

Kolbe Prison Ministries
ANNUAL REPORT
2023

Address:

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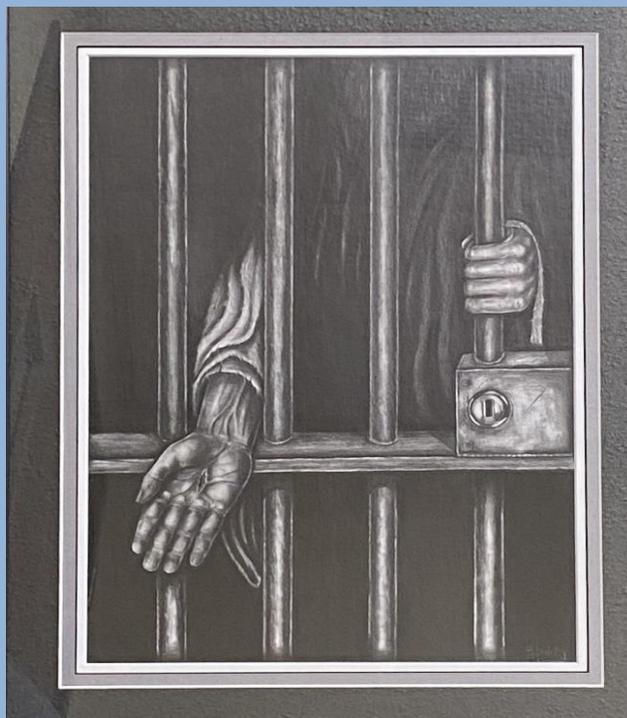
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www.kolbepisonministries.org



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Tommy Holiday
Stles Unit - Beaumont

TO OUR CORE TEAMS – A LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT

January 2024

Dear Friends of Kolbe Prison Ministries,

On behalf of Kolbe Prison Ministries, I would like to thank our Loving God, our board of directors, our Core Teams, clergy, volunteers, donors, and those who faithfully pray for our ministry. Our ministry has been blessed in so many ways, I am happy to share some highlights with you.

Strategic Highlights

As you might be aware, we are growing! With the growth we are experiencing, we are finding that we need strategic help to manage the many tasks that help in bringing the fullness of our Catholic faith to the incarcerated. In November, our board of directors and some local volunteers assembled at Holy Name Retreat Center in Houston for three days of strategic planning along with significant spiritual time and fellowship. We came away from the workshop with a plan to create working committees to be led by members of the board and staffed by Core Team members, as well as other volunteers who have the skills and desire to help our ministry. Through the past years we have often had people ask about helping, but they were not able to go into the prisons; now they can help by participating on a KPM Committee. We are planning retreats in Oklahoma and Kansas in 2024. We need committee members. Please consider volunteering to help with one of the committees.

Financial Highlights

We have been blessed with grants from The Kenedy Memorial Foundation and The National Christian Foundation. These grants, along with the many donations we receive, are what allow us to purchase Bibles, Catechisms, and many other educational publications.

Operating Highlights

Along with the growth, we encountered the need for clear guidelines for our retreats and Core Teams. We have updated the KPM Handbook, added a new Core Team Guide, a



Core Team Affiliation Agreement, KPM Financial Guide, a promotional video, Spanish translated documents for our retreats, and we are reviewing several other documents. We applied for a trademark to go along with copyright to protect our ministry. KPM has joined up with Christian Copyright Licensing International (CCLI) and purchased an annual license to cover all locations where we serve on retreats. This license will be used for music used on retreats and reunions so the writers can be compensated for the use of their music. We will be instituting the practice of requesting retreat team contact information and CCLI Music reports prior to posting photos so we can keep up with volunteers.

2023 Accomplishments

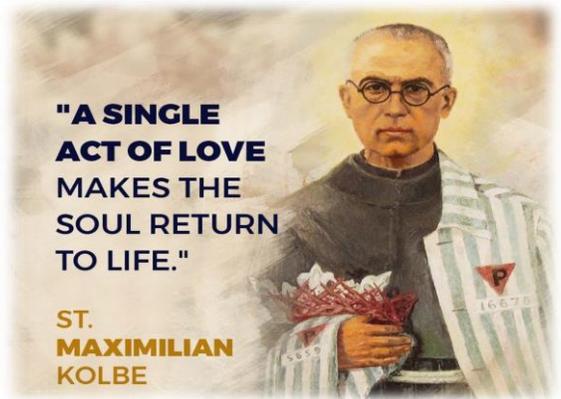
The Dallas Core Team and volunteers from Ft. Worth took a leadership role in our 2023 Conference at St. Francis in Frisco, Texas. We had our first mission retreat in the state of Florida at the Century Correctional Institution. We have a new Core Team in the Diocese of Pensacola/Tallahassee where **Bishop Wack** and his leadership team gave us a warm welcome. We filed with the Secretary of State in Oklahoma and Kansas to work as a non-profit organization where we have already received approval from **Archbishops Coakley and Nauman** respectively, to serve. The Lake Charles Core Team brought the first mission retreat to Baker, Louisiana at the Louisiana Correctional Institute for Women. Additionally, we have had a Facebook page for several years and have now added Twitter and Instagram. We want to keep the public aware of our ministry and opportunities to serve. We welcome your input and suggestions to keep our followers up to date with the ongoing work of Kolbe Prison Ministries.

Finally, please join us for our annual conference at St. Anthony of Padua Catholic Church in The Woodlands, Texas on July 13th, 2024. Go to our website www.kolbeprisonministries.org for details.

Respectfully yours in Christ,



Gerald Gaenslen
President
Kolbe Prison Ministries



2023 - 2024 BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Front: Daniel Reyes, John Panariello (Treasurer)

2nd Row: Jeremy Itz (Founder), Deacon Alvin Lovelady (Retreat Host), Deacon Marty Robertson, Bill Whitefield, Gerald Gaenslen (President), Dr. Don Duplan, Fr. Tom Edelen, Kathleen McDonald Tong (Secretary)

3rd Row: Kerry Johnston, Larry Reeh (Founder)

Not Pictured - Jimmy Reno (Vice President), Hermes Silva

Retirements: Len Weinheimer, Bill Whitefield

Welcome new 2024 Board Members:
Jim Murphy and Keven Birck

- ### KPM Committee Responsibilities
- Governance
 - Gerald Gaenslen
 - Daniel Reyes
 - Mission
 - Jeremy Itz
 - John Panariello
 - Kerry Johnston
 - Gerald Gaenslen
 - Core Team
 - Daniel Reyes
 - Don Duplan
 - Hermes Silva
 - John Panariello
 - Larry Reeh
 - Marketing & Communications
 - Kerry Johnston
 - Jimmy Reno
 - Fr. Tom Edelen
 - Jeremy Itz
 - Kathleen McDonald Tong
 - Faith Formation
 - Kathleen McDonald Tong
 - Deacon Alvin Lovelady
 - Deacon Marty Robertson
 - Don Duplan
 - Fr. Tom Edelen

THE MISSION

To share the Agape love of Jesus Christ with those in prison and to teach the fullness of the truth of the Catholic Church to the incarcerated.



FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The Kolbe Prison Ministries’ Board of Directors establish procedures, and govern operations, for the overall ministry. However, from a financial perspective, operations are managed independently by the Board and 17 active Core Teams in Texas, Louisiana, Florida, and Oklahoma. The data included in this section of the Annual Report pertains only to the Board’s financial activity for 2023.

From a tax reporting standpoint, 10 of the Core Teams operate under the Board’s federal tax identification number (see Table 1). Each of these 10 Core Teams provide a financial summary at the end of each year to the Board’s treasurer for inclusion in the corporation’s annual federal tax return.

Table 1: KPM Core Team Financial Reporting

Core Team	Operates Financially Under
1 Amarillo Diocese	Board of Directors
2 Austin Diocese West	Board of Directors
3 Beaumont Diocese - Men	Diocese
4 Beaumont Diocese - Women	Diocese
5 Brownsville Diocese	Diocese
6 Corpus Christi Diocese	Diocese
7 Dallas Diocese	Board of Directors
8 Ft Worth Diocese	Board of Directors
9 Houston Tyler Tennessee Colony	Board of Directors
10 Galveston/Houston AD North	Diocese
11 Galveston/Houston AD South	Diocese
12 Lake Charles, LA	Board of Directors
13 Oklahoma City <i>(To be formalized 1Q24)</i>	Board of Directors
14 Pensacola - Tallahassee	Board of Directors
15 San Antonio Archdiocese	Board of Directors
16 Tyler Diocese	Board of Directors
17 Victoria Diocese	Diocese

The 2023 financials for the Board are summarized below. For the 12-month period ending 12/31/2023, we had revenues of \$35,067 and expenses of \$40,345, which generated a net loss of \$5,278 for the year. Compared to the previous year, this represents a 57% increase in revenues and an 87% increase in expenses. Our total investment balance as of 12/31/23 was \$38,683.



Figure 1 below depicts our revenue and expenses on a monthly basis, and Figure 2 shows our cumulative revenue and expenses throughout the year.

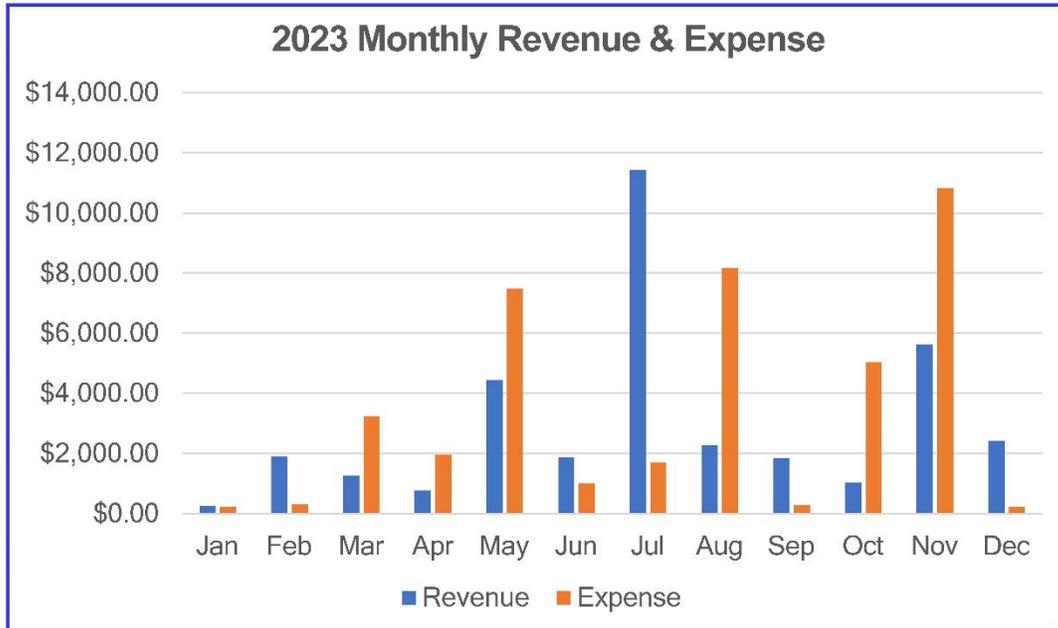


Figure 1: 2023 Monthly Revenue & Expense

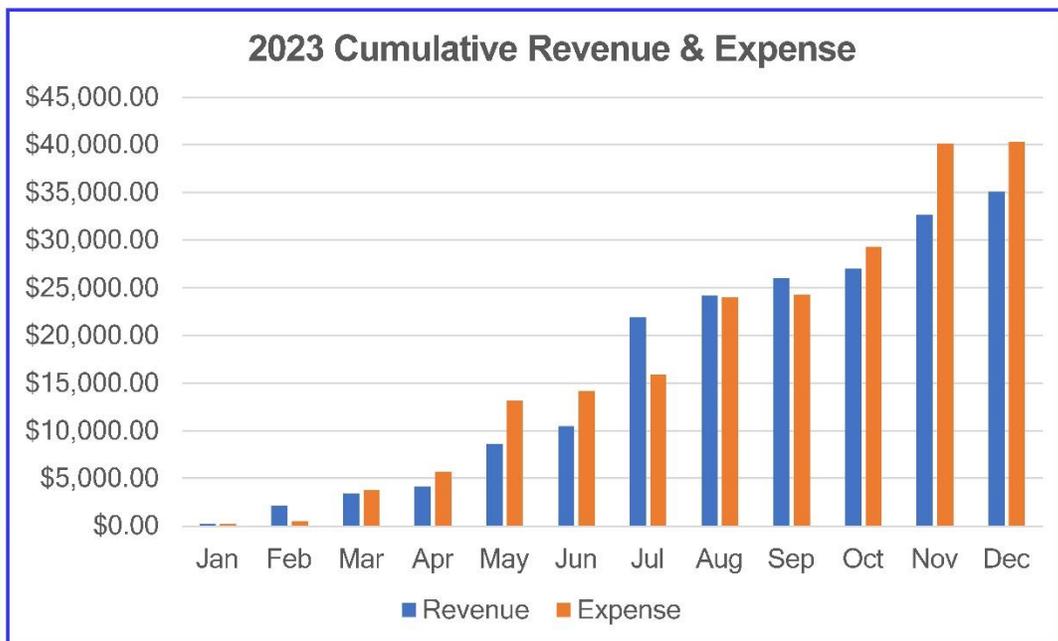


Figure 2: 2023 Cumulative Revenue & Expense



Table 2, Figure 3, and Figure 4 provide a breakdown of revenue sources in 2023.

Table 2: 2023 Revenue Breakdown

Revenue	Amount
General Donations (unrestricted)	\$16,884
Earmarked Donations (restricted)	\$5,098
Retreat Donations	\$11,085
Kolbe Shirts	\$1,198
Conferences	\$750
Bank Interest	\$52
TOTAL	\$35,067

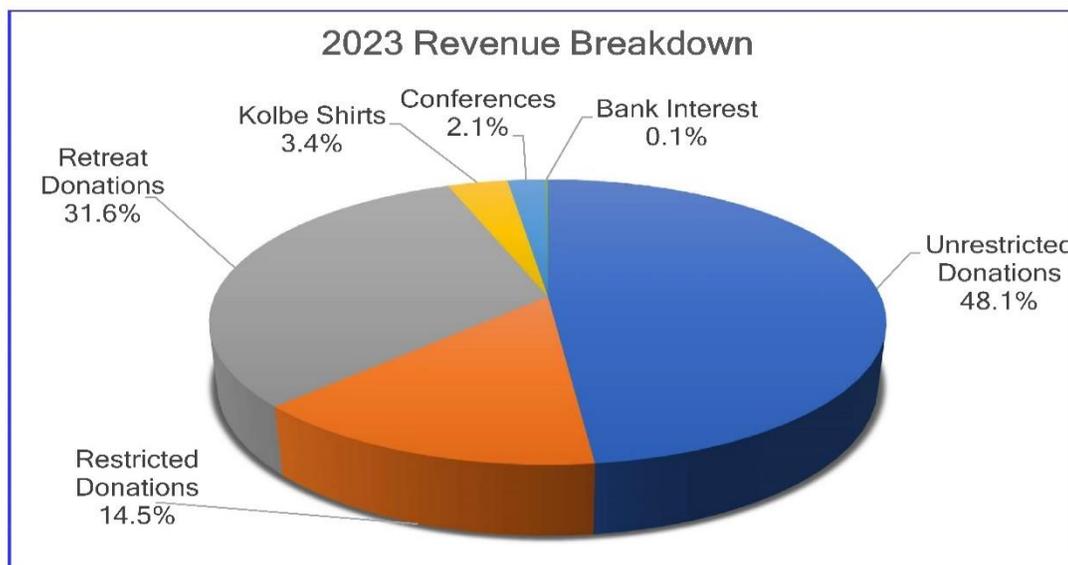


Figure 3: 2023 Revenue Breakdown



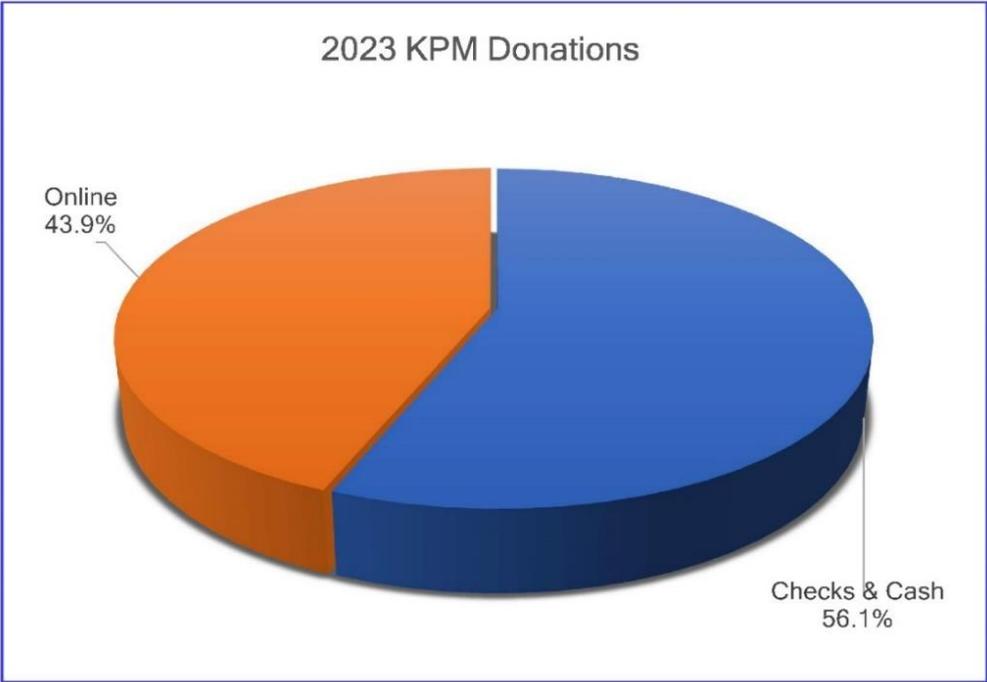


Figure 4: 2023 KPM Donations

Table 3, Figure 5, and Figure 6 provide a breakdown of expenses in 2023.

Table 3: 2023 Expense Breakdown

Expense	Amount
Conferences	\$5,689
Retreats	\$14,698
RCIA	\$6,887
Kolbe Shirts	\$1,066
G&A	\$12,005
TOTAL	\$40,345



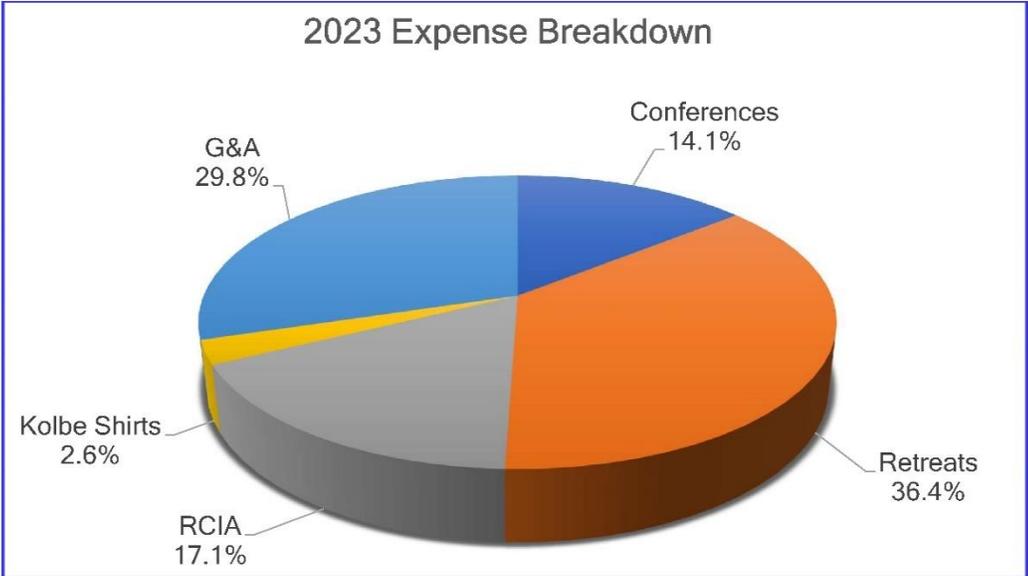


Figure 5: 2023 Expense Breakdown

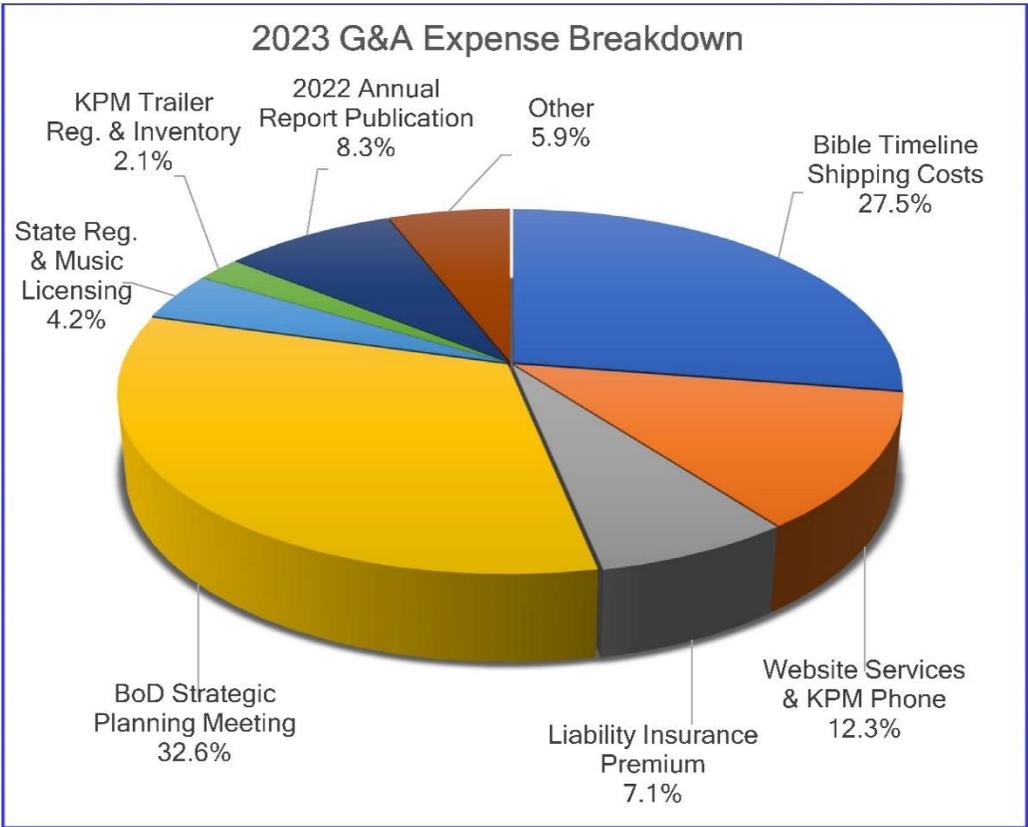


Figure 6: 2023 G&A Expense Breakdown



The 2023 KPM Balance Sheet is included in Figure 7 and the Income Statement is included in Figure 8.

		<i>Incorporated October 27, 2015</i>					
		12/31/2023	12/31/2022	12/31/2021	12/31/2020	12/31/2019	12/31/2018
KPM Balance Sheet							
(2018-2023)							
							
ASSETS							
Cash-Checking Operating		8,117.07	13,454.54	8,023.63	23,675.41	21,690.96	8,181.48
Savings Operating		28,558.27	30,506.57	31,100.83	12,559.01	15,037.89	15,000.00
CD Operating		-	-	4,039.50	4,031.70	-	-
Petty Cash		-	-	-	-	-	-
Inventory: Sales Items		-	-	- a	465.00	465.00	-
Inventory: RCIA Supplies		-	-	- a	5,136.37	5,136.37	4,035.65
Inventory: Retreat Supplies		-	-	- a	146.81	146.81	254.08
Inventory: AP Bible Study		20,275.80 d	205,960.64 d	- a	146.81	146.81	254.08
		Salvage					
Fixed Assets	MACRS Value						
Trailer:	6 \$ 1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,765.33	2,530.66	3,296.00	4,061.33
Tables:	10 \$ -	1,534.00	1,888.80	2,243.60	2,598.40	2,953.20	3,308.00 b
Durable goods:	10 \$ -	375.00	500.00	625.00	750.00	875.00	1,000.00
TOTAL ASSETS		59,860.14	253,310.55	47,797.89	52,040.17	49,748.04	36,094.62
LIABILITIES							
Trust Funds							
Earmark Future Retreats		279.97	6,000.00	-	- c	7,229.61	3,168.11
TOTAL LIABILITIES		279.97	6,000.00	-	-	7,229.61	3,168.11
FUND BALANCE							
General		59,580.17	247,310.55	47,797.89	52,040.17	42,518.43	32,926.51
<i>KPM operates on a cash basis</i>							
a - Inventory supplies were disbursed during the July 2021 KPM conference and December 2021 Price Daniel Retreat							
b - In 2018, 12 additional tables purchased at cost of: \$2,348.00							
c - All earmarked funds disbursed in 2020 per KPM Board decision							
d - Balance of 2022 Ascension Press property donations, which consisted of \$335,330 Bible Timeline Study materials (2/17/22) and \$2,600 Bible Tabs (8/26/22)							
		2/27/2024					

Figure 7: Balance Sheet



**KPM Income Statement
(2018-2023)**



Incorporated October 27, 2015

	12/31/2023	12/31/2022	12/31/2021	12/31/2020	12/31/2019	12/31/2018
Revenue						
Retreat Collections	11,085.12	4,000.00	1,700.00	1,740.92	10,090.00 a	12,416.00 a
Donations	21,813.08	18,107.85 a	12,893.70	13,322.79	17,137.00	20,320.00
Interest	51.70	48.13	57.75	69.91	50.50	-
Sales (Shirts, Patches, Decals, etc)	1,198.01	-	-	276.00	8,413.42	9,013.91
Amazon Rewards	168.94	209.44	247.35	141.17	138.99	74.83
	<u>34,316.85</u>	<u>22,365.42</u>	<u>14,898.80</u>	<u>15,550.79</u>	<u>35,829.91</u>	<u>41,824.74</u>
Expense						
General & Administrative	16,686.63	12,206.31	10,447.18	1,648.71	1,514.19	1,176.41
Retreat Supplies	14,955.55	4,939.58	1,497.73	1,530.08	4,596.15	13,096.22
RCIA Supplies	6,887.20	4,422.38	56.05	8,216.73	6,265.45	3,835.15
Cost of Goods Sold	1,066.00	-	-	618.00	9,916.75	8,976.32
Depreciation Expense	479.80	1,245.13	1,245.13	1,245.13	1,245.13 b	1,005.33
	<u>40,075.18</u>	<u>22,813.40</u>	<u>13,246.09</u>	<u>13,258.65</u>	<u>23,537.67</u>	<u>28,089.43</u>

Notes

Sales Net:	132.01	-	-	(342.00)	(1,503.33)	37.59
Retreat Net:	(3,870.43)	(939.58)	202.27	210.84	5,493.85	(680.22)

KPM operates on a cash basis

- a - Portion of revenue earmarked for future retreats: \$6,000.00 in 2022; \$3,600.00 in 2019; \$3,168.11 in 2018; \$3,100.00 in 2017
b - In 2018, 12 additional tables purchased at cost of: \$2,348.00

02/27/2024

Figure 8: Income Statement



CORE TEAM REPORTS

FLORIDA



THE CATHOLIC DIOCESE of PENSACOLA TALLAHASSEE

Here are the highlights for KPM - Pensacola. We began with Core team formation. It was an all-out effort over a few months. Without the power of the Holy Spirit, and a loving wife, it would have been impossible. God sent so many great volunteers to help. Of course, the arrival of Gerald (Gaenslen) and his team from Texas was critical. Now we have the confidence to go forward. Many of the things and items we had to put together for the first retreat can be used in the future. No doubt, the next retreat will be easier. We raised over \$11,000 in cash and had approximately \$4,000 in food donations related to jail and prison ministry. One husband and wife cooked \$2,000 worth of food for an event at the jail. We tried to send them a receipt, but they did not care to claim as a donation. The donations have been secondary to the recruiting talks we have given before or after Mass at a few Catholic Churches; talks to KOC, women's groups of the like. We have made bulletin announcements with pictures, sent out emails to different parish groups, and participated in a couple of ministry fairs, but the best response is personal talks to parishioners, individually and in groups. Reading a letter from an inmate or telling a recovery story are powerful. In these talks we try to provide a quick "laundry list" of the many ways people can help, including donations, but we do not focus on money. Charitable people just stop and write a check or give cash. The Core team and our diocese have been the most generous to date.

Between the mission retreat last August and upcoming February retreat, we have 40 active retreat volunteers. Five (5) volunteers are active in faith formation and an additional four (4) serve the jail. We use Dismas's Reasons for Hope for RCIA. We celebrated two (2) Baptism, First Communion and Confirmations. Three of our volunteers traveled to Texas for the Kolbe Conference, Andy and Teresa Cash and Brynne Cook. Our major challenges to serving the unit was a shortage of COs that cut into ministry time. We would like to recognize Morgan Rosas for helping to lead the Kolbe #2 Century retreat and Jeff Arnett in his devotion to both the jail and prison ministry in our area.



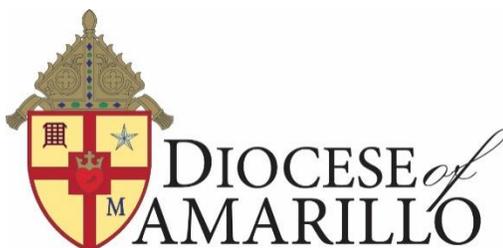
LOUISIANA

THE DIOCESE OF LAKE CHARLES



Kolbe Prison Ministries has returned to full scale operation. Two retreats were held at Allen Correctional Center in 2023, each having 72 retreatants. We were blessed to have 28 of our Inside Kolbe Brothers as part of our retreat team. The Lake Charles Core team also reached out to the Louisiana Correctional Institute for Women (LCIW) in Baker, LA and introduced a Kolbe retreat to approximately 35 women retreatants. Alexandra Hennigan directed the first Kolbe Mission retreat for women in the state of Louisiana and a second retreat is planned for March of 2024.

TEXAS

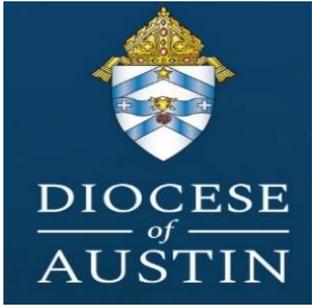


The Kolbe Prison Ministry team for the Diocese of Amarillo kept a full schedule in 2023. We held three-day retreats at four units in the Texas Panhandle under the Diocese of Amarillo. We kicked off the year with a Reunion/Gathering at the Clements Unit on Saturday January 14. The team went back

to the Roach Unit in Childress for a Reunion/Gathering on Saturday March 11. We held our fourth retreat at the Dalhart Unit in Dalhart March 16-18. We held retreat # 4 at the Jordan Unit in Pampa May 4-6. The Dalhart team then held a Reunion/Gathering at the Dalhart Unit on Saturday May 13. On Saturday July 15 the team held a Reunion/Gathering at the Jordan Unit in Pampa. We had 6 members of the Amarillo Core team attend the Kolbe Conference in Frisco on July 22, 2023. The team went to the Clements Unit in Amarillo and held retreat # 7 on August 17-19. November 9-11 the team held retreat # 4 at the Roach Unit in Childress. On Saturday November 18 the team held the Reunion/Gathering at the Clements Unit in Amarillo.

We have been able to keep our Core team and Core volunteers involved in the ministry and have even been able to attract new volunteers. For 2024 we have already planned for retreats in four units, along with gatherings/reunions in each of the units and looking at adding a fifth unit into the schedule; adding the Mechler Unit in Tulia. We have various members of our Core team and Ministry team who go into the units to help lead RCIA, Bible Study and other faith and worship events throughout the year. We are very blessed with a strong volunteer base, who love ministering to our brothers in white by showing them the love of Christ, and by sharing the message of the Gospel.





Kolbe Prison Ministry, Central Texas reduced the scope of its activities during 2023. The Ministry serves the Ellen Halbert Women’s Unit in Burnet and provides support to other Men’s and Women’s Units when requested by other Kolbe Cores. The Women continue to provide sustained support to the mission, especially at the Ellen Halbert Unit in Burnet. Also, Debbie Balsam achieved certification as a Certified

Volunteer Chaplain Assistant (CVCA) during 2023. Fund raising was limited to two (2) donations from Retreat participants. There were 25 volunteers for retreats at the Halbert Unit.

Several men volunteers participated in retreats in other areas of Texas. A weekly faith formation meeting is conducted at the Halbert Unit. Three women and our Deacon typically attend the meeting. The volunteers offer a Eucharist service every Thursday at the Halbert unit. No regular RCIA training was offered. RCIA is contemplated in 2024. Several women of the Halbert Unit have expressed intention to enter the Church. Five women attended the Kolbe Annual Conference.



Special Recognition

The following comment from the retreat leader at the Halbert Unit.

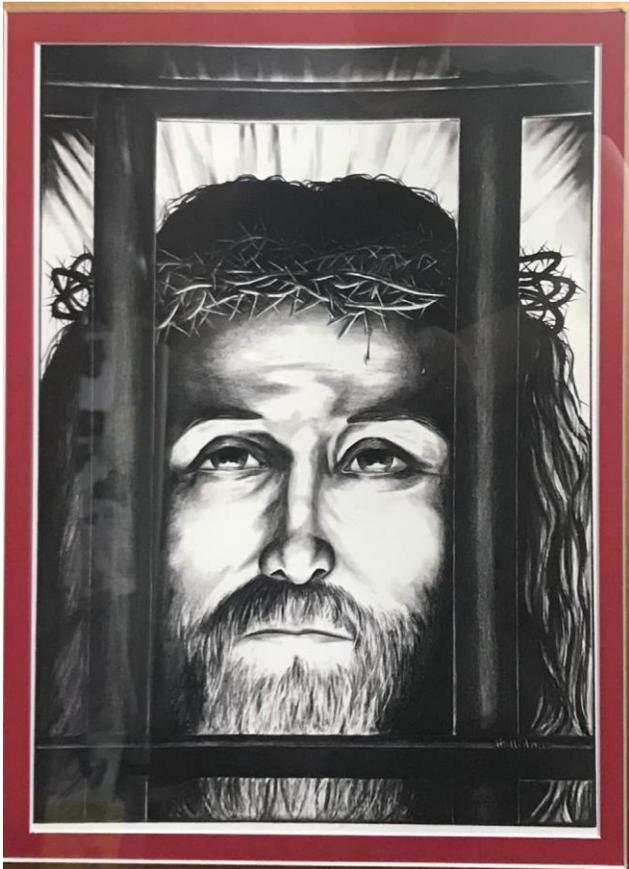
“I would like to thank, Deena Holcomb, who came from Louisiana, where she set up a Bible Study in a prison there. She & a good friend drove 8 hours arriving in Burnet at about 9:00PM on the Saturday of our retreat, so that she could be our special visitor and give her POWERFUL testimony on Sunday to our “ladies in white”. She rocked that retreat for all of us and gave the ladies so much hope. I met her first at the Ellen Halbert Unit years ago. She reminded me of that during her talk and the ladies felt ever closer to her for that as she had lived it, like they did & still are! I’m forever indebted to Deena for making it to Burnet & giving of herself so freely. She was also at the Annual Kolbe Conference, and we spoke there too! She is truly a blessing to behold! She rocked Sunday for all of us!”





The Diocese of Beaumont St. Kolbe Prison Ministry currently has about 250 active members. In 2023 we had 4 men’s retreats, with one women’s retreat cancelled the day before it started due to the state lockdown in September. The weekly Renew at Stiles and the monthly Renewals at Gib Lewis and Polunsky continue to keep the

flame of the spirit alive for the brothers in white. Attendance has steadily increased especially after retreats, with 80-120 men joining faithfully each week/month. Once a month, Stiles celebrates with popcorn night at Renew. Stiles also hosted its annual Volunteer Banquet, complete with door prizes, a drama skit, and musical interpretive dancing. It was very well received and many of our Kolbe brothers were there to join in the festivities. Many of the Kolbe brothers participated in the Christ in You men’s conference that has begun in the diocese. The women also have a Christ in You conference with some of our Kolbe sisters attending. This is a day of renewal, speakers, and worship across the diocese. It has become a large annual gathering. **Bishop Toups** celebrated Mass at Stiles, Gib Lewis, and Polunsky this year. He also recognized the Criminal Justice Volunteers at a Mass of Thanksgiving in November. He has been incredibly supportive of our incarcerated brothers and sisters.



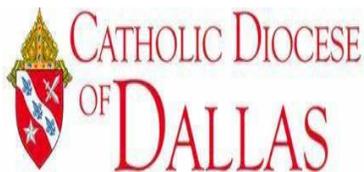
Used by permission.
Tommy Holiday
Stiles Unit- Beaumont

We welcomed 21 new Catholics into our faith through the RCIA program. We want to extend a heartfelt Thank You to Peter Peltier who leads RCIA in Woodville at Gib Lewis and to Deacon Steve Sellers who facilitates at both Stiles in Beaumont and Polunsky in Livingston. There will be an outreach within our 250 active volunteers to help with these programs. These two men are dedicated and willing to be involved in this ministry. The Church thanks you! We currently use a combination of Invitation by Paulist Press and the Catholic Faith, Life, and Creed by Mary Birmingham. Lessons are coordinated with these two programs to allow the catechists to use DVDs and Symbolon as needed to support the lessons. One new fundraising activity was selling Kolbe T-shirts and hats from a local company called Complete Athlete. A portion of the proceeds came back to help fund the future retreats. We are grateful for



their generosity as well as excited to share nice Kolbe attire with our volunteers. A special shoutout goes to Lynn Bryngleson who has so generously donated much needed music equipment to Stiles, Gib Lewis, and Polunsky to enhance the band's needs. These three units have some talented musicians, and Lynn has supplied them all with many instruments so they can make a joyful noise. Thank you!

In March, the Criminal Justice Office collected hygiene supplies for the indigent offenders at our units. Many of these supplies go to those units with a Kolbe community. Hygiene supplies as well as parole clothing are collected throughout the year as separate groups have a service project that is distributed to the units in need. This has become a well-known project throughout the diocese, parishes, schools, and religious education classes. We are grateful for the outpouring of God's love to the men and women that we serve. We continue to invite new volunteers into our fold and look forward to how the Spirit will move us in 2024.



Dallas Kolbe Prison Ministries have been serving the imprisoned within the Diocese with Kolbe Retreats, RCIA, weekly visitation and Mass since 2015. During 2023, Dallas Kolbe Prison Ministries has had a highly active year with a doubling of activities from a year earlier in 2022. Below is a summary of activities:

- Coordinated two Kolbe Retreats, at the Hutchins Unit, Dallas, Texas
- Held an inaugural retreat at the Buster Cole Unit during October 2023 in Bonham, Texas. This Buster Cole Retreat was postponed due to the September 2023 lockdown by the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ).
- Supported three *Diocese of Fort Worth* Kolbe Retreats, one at the Allred Unit, Iowa Park, Texas and two at the Bridgeport Unit, Texas.
- Hosted Kolbe Prison Ministries Annual Conference at St Francis of Assisi in Frisco, Texas attended by just over 200 people.
- In September 2023, we hosted a one day, 'Day with Dads' at Hutchins Unit in Dallas, Texas.
- Volunteers support the Hutchins Unit in Dallas with weekly Sunday Mass and Tuesday afternoon RCIA.
- We have increased the number of volunteers by 15% in 2023.
- Retreat volunteer donations increased from \$100 to \$125. More diligence is needed to solicit volunteer and other donations during formation meetings.

We still have not been able to reach all TDCJ, Federal and County prisons within the Diocese of Dallas. We are evaluating and refocusing our future efforts on other units within the Diocese of Dallas that have yet to be served by Kolbe Prison Ministries.



Operating Summary: By increasing the total number of Kolbe Activities during 2023 we experienced a decline in the number of volunteers on a per event basis. The resulting combination of fewer volunteer donations on a per activity basis combined with inflation, resulted in a mismatch of covered expenses versus incoming donations.

Final thought from excerpt of the Bishop Oscar Romero prayer:

'We plant the seeds that one day will grow. We water the seeds already planted, knowing that they hold future promise. We lay foundations that will need further development. We provide yeast that produces effects far beyond our capabilities.

We cannot do everything and there is a sense of liberation in realizing that. This enables us to do something and to do it well. It may be incomplete, but it is a beginning, a step along the way, an opportunity for the Lord's grace to enter and do the rest.

We may never see the end results, but that is the difference between the master builder and the worker. We are workers, not master builders; ministers, not messiahs.'



Inaugural Retreat
Buster Cole Unit
October 2023



THE ARCHDIOCESE OF
GALVESTON-HOUSTON

Kolbe Houston / South

The Kolbe Retreat Team Houston/South is an active team of about 40 men from several parishes south of Houston. These parishes include St John the Baptist in Alvin, Our Lady of Lourdes in Hitchcock, Mary Queen in Friendswood, St Paul in Clear Lake, True Cross in Dickinson, St. Michael in Lake Jackson, St. Jerome in Clute, St. Joseph in Brazoria, and St. Luke in South Houston. In 2023 we put on four Kolbe Retreats; the Terrell Unit in March, Stringfellow Unit in June, Clemens II Trustee Camp in June, Clemens Unit in Nov. We also helped cook for the Mary Queen Kolbe Women's Retreat in October at the Carol Young unit. We would like to thank St. John's Catholic Daughters for their donation to Correctional Ministries and all the Kolbe Team members for all their donations to the Kolbe Retreats and Correctional Ministries in 2023. We would also like to thank Houston Galveston Correctional Ministries and Dcn. Alvin Lovelady for all his support. We also must thank all the priests active and retired that supported Kolbe by



providing masses, Reconciliation and talks for the inmates on retreat. All the units we support have weekly activities provided by local volunteers and Kolbe. Team members provide Catholic Services, Catholic masses, RCIA and other related. Inmate faith-based programs.

Houston/Tyler (St. Rose)

We have approximately 30 active volunteers as we work to reorganize this area of the G-H Diocese Core Team. We are funded through local donations and team fees. There is no active fundraising effort, donations are primarily received through word of mouth. The Jester III unit already has an active Catholic volunteer base but there is limited inmate opportunity for a retreat. We are ramping up efforts to coordinate a retreat at the Memorial Unit. RCIA is not active in these units at this time. It is unclear if RCIA is active in the Tyler units we support as there is limited access to those units, currently.



Clemons Unit - November 2023

Kudos and special recognition for the St. Vincent de Paul food pantry at St. Rose. They are invaluable in helping with food for the retreat meals. Consistent across the TDCJ system, the lack of correctional officers has inhibited our efforts to schedule any activities or retreats.

Houston/North

The parishes of St. Anthony of Padua, St. Martha's, Christ the Redeemer, and St. Jerome's support us. They provide a pool of 35-50 men volunteers. a pool of 40 men volunteers and a pool of 20-25 men volunteers, respectively. St. Jerome's (being missioned) appears to have 18-24 volunteers. Additionally, there are Kolbe volunteers who serve weekly or monthly in faith formation. St. Anthony's of Padua: a pool of 15-20, St. Martha's: a pool of 15-20, Christ the Redeemer: a pool of 4-8, and St Jerome's (being missioned) appears to have 2-3. RCIA formation in the Houston North units utilizes Invitation by the Paulist Brothers. In 2023; Baptisms 15+, Eucharist 30+, Confirmations 15+ were celebrated in our area. We had four (4) participants attend the Kolbe conference in Frisco, Texas.





Ferguson Unit
June 2023

The shortage of correctional officers has had a major impact on our efforts to serve our units. Absolutely! It affects all the catechesis with the exception of the Saturday Primary Service. Bible Studies, Fellowship, Friday Night Catechesis throughout the 6 units. We extend special recognition to Gerald Villaver, Kevin Vaughn; Richard Olson for 5 years of Bible Timeline programs at the Ferguson Unit. Additionally, Rick Causey, David Valicevic and John Rubel for overseeing Communion Service and Mass for 4+ years there.

Thanks to Steve Brown for overseeing Friday Night Services and Praise Worship at the Ferguson for 4+ years plus his service for 3 years as St. Anthony's Parish Team Leader.

Additional thanks to Paul Agerter, Mike Kevlin and Kevin McKee for 7 years of service driving and building KPM at St Martha's parish while supporting the men at both the Estelle and Walls Units. We recognize Mike Romano, Deacon Bill Bradley, and Jim Norris for 7 years of ongoing service to the men at the Ellis and Wm. Pack Unit.

Estelle Unit (St Martha)

St. Martha held two retreats at the Estelle unit in 2023. The winter retreat had 80 inside and 32 team members including a former man in white who had attended the first Estelle retreat. He also volunteered for the Walls retreat the previous year. We tracked 250 volunteer man hours, \$125 retreat team fee per person and logged hotel and meals in Huntsville for 3 nights. The Fall retreat statistics were the same as the winter retreat. However, since the retreat was scheduled the weekend before Thanksgiving, we cooked a Thanksgiving meal with roasted turkey, cornbread dressing and gravy, sweet potatoes, carrots, Deacon Tony's Italian lasagna, and pumpkin and pecan pies for Thursday lunch. On Friday, we brought in fried chicken from Brookshire Brother's grocery store.

After Care at Estelle is supported by 2-3 men visiting on each Monday. They conduct a communion service and facilitate faith sharing. They also hold communion services in high security at Estelle.





We welcome the arrival of Deacon Dan Shannahan, Director of Prison Ministries for the diocese of San Angelo. We are confident we will complete implementation of the San Angelo Core Team in 2024. We will continue to grow our database of diocese volunteers from those who are faithful to the ministry. From that database, we will eventually form the necessary core group of a dozen or so faithful men to serve as the core team. Last week, I met Larry Reeh in Brady and picked up a Kolbe trailer that we will eventually use for Kolbe retreats in the Diocese of San Angelo. The trailer will have to be inventoried properly to be self-contained to conduct those retreats.

We support the Diocese of Lubbock with Kolbe retreats. We held three retreats in the diocese during 2023: the Robertson Unit in Abilene, the Smith Unit in Lamesa, and the Price Unit in Snyder. We are slated to return with three more retreats in 2024.

Recently we began an OCIA class at the Colorado City Wallace Unit, which is eight miles west of the small town of Robert Lee. We meet from 2:30 to 5:00 pm each Tuesday, following either Mass by **Fr. Michael Udegbumam**, pastor of St. Ann Catholic Church, Colorado City, or a Communion Service and celebrate with the Catholic inmates. **Fr. Michael** celebrates Mass on the 1st and last Tuesdays of each month, and we celebrate a SCAP Communion Service the other Tuesdays of the month. We need more volunteers to support this effort. We alternate the celebration of SCAP Communion Services each Friday at the Federal Correction Institution in Big Spring with the help of Mitchell Jansa. He will be a valuable member of the San Angelo Core.

2024 is off to a busy start with retreats scheduled for the Lynaugh Unit in Ft. Stockton, Texas, the Wallace Unit in Colorado City, in addition to Robertson Unit, Smith Unit, and the Price Unit.



San Antonio Core Team Overview

Kolbe Prison Ministries was continually active in the 5 Texas Dept of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) prisons and jail units as well as a Bexar County Recovery Center in the San Antonio area. Seven 3-day Kolbe retreats were held at the units and resulted in the formation of new RCIA classes.

The generous donation of Catechism books and Bibles by the Archdiocese facilitated our ability to minister to the inmates and is appreciated. Inmates are provided with the opportunity to attend



Mass and the Sacrament of Reconciliation in most of the units on a regular basis. In addition to RCIA classes, inmates are provided with the opportunity to attend Ascension's *The Bible Timeline*, and other faith-formation classes.

Applewhite Recovery Center

Kolbe Prison Ministries had a Women's Retreat at Applewhite Recovery Center in San Antonio June 15-17, 2023. This is the first retreat for the women in this facility since before the pandemic. An Applewhite Men's Kolbe retreat is scheduled for February 9-11, 2024. Kolbe also collaborated with the Archdiocese of San Antonio Criminal Justice Ministry to coordinate volunteers for a weekly Bible study on Saturday afternoons for the women at Applewhite, with a plan to start one for the men in 2024.



Applewhite Retreat - June 2023

Briscoe Unit

A Kolbe Prison Ministry retreat was held at the unit in May and was attended by 41 retreatants. Approximately twelve inmates started the weekly RCIA Class following this retreat. Although part of the RCIA class was transferred to different units during the course, six men were able to celebrate their sacraments when **Bishop Mike Boulette** visited the unit in October. A fall Kolbe retreat was cancelled due to the limited number of inmates available to attend the retreat and serve on the Inside Team. Mass or Liturgy of the Word with Communion Services are celebrated for TDCJ inmates weekly and are supported by the local parish priest, Fr Stan Marciniak who is incredibly supportive of the men. Attendance at the Mass or Communion service varies between 30-45 men. Reading materials and spiritual support are provided to Confinees on weeks when two Catholic CVCAs are in the unit. The prison has not had a full-time chaplain, and this has hampered efforts to offer regularly scheduled faith-formation classes. During 2023, Briscoe celebrated 2 Baptisms and 5 Confirmations.

Dominguez State Jail

The Dominguez State Jail, a TDCJ facility, had fifty-eight men who enjoyed Ascension's, *The Bible Timeline* and also did a deep dive into the television series, 'The Chosen'. They watched the episodes then did a bible study on the verses represented in the program. They absolutely loved it and can't wait until season four is available. We had one confirmation at Dominguez, a man who completed RCIA at the Connally Unit and was moved before he could be confirmed. Kolbe Prison Ministries organized priests and deacons for weekly Sacraments. Kolbe Prison Ministries



also joined together with the Archdiocese of San Antonio to purchase a Lectionary and Missal along with ciborium, cruets, and linens to be kept in the prison unit for services. They also purchased sixty bibles to be used with Ascension’s *The Bible Timeline* study.

Connally Unit

The year kicked off with a special Kolbe retreat on April 19, 2023, with 80 retreatants and inside team members. The outside team was composed of 90% former military veterans assigned as table mentors. The inside team was composed primarily of military veterans. Each morning the honor guard brought in the colors (flag), and everyone stood at attention and followed with the Pledge of Allegiance. All retreatant veterans were presented with a pin that conveyed a cross on top of the American flag at the end of Agape. A second Kolbe retreat was held at the Connally “B” side for G4 inmates in November 2023 and was attended by 40 retreatants. This was the first Medium Custody (G4) retreat since 2019. A Kolbe retreat was also held at the Connally “A” unit

in May 2023 for General Population (G2) inmates and was attended by 54 retreatants. The plan is to have two G2 retreats in 2024, one in April and another in late summer. We have truly been blessed with monetary and meal contributions for our retreats. Mass and the Sacrament of Reconciliation are celebrated twice a month,



and a Communion Service is held on the other weeks. The local pastor at Kenedy, Texas, **Fr Robert Ploch**, and **Fr Paul Raaz**, a retired priest living in Shiner, Texas, and Deacons Wally Cantu and Adrian Cepeda are incredibly supportive offer Mass at the unit on a regular basis. An Adoration Service is also held on the last Monday of every month. During 2024, the Catholic Community celebrated 8 Baptisms and 13 Confirmations in 2023. Mass attendance is growing post-Covid and is consistently above 120+ inmates which positively impacts the Connally Catholic Community. Our thanks to **Fr. Robert Ploch** for his commitment to the men with bimonthly Mass and Confessions. The unit continues to have classes on apologetics, RCIA, Spanish RCIA, and *The Bible Timeline* and *The Didache Series* (RCIA inmate facilitator training), Journeyman (Catholic Life skills) and Fulton Sheen. **Archbishop Gustavo Siller, Bishop Michael Boulette, and Bishop Gary Janek**, were celebrants of Mass at Connally during 2023. The Connally unit has implemented year-round RCIA.



Ney Unit



Catholic Services are held at the Ney Unit each Saturday from 8AM to 12 noon. Increased focus on managing contraband this year resulted in significantly increased restrictions on items carried into the unit and resulted in a need to completely redo all of our Inter Office Communications (IOCs) needed for approvals. We've gone through a change of Chaplains recently which has resulted in some additional

difficulty in getting IOCs approved, and recently, contributed to our being unable to provide Christmas hygiene packs to the brothers in White. Each Saturday Mass or Communion Service is available to inmates and is celebrated by **Fr. Babychan** and **Fr John Cyriac** from the Hondo and D'Hanis communities, and by **Deacon Adrian Cepeda**. Their dedication and assistance are appreciated. RCIA classes using the Kolbe RCIA class curriculum are held each Saturday and 9 inmates celebrated their sacraments when **Bishop Janek** attended the unit in December. *Ascension's The Bible Timeline* study course was also provided to inmates in early 2023. We hope to provide a study of *The Prophets* in early 2024. A Kolbe retreat was held at the unit in July 2023 and was followed up by a Kolbe Reunion in August. A Kolbe retreat date has been set for July 2024, and an RCIA class will restart following this retreat.

Torres Unit

Retreat and faith-based programs at the Torres Unit were hampered by a shortage of correctional officers which resulted in closure of the chapel and cancellation or postponement of retreats and many faith-formation classes/RCIA. Volunteers were also unable to visit the unit during the general lockdown of all TDCJ units in August. The Catholic community lost a strong supporter when Chaplain David Busby was promoted to Regional Chaplain in 2023, and the gap left by his

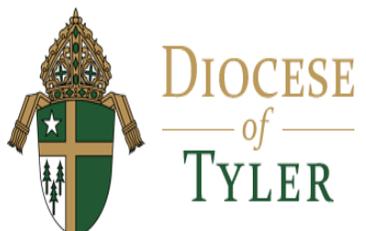


absence hindered the scheduling of the faith-formation classes. Despite the shortages in prison staff, the Torres unit hosted two Kolbe retreats in 2023 which were attended by approximately 80 retreatants and 37 Outside Team volunteers. Many of the retreatants decided to join the RCIA classes, though many classes had to be postponed due to the unavailability of correctional officers to staff the chapel. Meals donated by Bill Miller’s BBQ, Mars Pizza, Knights of Columbus, and other groups were appreciated. The RCIA class was started despite the challenges and the

men demonstrated their commitment by attending double RCIA classes on the weeks when classes were permitted to be held. A total of 13 men celebrated their sacraments when **Bishop Mike Boulette** visited the unit in December. Mass and the Sacrament of Reconciliation is celebrated on most Tuesdays by **Fr. Babychan** and **Fr. John Cyriac** from the Hondo and D’Hanis communities. The unit has an active



Catholic community who meet for a Spiritual Communion service when priests are unavailable when the chapel is open. The assistance of Deacon Adrian Cepeda has been appreciated. Ashes were also distributed to inmates throughout the unit on Ash Wednesday by volunteers and **Fr. Enda McKenna**. Inmates at the unit also attend Ascension’s *The Bible Timeline* classes as a group, as well as within the faith-based dorm. An apologetics class is also performed weekly when the chapel is open. Funding by the Archdiocese for Catholic, bibles and other faith-based books aided the performance of faith-based programs at the unit and was much appreciated. Permission to make hard copies of RCIA course materials at St. Peter the Apostle Catholic Church in Boerne was also greatly appreciated. Special thanks to **Deacon Adrian Cepeda**, Director of Criminal Justice/ARCHSA for his consistent and endless commitment to our Kolbe Prison Ministry volunteers and especially the men and women we serve.



East Texas (Hodge Unit) held a retreat in May of 2023 with 30 team members participating. We were not able to have a reunion because of the shortage of TDCJ Officers, so the reunion is planned for February 2024. With the help of **Father Tom Edelen** and 5 other volunteers we support Mass, Bible Study and teaching Faith Base Dorm Classes.

The Core was put back together with 10 members and 8 of the 10 attended the Annual Kolbe



Conference in Frisco Texas. With sadden hearts we lost one of a our very faithful volunteers (Charlie Eckel) in an accident who will be deeply missed. As of now we are planning a retreat at the Hodge Unit in March and trying to get retreats started back up at the Skyview Unit.



On September 23-25, 2010, the first ACTS Prison Retreat took place at the Clarence Stevenson Medium Security Prison Unit. The prison is located just north of Cuero and houses 1,384 men, a number of whom profess to have been raised in Catholic homes. Men from the Diocese of Victoria and beyond have participated in bringing the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the incarcerated brothers at this unit through weekend retreats, weekly Mass, Catholic Education Classes, and RCIA Instruction. In 2011 the Victoria Diocesan CORE Team was formed. On April 3-6, 2014, the first Spanish Kolbe Retreat took place at this unit. Retreats are held twice a year during the Spring and Fall. Since 2014 we offered a rotation of two retreats in English followed by one in Spanish.



Holy Thursday, April 6, 2023, Confirmation Stevenson Unit

In 2023 we had our XXII Kolbe Prison Retreat in English from April 20-23 and our XXIII Kolbe Retreat in Spanish from October 19-22.

An average of 90 incarcerated brothers participates in each retreat. Retreats offered at this unit have enriched and reinvigorated the spiritual lives of hundreds of inmates. Many of them open their hearts to the word of God and begin to make a positive change in their lives. The following services are offered at the Stevenson Unit: weekly mass on Mondays, RCIA on Mondays, Catholic Education Class in Spanish on Tuesdays and on Wednesdays in English. Our goal is to witness and teach the Catholic faith, not only to those behind bars but also to those entrusted with their care. To seek out our Catholic brothers and those who would like to join our faith by bringing them into a better understanding of the “fullness of our Catholic faith.” In 2023, twenty-one inmates completed the RICA program. A total of 15 of them were fully immersed in the Catholic Church and celebrated the sacraments of Baptism, Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation; 6 received the sacraments of Reconciliation, Eucharist, and Confirmation and 6 received the Sacrament of Confirmation.



On April 6, 2023, our **Bishop Brendan Cahill** celebrated Holy Thursday Mass and washed the feet of ten offenders and two staff members. On December 22, 2023, for the seventh consecutive year, the Kolbe Prison Ministry volunteers delivered a Christmas Gift to 1384 incarcerated men at the Stevenson Unit consisting of a pair of white crew socks along with two Christmas cards.



Bishop Brendan Cahill

Victoria Core Members
Elias Flores, Hermes Silva (President), Michael Roznovsky, Robert Landry, Manuel Ramos, Roger Huehlefeld (Treasurer)



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GRATEFUL FOR OUR CORPORATE DONORS

Our donors provide continual financial support making it possible to minister to the incarcerated. Due to the nature of the ministry and the desired privacy of our donors, most prefer to remain anonymous and protect their personal information. KPM is blessed with many contributors who supply materials for catechesis, literature, RCIA materials, and food for our retreats and special programs. KPM recognizes the generosity of those who sustain the ministry behind the walls.



UPDATES

Be sure to review these updated Core Team Documents on the Kolbe Prison Ministries website. You can find them in the *private pages* under the KPM Library when you sign in. www.kolbeprisonministries.org

- Kolbe Prison Ministries Handbook
- Kolbe Prison Ministries Core Team Operating Guide
- Core and Retreat Directors Acknowledgement Document
- CCLI - Music Licensing Agreement



THANK YOU NOTE

MY JOURNAL

Family isn't always blood it's the people in your life who want you in theirs, The ones who accept you for who you are. The ones who would do anything to see you smile and who love you no matter what.

What you men in Kolbe prison ministries do for us is incredible. To take that most precious of commodities: Time and to invest so much of it into us..... Well I'll just say it's men like you guys that give me the proof I need of how much good is still present. You men change lives for the better! ~~To take~~ Most of us have years of abuse, most of it verbal but some physical, We've all felt like we weren't worth it. We've been treated like animals. At times we almost feel sub-human. And it seems when we need it the most here comes that e-mail. I've never heard of Kolbe but now I'll never forget Kolbe! And you Angels in green with a message of love and hope but most importantly you men showed us something most of us haven't felt in years. That we are worth it. Thank you dearly my good men. I'm proud to be part of the very first Florida Kolbe Prison retreat. This 3 days has been incredible. But when incredible people come into your life amazing things happen. Prior to this Wednesday I almost gave up it seemed no matter what I did I just couldn't get it right. But now I have hope thanks to Kolbe prison ministries I'll keep trucking on head held high knowing beyond a reasonable ~~doubt~~ that there are men like Fr. Tony v. George and Deacon ~~out there~~ and Fr. Carl, as he rests in peace, my old father from my alter boy days, men like Robert, Earl, Mark men like Andy ^{wally} etc.... all out there daily swords in hands doing the right thing. I know I speak for everyone when I say Thank You from the depths of my soul I thank you! This right here is The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen!

Mission Retreat I - Century Unit Florida -
August 2023





Artist:
Formerly Incarcerated Jose Hernandez