

## July 15, 2017 Convention

### Greetings Brothers and Sisters in Christ!

May the joy of our Lord Jesus Christ bless you all this day.

My name is Robert G. Hart. I am a 51 year old imprisoned cradle Catholic humbly asking that my voice be heard at this convention because I believe that my brief testimony deserves some credit in fulfilling the nature of this gathering.

I was born and raised in Houston, Texas to a devout and robust Catholic community. From the age of five to fourteen I was Catholic schooled, thus I knew Jesus and the meaning of prayer. My life was full of love and God's grace filled me abundantly. But at the age of fourteen I walked away from my faith to dabble in the pleasures of this world. I no longer honored my father and my mother thus becoming a disobedient juvenile. Alcohol, drugs, and crime was a new way of life. My first arrest was at the age of fourteen followed by two more and a one-year sentence as a juvenile for theft. After my release I returned to the pleasures of the world.

I continued to use drugs as my life continued to spiral down hill and I eventually ended up in federal prison around the age of twenty-one. I lasted only a few months on parole before my drug use landed me back in prison for a parole violation. After my second release and wanting help, I ran off to Pleasant Valley, New York in an attempt to escape my cursed life. But my drug addiction only escalated and I ended up in jail again and then a mental institution because I drove myself to insanity, I was truly a very messed up man. I caused this institution so many problems that they agreed to send me anywhere in the country as long as it was out of the state of New York. I flew home and entered into an in-house drug recovery program called "Houston After-Care." After eight months I returned to my addiction. My life was consumed with much pain and sorrow. Instead of running I attempted suicide to no avail. I couldn't do anything right, not even kill myself. I was a failure, a complete loser. I was ashamed. I was a broken man I thought nobody could fix.

After several more arrests in and out of the Harris County Jail and homeless, I nearly murdered a dear friend for drugs. I was sentenced to life in prison in 1996. When I apologized to my friend and entered prison I was uneducated, hard headed with no structure or sense of direction in my life. I wanted help so bad but nothing I did seemed to help me. I came to the conclusion that prison was where I needed to be. After several transfers due to my disruptive behavior, I ended up on the John B. Connally Unit in Kenedy, Texas where I now reside. My life began to change after a year. Hope started to transform my life. This hope is the result of some very special men and women God brought into my life.

As God is my witness, I can now unequivocally state that my reconciliation with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ stems from all the Kolbe Prison Ministry volunteers who have dedicated their lives to helping those like me who are hopeless drug addicted hardened criminals. It is through the love of these special volunteers that love for God returned into my life and gave me a spark of hope. Nothing I ever did on my own worked for me, that is, running, drug recovery programs, N/A and A/A meetings. Nothing! But when I became a member of the christian community on Connally and gave my life back to God, God gave my life back to me. The encouragement and influence of these special people strengthened me. Their very presence of love consumed my life. It is through their undying love and inspiration that I have regained control of my life.

Today I am a very educated man. I obtained my GED, a Bachelor's Degree in Divinity, a Master's Degree in Christian Education, and I'm currently working on my Doctorate in Theology. Thanks to these special volunteers my life has meaning now and I am even teaching confirmation to general population in the chapel and Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults to high security prisoners in administrative segregation. I've come a long ways because of these special volunteers representing Christ. I say special because it requires special people to help special needs prisoners like me who are starving for love, acceptance, and appreciation.

Brothers and Sisters, we are all called to serve God. This we cannot ignore if we are to enjoy the riches of the Kingdom of God. Our christian faith is about knowing the love of God and being changed by God. The great call we have is to love God and love neighbor. When we grow in this our lives change and we make a difference in the lives of others. Through love of God and love of neighbor we can rebuild lives one person at a time. But we cannot do this without your help.

When I pray the Rosary and reflect on the mysteries of Jesus' life, I also reflect on why Mary gave the Rosary to Saint Dominic in 1208. She wanted us to pray for world peace. How do we tell the Virgin Mary, "No?" She said yes and gave us Salvation through Christ Jesus. I can't help but honor my Queen Mother's request.

Therefore Brothers and Sisters, I appeal to your conscience individually and collectively to join our ministry. Please help us at Kolbe Prison Ministry restore peace back into a troubled world one person at a time. I truly beg you in the name of Jesus Christ to help us reach out and save a lost soul. Let's bring them home together as a team. TEAM JESUS!!

May the grace, love, and peace of Jesus Christ be with you always. God bless you for coming and thank you for hearing my testimony.

In Truth,

Robert G. Hart  
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April 30, 2017

To Whom it May Concern, Members of the Kolbe Prison Ministry;

Grace to you all, and Peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. My name is Jeffrey Seeger. I am an inmate at the Clements Unit in Amarillo. I had the privilege of attending the first Kolbe prison Retreat held in January. I would like to share with you the joys of my experience and the transformation it had on my life. You're not going to hear about how this Retreat changed my life, you are going to hear how it transformed my life.

The first Kolbe retreat at the Clements Unit did not get off to a good start. The Unit went on lock-down the previous night. I awoke the morning of the 26th only to find a stumbling block in my way. I stood at my cell door as the minutes went by, fear and doubt setting in. I began to complain to myself. Yet, a still small voice in my head spoke to me. It said, "Jeff, Im in control". Just then I saw the face of one of the Units Field Officers and I knew then that the only reason they were there at our building was to usher us to the Retreat. It was going to happen. God has a plan. He always has a reason.

When I walked into the Gym here at the beginning of the Retreat there were more smiles that I had ever seen in my life at one time. As I was greeted by each volunteer the love of God flowed through each one of them. Not one of the volunteers stayed idle. They all offered a huge hug, something I already miss.

You see, this Retreat, The Kolbe Prison Ministry Retreat is not about forcing doctrine upon anyone. It's about approaching with love but not just any type of love. The Retreat takes a certain type of person. Each are hand-picked and careful consideration is taken about each of the volunteers. You see, God is in control. God has picked each one of these men. I believe they were all there just for me. Sure, there were other Offenders there, but honestly, I wasn't concerned about what they were doing. I was concerned about opening up and allowing God to move through these men in order that my life would be transformed. And it was.

Each of us has a story that in some way can affect someones life. During the three days of the Retreat I listened as the volunteers shared life altering personal stories, of how God changed their lives. At first I thought this might be about self-closure. Something for them. Not so. On the inside of me a war was taking place. The old me was fighting to hold on while the new man was determined to shed off

old habits and a self-destructive lifestyle. It was going to happen. I would walk out of the Retreat a changed man. You might ask, how. How, in three days would a mans life be changed? First, I had a choice. I was presented with a situation unlike any other. Before me were men that didn't care I was an outcast, a convicted felon. They were not concern, like so many, why was I in prison. All each volunteer wanted for me was a chance to change. It was at this Retreat that my life would be forever transformed. The Retreat taught me something no one else ever has. They taught me how to forgive myself. I learned that these men were really no different than me. I just made bad choice after choice. These choices caused me to live a self-destructive life. After my incarceration I became bitter at everyone around me. I lived in a state of, the poor me attitude. A person can only change if he truly wants to. No amount of incarceration will change anyone if it's in their heart, the wickedness that was in mine. I had to let it go. But how? I didn't have the answer until the final day of the Retreat. I met a volunteer named Bill. I had listened to Bill during the talk he gave. Inside, I was a mess. I was still stubborn. But during a break, I got up from my table and went to Bill. I talked to Bill and found that I could share, with him, the issues I was carrying for too long. He didn't judge, he didn't ridicule or offer negative feedback. He said something to me I will never forget. He said, "lets pray right now!" "Lets give it to God!" Bill took my hands and prayed with me. At first I felt very awkward and uneasy. But as Bill prayed a tranformation took place. Bill told me, "Jeff, you've forgiven everyone around you but you have not forgiven yourself." I was shocked to hear this. I hadn't the first clue on how to forgive myself.

God has a plan for all of us. It is not coincidence that all of you are here together today. This letter is for all of you. If you have changed but one man's life at one of the Retreats then you have done a monumental act of kindness. All of you are here for me. Afterall, wasn't the commandment of Jesus to Love our neighbor as ourselves. Well, I am your neighbor, I am the outcast, I am that blame person that desperately needs your love. The Retreat didn't just change my life. It transformed it. Because of your love, your commitment to me through Christ, I now have been able to forgive myself. It wasn't easy and it's not an over night process. It will take consistent living in God's grace to complete this transformation but it all started with you. You are all responsible for where I am today. It's through the love you give, the generosity of your hearts to men like me. This is what the Kolbe Retreat is all about. Finally, eventhough the Retreat is over, the effects are not. I am using what the Retreat has given to me to share with others. It's not always a success story. But if I can reach one person like you reached me. Praise

God and all Glory be to Him. I want to thank each and everyone of you for your active participation in the Retreats. You are doing a great work. Thank you also for allowing me to share with you the awesome transformation that took place at and after the Kolbe Retreat; God Bless you all.

Sincerely,

*Jeffrey Seeger*