



Order of Malta Federal Association

Last week I received three letters from pen pals. Each indicated that they were praying for a friend of mine. They eagerly embrace my prayer requests and ask for my prayers. They pour their souls into their prayers.

I shared the letters I received with my friend who was the object of their prayers. She was moved and humbled that these men were offering prayers for her healing, comfort and recovery. I told her a little about each of the men.

One is on death row. He spends 23 hours each day in solitary confinement. Praying for others helps him keep his sanity. He was baptized and became Catholic in December of 2014. His faith journey is unconventional. He is waiting for the State of Texas to circle the day on the calendar to mark his final day. Until then, he will keep praying for others. This is his new vocation.

I met the other two at a prison retreat last May. It is easy exchanging letters with them because we have traded family stories and can put a face and personality to the letters. They have both been transferred to other units, so I do not get to see them when I visit prison. Their letters, however, provide updates on their faith journey. They freely tell me about their challenges and victories.

One was non-committal about becoming Christian after the retreat. His recent letter shared that he was baptized on December 4, and expressed his gratitude for the retreat. It completely changed his life. He also renounced his gang affiliation.

I witnessed a small group prayer where two additional men told their stories about renouncing their gang affiliation. The second one affirmed that he was able to do it because of the faith and courage of the first. The Men in White are not only giving each other encouragement, they are modeling their faith for each other.

Like us, each of these men are on a journey. Their journeys, like ours, are not meant to be traveled alone. What would prevent you from encouraging those inside the walls to experience the love of Christ? How would you feel about them lifting their prayers for you?

Please consider having an encounter with someone in prison.