

TOPIC PAPER 2 – 2009 – Prison Ministries

Dear Circle Members

Drug and alcohol addiction and resultant crime have far reaching effects within families and the wider community. Families (including parents of inmates) are often overwhelmed by the strains and needs caused by the incarceration of a loved one. Prison Fellowship offers support through a range of programmes for the children and families of inmates of our Correctional Centres and for victims of crime.

Scripture Reading: *Matthew 25: 31-45*

The following extracts, used with permission are from the *Prison Fellowship NSW/ACT publication "Unbound" June/July 2009 Edition* for your information and prayer.

"After his release from prison, Daniel had a fair bit of trouble getting used to the outside world again. Not only was he haunted by paranoia but the 'old temptations were back'. 'It's more your mind than your body that is locked up in jail so readjusting was hard', he recalls.

Mandie also struggled to readjust after leaving prison. She couldn't find Christian support and ended up back in prison. 'For me, because I was a heroin addict' she says, 'I think I needed Christians who knew how to disciple me. I was trying to go into Churches, but I didn't feel they had any understanding to work with someone who was coming from a background of drug addiction and always being in jail.'"

Daniel and Mandie are two cases of many men and women who want to change their offending behaviour, who want to follow God but face enormous challenges of re-integration. It is for people like Daniel and Mandie that Prison Fellowship runs day-release and post-release programs, camps where children and young people are able to meet others who are in the same situation and know they are not alone, family support programs for the parents and partners of inmates.

Prayer is vital for inmates, the families of inmates and the many volunteers who make prison ministry possible.

In White Ribbon Bonds,

Mavis Gerrish,

Director of Education and Research