



So much joy - Letter Writing



Ronke is a member of PF Thorn Cross and has recently become a Letter Writer. Below, Ronke tells us why she has

entered into prison ministry and how she has found being a Letter Writer so far:

I first became involved with Prison Fellowship because I desperately needed to answer the call of God on my life. I was promptly linked to my local prayer group and prison, and I now serve at the Tea Bar as well as getting involved with Week Six of Sycamore Tree. During my time with Prison Fellowship I have been so supported and I have recently decided to become further involved as a Letter Writer. I saw that this would be a great help to me in fulfilling my vision to reach out to prisoners who do not normally get visitors or who need a friend.

It was easy to volunteer for the scheme and the training session I attended was a real eye opener. It was in-depth and enjoyable and I gained a lot from it. I felt very confident in writing my first letter due to the training and through ringing the office with any questions I had. I kept it simple, introducing myself and my hobbies and I asked how she was. I had so much joy when I received a response from her and I was happy to respond immediately. Praise God for His miracles! I am honoured to be a part of Prison Fellowship and I thank God for all staff and members for their help in fulfilling my vision.

Ronke Immanuel

www.touchingheartsmministries.co.uk

Letter Writing training event

17th February, 2pm - 4pm
Midge Hall Methodist Church
Midge Hall, PR26 6TD.

Please contact Stephen Hawkins if you would like to attend:

(M) 07890 636837

(E) stephenhawkins@prisonfellowship.org.uk



A first time tutor – *HMP Hollesley Bay*

Emma Greenfield, Regional Coordinator for the East, recently tutored Sycamore Tree for the first time. Here she tells us how she found the experience:

I wanted to share my experiences of tutoring Sycamore Tree for the first time, as to begin with I felt quite apprehensive at the thought of the challenge ahead. It does not matter how many courses you've helped on previously, when you start as a tutor there is a real sense of responsibility and of meeting the expectation of the learners. Many times I thought about all the questions that the learners might throw at me and imagined myself stuck for an answer! But I write this to encourage all of you who have thought about tutoring but have held back to get stuck in, because I really enjoyed the whole course.

The bottom line is prayer: for the learners, the team and for the tutor. God's power is made perfect in our weakness and He demonstrates that over and over again in our lives as we step out in faith. It was easy to commit every aspect of the course in prayer and to trust God.

Gathering all my resources was made easy by helpful colleagues, and I enjoyed planning each session. We were also greatly blessed by Brenda who came in as a victim of crime to tell her story. When she returned for Week Six she wrote that she was, "Unable to recall a comparable occasion which has created such reflection and compassion." Governor Moore also spoke warmly at the end, affirming the men.

Seeing the learners change from holding back to being fully open about the changes they need and want to make was fantastic, as in the end it is down to them.

We have a tremendous demand for Sycamore Tree in prisons throughout the Eastern regions, so please speak to me about this if you are interested in volunteering and would like to know more.

Emma Greenfield

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The Road To Maturity

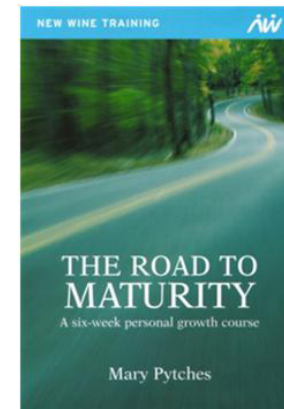
Vera Quick, Group Leader for PF Grantham and District, shares of her involvement in a life changing Christian course for prisoners:

Recently I was privileged to be able to support Jo Honour, the Coordinating Chaplain at Whatton prison, in leading a six week course called 'The Road To Maturity*.'

Twelve men were chosen and each week we watched a session on DVD which was followed by discussion and prayer. The aim of the course is personal growth and transformation into the image of Jesus. It is an incredibly challenging process, identifying, admitting and removing blockages to growth with the help of God.

These men were mature Christians and I was bowled over by their openness and honesty in sharing past events in their lives that were very painful. Every one of them met the challenges they were presented with head on and I know it was not easy for them, but I believe they are now better equipped to move into a deeper relationship with God and

others. Here is one learners reaction to the course:



"The 'Road to Maturity' course has helped me see my past both critically and yet without condemnation. I know any evil within myself can be overcome. This is because the word of God says, 'Greater is He (Jesus) that is in you than he that is in the world (1 John 4:4). In this respect the course has been and is a blessing."

God has given me a heart full of love for these men and if anyone feels that this course might also be something worth pursuing in their local prison please do look into it further.

Vera Quick

Road to Maturity* by Mary Pitches is published by New Wine Resources Ltd.
www.new-wine.org

Prayer Points

- Pray for more Letter Writing volunteers so that we can match the remaining 25 prisoners who are still waiting for a pen pal.
- Give thanks for Sycamore Tree and pray that God will provide volunteers in the Eastern region so that more prisoners can benefit from the course.
- Please pray for the Alpha courses starting in Whatton prison this year.

Getting the Message Across

A training day on communication & media

This event will equip you with skills that are vital in raising awareness for your work in local prisons. It will give you the confidence to approach local media, whether that be the local papers or radio stations, and will prepare you to visit local churches with your experience of prison ministry.

Throughout the day we will cover:

- How we communicate our work to others
- How we tell the story of our involvement with Prison Fellowship
- The best way of using traditional and new media to tell our story

Course Tutor: Revd Rob Marshall is the former Media Advisor to the Archbishop of York and is now Communications Advisor to Prison Fellowship. Rob also regularly presents 'Thought for the Day' on Radio 4.

Dates & Venues:

YORK 25th February, 11am – 3.30pm
Novotel York, Fishergate, York,
North Yorkshire, YO10 4FD

LONDON 31st March, 11am – 3.30pm
77 Great Peter Street, Westminster,
London, SW1P 2EZ

Price

£19 (includes hot drinks and lunch).

To book your place please send your cheque (made payable to Prison Fellowship) into the Maldon office for the attention of Sasha Chipperfield.

Don't forget to visit the Patchwork Quilt

(www.prisonfellowship.org.uk/patchwork)
to read the latest stories! We are always looking to add to Patchwork, so if you have a story that you would like to share please use the 'send us yours' page or email them to sashachipperfield@prisonfellowship.org.uk we would love to receive them!



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