



### From the Desk of Sister Mary

Greetings and blessings to you in this month of September!

*"It is my hope that the gravity of the abuse scandals, which have cast a light on the failings of many, will serve to emphasize the importance of the protection of minors and vulnerable adults on the part of society as a whole." "I acknowledge once more the suffering endured by many minors due to sexual abuse, the abuse of power and the abuse of conscience perpetrated by a significant number of clerics and consecrated persons," Francis said. "We showed no care for the little ones," the pope wrote. "We abandoned them."*

I begin, as usual, with a quote from Pope Francis. We at PREP stand in solidarity with grieving and saddened people from around the world at the devastation caused by the sexual abuse and cover-up, of not only Catholic priests, but of all who abuse any person sexually.

With joy and pride, IT IS FINAL that FRED PRICE is the Assistant Director of PREP. The Semi-Annual Report shared that the Assistant would be Luke Sheldon. After further reflection, it was felt that Luke would continue his work as an employment attorney.

Fred has been with PREP, first as a volunteer, then a paid worker and recently as an ACC employment. He brings an enthusiasm, breath of relationships and creativity and a passion for giving back in this work. Fred is a former Lifer.

**Thank you, Fred, for accepting this position and bringing your leadership role into immediate presence.**

I had the honor and privilege of participating in the Fifth Global Homeboy Network August 27-28 at California Endowment. The guiding theme - Radical Kinship- filtered into the whole of the conference, breathing in TENDERNESS and LOVE. **Congratulations Father Greg and Homeboy. Thank you, Allison Lass, for your directing this gathering.**

We begin our season of ART SHOWS: Faith & Hope, Art of the Incarcerated, September 22 at Homeboy and September 29 at Pilgrim Place in Claremont. **We thank all inmates who continue to bless us with your creative art.**

Our blessings, prayer and thanks to you for continuing to grow into the person God created you to be.

Sister Mary Sean and Staff



### TO IMAGINE ANGELS

(an abridged version of the published piece by Words Uncaged, Dis- Re-connected)

by John Purugganan, PB



Larry Viera CMC

I have lived behind bars for nearly thirty years now, the consequences for killing a man, for taking the precious life of a fellow human being. My fourth year in - despite my vow to live my life making amends, to strive to become a better person, to restore my humanity - I allowed my pride to fuel my thoughts with vengeance toward another prisoner.

It was at the height of those feelings on an August morning when a parakeet appeared in my life. I was sitting alone against a wall at the north end of the yard and it landed on the razor wire above me. It was the same type I used to see at the pet shop when I was a kid. It chirped at me. When I spoke to it it chirped again, a melodious response each time I spoke. It felt like being visited by a tiny miracle, and my spirit was uplifted.

It happened again five months later. I'd been up all night, missing my children, hating myself for abandoning them, when a fluttering motion cause me to raise my eyes to the window. There sat a baby owl, right outside on the ledge. He stayed with me for hours, keeping me company, turning to look at me whenever it heard my voice - another feathered miracle.

It was like a message from the Universe that we, all of us, are not alone. Something sent a baby owl - a night creature - in the light of day, to let me know that I wasn't alone in my darkest hour the night before. A quarter of a century later. These cold hard walls are just as high. The razor-laced wire is every bit as sharp. The electric fence is deadly as ever. But when my spirit needs healing, I can still recall those feathered messengers, and it gladdens my heart to imagine angels truly do have wings.

### FEEDBACK: Domestic Violence from Thomas Waterbury - MC

Please let me take this opportunity to thank you for your prompt response and your constructive critique of my work. In reviewing my work (which I have kept a copy of to review and reflect further upon), I can see where it is a-bit "too intellectual"- and does not cover enough of the emotional elements you hit upon in your letter.

Because I am serving an LWOP sentence, (for 38 years now) I have never experienced the Board, nor what degree of insight they may require of me. Circumstances may shortly change whereby I shall need to be concerned with such matters. So, I promise you, I will reflect deeply upon your comments and the insight you have thoughtfully provided me.

Please understand, I have not taken the multitude of self-help groups that I have for purposes of the Board, but rather, I have taken them for myself and because as a Christian man, I want my life to reflect Jesus and I want to be able to help other people who have wrecked their lives and help disciple them in the faith. So, any knowledge I gain, whether from the Word of God or via self-help groups that I can utilize to help others succeed I will avail myself of and use.

I cannot thank you sincerely enough for your personal evaluation of my work and wish there were other courses like this available to us. This is the first time in 38 years I have run across such a course for DV and I am truly grateful and blessed to have had the benefit. If there are other courses you are aware of or things you think I should read, please advise me.

Again - Thank You! May the grace and peace of God abide with you always.

**(Reviewed by AI Cruz, DV Coordinator)**

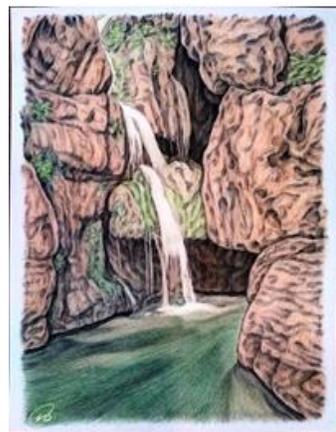


**The Ultimate Life**  
by Luis Flores

First and foremost; Thank God in the name of Jesus Christ for getting me through the 13 years I served in the California prison system. Thank God for the woman I now call my wife, whom I began to develop a relationship with about a year into my term.

I've been out of prison since February 2017. It's been a little over a year and thank God things are good. I have the bad tendency to take things for granted and selfishly want more. In reality, things are good. I'm Blessed!

I use to think that being bored was a state or condition that had to be overcome through quick decision-making that would bring me excitement or pleasure. I now realize that being bored is a pleasure all in itself. Being bored probably means I am not having fun at that precise moment in time, but it also means, I'm not in any sort of trouble either. Being bored means I have very little energy to do anything after work because, I'm tired. It also means I'm not hurting anybody. Now, being bored is a blessing. It's peace when everything around me is so fast paced. It's something to be appreciated and not replaced with impulsive decision making.



**Vu Bui - SOL**

*Life on the outside* is all about my wife, our family, my work, the bills, the expensive Los Angeles rent, the frustrating Los Angeles traffic, responsibility, people with bad attitudes and supervisors who can talk down and yell at you. *Life on the outside* is also about temptations or distractions from God and relationships. Even with all life's difficulties, I thank God I'm not in prison anymore.

Ultimately, *life on the outside* or *life on the inside*, Life isn't life without knowing God. Jesus really did rise from the dead and ascend into heaven to be seated at the right hand of the father. There is no lie that lasts forever. The word of God is still here. God bless you all. Greetings from a parolee out in North-east Los Angeles. By the way, I'm working and staying out of trouble, but might have to do two years on parole.

**ANOTHER CHANCE**

*Submitted by Louis Calderon*

*How often we wish for another chance  
To make a fresh beginning.  
A chance to blot out our mistakes  
And change failure into winning.  
It does not take a new day  
To make a brand-new start,  
It only takes a deep desire  
To try with all our heart.  
To live a little better  
And to always be forgiving  
And to add a little sun-shine  
To the world in which we're living.  
So never give up in despair  
And think that you are through,  
For there's always a tomorrow  
And the hope of starting new.  
-Helen Steiner Rice*



**Esteemed Family, Friends, and Supporters**  
With Gratitude, Louis Calderon - VSP

Today, I wish to express my gratitude to my supporting cast; deep, wide, soul-embracing gratitude to everyone who has, and continues to pass on to me their unwavering love, guidance, and support.

I appeared before the Board of Parole Hearings on Tuesday, August 7, 2018, and after 4 hours of presenting myself before BPH commissioners, was deemed suitable for parole. I'm still in awe, and really haven't been able to completely process the experience. I am mentally and emotionally drained, and in the back of my mind, can still gaudily recall the judge sentencing me to a term of 32 years-to-life.



**Christopher Avitea CMC**

I remember thinking at the young age of 19 that my life was over. But God in his infinite greatness, would have other plans for my life. He would ensure that everything that needed to happen to my benefit, especially my transformation, would happen.

Again, this wouldn't have been possible if I didn't have people who were kind enough to invest time and, more importantly, believe in me. Thank you so much for extending your hand and, above all, your heart as a family, friend, and supporter. You have helped me in some way, shape or form to overcome my toughest life experience and lesson.

Rest assure that as I begin a new chapter in my life, I will continue to work hard toward succeeding, and pay it forward in every way possible. Thank you again. May God bless you and keep you always.



On August 24<sup>th</sup> 2018 my boss Sister Mary Sean Hodges said she wanted to have lunch with me, in other words "Porch Therapy". This meant she wanted to talk about my job performance. I was a bit nervous,

Then she started describing the person she has come to know, and all the positive things I have done. I looked at her and she had this wonderful smile on her face which made me relax. Now the Sister will debate this, but I am a shy person and this put me at a loss for words.

However, Sister's next words would forever change my life. I was asked to be PREP's Assistant Director. I WAS SHOCKED, and had to fight back tears. Your path in life is never what you expect. It is all about what God has planned for you. In August of 2017 I was a volunteer here at PREP. In May of this year I was hired as staff. Now I am given the serious role of Assistant Director. I am still in shock and truly humbled by Sister's trust in me, and I thank her for all she has and continues to do for me.

**Art Show Update**



**Our season of Art Shows begins again in September.** Thank you for continuing to send us your magnificent and creative art pieces in faithful support of PREP. Your amazing works decorate our office between sales. ☺ **September 22: Homeboy 5K run/walk. September 29 Pilgrim Place,**

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

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PREP

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