

Catholics United for Life Our Mother of Sorrows Prison Ministry Program



Pamphlets for Prison Ministry

Short pamphlets of about 1000 words, written especially for prisoners. Contain short lives of saints who are of special relevance to prisoners. Conforming to prison ministry requirements (no staples). Additional titles will be added to this series.

Item #PM304 St. Maximilian Kolbe, Ahead of His Time
This 20th century saint was imprisoned twice by the Nazis and ended his life in a prison camp, offering to take the place of another man chosen for execution.



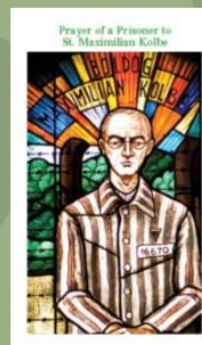
Item #PM 305 St. Leonard of Noblac, Friend of Prisoners
This saint, a hermit who lived in the sixth century, always had a special interest in the spiritual and physical welfare of prisoners, freeing some miraculously and teaching others to profit from their time in isolation.



Prayer Cards Also Available!



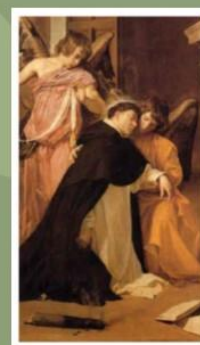
Item #PM540
Prayer to St. Leonard



Item #PM539
Prayer of a Prisoner to St. Maximilian Kolbe



Item #PM541
Prayer to St. Anthony, Liberator of Prisoners



Item #PM538
Prayer of St. Thomas for Purity for Prisoners

Free Catholic resources for your prison ministry!
Contact: Theresa Smith at PO Box 10, New Hope, KY 40052
Or at smith.mtheresa@gmail.com/1-800-764-8444

For the Least of These...

A Publication of Catholics United for Life for Those in Prison Ministry

FALL 2017

this issue



Letter from our President P. 1
Story of St. Joseph Cafasso P. 2
Pamphlets for Prisoners P. 3

"...your ministry...is very demanding and very important since it expresses one of the works of mercy: to make the Lord's presence visible in the prison, in the prison cell. You are a sign of the closeness of Christ to these brothers who are in need of hope."

Address of Pope Francis to Participants in the National Meeting of Prison Chaplains, October 22, 2013

Dear Friends,

St. Joseph Cafasso (story inside) reacted to the inhumane conditions of the prisons because he knew that humans—no matter what they may have done—have inherent dignity. We are created in the image and likeness of God Himself. This message appeared to have been lost in the darkness of the prisons of his time, just as it seems to be lost in the strange darkness of our own times.

Recently I posted on Facebook that I thought the world would be a better place if we simply stopped saying the "f" word. Surprisingly, I got a lot of negative feedback on my post. But this word and others like it are meant to degrade human persons and human actions to the level of animals.

Small but loud hate groups dominate the media and news reports. I watched one video clip of a recent protest where bandana-covered faces shouted nothing but "F--- you" over and over, differing only in their tones of anger.

St. Joseph Cafasso would have had a simple answer: see people as the good creation of God, with all the value and dignity that He gives us.

In the inhumane words we shout at each other, the devil convinces us that we are either too debased to be loved by Him or that, in our "righteous" anger, we are too in control to need Him.

The horrible conditions of prison life in the 1800's moved St. Joseph Cafasso to dedicate his life to assuring that prisoners at least received proper spiritual care. He was born into an era of social problems and unrest—just as we are. His response was love.

Thank you for your service,

Tamara Cesare
President of CUL

**Catholics United for Life
Our Mother of Sorrows
Prison Ministry Program**

Our Prison Ministry Support Program is an effective way to distribute Catholic literature to inmates across the country. Our prison ministry associates receive mailings free of charge! These mailings include pamphlets, booklets, prayer cards, books and occasionally Bibles and catechisms as well. CUL is happy to partner with prison ministers to find a good use for materials that the printing industry calls "seconds." These are items which are not up to retail standards but are still very useful for individual faith formation. In addition, we try to fill specific requests from our associates as often as we are able.

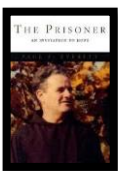
WHAT WE CAN PROVIDE

- ✓ Free mailings of Catholic literature
- ✓ English and Spanish literature (when available)
- ✓ Response to special needs based on availability
- ✓ Monthly Mass offered in our Mother of Sorrows Chapel for the intentions and needs of our prison associates and the inmates in their care

WHAT WE ASK OF YOU

1. Complete the application
2. Agree to the guidelines for the use of CUL materials
3. Inform inmates that you are a CUL Prison Ministry Associate

**Catholics United for Life:
Br. Jim Townsend Project**



*The Prisoner: An
Invitation to Hope*
by Paul Everett

For **free** copies of this book for your ministry, please contact:
Theresa Smith at
smith.mtheresa@gmail.com or
270-325-3061

St. Joseph Cafasso Priest of the Gallows



St. Joseph Cafasso

On June 30, 2010, during a General Audience, Pope Benedict XVI offered the following catechesis on St. Joseph Cafasso, a 19th century priest from Turin, Italy. The following is an excerpt from that address. To read the full address go to:

http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/audiences/2010/documents/hf_ben-xvi_aud_20100630.html

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

We have just come to the end of the Year for Priests ... Today ... I would like to recall one who stands out from the group of "social saints" of Turin in the 19th century: it is St. Joseph Cafasso.

Joseph Cafasso was born in Castelnuovo d'Asti, the same village in which St. John Bosco was born, January 15, 1811 ... (H)e was ordained a priest in 1833. Four months later he entered what for him was to be the fundamental and only "stage" in his priestly life: the "Convitto Ecclesiastico di S. Francesco d'Assisi" in Turin.

The type of priest that Cafasso met at the "Convitto" and that he himself helped to strengthen — especially as rector — was that of the true pastor with a rich inner life and profound zeal in pastoral care, faithful to prayer, committed to preaching and to catechesis, dedicated to the celebration of the Eucharist and to the ministry of Confession, after the model embodied by St. Charles Borromeo and St. Francis de Sales and promoted by the Council of Trent.

His secret was simple: to be a man of God; to do in small daily actions "what can result in the greater glory of God and the advantage of souls."

He loved the Lord without reserve; he was enlivened by a firmly-rooted faith, supported by profound and prolonged prayer and exercised in sincere charity to all. He was versed in moral theology but was likewise familiar with the situation and hearts of people, of whose good he took charge as the good pastor that he was.

Those who had the grace to be close to him were transformed into as many good pastors and sound confessors. He would point out clearly to all priests the holiness to achieve in their own pastoral ministry.

How many priests were trained by him at the "Convitto," and then accompanied by him spiritually! Among them ... emerges St. John Bosco who had him as his spiritual director for a good 25 years, from 1835 to 1860: first as a seminarian, then as a priest and lastly as a founder.

In all the fundamental decisions of his life, St. John Bosco had St. Joseph Cafasso to advise him, but in a very specific way: Cafasso never sought to form Don Bosco as a disciple "in his own image and likeness," and Don Bosco did not copy Cafasso; he imitated Cafasso's human and priestly virtues, certainly, and described him as "a model of priestly life," — but according to his

**"All a person's holiness, perfection and profit lie in doing
God's will perfectly.... "**

St. Joseph Cafasso

own personal disposition and his own specific vocation, a sign of the wisdom of the spiritual teacher and of the intelligence of the disciple: the former did not impose himself on the latter but respected his personality and helped him to interpret God's will for him.

Dear friends, this is a valuable lesson for all who are involved in the formation and education of the young generations and also a strong reminder of how important it is to have a spiritual guide in one's life, who helps one to understand what God expects of each of us.

Our saint declared with simplicity and depth: "All a person's holiness, perfection and profit lie in doing God's will perfectly.... Happy are we if we succeed in pouring out our heart into God's, in uniting our desires and our will to His to the point that one heart and one will are formed: wanting what God wants, wanting it in the way, in the time and in the circumstances that He desires and willing it all for no other reason than that God wills it."

However, another element characterizes the ministry of our saint: attention to the least and in particular to prisoners who in 19th-century Turin lived in inhumane and dehumanizing conditions.

In this sensitive service too, which he carried out for more than 20 years, he was always a good, understanding and compassionate pastor: qualities perceived by the prisoners who ended up by being won over by his sincere love, whose origin lay in God Himself. Cafasso's simple presence did good: it reassured, it moved hearts hardened by the events of life, and above all it enlightened and jolted indifferent consciences.

In his early prison ministry he often had recourse to great sermons that managed to involve almost the entire population of the prison. As time passed, he gave priority to plain catechesis in conversation and in personal meetings. Respectful of each individual's affairs, he addressed the important topics of Christian life, speaking of trust in God, of adherence to His will, of the usefulness of prayer and of the sacraments whose goal is Confession, the encounter with God who makes Himself infinite mercy for us.

Those condemned to death were the object of very special human and spiritual care. He accompanied to the scaffold 57 of the men sentenced to death, having heard their confessions and having administered the Eucharist to them. He accompanied them with deep love until the last breath of their earthly existence.

Joseph Cafasso died on June 23, 1860, after a life offered entirely to the Lord and spent for his neighbor. My Predecessor, the Venerable Servant of God Pope Pius XII, proclaimed him Patron of Italian Prisons on April 9, 1948, and, with his Apostolic Exhortation *Menti Nostrae*, on September 23, 1950 held him up as a model to priests engaged in Confession and in spiritual direction.

Dear brothers and sisters, may St. Joseph Cafasso's example serve as a reminder to all to hasten towards the perfection of Christian life, towards holiness....

**Prayer of a Prisoner
for CUL's Work**

O Jesus, King of mercy, I adore You wherever You are made present in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and in Your Eucharistic presence in all the tabernacles of the world. Through Your suffering on the Cross, You called me to repentance, made me free, and gave me the dignity of being a child of God the Father. Shepherd of my soul, I believe in Your tender, loving kindness and want to be united in my whole being to Your Sacred Heart.

O Jesus, let the rays of Your mercy shine on all those who today are considering abortion, on those who provide abortion, and on all those who commit acts against the dignity of the unborn, the ill, the helpless, the poor and the elderly. I beg You to convert and change their hearts and minds. I pray for our nation, that its legislators and judges will enact laws to end the evil of abortion and euthanasia.

I pray for Catholics United for Life. I ask for Your blessings on their apostolate to defend life by promoting the saving truths of Holy Mother Church. May Your Blessed Mother intercede for their work to save the lives of the unborn, assist mothers by offering alternatives to abortion, and help those who have been involved in abortion to find Your mercy and healing.

I wish to offer reparation to You for all the sins that offend You and Your Blessed Mother. All who love You long to see all human life defended and respected. May our desires be according to Your will.

Amen.

For free copies of this prayer card, please contact:
Theresa Smith at
smith.mtheresa@gmail.com or
270-325-3061 and ask for item #0381.