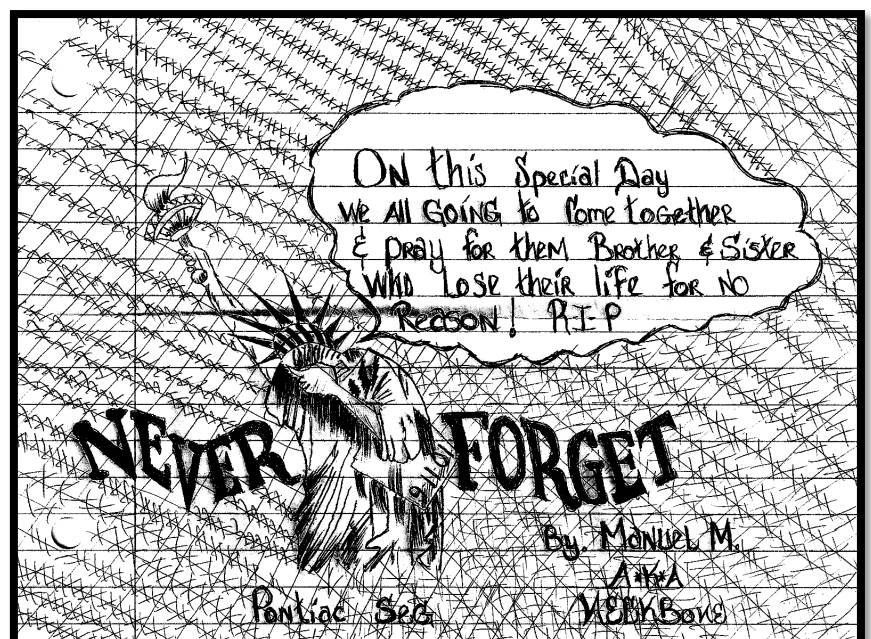
I'm tired of sleeping in a bathroom with another dude.
I'm tired of my celly being so rude.

I'm tired of the mailman passing me by. I tired of the people I love having to die.

I'm tired of eating Ramen Soups. I'm tired of being locked in this cell while my celly has to poop!
I'm tired of this hard steel bed, I'm tired of the police dividing when I get fed.

I'm tired of trying to call people collect, and most of all I'm tired of trying to fix my life, Lord knows it's a wreck!

That's all folks, I'm tired.



MAKING CHOICES

Don't Quit

Submitted by Marcus Versher
Big Muddy River C.C.

When things go wrong as they
sometimes will...
When the road you're traveling
seems all up hill...
When the funds are low and
the debts are high, and you
want to smile but you have to
sigh...
When care is pressing you
down a bit, rest if you must,
but don't ever quit!

Life's race is full of twists and
turns, as everyone of us finally
learns. And many a failure
turns about, when he might
have won, had he stuck it out.

Don't give up though the pace
seems slow, you may succeed
if you give it a go.

Success is a failure turned
inside out, the silver tint of the
clouds of doubt.
You can never tell how the
race will end, a victory may lie
just around the next bend.

So stay the course when you're
hardest hit;
It's when things seem worse,
that you must not quit.

***"When we change the way
we look at things, the things
we look at change".***

"Passion without a plan is frustration".

By Bill Duke

You Are

By Jamon Whales
Pinckneyville C.C.

You are the sun that shines
bright throughout my day.
You are the gravity that hold
me down in every way.

You are the moon that
shimmers through out my
night, you are the stars that
glimmers oh so bright.

You are the oxygen that keeps
me alive, you are my heart
that beats inside.
You are the blood that flows
through me, you are the only
girl I can see.

You have the voice of my hero
when you speak,. You are my
everything!

You are my one and only. You
stop me from being lonely.
We plan our future as if we
have a clue, I never want to
lose you.
I want to be your husband and
I want you to be my wife.
I want to be with you for the
rest of my life.

What Is Hope?

By Pamela Spittler
Logan C.C.

Hope is happiness held in the
heart. When happiness seems
to be gone, hope is the quiet
joy deep within encouraging
us to go on.

Hope is a guide when we
seem to be lost that can help
us find our way.
Hope is a strong immovable
force that our doubts and fears
cannot weigh.

Hope is a light that burns in
the night in a place where
miracles start. And every
good thing will come as long
as there's hope in our hearts.

We must search for ways to
bring hope to our hearts and
make us smile again.

Questions

By Bryon O'Dell
Centralia C.C.

Why am I filled with so much anger and aggression?
Is it because I've failed at some of life's lessons?
Is it because its harder to get a job than a 357?
Or is it because God doesn't send answers to any of my questions?

Why does it seem so hard for me to maintain my peace?
Is it because violence and depression is all I see?
Is it because my life has been reduced to collect calls and watching TV?
Or is it because only few show support even though everybody claims to miss me?

Why do I keep trying to make it even though many others fail?
Is it because I know there's more to life than an 8*8 cell?

Is it because I know it's n me to keep my boy out of jail
Or is it because I want Mrs. Odell to see me successful while she's still live and well?
Maybe it's all of that.

Penned Frustrations

By Arthur Sanchez
Illinois River C.C.

I open the folds of my book placing pen and paper wanting to unleash the rage within my mind.

"The Pen is mightier than the sword", so I weld mine with that power in mind. Finding my for to deliver the frustration to the whole force unimaginable, yet I penetrate the pages leaving my mark for generations to come.

The message of my penned frustrations. You become aware of the depths that resides within the man,
There's no walking into this with half a heart, penned frustrations be they life or death.
Confront the conflict to be resolved...

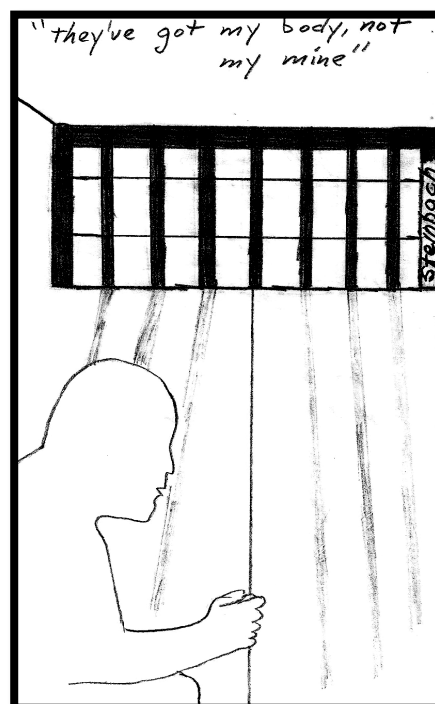
Temptation calling, no response. The grr grew louder leading to the cage.

A man stripped of everything mad pages upon pages floors the cage floor and a pen that has bled it's last bit of ink at his feet.

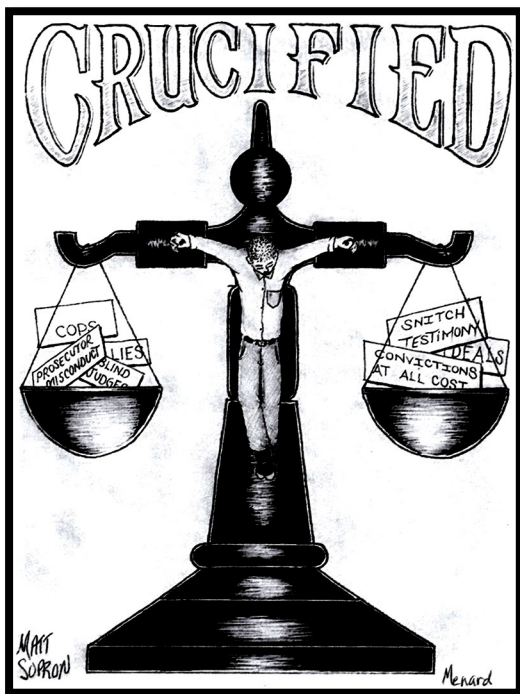
The look of despair on his face . "The years of captivity drove me insane and here lie my penned frustrations. A dark soul, burdened with hate, which cannot be shed.

The Darkness has kept me though I seek hope.

Into the corner the man retreats and cries himself to sleep. Left top wonder when will the dream of freedom become reality.



MAKING CHOICES



Love Enough

By Lee Alan Cotes
Robinson C.C.

Is happiness too much to ask?
Is it really such a hard task?
Is a smile too much to want?
Is it hard to let it be, help me
see.

Why is it so bad to be happy,
Why would anybody want to be
sad?

Why can't people just get
along?

Why can't we see, that life is too
short, to be wasting time being
mean.

Take Time

By Willie Scales
Hill C.C.

Take time to help each other
and they in turn will help you!

Take time to look for wonderful
ways to make new ideas work,
not for reasons they won't!

Take time to love another thru
all the difficult days!

Take time to maintain a
positive attitude no matters
what the circumstances are!

Take time to put God first in our
lives today!

Separate The Man From The Boy

By Eddie Williams
Menard C.C.

I left home eager to make my
mark. Didn't see trouble lurking
around the corner. I thought be-
ing on my own would be easy,
but it has proven to be formida-
ble.

Hopefully, with the grace of God,
I'll overcome my insecurities. I'll
keep on pushing and cherishing
the memoires of my life at home.
Thank you mother and father for
emboldening me on how to face
life's trails and tribulations with
confidence.

Don't you see now, give your-
self a bow,
We've all made this beautiful
world,
Such a cruel place, oh why,
Why are we so blind, what's
with all this hatred.
When can happiness be, when
will sadness sleep, oh please
tell me, when is love enough.

I've Never Gave Up On You

By Sharod Pierce
Stateville C.C.

Lord I come to you looking for your guidance and mercy. I know with you I ain't got no limit like my first name Percy. I been through it all and my heart wasn't always right, but when I do come to you, you'd always showed me the light.

I could never denial the blessings you placed upon me, even in the dark you had my eyes open for me to see. Now I'm growing because of the seeds you planted and I can see the devil getting mad, he can't stand it!

He fighting harder now because he don't want me in your kingdom, but I know he's my rotten uncle and I'm your sinful son.

You hold more love and authority over my life; I'm tired of sinning, I know it's time to make the sacrifice!

I'm fasting on you and off your flesh and blood while my heart beat with you and your breath in my lungs.

I'm ready to be stripped of sin and back in your love while I'm on this Earth you the only one can help me rise above.

Real Cost Incarceration

By Brandon Latham
Pontiac C.C.

Loss of meaning, that's a punishment quite severe. Having no one around to wipe away a single tear. Toss and turn never getting a good night's rest, get up each new day to be put to the test!

All I hear is cursing from all those around, searching and waiting , but no real friend is found. Loneliness, misery, surround by hate, Sickness from the smell of the food on your plate.

Mothers and fathers taken away from their home, hearing their kids cry when they call on the phone. Insufficient healthcare, hard to get in school. Hard to believe people think prison is cool.

People fighting and yelling can't get along, spitting and throwing stuff, though they know it's wrong.

Tell me what's rehabilitating about this? Alternatives to prion would be pure bliss! Such as spending tax money on rehabs and school, instead of on prisons which are harsh and cruel.

Most crime boils down to drug addiction anyway, prisons aren't working, addicts are sent here every day!

All tax payers at home deep in this slumber, please wake up and take a look at the numbers...

Prison average cost to imprison one person for a year is \$30,000, Alternatives to prison: Average cost of one year of community college is \$1518, average cost for 6 months of rehab is \$2,000 and some are free!



A NOTE FROM FR. KELLY

We are in need of your poetry and art in order to have this newsletter reflect your thoughts/feelings. It requires you to dig deep within and write what you are truly feeling and/or thinking.

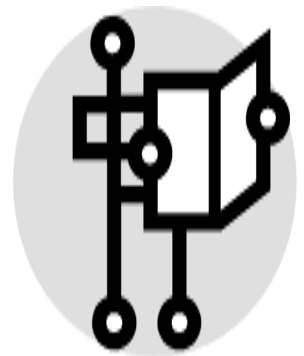
I think this edition of the newsletter is a good example of the power of your words. You are able to make a difference in lives of young and old, both those inside and out. People are reading your words and making better choices.

We have a regular gathering of young people on Wednesday evening. Many times we use your words or your drawings to help us open up a bit and talk more about what is truly going on in our lives.

Your words have power....they can move people to look deeper into their lives.

Blessing to you,

Fr. Kelly



*Making Choices Newsletter is
a project of **Kolbe House**,
the jail ministry of the
Archdiocese of Chicago and
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Continue to send your articles and poetry to :

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