

CJM Connection

The bi-monthly newsletter of Criminal Justice Ministry -St. Louis



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Sister Sharon on the Pen pal Program

by Fatema Medhat

CJM believes that everyone has inherent human dignity and needs human connection to flourish. Unfortunately, our correctional system (jails/prisons) is not based on this belief. As a result, loneliness and isolation is common among inmates and negative outcomes ensue, including mental health issues and increased criminal activity. For almost 40 years, CJM volunteers like Sister Sharon Rose Terbrock, SSND, have been responding to isolated inmates through the pen pal program.

CJM's Pen Pal program is the one beacon of hope and connection for many inmates. The program pairs inmates with volunteers looking to making a difference in the life of someone in prison. Many inmates lack any contact with the outside world (friends, family, etc.). CJM's pen pal program offers them a connection to a friend, a mentor, or simply a person willing to acknowledge their dignity. This simple act of communication with the outside world increases an inmate's likelihood of success when released, providing essential hope and support.

For over five years, Sister Sharon Rose, SSND, has been responding to inmates who contact CJM in search of a pen pal. She has shared her experience with us here.

"I enjoy being a CJM pen pal. I have been writing to one inmate for three years. It gives me an insight on what he is really going through inside prison. It is a rewarding experience because I can see that I give him hope, and that he appreciates having someone to speak to about his pain and struggles. It satisfies me to know that I could help him in such a way."



New FREE Class At CJM

Anger Management:
6 consecutive Thursdays
9am-12pm

Advance registration is required:
For registration GO on our website
at www.cjmstlouis.org
or Call us at (314) 652-8062

Ways To Give

Activate:
a CJM Membership, it's the easiest, most effective way to give

Volunteer:
at CJM or a prison/jail

Attend:
a CJM event and learn more about the criminal justice system

Donate:
money or in-kind items for clients

Shop:
using AmazonSmile and designate CJM when purchasing items

Click on the "How You Can Help" button on CJM's website to learn more...



Trivia Night

On August 25th, CJM's Fifth Annual Trivia Night event brought together around 300 people. CJM supporters and friends gathered at St. James the Greater for a night of networking, trivia, and charity.

CJM would like to thank everyone for their generous donations and enthusiasm at the trivia event. Because of your support, the event exceeded expectations, engaging 50 more people than the previous year and raising \$15,515.50 (\$7,353 more than 2017).

These donations will directly fund more programming in our community and change the lives of hundreds of people in need.

CJM Updates

Our supporters have continued to help CJM grow and help more clients. Here are a few of our recent improvements:

- Last spring, CJM created a new department that encompasses volunteer coordination, direct services, and community outreach called the FIRST Services (Foundational Incarceration and Reentry Support Team) department, located at 1100 S. Jefferson Ave.
- Release to Rent: Veterans (R2RV) has received additional funding from the VA to serve more Vets, focusing on female Veterans.
- Through NPO Properties, LLC (a subsidiary of CJM), another apartment building was purchased in the South city area to house the growing number of successful CJM clients.

Upcoming Event: Backpack Filling Party

CJM is celebrating the season of gratitude by hosting a Thanksgiving event on Saturday, November 17th to collect backpacks for individuals who have recently been released in the St. Louis area. Join us at the CJM office to fill backpacks with essential items for clients, or drop off your donation ahead of time. For more information, visit our Facebook page. To RSVP, contact Anna Muckerman at annam@cjmstlouis.org

