

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE PANEL, NEWMAN HALL, FEBRUARY 9, 2012

“[Lord,] When was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?” And the king will answer them, “Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.”

– Matthew 25: 39-40, NRSV

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER ENGAGEMENT IN PRISON REFORM ISSUES

Actions

- Sign the S.A.F.E. petition TONIGHT to get a proposition on the ballot this November to repeal the death penalty in California.
- Analyze your own notion of justice. Is it more akin to punishment or restoration?
- Drive to the nearest prison; question the relevance of its location/invisibility.
- Examine your investment portfolio. Do you have investments in corporations providing for-profit prison services? Geo Group and Corrections Corporation of America (or CCA) are 2 of the largest.
- Sit-in on proceedings at a courthouse, especially bail hearings. What notion of justice guides the proceedings?
- Participate in a chaplaincy program through your church.
- Create a study group and read some of the resources below; find a way to respond to what you find unjust.
- Visit or write to inmates.
- Volunteer with an organization working to change the system or meet the needs of the incarcerated or formerly incarcerated.

Resources

- Soering, Jens. (2008) *The Church of the Second Chance*.
- US Conference of Catholic Bishops. (2000) *Responsibility, Rehabilitation, and Restoration*
- Zehr, Howard. (1990) *Changing Lenses*, and (2002) *Little Book of Restorative Justice*.
- Commission on Safety and Abuse – www.prisoncommission.org
- International Centre for Prison Studies – www.prisonstudies.org
- Penal Reform International – www.penalreform.org
- Prison Legal News – www.prisonlegalnews.org
- Vera Institute – www.vera.org
- Real Cost of Prisons – www.realcostofprisons.org
- Restorative Justice Online – www.restorativejustice.org

Organizations, near and far, that welcome gifts of time and/or money

Tonight's Panelists' Organizations

- Insight Prison Project offers classes to the formerly incarcerated with the aim of transforming their lives and preparing them for successful re-entry. (in San Rafael). www.insightprisonproject.org
Panelists Jack Dison and Jaimee Karroll
- Legal Services for Prisoners with Children (LSPC) advocates for the civil rights and empowerment of incarcerated parents, children, family members, and people at risk for incarceration. Offers trainings, technical assistance, litigation, and community activism. (in San Francisco). www.prisonerswithchildren.org
Panelist Jerry Elster
- National Council on Crime and Delinquency (NCCD) promotes just and equitable social systems for individuals, families, and communities through research, public policy, and practice. (in Oakland) www.nccd-crc.org **Panelist Sujatha Baliga**
- Restorative Justice for Oakland Youth (RJOY) promotes “restorative approaches that actively engage families, communities, and systems to repair harm and prevent re-offending.” (in Oakland) www.rjoyoakland.org **Panelist Jack Dison**
- SEEDS Community Resolution Center assists individuals, businesses, and schools to find peaceful resolution to conflict. Their work includes mediation, facilitation, training, and restorative justice. (in Berkeley) www.seedsccrc.org **Shar Etabar** helped us identify panelists for this evening's program.

Other Organizations Addressing Prison and Justice Issues

- Alderson Hospitality House provides food and a room at a “give what you can” rate so that people can afford to visit the women at the local prison. (in Alderson, WV) www.aldersonhospitalityhouse.org
- CA Prison Moratorium Project seeks to halt expansion of prisons and channel money to programs that provide alternatives to prison and address root causes of criminal activity. (in Fresno) www.calipmp.org
- Circles of Support and Accountability (COSA) serves high risk sex offenders, supporting their integration into community and establishment of “responsible, productive, and accountable lives,” (in Fresno) peace.fresno.edu/cosa
- Delancey Street Foundation offers former prisoners and others valuable job and life skills. The organization provides a variety of services to the public -- from the familiar Christmas tree sales, to movers, to fine catering. (in San Francisco) www.delanceystreetfoundation.org
- The Gamble Institute works “with community members to provide relevant services and implement research projects that create meaningful knowledge to improve conditions for parolees and their families,” (in Oakland) www.gambleinstitute.org
- Murder Victims’ Families for Reconciliation., an organization that knows of the pain of losing a loved one to murder, is committed to ending the death penalty, www.mvfr.org.
- Seventh Step Foundation, a comprehensive residential facility for homeless and drug addicted men who are former prisoners, prepares men for permanent re-entry. (in Hayward) (510) 278-0230

NOTES: