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"GOD'S SPECIAL TIME"

Volume 15 #4

Christmas 1997

"I was in prison and you came to me." Matthew 25:36

SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING

PILGRIMS ON A JOURNEY

In the "Journey" talk on Sunday morning the speaker reads the words of "The Servant Song." Then we sing it, with its second verse: "We are pilgrims on a journey, we are brothers on the road; we are here to help each other walk the mile and bear the load."

In obedience to God's call, Abraham became a pilgrim on a journey, a "stranger and an alien" in a foreign land (Genesis 23:4). "He set out, not knowing where he was going. By faith he stayed for a time in the land he had been promised, as in a foreign land... For he looked forward to the city that has foundations, whose architect and builder is God" (Hebrews 11:8-10).

In obedience to God's call, we are all pilgrims on a journey -- the unique journey God has for each of us, in the world but not of the world. Our real home is not here. Yes, we each have our Haran where our roots are, just as Abraham had his. And we have our so-called possessions around us, but that is all temporary. Our journey in Christ, the Way, rests on the foundations of God, not man. It rests on God's promise of forgiveness, salvation, and eternal life in Christ Jesus. By faith we know that God keeps His promises.

The more we walk the mile and bear the load, the more we realize our journey has no end, not while in this world. It's like climbing a spectacular mountain that has no top. We are to let "Abba Father" mold us and re-mold us as we go along, so that we may serve His purposes, not ours. We put ourselves in His hands, to be the hands and feet of Jesus in this physical realm as He draws others into His spiritual realm through us -- through Listen, Listen, Love, Love -- not just for prisoners but for all those we encounter.

Eventually (verse 5): "When we sing to God in heaven we shall find such harmony, born of all we've known together of Christ's love and agony." Now that's Kairos! Kairos in heaven. Hello there, Sue -- and Jackie, and Gordon, and Gene, and Ray. Sing pretty!

BIBLE QUOTES FROM NRSV SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING BY JIM STRUB

KAIROS of COLORADO

We are Christians reaching out to inmates in Colorado prisons with the Good News of God's love, forgiveness, and new life, which are available to all who repent of their sin and submit to Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord.

We are entirely volunteer. There is no paid staff. We depend on God to meet expenses through donations by our team members, churches, and friends like yourselves.

Please use our pre-addressed envelope for donations and other inquiries, or write to the address on this newsletter.

Thank you for your prayers and support!

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KAIROS KALENDAR ---

	Spring 1998	Fall 1998
Fremont	#31 --- Mar 19-22	#32 --- Sep 17-20
Women's	#28 --- Apr 23-26	#29 --- Oct 15-18
Delta	#13 --- Apr 23-26	#14 --- Oct 22-25
Territorial	#25 --- May 14-17	#26 --- Nov 19-22

Please keep the Kairos weekends in your prayers and on your calendars. We always need pray-ers, Closing guests, and team members. *"Christ is counting on you!"*

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VOLUNTEERS NEEDED ---

Kairos is always in need of more team members, especially men. Whether new or experienced, please pray about volunteering to share God's love with our incarcerated brothers and sisters.

You can call the Facility Coordinator (see list above) for the prison you are interested in, or you can use the enclosed envelope. Fill in the name, phone, and address spaces, and check the line which says " I'd like to volunteer...." Men need to specify *which prison* they are volunteering for, so we can notify the appropriate Facility Coordinator.

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OUTSIDE WEEKEND INFORMATION ---

- Walk to Emmaus, east: Jim Lollar, 303-659-6108
- Walk to Emmaus, west: Janet Keenan, 970-963-1030
- Catholic Cursillo, Den: Fransisco Mondragon, 303-429-3464
- Catholic Cursillo, Colo Spgs: Dan Furzi, 719-392-8404
- Episcopal Crslo, east: Marge Humphrey, 303-973-5448
- Episcopal Crslo, west: Bill Bennett, 970-626-3855

Please pray about sponsoring Kairos team prospects.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT ---

Prayers are our primary form of support -- the prayers of our team members, their families, their churches, and many of you out there that we don't even know about -- the prayers of God's people. **THANK YOU ALL!**

Donations are our financial form of support -- the tax-deductible donations from Kairos volunteers, churches, and you, our generous community. **THANK YOU ALL!**

Prayers about donations combine the two, especially in this Christmas season of giving and gratitude. Please give some extra prayer time to a special year-end donation to Kairos of Colorado. For that we will thank God, and say to you in advance, **THANK YOU ALL!**

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KAIROS ADVANCED TRAINING ---

On 14 to 16 November, Kairos veterans Bill Enter of Orlando and Jack Livingston of Fort Worth conducted a "Kairos Advanced Training" seminar in Colorado Springs. Twenty-two Colorado Kairos team members attended.

This "National" training is intended to help all team members, and especially those in leadership roles. The National and Colorado Boards have made it a prerequisite to becoming a rector or rectora. 1998 rector-designates attending were:

- George Tewksbury Delta #13
- Bill Bennett Delta #14
- Tom Starnes Fremont #31
- Dave McGee Territorial #25
- Wanda Sitler Women's #29

Items stressed were the fourth-day community, team formation, and the "Kairos Essentials" which are, basically, the purpose of Kairos, reliance on the Holy Spirit and prayer, forgiveness, God's unconditional love, and grouping.

We are grateful to Saint Patrick's Parish for the excellent meeting facilities, and to the Colorado Springs Catholic Cursillo Community for feeding us. Another PTL!

**"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.
By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."
(John 13:34, 35 -- scripture for Kairos Team Meeting #1)**

Sue Martinez knew how deeply God loved her, and it was this love that she so lavishly shared with others. By this love we all knew that Sue was truly one of Jesus' disciples. It was obvious on every one of the many occasions that she worked Kairos inside teams and kitchen teams. It shone through in her service on the Kairos Board as the Palanca (Agape) Chairman. It was especially obvious in her service on kitchen teams for the men's Kairos weekends. Ah, we could taste the love in the meals!

God gave Sue plenty of time to prepare her family and friends for her return to His bosom. And it was during this time that, unknown to family, she wrote a letter to be read at the funeral. With husband Frank's permission, we share some of it here:

"I feel great gratitude for the many friends God brought into my life. The community of Our Lady Mother of the Church made me feel a part of their family of the Church from day one. Through the La Leche League God and the Holy Spirit taught me how to mother my own children. The Cursillo taught me to know, love, and serve the Lord, and experience the unconditional love that can be shared with others.

"I am grateful to Al-Anon where I learned the tools to be able to break the cycle of the family disease of alcoholism. It taught me the gift of forgiveness -- of myself and of my family. I feel great gratitude to the Catholic Community Services in allowing me to foster forty-six babies who will never have to go through life without knowing moments of being wanted and loved. The Community of Kairos and the women at the Colorado Women's Correctional Facility brought me the exquisite joy of seeing the power of love working in their lives. They taught me to accept others without reservation and judgment, only with love. And I also feel such gratitude that, as a daycare provider, I had the opportunity to be a part of nourishing the hearts and bodies of all my little babies.

"Thank you to my friends of the Hospice of Metro Denver for allowing me to die with humility, dignity, and grace. I hope you, my family and friends, find comfort in knowing that each of you and all my experiences made me happy to live and ready to die.

"I would like each of you to remember that if you walk with Jesus Christ as the Center of your life, not a day will go by that you cannot stand up and witness to that."

Yes, stand up and witness to Jesus Christ! That is what Sue did for many, many years, as did daughter Jackie who left us by the same malady that took Sue. We remember them as hands and feet of Jesus in the Colorado prisons. Through all of that Frank was always with them. Now he's the one who carries on the family ministry. Since Sue's passing, he has already served on one team, Territorial #24, and has volunteered for men's teams in 1998. Frank, may God continue to use you mightily!

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NEW CHAPELS ---

New chapel facilities at Delta and Women's are "under construction" and getting closer to being ready for use.

At Delta, it is a completely new building, the "Chapel of Hope" -- a cooperative project sponsored by the Delta County Ministerial Fellowship, the DOC, and Delta CC. Many churches, businesses and individuals have come forward to assist in the building process -- some of them being Kairos volunteers. Construction moves forward only as funds and/or materials are made available. Of the estimated \$220,000 needed, \$140,000 has already been raised. Whatever part of the remaining \$80,000 you feel led to contribute would be greatly appreciated, whether in dollars or in materials.

At Women's, it is the enlarging and refurbishing of an existing building, within the secure area of the prison, in order to make Chapel activities more accessible to higher security level inmates who cannot go freely to the current Chapel outside. The new addition is closed in but still needs electrical and finishing work. Hope to be in it by Christmas.

KAIROS NATIONAL OFFICE ---

A recent letter from Ike Griffin, Executive Director of Kairos, Inc, points out that the Kairos prison ministry is growing rapidly. By year's end Kairos will be active in 165 institutions and Kairos Outside ministries. The National Office is also developing the Kairos Torch program for youthful offenders. In effect, the "National" office has become international, with Kairos now active in England and Australia, and working on a 1998 start up in South Africa.

All of this is being done by volunteers and coordinated by a central office staff of only three paid people. Obviously, our donations are not supporting a cumbersome bureaucracy. Nor does Kairos engage in expensive fund-raising operations -- just this annual appeal letter from Ike, who tells us that "the coffers are very low and we are operating without reserves."

A gift of any amount would be greatly appreciated -- or, say, \$165 (1\$ for each ministry) or \$21 (1\$ for each Kairos year of ministry). Donations are to "Kairos, Inc." and address is: 140 N. Orlando Ave., Suite 275, Winter Park, FL 32789.

DELTA #12 CLOSING ---

I grew up with a void in my life -- I didn't know love. When I was 16, I was going to movies to learn violence and ended up in prison. After getting out the first time, I got married, and even though my wife stuck by me, I was cold and abusive. I got into trouble again and returned to prison and then God began putting brothers in my path to guide me to Him. Kairos taught me about unconditional love and fellowship with my brothers. I thank God for using me as an instrument to break the cycle of violence when I return home.

When I see all of you here, I know you really care about us. My "celly" accepted Christ during this Kairos and this really touched me.

God brought me back to prison for a purpose -- to know Him and to learn to love. Kairos has been an awesome experience for me. Here at Delta, some of the brothers who know me from the street want me to stay with the Lord, so they help keep me on the right path. I asked my table family to pray that God will take away my false pride. I ask you to pray for me, too.

You know, there's something wrong with the way society brands people as black, white, brown, etc. As I look at my brothers here behind me, I don't see different races. I only see my brothers in the body of Christ. God only knows the love of man and between men.

In Kairos I learned agape love. I feel like today is the first day of the rest of my life.

Most of us came here with walls we had built around ourselves. If they just could have taught me in the treatment center what I have learned here about God's unconditional love for me, then I wouldn't be here. Many of those walls were broken down this weekend. Thank you.

All I found in prison was negativity until two Christians brought me to Kairos. When I get out I know I have friends in my brothers and the Bible. My feet aren't even touching the ground right now. Thank you, DOC, for letting Kairos happen at Delta.

In Kairos I found knowledge, love and courtesy. I learned to pray. I saw prayers answered. I'm going away with trust -- something that's hard to do in here. I learned God loves us.

I received healing at Kairos. Two days before Kairos, I was taken to Grand Junction by helicopter with headaches that felt like my head was splitting open. I didn't think I would be able to attend. Then here, my brothers laid hands on me and prayed for healing. I have had no more headache and have not taken my pain medicine. Through your prayers, God has healed me. Thank you.

TERRITORIAL #24 CLOSING
will be in next newsletter

KAIROS RECIDIVISM STUDY ---

Chaplaincy Services of the Florida Department of Corrections recently studied recidivism rates of inmates of the Union Correctional Institution. They compared the rates of 525 UCI inmates who participated in Kairos with the rates of those who had not participated. They noted up front that "by race, type of offense, and other characteristics, the Kairos participants are comparable to the general population."

The non-Kairos group re-offended at a rate of 28%.
Those who attended Kairos re-offended at a rate of 16%.
Those who attended Kairos and remained active in follow-up programs re-offended at a rate of 9%.

After reviewing these findings and considering the financial implications, the Florida State Legislature passed a bill declaring (1) that faith-based programs offered in state and private correctional institutions and facilities have the potential to facilitate inmate institutional adjustment, help inmates assume personal responsibility, and reduce recidivism; (2) that it is the intent of the Legislature that the Department of Corrections and the private vendors operating private correctional facilities shall continuously:

- a. measure recidivism rates for inmates who have participated in religious programs,
- b. increase the number of volunteers who minister to inmates from various faith-based institutions in the community,
- c. develop community linkages with churches, synagogues, mosques, and other faith-based institutions to assist inmates in their release back into the community, and
- d. fund through the use of the inmate welfare trust fund...an adequate number of chaplains and support staff to operate chaplaincy programs in state correctional institutions.

The DOC is to conduct an in-depth study to measure the effectiveness of faith-based programs..., including those in other states, and make recommendations to the Legislature on modifications or improvements to existing Florida programs.

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PLEASE PRAY FOR ---

Physical healing for Dave Jones, Moses Archuleta, Joe Esquibel, A.J. Luckey, Bill Tipton, Ted van Horn, and Wanda Sitler.

A kidney donor for Duane Medina.

A loving touch and encouragement for those with a handicap, and for those with chronic ailments such as diabetes, arthritis, unhappy backbones, migraines, etc.

Healing for all the rest of us with other needs.

God's peace and vigor for Frank Martinez.

God's will, love, and joy in upcoming team formations.