

ORTHODOX BIBLE/BOOK STUDY @ OREGON STATE PRISON, SALEM

OSP NEWS & PRAYER LETTER

Class Date: June 21, 2017

Inmates Present: 6

Leaders Present: 2; Fr. Jerry Markopoulos, Paul Crawford.

Study Subject: Journey to Fullness DVD by Fr. Barnabas Powell, part 5.

Our Oregon State Prison classroom was slow to fill up today. Five of the men came in after the 1:30 pm scheduled start time. Many things are going on each day in a prison, like doctor visits, special shower times, inmate visitors, new clothing to be issued and other schedule conflicts. One man was about 30 minutes late but this is expected now and the men enter quietly. The first man in was 10-15 minutes early. It was good, allowing he and I to talk some while still alone.

He was carrying a book, the Orthodox *Book of Hours*, and asked if he could get his own copy (in his hand was the library copy). He'd been reading it as often as he could and was now familiar with the prayers for several of the Hours. The only service he had not yet read was the 9th Hour. He wanted to familiarize himself with the prayers! They give him peace. God is answering your prayers for these inmates, drawing them by His Holy Spirit.

Our schedule note for the weekly & bi-weekly religious meetings has not yet been added to the prison newspaper. Fr. Jerry gave the Chaplain our schedule for Orthodox Christian classes, along with explanatory comments, several weeks ago. It seems there is a power play by a prison gang to keep our schedule hidden from most of the inmates. The men coming to our Orthodox class seem to have a special patience with this, likely God given, allowing them to accept the things they cannot change.

Pray for:

- 1) God's grace to be on the men looking at/ learning about Orthodoxy. They need courage to come to our class and kindness in relating to other inmates;
- 2) Peace of soul for them in their two man cells;
- 3) The men to put unwelcome memories at the foot of Christ's Cross and sever any connections to them, leaving them with the Lord; to trust God's promises by faith in Him and His healing work on the Cross;
- 4) Them to believe that Jesus Christ will forgive them of all their sins when they release them to God and receive His Life (Col 2:13-15);
- 5) The inmates coming now to our Orthodoxy classes to be enabled to continue with us and that others will join them.

"And you, being dead ..., He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us ... And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it [the handwriting] to the Cross." Colossians 2:13, 14.

In Christ our Life, Paul