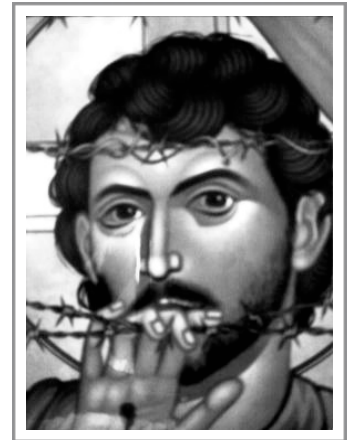


*I was in prison and you visited me. Matthew 25:36*

# Voices From prison

**A newsletter from Adeodatus prison ministry**

Autumn 2009, Vol. 2, No. 2



*See, I will not forget you, for I have carved you on the palm of my hand.  
(tattoo on the palm of an inmate... from Isaiah 49:15).*

*Rose, stripped of my soul, I suffer without you. (tattoo on his throat).*

Oh God, so many of your children are suffering behind bars. (1 in every 100 Americans). Many of these have caused others to suffer as well--people they have victimized, their own families, including wives, husbands, parents and children. The children and siblings of those in prison are six times more likely to wind up in prison themselves. Much of this is due to addictions. The effect of addictions spreads like cancer. Show us how to stop this, please.

This issue of our newsletter focuses on addictions. Incarcerated people are not the only ones imprisoned. Many of us are addicted—to alcohol, drugs (including prescription meds and pain killers), sexual conquests, money/gambling, power and control. Even the obsessive use of technology. These “false gods” hold us captive. Wake us up, Father, to the prevalence of these fake fixes in our families and ourselves. Show us how to take steps to heal this “spiritual disease” as it is called in the “Big Book” of Alcoholics Anonymous The following story by “Cliff” could have been any of us...I’ll call it “Heroin, My Love.”

*I remember when I was four, I was adored, but in the wrong way. As he shut the door...the fright...the life nobody knew how I had to fight. I used to cry inside, feeling so afraid of being alive. What happened to me put a void in my soul, making me hate everything and my heart was very cold! I remember my mother used to tell me God will take care of everything. I used to laugh and say that’s a bunch of crap...*

*I remember being sexually abused by my father and hating my life (hating God). I believed in nothing nor nobody. Going through those years I was crazy. I ended up in a place nobody wanted to be – juvenile detention. They called it Gladiator School. I spent two years there and learned very quickly how to cheat, lie, steal, and especially, how to fight. I got out of that place and started doing drugs because before that it was just beer and pot. But now I was older and my friends did all kinds of drugs. We did everything but heroin because we always thought once you did that you were a junkie. I remember selling drugs at a young age, got my first adult arrest for one ounce of cocaine when I was nineteen years old. I thought I was the man. I had it all at this age. I went to court and my bail was \$25,000. An hour later I was out. I thought at the time that these people who bailed me out were my family...that they cared about me. But the truth is that they thought I was going to rat or because they made a lot of money off me at the time. I realize that now...*

**Christ of Maryknoll** icon by Robert Lentz who states, “This icon of Christ does not make clear which side of the fence Christ is on. Is He imprisoned or are we?”

*I was always trying to fill a void that was inside of me. If it wasn't women, it was drugs, clothes, cars or friends. I was always trying to be accepted in life. The truth is I had no idea who I was or where I belonged in life. When I was twenty-four, I jumped bail on a drug case I had. I ended up in prison with no bail. By now I was so strung out on cocaine that I didn't care about anything. I tried heroin for the first time. I remember my celly shot me up. It was everything I was looking for in life. It took that void and filled it. By the time I got out of prison this time I was off to the races. I found my true love, heroin. It loved me back by taking everything that I ever had in life including my soul. I was Satan's partner because I hurt a lot of people to get my drug, and nothing or nobody got in my way when it came to my love...*

*By now I've been in and out of prison quite a few times. I found God in jail but something always took me back to my old ways and my addictions. Today, I am starting to understand "why." See, I always counted on myself. My pride would always get in the way of growth. Plus I was looking for something that always been there but never knew it. Today I know that I need God and people in my life to show me how to live. I pray on this void I have for my Lord to fill it and it works. I am a thirty-nine year old man and I want a life. I am putting my foot forward to get one, asking for help from God, and the All Mighty is putting people in my life to help me.*

*It's time to face my disease. I know I am an addict, but God loves me and I'll be free, free of the chains of myself. But it has to be you that take the steps to change. I ask everyone this, "What do you want to do with your life, spend it in jail?" I don't! I spent half of my life in jail. It's no way to live! I am a prisoner now, but I know in my heart that I am free, and I want to keep that freedom on the outside. God has shown me the way to be right. You are me and I am you. Don't forget that God loves you too! --Cliff*

## Reflection Questions

1. What do you feel when you read "Cliff's" story? Is he salvageable? Should the Church reach out to people like him?
2. Who is your real "love?" What void is in you? Does anyone know?
3. Have you ever gone to a 12 step group? Have you ever sought help for an addiction? What role does shame play?

*You have made us for Yourself, O Lord, and our hearts are restless until they rest in You.*  
-Saint Augustine



## How to Get Involved

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Father Paul Morrissey O.S.A.  
George Munyan, co-editors

We distribute to 8 parishes, and more will join us soon. A donation of \$5 or \$10 would greatly help this mission. If possible please send a donation to our address (shown left).

Your comments and credit card donations are also welcomed on our website (also shown left). Thank You.