

LIFE ON THE OUTSIDE FROM ON THE INSIDE



LIFE ON THE INSIDE

MY -LI-F-E, MY AWAKENING'

By Maurice Washington LAC

By Miguel White SVSP



Fred Price is a Hero in my life. I met Fred in April 2014. We were housed in the same building on A-yard at SVSP. I later began to work with him as a volunteer clerk. Fred got along with everyone of all races, and I had yet to meet anyone who did so. He also went beyond that, teaching anyone who asked, even if it was basic math.

THE RACE

By Horace Thomas SVSP

Here I am again
Trapped in time and space
Writing these letters
It's like a race...

I'm out in front
Got a good start
Running full speed
Pumping my heart...

The challenge is beautiful
I feel the heat from the sun
I think about everything
That's already been done...

I keep running
To reach the finish line
And I keep thinking
I am running out of time...

I got in this race
To stretch my limbs
Too also nurture
All my whims...

To feel the fire
A lived flame
To hear my mind
Repeat my name...

I'm running out of fuel
But refuse to quit
I am a fighter
I can lick this!

This race doesn't seem to end
I am still in the lead
I open up my heart
And drop my seed...

While I'm running
I'm under a spell
I feel so confident
I am doing well...

Now I push myself...
Coming around the final lap
I hear my feet on the ground
Up and down the slap...

And I give it my all
Not just some
Can you feel me
The race I've won?

I saw men on the yard look up to Fred, even seek him out for advice, and Fred took time out of his busy life to listen to anyone, even me. Fred took it upon himself to secure me a job as a clerk and taught me the ins and outs of the job, from filing, to tutoring, to good relations with staff. Fred also taught me about myself, about how to change for the better.

Fred was working on his parole and he openly and honestly shared his life crime with me and his changed reflections on it, which included: remorse, insight, empathy for his victims, and his awareness of how his crime affected society as a whole.

Fred was found suitable for parole and went home in November 2016.

Fred did effect change in my life. I follow his example as lead clerk of education helping as many as possible. I also am working to gain insight into my life crime. Fred's example continues to hold weight on our yard. He is an example of true insight.

Universal Understanding

Blessings and peace be upon you and your family. My name is Maurice Washington, and I am a 45-year-old African-American from the city of Watts, in California. I am currently incarcerated; and have been for the past 22-years, for a second-degree robbery - sentenced under California's unjust, 3-Strikes Law. However, as a conscious black man, I am taking full responsibility for my actions, because I am not proud of the life I've lived in the past, which brought disappointment to family, friends and my community.

During my early adult years, with only a second-grade education, I found myself becoming a product of my surroundings, because I was involved with gangs, and lived in a drug- infested environment. I was searching for love and acceptance, as so many youths do, and allowed many social factors to play the role of dictating what I chose to do, which led me down many different roads. As a youth, these roads are supposed to be unimaginable, but the way I gravitated toward my so-called homeboys. I was drawn to embracing the path of destruction which ultimately cost me my freedom. This left me wounded, because, back then, I had both my mother and my father in my life, but they have since passed on. Unfortunately, as an incarcerated individual, I was unable to be by my mother's side during her recent passing.

However, Oprah Winfrey motivated me to want to learn about myself, and the various aspects of my life that would allow me to understand what my purpose in life is. As a result of my new motivations, I decided to write about my experiences, self-publishing one of two books in an attempt to inspire others, as Oprah did for me. Therefore, I'm here as a living testimony to try to encourage others to realize that if we educate and believe in ourselves, then we can in fact succeed - despite the obstacles we face daily in our lives. We can overcome the odds that are stacked against so many of us. There is nothing that can stop me from the journey to mental, emotional, and physical freedom - not even prison walls.

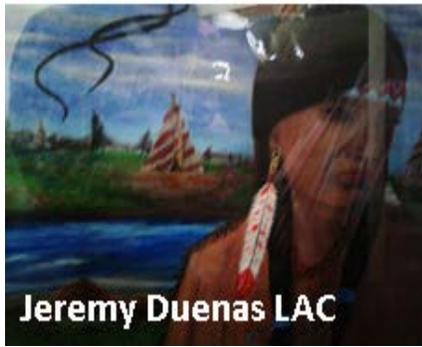
Through my own personal journey, I've developed an honest relationship with God, which allowed me to discover that I have a desire to work with "at-risk youth," because, as the old American adage goes, "our youth is the future". Therefore, I believe I am equipped with the valuable insight of my experiences as an at-risk youth, to ensure that the future of our youth is brighter than those who have traveled down the path of destruction. This is why I have written my book, "**My Life, My Awakening**", because there is no one better equipped to help encourage the youth to become positive, productive members of society, then someone who has lived the destructive lifestyle, walking the walk, where only the strong survive in the inner-city.

Now, when I speak, I refer to the strong, such as Nelson Mandela, Gandhi, Martin Luther King Jr., Mother Theresa, and all the others who stood for something positive. Therefore, I am making my stand through my book, "**My Life, My Awakening**" (available online at Amazon.com), which, I've been told, has brought a special meaning to others, in a spiritual sense of enlightenment, and I hope it does for you as well.

I would like to leave you as I came in, wishing you nothing but blessings and peace. "appreciate every aspect of life, as well as family, friends, loved ones, and especially your freedom - it really is precious!"

FEEDBACK

Thank you for allowing me to take Gang Awareness. I am learning so much and always look forward to the next lesson. Your commitment to helping us inmates learn and better our ways to live is appreciated so much.
Peter J Maciel ~CCI



Jeremy Duenas LAC

Fred, I just wanted to say thank you for your humble understanding and positive words of encouragement. I really do appreciate your program and I am learning a lot. I'm glad we were able to clear things up because, I am determined and focused to complete this entire Turning Point program. Your note made me feel welcomed and I am pleased to see how diligent you are. Keep up the amazing work. You are a blessing. Please take care and pushing forward. Dasheme Husley ~SOL.ANO



Carlos Ortiz, ISP

I have just received my RoC for completing "Cell Phones in Prison" and want to thank you for the service you provide to inmates. Your program is the only one I have encountered that provides us with the opportunity to address this very serious issue that has plagued so many inmates and has hindered our ability to return home to our loved ones.

Ruben Stewart ~Folsom

Cookies for Post Office, by Dale Lozier



Tony Kim, Mario Ortiz, Sister, Lawrence Alvitre, David Miranowski

Every year PREP gets together with a few members of the staff to make cookies for the post office in recognition for their great service and patience with us throughout the year.

The post office handles hundreds of letters a week for us. Often our box is full and they go out of their way to keep it safe; they also have our outgoing mail of equal proportion.

This is a great opportunity for the newly released to give back, have fun and eat to their hearts content. I have been lucky to be able to provide the kitchen for the last three years and look forward to next year.

Maybe you have extra stamps, I would guess that PREP spends more than I make a year on postage alone.



PREP's next Art Show is at Holy Family Jan. 13-14. The significance of our shows is speaking to the parishioners about God's redemptive love in those inside and out who choose to change and transform their lives. We thank you for the art you continue to send us and we ask for your further generosity of art to support PREP. ♥♥♥♥

From the desk of Sister Mary Sean

"Every human being desires communion and peace. Everyone needs peaceful co-existence. But this can grow only when we also build inner peace in our heart..." Pope Francis



2018!! I remember the phenomenon of Y2K and the computer worry frenzy when the year turned 2000.! And it is 18 years later. Do you remember the change of century?

Many good events in December bring us to the close of this year:

- ♥ On Wednesday, December 6, PREP staff of Alfredo Cruz, Victor Francisco, Dan Adamik and I joined the Archdiocesan staff at the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels for Advent/Christmas Mass and lunch. It is always rewarding to be with the ACC (Archdiocesan Catholic Center) staff.

- ♥ On Sunday, December 10, we had our annual PREP Christmas party at Sacred Heart Elementary School



Hall. We began by sitting in the circle to share the blessings of this year and what we hope for in the year to come. About 15 former Lifers shared that this is their first Christmas on the outside. This is great joy to each of us. My thanks to Joe and Angie Marquina for being the chief organizers and cooks.

- ♥ On December 15, Alfredo Cruz, Dan Adamik and I went to Avenal State Prison for the graduation of the first PREP Workshop FORUM, celebrating 42 men who finished the 2-hour weekly-year long course on Insight. The program was developed by social worker TAMMI KELLENBERGER and inmates Richard Bramick and Francisco Diaz. Bishop Armando Ochoa from Fresno and Deacon Clyde Davis, Catholic Chaplain Specialist graced our gathering. The achievement of developing this class from the PREP programs and the first graduation is notably commendable.

Of Al and Dan's first visit back to a prison, Al says: "Surprisingly enjoyable and relaxed, a welcoming experience; looking forward to more visits". Dan reflects: "Exciting and satisfying to see so many men committed and succeeding in their life transformation."

I have the opportunity to travel to HAITI from January 7-11 with a group from Holy Family Church in South Pasadena in support of Father Tom Hayden's work HANDS TOGETHER. We will be in Port-Au-Prince to see the schools and agriculture of the people Father Tom is working with.

With deep gratitude and thanks, we bless and pray for each of you. Of course, I would not be complete without asking you to bless us with your incredible/remarkable art. Our first show after the holidays is January 12-13 at Holy Family in South Pasadena.

We close with Pope Francis and our wish for each of you in 2018! "...Peace involves work, it is not about staying calm and doing nothing. No! True peace means working so that everyone has a solution to the problems, to the needs, that they have in their land, in their homeland, in their family, in their society". Sister and PREP Staff

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