



# Pacific Youth Correctional Ministries

Serving Orange County Probation Facilities Since 1981

Winter 2019

Here are some pictures to let you know what is happening and on the back are excerpts from some of the letters I have received from those in jail or prison. The column of comments are things I heard in person or read in a text message, an email, a card or letter this past year.



This past year our ministry stopped handing out literature with staples because certain youth would use them to carve on themselves. I manually remove the staples to keep making the Our Daily Bread pamphlets available but had to stop using Decision Magazine and Chick Tracts. While at the CMCA Conference in May, I noticed the display for Challenge Literature Fellowship in Lebanon, Ohio. Their ministry publishes a newspaper for correctional facilities every other month. Within a couple weeks our first order came and we have been handing them out ever since. Every page has articles, testimonies, artwork, or puzzles that appeal to incarcerate youth. The other good news is that the ministry provides them for free!

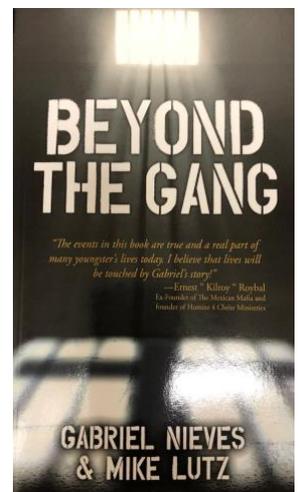


Mike and McKenna have driven from Kansas to California to visit friends a few times but now with three kids, it would not be as easy. I went for a visit back in 2016 and felt it was time for another one. I am the only person he knows in Orange County that came to visit. I was there over the 4<sup>th</sup> of July holiday and got to see fireworks legally leave the ground in neighborhoods all over Wichita. Silas was born last Spring with water on his brain and spent over a month in the Children's Hospital several hours from their home. It was a difficult season but the latest test show that fluid is draining normally. The doctors are surprised because in most cases like this, a shunt is required. Silas was also born premature so pray that physical therapy will return his muscles to normal.

Leo was in Juvenile Hall from age 14-18 going to court and got a 40 year to life sentence. One day at Ironwood State Prison, a letter from his attorney was dropped off at his cell saying that due to Prop 57, his case was being retried. Within two months, Leo was back in an Orange County Courtroom and was given ten years instead of forty. He was also allowed to complete his last year in a program. He graduated from the Teen Challenge Induction Center and shared his testimony at St Andrews Presbyterian Church when I had the field trip there. He mentioned how our ministry had helped plant seeds of faith in his life. He is currently in the final phase of the program at Teen Challenge in Riverside and will move back to Orange County to live with his wife after that.



Gabriel Nieves was a typical gang member caught up in the juvenile justice system at a young age. I remember when he was in Juvenile Hall and came to church once in a while. When he turned 18, he was transferred to the jail to complete his court process. What happened next was miraculous and that is why it took a book to share it. I asked Gabriel to share his story a couple years ago at the Bible Jeopardy Outreach at Joplin and he will minister with me again at the YGC Christmas Outreach. I was blessed to be asked to write a short endorsement for the book. I bought a few copies and gave them out to youth who requested a copy. You can read about the book on Amazon and get your own copy there if you want.



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Rick

I love the Bible you sent me and feel God is talking directly to me. My television also has a radio in it and when I got it back, it only got one station. The one signal I am able to get is from KLOVE, so I have been listening to Christian music every morning and stopped searching for other stations. I am sending you another drawing for the newsletter to the youth. The picture has a lot of significance to the battle with my faith. You have played a big role in it. Thank you for never giving up on me.

CM

Dear Rick

Can you please say hi to everyone back in Orange County (Melanie, Chad, Laura, Tim, and Bob)? I hope you got the visiting form turned in by now. I spoke to my counselor and will be going to Pleasant Valley State Prison. I was a little upset with the news but then I read Psalm 112:7 about not fearing bad news. I no longer want to live in the world but sometimes I feel lost and ask the Lord to restore my heart. Every day I remember that God is always first. Hope to hear from you soon.

AG

Dear Rick

Thank you for writing me back. I enjoyed reading your letter. I have been amazed at how many men are saved here in Wasco State Prison. We even have a correctional officer that prays with us. I've never seen an officer on fire spiritually. I still have a lot to learn so pray for the Lord to bless me with wisdom. Satan has been trying to get to me again but I am saying "no". Can you send me a Daily Bread and some addresses for bible courses? Oh yeah, can I get a calendar too?

ST

Dear Chaplain Rick

It has been awhile but I know you still remember me. I am writing to you from Theo Lacy Jail because I messed up and facing a lot to time in prison. I keep thinking about all the good things you taught me at Joplin and Juvenile Hall. I'll never forget your coming out to speak at Josh and Austin's memorial service. I've been getting closer with God lately and reading Our Daily Bread along with the Bible. I try not to stress out because having faith is knowing everything is part of God's plan. It would be cool to see you one day if you get a chance since I am right next door.

CL

Dear Chaplain Rick

Prison so far has been smooth but not for some inmates. I've seen more bad things happen in here in one month than I did during my two years in Juvenile Hall. I showed your letter to my cellie who is older than my grandfather. I wish I was back at YGC because it was a good place. I might parole next year since my robbery wasn't violent. I know God's got my back even when I am lonely. You mean a lot to me, because who else would drive from Orange County to San Fernando to visit me? No one.

DD

Chaplain Rick

What a blessing to have you come by the jail. I am touched that someone cared enough about me to ask you to visit me. The big take away from our visit is that God is not worried and he is at peace. God's gifts and calling on my life are irrevocable! When I shared the two verses from Proverbs we discussed with my wife, she already knew them by heart. I would love to have you visit again if you can.

JM

## Proverbs 12:25

*"An anxious heart weighs a man down but a kind word cheers him up."*

### Assistant Director

We are happy to have you and your volunteers so committed to our youth.

### Church Member

You are truly doing the Lord's work by being a guiding light in such a dark place.

### Incarcerated Youth

Right now you are the wisest person I know.

### Church Staff Member

This was a meaningful service activity for our kids and I hope your youth felt loved.

### Mother at Funeral

My son had your number and a picture of you in his phone. Thank you for being there for him.

### Retiring Supervisor

I am thankful for your faithfulness and commitment to minister to the youth in the OCPD.

### Aunt of Released Youth

Johnny always comes home happy on Fridays after you take him to church.

### My Boss

Thank you for sending out the weekly reports so each volunteer sees how their contribution ties into the whole ministry.

### Local Pastor

Happy Father's Day Chaplain Rick. You are a great father figure to many.

### Probation Staff

That message was a home run. I got more out of your message than the one at my own church.

### Missionary

Thank you again for the trauma work books. We are using them in our teen orphanage transitional home in Russia.

### Former Probationer

Thank you for calling me back. I feel better just hearing your voice again.

### Pastor's Wife

I thank the Lord that you are coming to this church. My husband also really appreciates it.

### Former Probationer

Congratulations Rick on so many years of serving and mentoring troubled youth.

**Thank you for taking the time to read the newsletter and for your part in keeping me on the mission field.**