

ORTHODOX BIBLE/BOOK STUDY @ OREGON STATE PRISON, SALEM

OSP NEWS & PRAYER LETTER

Class Date: July 19, 2017

Inmates Present: 5 men

Leaders Present: 2; Steven Tussing, Paul Crawford.

Study Subject: God is Our Deliverer, Ps 18:1-19 & 1 Cor. 10:12,13.

Father Jerry was not with us today. He was doing a funeral service for a dear parishioner, Stephen Paulus. Our DVD series by Fr. Barnabas Powell will have to continue in 2 weeks. Today we had another 'Stephen' with us, Steven Tussing, from Beaverton, a student at Holy Cross Seminary, near Boston. The inmates' curiosity was roused by a young convert to Orthodoxy, Steven, and his desire to become a priest. We were asked by a Romanian 'Cradle' Orthodox inmate, "I don't understand how a Protestant in America can convert to Orthodoxy; how does this happen?"

We started our session with Steven reading the story of St. Ephraim the Patriarch of Serbia. He was then asked to speak of his conversion and plans for the future. The men were listening attentively. In prison a new face with a compelling story of God and the power of His Holy Spirit, can draw a man to wonder what God can do with his own life.

We read as a group parts of Psalm 18 ("I will call upon the Lord...so shall I be saved from my enemies") and 1 Cor. 10:12,13 ("God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able..."). The discussion that followed was wonderful to hear, a mixture of sound doctrine preached from the heart, from inmates, one speaking at a time to the others.

As an answer to your prayers, the prison newspaper, called "The Walled Street Journal", is set to come out this week showing our Orthodoxy Class schedule.

Pray for:

- 1) The prison population to read the schedule for Orthodox Christian classes and decide to come to see Orthodoxy, even if out of simple curiosity;
- 2) God to continue to pique the interest of the inmates coming to the classes and help them to understand what they hear;
- 3) The Holy Spirit to reveal God's love for them in a way they will accept, since the past lives of these men leave them believing they cannot be loved nor forgiven;
- 4) The Holy Spirit to draw them to see their sins and give them repentance;
- 5) The Orthodox Study leaders to understand how best to help inmates to repent and confess.

We give "...thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light. He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, [having] redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins." Colossians 1:12-14.

In Christ our Life, Paul