

SARASOTA COUNTY JAIL TO CELEBRATE ITS FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF THE FIT PROGRAM

We are pleased to feature the Sarasota County Jail as this month's exemplary program. We're excited for many reasons. (1) This is an example of how many people of different Christian churches can work together for a common goal and enjoy it. (2) It has become the largest of our institutional programs and produced more recorded graduates than any other facility. In the period April 4, 2008-March 3, 2009, a total of 264 individuals have graduated from one of our six units. 122 of them were female and 142 were male. All six of our units have been offered and graduates produced. (3) Having run out of funds for "free materials" for inmates, facilitators have risen to the occasion by teaching without the group member guides if necessary. Others have purchased materials out of their own pockets. (4) The leadership and facilitators funnel jail participants into our community-based program, Recently Released in a seamless way, helping ensure that transition will be smooth and effective. After all, that is what we are all about – a transition program.



A NOTE FROM THE CHAPLAIN'S OFFICE

As the Chaplain of the Sarasota County Jail, I really appreciate the 100 Hour Curriculum. Because of budget cuts some of our programs were cut and this Curriculum has brought them back into the jail. All of these programs have great meaning to our inmates and it's a great blessing that they are without cost to the Sarasota County Jail and the county itself. Thank you all for all your hard work. GOD bless,

Chaplain Frank Giordano, Sarasota County Jail

We are so grateful to have the 100 Program here in the Sarasota County Jail. Well, it's been almost a year since the Jail adopted the program in April of 2008. Since then we have had over 500 inmates participate in our sessions, graduating 264 of them for a total of 3954 individual hours of contact and interaction! This has been possible because of the 13 volunteers who came in and donated their time in sharing in God's work. We are truly blessed to be part of this wonderful experience. I give all the credit to the wonderful volunteers and the curriculum, and let's not forget Pastor Don Pratt for all he does! He, too, has been a volunteer here in the jail! Here are some quotes from our volunteers as well as from our inmates:



Robin, Administrative Assistant to the Chaplain, Sarasota County Jail

FROM THE FACILITATORS...

I have seen the transformation in some of the women turning their lives over to God. It's not just "Jail House Religion"! Because of the 100 hour curriculum, I have been working with the women when they get out also; they are truly transformed! Because of the transformation I have been mentoring the women when they get out.

Robin...Personal Insight unit

Jail ministry using the 100 Hour program is an interactive teaching ministry. My "gift" is teaching and not preaching and that is why I enjoy the 100 Hour program. It is an opportunity for "seed planting" because most of the men in the men's classes are awaiting sentencing and will be "moving on" and I will never see them again. The real hope is that they now have an understanding that a saving relationship with Jesus Christ and an intimate application of His word is what is needed to change their lives.

Bob Tapley ... Anger Management and Personal Insight

Teaching the 100 hour class has been a wonderful experience. They share their hearts and it's wonderful to see God at work in their lives. These girls are a blessing to me.

Linda Foxwell ... Financial Recovery

Through facilitating in the jail the Lord has brought extra blessings into my life! I hope to never stop!

Juliana Pace ... Parenting

As a volunteer facilitator for the 100 hour program, working with the ladies in jail is most rewarding. In almost every class we have you can see God's hand over us and the Holy Spirit is alive and well in those rooms. It has been a blessing to me to be able to be part of this rewarding work. I feel that all the ladies in the classes come away with a closer relationship to God. I thank Pastor Pratt for the opportunity to be able to work with the inmates and give them the statement that what God has done in my life he will also do for them. Yours in Christ,

Linda Coker ... Personal Insight and Free to Grow

I have had the privilege of doing three different courses at the Sarasota County Jail and it has been a wonderful experience for me. I have had men break down and cry in the parenting class as they have been realizing what they have done in the past and have come up to me and promise they will change with their children. I will be starting at Manatee County Jail the first week of March with another course (Personal Insight) and I'm sure I will feel the same there.

Don ... Parenting, Financial, and Anger Management

What an incredible blessing it has been to me to be a part of the 100 Hour program at Sarasota County Jail. Each week we get to know the ladies more as they share with us about their families. We know it is the Holy Spirit who teaches them in the ways of God and Christian parenting. Thank you God that we can touch their lives with your love!

Bonnie Tapley ... Parenting

FROM THE INMATES...

I just wanted to let you know how much the classes (100 hour) have helped me. I feel that I have grown in so many ways emotionally and spiritually. The women in Sarasota County Jail are truly blessed to have these classes.

Michelle ... Graduated Personal Insight, and Financial Recovery currently attending Free to Grow

The classes are great, they have helped me work on family issues break down barriers, and work on Anger issues- as well as grow in Christ; and giving us girls the opportunity to grow.

Dora ... Graduated Mom's, Personal Insight, currently attending Free to Grow Anger Management, and Loss and Grief

I just wanted to thank you from the bottom of my heart for this class. I never imagined a Financial Recovery class could help me as it has! This class has not only given me a new incite on my finances, it brought me closer to God! I would like to recommend this class to everyone. Also Thanks to Madeline and Linda

Laura ... Graduated Financial Recovery

Thank You for the classes they have helped me in many areas of my life; spiritually and financially. I would recommend them to everyone.

Sally ... Graduated Free to Grow, Personal Insight, currently attending Anger Management, Mom's and Loss and Grief

CURRENT NEWS AND NEEDS Due to the economic downturn, we have lost the funding to provide workbook materials to our clients. We could use some help there. \$120 would supply a group of 15 for a unit. For \$65/month we could start offering a shopping cart on our website and accept credit cards. \$25 will pay for a volunteer's training fee. \$15 will provide printed certificates for a graduating class.

"Together we can accomplish so much more than by working alone." – The FIT Network