



### From the desk of Sister Mary Sean

"... Do not worry about what to say or how to say it. At that time, you will be given what to say..." Matthew 10:19

### Honored, we give you our SPECIAL EDITION of OASIS highlighting Insight and internal change

Blessings and greetings to you! We at the PREP office become more sure in ourselves each day in the work we do to serve, and to make our service, more valuable. We have become firmly convinced that the PREP correspondence programs are provided to help you **CHANGE** and **TRANSFORM OUR** lives, ours as well as yours!! We ALL need to become better each day.

Each time I do the INSIGHT workshop I learn how to strengthen my learning skills and continually ask myself: **WHAT DID I LEARN TODAY** to be better than I was yesterday.

We want to present to you the INSIGHT initial - with the victim's family present. learned from the programs he took with

Frequently I hear from a person who Often, I hear from persons who do not present. The critical message to BE at BECOME?

We recommend this reading and review Lozier for putting this work into a small **OASIS**. We feel knowing, believing and **BECOME** is essential for your hearing.

The sacred days of HOLY WEEK and the teach us of GOD'S eternal and boundless REDEEMED!



from SAUL MARTINEZ who got his date at his Read Saul's Opening Statement, what he PREP. Read his Closing Statement.

went to Board and got a date on his initial. get a date because the victim's family was the Board is WHO AM I TODAY? WHO HAVE I

for anyone going to BOARD! Thanks to Dale booklet and into this **SPECIAL EDITION OF** being able to articulate **WHO YOU HAVE**

FEAST OF JESUS RISING FROM the dead love. It reminds me that I AM FORGIVEN and

We send Easter JOY, NEW LIFE, BLESSINGS and LOVE to you ♥ ♥ ♥

## REFLECTIONS FROM INSIGHT

An essential element of going to the parole board is understanding two aspects of life: how I came to take the road to my crime and what am I doing to change and transform my life. In the readings below is the awesome testimony of SAUL MARTINEZ who appeared before the Board for the first time on January 9, 2018 and GOT HIS DATE. Saul has served 20 years in prison. Most extraordinary in this story is the fact that the victim's family was present at his hearing.

Saul's story tells you of his preparation for his hearing. After his story are quotes from the book reports he did on each of the courses he took through PREP where he speaks **OF THE CHANGE** he made in his life because of the course. This preparation for board speaks of the commendable process he took to be as totally prepared as he could be. Read Saul's story and his book reports.

### Saul's Opening Statement

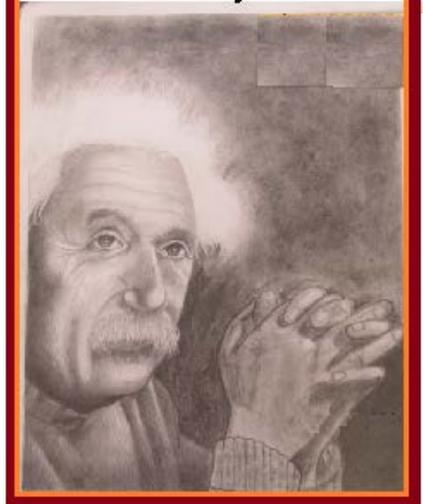
My name is Saul Martinez, PREP facilitator here at Centinela Prison on D yard. Thanks be to God my initial parole hearing on January 9, 2018 was a success. I prepared intensely for the hearing - transformation, insight, remorse, responsibility, amends.

Minutes before leaving my cell I meditated and prayed, asking God that his will be done.

The officer who came for me asked me how I felt today. I said, "ready and motivated."

Then he told me my victim's family would be present at the hearing. I felt paralyzed, but I remembered I had waited twenty years for this opportunity. Before entering I said to God, "I have faith in you, but if you feel that I need to spend more time in prison - three, five or seven more years- I will humbly accept it if it is your will; but **today I will give my best effort.**"

Willie McKinney - CHCF



I entered the room and felt the penetrating looks of my innocent victims - looks of pain, resentment, doubt. The hearing began and so did my tears. I asked God for serenity. During the hearing, which lasted almost five hours, I observed that my victims had a paper on which they occasionally wrote and erased things. I answered the commissioners as the human being that I am now, describing the monster that I was twenty years ago. The time came for the closing statements from the DA, my lawyer and me. Then it was the victims turn, they began reading from their papers. It was obvious that in the beginning they came with the intention of opposing my freedom, but they spoke of pardon and broke into tears. There is no doubt that my life and their lives will always be connected.

When the time came for making a decision, we were asked to leave the room. God was truly present during my hearing, observing my genuine repentance and remorse.

In the course of the next four months I will be deported to Mexico. I will continue my rehabilitation, recuperation and amend my life.

Sister Mary, thank you for all your help. I promise, from Mexico, to continue writing of my progress and reintegration into the outside world. I am so grateful to all the PREP family. Receive a big embrace!

## PREP COURSES

**Turning Point:** When I started this course, I found out that I needed to answer personal and hard questions. I knew that answering with all honesty and sincerity would help liberate me from many things on my chest. Sharing many details of my life since my childhood and adolescence was very difficult, as if I was confessing to my best friend. It surprised me since the first lesson I identified the very accurate questions, and in accordance with the lessons, the questions took me straight to my memories, to talk about my morals, my defects, fears, ethics, disillusionments, egoism, worries and my goals. This was an experience that inevitably made me realize the importance that God has been in the process of my personal change- all those times during all these years in which I spoke in silence to God asking to fortify me in the moments of trouble or during the passing of a family member.

**PREP/Turning Point** is a friend that awaked my spiritual side; it's that friend or paternal figure that I really needed during my growing and mature stage during these 20 years in prison. I learned how to have tolerance for my insecurities, to express myself in English. At present my talks with God continue with great gratitude and thankfulness.

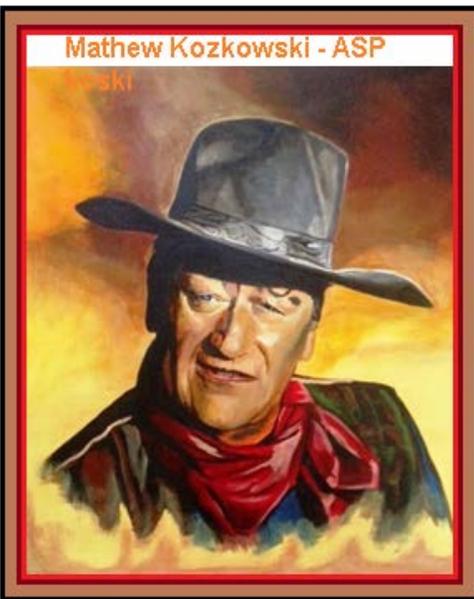
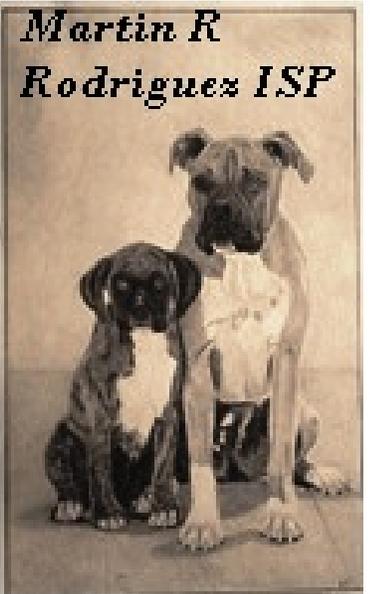
**Anger Management:** This course continues to be as important as the others ones that I have participated in. I have discovered and learned things about my character that precisely in this phase of my life I want to correct. They are small defects but I know that with God's help and my strong conviction to continue to better myself as a human being, I have now achieved strong awareness of my feelings and emotions and have learned to channel my energy in a positive way, full of obstacles, but I strive to become a person that can resolve situations in the most correct and honest way. I don't seek to be perfect; I am only human. But what I do seek is the road ahead of me to be blessed with good solutions and minimal complications. I strive to keep learning and through every experience in life to obtain more information, processing it in my mind, and putting it into practice. My impatience, anger, frustrations, intolerance, irresponsibility and other negative traits are being substituted with positive emotions thanks to my acceptance of my defects.

I went through periods where I have felt the whole world was against me. Growing up in the adult prison system has been a struggle, and looking back on my life, I am filled with regret for those decisions I made in my youth. It was necessary to analyze my interior and modify my thoughts and beliefs, keeping in my mind that I am no longer that immature and rebellious teen. For several years, I read books and newspapers, anything that could feed my mind. Also, I studied myself by writing about my life. For me, reading and writing are a good way to grow on a personal level. I can

make a difference by sharing it with others who might be headed down the same path.

**Gang Awareness and Recovery - GAR:** For no reasons would I miss out on a course such as this one. It would be irresponsible of me to do so. Even though I never belonged to a gang on the streets or in prison, I have always been surrounded by, and influenced by, anti- authority and disruptive persons.

During the first years of my incarceration, being young in Level 4 active yards, I lived in a negative environment between my co-patriots from Mexico. My behavior was focused on survival, to not be devoured by the gangs of southerners, blacks and whites. Thanks to God, I remained sober without using alcohol or drugs but my immaturity, rebelliousness and resentment made me vulnerable to participate in incidents in several occasions. This course confirms for me what I started to analyze when I reached maturity: "I don't have the right to be judge or executioner of another human being". In 2007 I renounced the destructive environment with its code of silence. Criminality is a self-lifestyle whose codes of ethics and norms are self-destructive and prejudicial to society.



**PARENTING - PAR:** Taking this course was very delicate for me. With every day that went by, I was having a deeper understanding of who I am today, about my childhood and the future I want to have. I have learned that by achieving control of my thoughts and actions, I can be a good example to my children. I am blessed to have a daughter but because of my poor choices and irresponsibility, I have not had the good fortune of seeing her grow up. Because of this, I have a strong desire in my heart to embrace the obligation to prepare myself to be a good father someday. I have dreamt thousands of times with freedom and searching for my DELIHLA, hugging her, pleading forgiveness, and giving her honest answers, with God's help, I have hope that these dreams will come true in a prudent and responsible way.

This parenting course makes me firmly realize how essential it is to know what lies beneath the emotion of anger. Parenting has taught me what I, at 17, was incapable of understanding.

### ***Closing Impact Statement:***

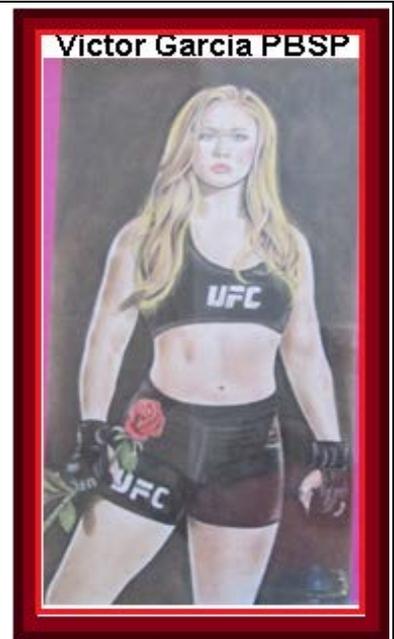
To visualize and express a closing statement should not be planned. I do not see it as the culmination of something that took place. I will never be able to close, finish or forget the damage I caused in 1998. I feel guilty for what I did in the process of my criminal activity and I feel ashamed to remember the kind of person I used to be. Even though accompanied by my higher power and prepared for my BPH, I discovered that I feel disillusioned and angry with myself when I reviewed the police report and court transcripts which described my crimes. I used to be a bad person and I still feel uneasy for having impacted negatively so many people.

For my actions over 20 years ago, I did not have the right to have acted that way towards those persons. It is true that back then I did not know how to solve my emotional problems I was carrying since childhood. I possessed many defects long before I became a criminal. As a child I was resentful, dishonest, angry and aggressive. I take responsibility for threatening and manipulating others to obtain what I wanted. I take responsibility for terrorizing and victimizing my community with intimidation and violence. I am responsible for shocking, devastating and forever altering their lives as well as their families. It was not until I came to experience the same anguish, worry and fear that I had inflicted on so many others that ultimately motivated me to change my negative beliefs and violent behavior. Once I transformed my mind and heart I began to feel compassion, empathy and love for my fellow human beings.

Yet I am totally accountable for all the bad choices and decisions I made in life. I am truly sorry and deeply regretful for the sorrow, terror and trauma I caused. I take full responsibility

Yet I am totally accountable for all the bad choices and decisions I made in life. I am truly sorry and deeply regretful for hurting countless people. I have committed my life to making direct amends for the sorrow, terror and trauma I caused. I take full responsibility for my role in my offenses and thanks to my determination in remaining sober and living a drug free life I have been blessed to arrive in a phase in which as a human being, I have reached a transition of acceptance, healing, preparation and as a result, rehabilitation. The clarity with which I think today motivates me to fight for my physical liberty. My interior liberty I started to have as soon as I started to feel the desire to confront, solve and put order in all aspects of my life. I have now achieved that and I can say that I have full control

of my thoughts, emotions, decisions and actions to hold responsibly and positively any situation or obstacle that may present itself in the outside world community so that I may never fall again. I feel blessed that this respectable panel has evaluated and revised my case and I promise to humbly respect with sincerity the result of deliberation by this panel. Thank you. Saul Martinez - P54862



### **Transformation through PREP**

I would like to show my devotion and thank you for the great opportunity to allow me to make a change in my life. I have grown so much with your courses and plan to keep every aspect of re-entry skills that was given as teaching tools, so I may live a positive lifestyle to transition my life as a productive citizen of society. Reyes Carlos CSP\_LAC

### **Grateful for the Support of PREP**

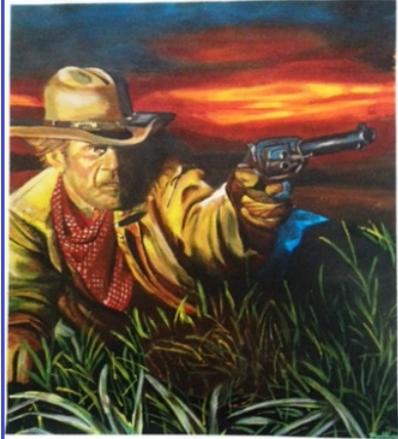
Yesterday I went to the BPH for my initial suitability hearing and was found suitable. I am humbled and grateful for God's grace. He has blessed me with an extraordinary experience during my incarceration. Part of that blessing was meeting you and being involved in PREP. My attorney, Tracy Lum, was also a blessing as she helped we prepare well. I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart and soul for your love, faith and support throughout all these years. May you always be blessed and always be in Christ. Shelley Malil, CV

### **Feedback from GAR**

I would like to thank you and the PREP program for giving me the opportunity to correct the mistakes I made at a young age in life. I joined a gang and participated in gang activity. I have completed GAR which gave me a better understanding about life and a positive direction to strive toward, which is my freedom. Now, I am participating in PREP Turning Point. I have been incarcerated for 23 years. I thought I would never say I am sorry! I apologize to all my victims and to all the people I hurt. I hope and pray, someday, you can forgive me, as I forgive others, as well as myself. All praise to God. Amen!

Billy Andrews, Centinela State Prison

Mathew Kozkowski - ASP



# Our Garden, The Pride of PREP

by Dale Lozier

Fred Taylor, is an awesome example of selflessness in action. Last year he dug out this whole area by hand, laid the weed shield, planted the garden, added bark and laid the rocks. He not only did this, but at his own expense. He came back and redid the weed shield, added new bark and hand cleaned the stones before placing them back, again at his own expense, taking great pride in his work.



We stand in awe with thankfulness at the humbleness of Fred as he quietly puts his heart into everything he does.



It is with great sadness that we announce **Edgar Kunkler (Smurf)** was killed in an accident February 16 2018. A big rig was traveling westbound on the 10 shortly before 1 p.m. when, for an unknown reason, it veered toward the median, crashed through the guardrail and burst into flames near the Riverside Avenue exit in Rialto.



The massive vehicle, apparently a concrete pump truck, continued to travel across all eastbound lanes, striking multiple other vehicles including Smurf on his motorcycle.

Accordingly, Norm Brantley said, "He struggled like a lot of us and prevailed. As his niece, Kerry, has said, 'He died at the happiest point of his life.' I believe that to be true as well. He built his pride and joy from the ground up. Did a heck of a job too! He said many times, 'I'm riding this bike to the grave.' And he did. Too soon, but he did."



**Lucy Copp**, who has been volunteering with PREP for the past three years, has just released the first episode of her podcast called, "Life on the Outside." The podcast focuses on the reentry stories of ex-lifers with the aim to bring more awareness and change in some of the challenges they face upon returning to society. Lucy began volunteering at PREP's office and soon after starting visiting prisons and co-facilitating our Insight workshop with Sister Mary. This project is dear to her, as are the stories and people who share them. If you'd like to listen, please visit iTunes or SoundCloud and search "Life on the Outside." You can also keep up with her by following the podcast Instagram @loto\_podcast. Please reach out to her directly if you have any comments or questions, [lifontheoutside7@gmail.com](mailto:liftontheoutside7@gmail.com)

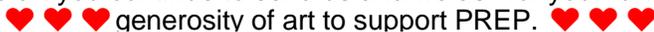


## Art Show Update



PREP's next Art Show is at St Lawrence Martyr, Redondo Beach, April 14-15

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.



I would like to donate to the following organization in the amount of:

\$25  \$50  \$100  \$250  \$500  Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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