

Office of Restorative Justice



Catholic Diocese of Orange



Annual Report 2023-2024



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I. GENERAL MINISTRY OVERVIEW

Covers ministry history and describes general day-to-day functions

1. Ministry Introduction

1.1 Purpose

This document describes the mission, responsibilities, and activities of The Office of Restorative Justice of the Diocese of Orange, during 2023-2024.

Numbers in the figures contained herein reflect the operations of volunteers and services.

1.2 Historical Background

The Catholic Detention Ministry (CDM) has been providing spiritual guidance and instruction to inmates in Orange County jails and juvenile facilities since before the Diocese of Orange existed.

This ministry had been a part of the detention ministry program in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles prior to the formation of the Diocese of Orange. When the Diocese of Orange was established in 1976, ministry management moved to Los Angeles leaving a handful of priests, sisters and volunteers to run the ministry in Orange. The Missionary Servants of the Most Holy Trinity (ST) - the Trinitarians - ran the ministry with financial help from the Society of St. Vincent De Paul.

In 1981, the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul took over management of the ministry. The ministry expanded beyond services in English and Spanish to Vietnamese in 1979 with the arrest of a Vietnamese minor. The ministry grew in the number of volunteers and programs it offered. The ministry eventually required resources beyond those available to St. Vincent De Paul.

CDM was officially made a diocesan office on July 1, 2002 where it remains today.

In January 2010, the ministry was renamed to its current name “Office of Restorative Justice.” This reflects our expanded mission: to bring the word and love of Jesus to the incarcerated and to minister to those in the community who have been affected by crime, including victims and their families.

1.3 Mission Statement

We live the Gospel message of Jesus by serving those affected by the criminal justice system; offender, victim, their families and their communities.

1.4 Vision

We live the Gospel message of Jesus by serving those affected by the criminal justice system; offender, victim, survivor, their families and their communities.

We strive to be an indispensable source of collaboration with parishes, government agencies, and community organizations in the Diocese of Orange to serve all of those affected by crime.

In the community, we:

- ❖ Encourage and facilitate parish-based efforts to bring healing,
- ❖ Encourage the formation of support groups, pastoral care, and other activities for those newly released from jail/juvenile hall, their families, victims and their families, and members of communities where crimes occur,
- ❖ Encourage facilitation of the sacraments of initiation at the parish for those newly released,
- ❖ Provide presentations and other resources on restorative justice topics and practices as requested,
- ❖ Work in collaborative partnership with government agencies and community non-profits to influence the implementation of restorative practices and to create a network of holistic re-entry services.

To the incarcerated, we:

- ❖ Provide pastoral care and spiritual nurturing primarily by our presence,
- ❖ Come as a hope-filled Catholic Community to witness and offer by our presence and activities God's unconditional love, compassionate forgiveness, and healing justice,
- ❖ Communicate the Good News of God's unconditional love,
- ❖ Affirm the dignity of each person - not necessarily their behavior - and invite them to grow as sons and daughters of God.

To the victims we:

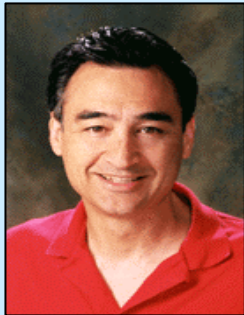
- ❖ Provide pastoral care, primarily by our presence,
- ❖ Come as a hope-filled Catholic Community to witness and offer by our presence and activities God's compassion, and healing care,
- ❖ Communicate the Good News of God's unconditional love,

- ❖ Affirm the suffering experience each person is dealing with and accompany them during their difficult time,
- ❖ Offer referrals that provide services and work in collaboration with parishes to offer individual support needed during times of trauma victims and their family members experience by crimes committed against them.

2. Our Staff Organization



Bishop Thai Thanh Nguyen
Episcopal Supervisor



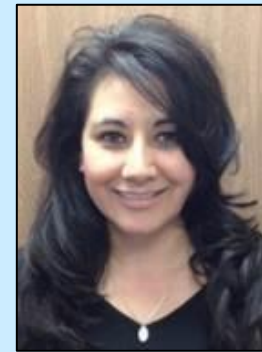
Fred LaPuzza
Ministry Director



Fr. Loc Tran
Ministry Chaplain



Gabriela Vazquez
Ministry Coordinator
Adult Facilities



Ruth Guzman
Ministry Coordinator,
Juvenile Facilities

We are a Directorate of the Diocese of Orange. As such, we report to Auxiliary Bishop Thomas Nguyen, our immediate Episcopal supervisor, under Bishop Kevin Vann, our shepherd for the Diocese of Orange. The office staff is comprised of the following members:

❖ **Director** – Fred LaPuzza:

Fred has the responsibility for conducting overall ministry operations and for the performance of the ministry staff. He began the ministry as a volunteer at Juvenile Hall in 1988 and was hired as the detention ministry coordinator in 2003 and took over as director in 2014. Fred is also a consecrated lay member of the Missionary Servants of the Most Holy Trinity and has an Advance Level Master Catechist and Biblical Studies Certification from the Institute for Pastoral Ministry (IPM) a former adult faith formation certification program of the diocese.

Chaplain – Rev. Loc Tran:

Father Loc is our ministry's only full-time on staff priest. He conducts one-to-one pastoral visits, confessions, and Mass at all facilities we serve.

Fr. Loc is a diocesan priest ordained in 2008. He was assigned as Chaplain for the Office of Restorative Justice in 2017. Fr. Loc speaks English, Vietnamese and continues to work on improving his Spanish language skills.

❖ **Coordinator, Adult Facilities – Gabriela Vazquez:**

Gabriela was hired as Ministry Coordinator for the adult jail facilities in 2022. She is responsible for coordinating Catholic services in all five adult jail facilities we serve. Primary responsibilities include: interviewing, supervising and scheduling volunteers and religious services, in addition to providing pastoral care for those we serve in these facilities. She ensures standardization of volunteer recruiting and training with English, Spanish and Vietnamese communities. Gabriela has her Basic Ministry Certification from IPM and is fluent in both English and Spanish.

❖ **Coordinator, Juvenile Facilities – Ruth Guzman:**

Ruth began the ministry as a volunteer in Juvenile Hall and was later hired for the Juvenile Ministry Coordinators position in 2012. Ruth was laid off from the diocese in 2020 as a result of the pandemic and was rehired in December 2022. Ruth is responsible for coordinating Catholic services in all four juvenile facilities we serve. Primary responsibilities include: interviewing, supervising and scheduling volunteers and religious services, in addition to providing pastoral care for those we serve in these facilities. She ensures standardization of volunteer recruiting and training. Ruth has an associate degree in early childhood education and criminal justice and a Bachelors degree in Administration of Justice with a concentration in human services. Ruth has her IPM Basic Certification. She is fluent in both English and Spanish.

3. Volunteer Participation

3.1 Volunteering

Volunteers are the heart of this ministry – both inside and outside of jail walls. The amount of work required for this ministry would not be possible without them. Volunteers provide Catholic services in our jails and juvenile facilities throughout Orange County. Volunteers help us create environments of sacred space, where gospel values can be fostered and developed. Because the recruitment of volunteers is an on-going process, we spread the need for volunteers through parish bulletins, the Orange County Catholic, on-site and parish presentations, and most effectively, by word of mouth. To that end, the Bishop requires first-year deacon aspirants to complete a minimum one year of service, in the jail facilities, as part of the diaconate formation process.

3.2 Becoming a Volunteer

The following steps for becoming a volunteer.

- a. Attend our Ministry Overview Presentation (English or Spanish).
- b. Potential volunteers are vetted through an interview and application process that included parish and community references.
- c. Volunteers must complete a Security Orientation and pass an extensive screening and background check provided by the law enforcement agency managing the facility they will potentially be assigned.
- d. Volunteers must complete a minimum of approximately 30 hours of in class specialized training provided by the Office of Restorative Justice, in addition to on-site training at the facility, and the Emmaus Institute Basic Ministry Certification within the first year of involvement with the ministry.
- d. Volunteers are required to complete on-going training as required on an annual basis to stay active in the ministry.

In fiscal year 2023-2024 volunteers provided:

Figure 3.1-1

1,655 Juvenile Services and 2,797 volunteer hours

2,388 Adult Jail Services and 5,393 volunteer hours

Total Combined Number of Services = 4,043

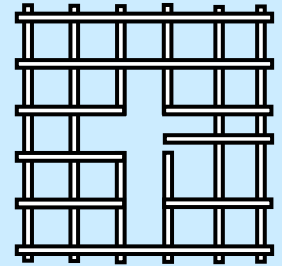
Total Combined Number of volunteer hours = 8,190

Based on 2024 California rate (\$27.43 per hr. + 12% for benefits) from Independent Sector, the approximate volunteer hours value reflects taxpayer savings of \$224,651.70. www.independentsector.org

4. Our In-Facility Programming

4.1 General Overview

In both the adult and juvenile facilities, we provide weekly Bible study/faith sharing, communion services, sacramental prep, and one-to-one pastoral visits. Priests serving in the ministry primarily celebrate Masses and hear confessions.



We prepare both juveniles and adults to receive the sacraments of initiation. For the purpose of supporting adult inmates and juveniles in their new sacramental life we recommend celebrating the sacraments of initiation at their home parish community after release. However, there may be extenuating circumstances, personal burdens and sentencing outcomes that would warrant consideration for receiving the sacraments while in custody at the facility. Each request is assessed on a case-by-case basis.

We make all the sacraments of initiation accessible to those whom we serve in the jails and juvenile detention facilities. Although inmate transitions, jail environment restrictions, and the demand for certified catechists make this a challenging task, we do our best to accommodate inmates and minors who freely initiate a request for the sacraments.

Sacramental preparation and services were put on hold during the pandemic at both adult and juvenile facilities but were able to resume at adult facilities in 2023 and at juvenile facilities in 2024. Two inmates completed sacraments of initiation in our adult facilities in 2023.



5. Whom and Where We Serve

5.1 County Adult Jail Facilities

The Sheriff's Department is the largest agency with whom we work. There are an estimated 36,000 adult male and female Catholic inmates residing in or passing through the county jail system annually. Although, we also have a substantial number of non-Catholics who also attend our services. We have a combined total of **85** scheduled Communion services and Bible Studies per week. Services are provided in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese.

Chaplain classifications are issued to volunteers who serve in our one-to-one pastoral visitation ministry and to RJ staff members serving the adult county jail facilities. In addition to one-to-one visitations, a Chaplain volunteer may be called upon by the Sheriff's Department in certain situations involving inmates, such as family death notifications, suicide watch, or some other type of personal crisis an inmate may be experiencing.

The title "Chaplain" is more of a generic term used by the correctional agencies to identify a particular volunteer classification and has no association with requirements set forth by the National Association of Catholic Chaplains - the agency that certifies Catholic Chaplains.

5.2 Santa Ana City Jail

The Santa Ana City Jail is the largest city jail in Orange County managed by the Santa Ana City Police Department. In 2023, we provided **5 Christmas Masses**, two of which were presided over by Aux. Bishop Thanh Nguyen.



5.3 Juvenile Facilities

We offer volunteers and programs to the current population of approximately **220 in-custody juveniles** operated by the Orange County Probation Department and Social Services. Each week we provide a combined total of **19 Bible Studies and Communion Services/Masses**, in addition to numerous one-to-one visits, sacramental prep, and confessions.



Our Christmas caroling continues to be a big hit at all juvenile detention facilities. In 2023, we accepted 100 one-time volunteer clearance applications from numerous parish choir members. Volunteers also provided pizza, beverages, sweet treats, and tamales, enough to feed all the youth and Probations staff in all juvenile facilities. Smiles left on the faces of the kids could not have been a greater gift for both the kids and the volunteers.



While not a detention facility, **Orangewood Children's Home**, is managed by the Orange County Department of Social Services Agency. It currently houses approximately **45 children** or youth, from infants to age 18, who were removed from their parents or care givers due to abuse, abandonment or neglect.

We provide weekly Communion Services and Bible Studies at Orangewood. Consistent with our juvenile detention populations, more than 60% of these children are from Catholic families. In 2023, our office began working in closer partnership with Social Services through our participation with the Hearts in Motion Collaborative, a group of faith-based organizations and community non-prophets led by County Social Service, working together to fill gaps in services for kids in foster care. Throughout the year, our office was able to link Social Service

representatives with a sustainable resource for young foster care mothers in need of diapers and other needs.

We are working with Social Services representatives in 2024 to initiate support for expanding our effort to fill other needs including families willing to take in children in the foster care system.

6. Volunteer Training & Formation

6.1 Volunteer Training Requirements

Training and formation continue to remain a top priority for ministry staff and volunteers. In 2011, we implemented the Bishop's directive that all ministry leaders receive Basic Lay Ministry Catechetical Certification through the diocesan office of Faith Formation, recently renamed Lumen Christi Institute. In 2018, the IPM went through a curriculum overhaul that included changing the name to Emmaus Institute, now known as Lumen Christi. In compliance with the Bishops directive, we require that all current and new incoming volunteers receive the Basic Ministry Certification or an equivalency approved by the Faith Formation Office. New volunteers can participate in the ministry while working on their certification but are expected to be completed by the end of their first year in service.



In conjunction with certification classes, volunteers are required to complete our RJ Specialized Trainings provided by our office. All our trainings are a credited equivalency for Basic Certification Methodology requirements and for continuing re-certification. Those interested in becoming a volunteer must begin by attending one of our Ministry Overview Presentations, held bi-monthly at the Pastoral Center. See Figure below for details of our Initial and Specialized training requirements.

Requirement	Training Title & Duration	Description
Introductory for perspective volunteers.	Ministry Overview (2.0 hours)	Introduction to the ministry. Open to all who are interested in our ministry – whether or not they want to become volunteers. Mandatory for new volunteers. The only way to receive a ministry application packet is to attend an Overview.
All Services	Orientation (6.0 hours)	The do's and don'ts of serving in a correctional environment. Required of all volunteers before beginning this ministry.
Bible Study	Small Group Facilitation (3.0 hours)	Instruction on how to facilitate a small group.

All Services	Basic Ministry Certification (45.0hours)	For personal spiritual enrichment and preparing volunteers to provide up to date instruction in current Catholic teachings.
Communion Service	Communion Service Leader (6.0 hours)	Basics of how to lead a communion service. Includes instruction on giving a reflection.
	Commissioned Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion	Proper respect for the handling of Holy Communion for those leading Communion services. Training provided by parishes.
1-to-1 Visitation	1-to-1 Visitation (6.0 hours)	How to minister in a one-to-one pastoral setting. Role-playing involved.
All Services	Substance Abuse Awareness (6.0 hours)	Increases awareness of illegal drug usage, description of drugs, their affects, and how we minister to those suffering from substance use disorder.
All Services	Gang awareness (6.0 hours)	Increases awareness of gangs, their lifestyle and how we minister to gang involved persons.
All Services	Mental Health Trauma Care (2.5 hours)	How childhood trauma affects brain development and behavior from childhood to adulthood and its connection to criminal behavior.
All Services	Suicide Prevention (2.5 hours)	Study of suicidology and how to identify if someone is potentially suicidal and how to provide aid or support.
Sacramental Prep.	Instructing Catechists	Review of catechetical material, how to apply it, and administrative procedures (5.0 hrs.).
All Services	On-going training and formation	Required annually to stay active in the ministry.

Figure 6.1-1

6.2 Training Out-Sourcing

Currently, our office staff conduct most of our in-house training. We also recruit outside agencies that provide professional instructors at no cost to assist with subjects requiring specific areas of expertise (e.g. Suicide Prevention and Mental Health/Trauma Care training).

6.3 Continuing Education & Formation

Ongoing training/formation is an important aspect of our Catholic tradition. We do not have a “one-and-done” policy. Continuing education and faith formation is essential for those in ministry leadership, regardless of the level of experience or number of years in the ministry.

All volunteers and office staff are required to take on-going training as part of a healthy and progressive spiritual life and leadership skills maintenance.

In addition to the Basic Certification requirement, we strongly encourage our volunteers to consider taking advanced level certifications and personal enrichment classes through the diocesan Faith Formation Office and other credited equivalencies. The diocese of Orange continues to provide opportunities for on-going adult Lay Ministry Formation through various certification programs, which cultivate and support spiritual, theological, and pastoral education and growth. Attendance at trainings provided by the community agencies and partners are also encouraged, or in some cases required in addition to verification of classes attended. Volunteers are offered opportunities to evaluate all trainings which provide RJ office staff with important feedback needed to improve the quality of each training.

Volunteer clergy and religious are not required to complete faith formation certifications due to formation they receive through their respective religious orders. They are however required to complete our specialized methodology trainings and are also encouraged to attend our ongoing out-source trainings.



6.4 Volunteer Training

Last year, the RJ office provided: **6** Ministry Overview Presentations for perspective volunteer inquiries, and **21** RJ/DM Specialized Methodology trainings for new and currently active volunteers, totaling **600 hours of in-classroom training**. Additional onsite training was provided but hourly calculations are not reflected in this number.

We cannot minister to whom we do not know. For this reason, our Specialized Methodology Trainings focus heavily on the criminogenic characteristics of those we serve. For example, 70% of our female youth have experienced human trafficking, 30% identify to a variation of LGBTQ lifestyle, approx. 85% suffer from some form of mental impairment compounded by Substance Use Disorder, 70% have spent time in the Foster Care system, and nearly 100% have experienced developmental trauma.

II. RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

Restorative Justice Description

7. Restorative Justice

7.1 Restorative Justice Description

Restorative justice is not new. It's an alternative approach to justice that is centuries old, deeply rooted in indigenous philosophies that value healing over punishment. Native American and First Nation practices have included healing circles and peacemaking as responses to crime and conflict. RJ practices were present in the days of the early church and reflect the most basic tenets of Catholic Social Teaching.

Restorative Justice is an over-arching term for a social system that seeks to restore relationships broken by crime. Under our current criminal justice system, society relies on the government to punish law-breakers. The system pits offender against the state. If one is found guilty, the offender usually serves his or her sentence in a jail or in prison. In such a system, the victim is usually left out. Without help to heal the psychological, if not physical wounds caused by the offender, the victim may never find peace in their lives. In a punishment-only system of justice, the offender is given no process of taking firm responsibility for their actions and transforming their lives so as to realize their wrongdoing and not harm again.

Restorative Justice focuses on both the offender and the victim. The offender must take responsibility for their crimes. They may in certain cases, face the victims, admit their mistakes, and begin the healing process. Programs are in place, in some state prisons and judicial systems, which provide an offender the opportunity to recognize the hurt that they have caused and to take responsibility for it. Given the emotions of both offender and victim, the healing process takes time – months or even years.

Relationships, which are broken by crime, are not just those of solely the offender or the victim. A criminal act causes a ripple that affects relationships with their families and community. Other iterations may be possible, given the complexity of today's society. RJ's focus is on the relationships broken rather than on a law broken. True accountability does not mean punishment, but rather sustainable transformation. Whatever the relationship, the goal is always restoration rather than punishment, redemption and transformation rather than condemnation. What we do know about restorative justice is, it works! There is plenty of data to support this truth.

Traditionally, in a Catholic parish, a priest may act to support a parishioner or victim who has been hurt by crime. In many cases, this takes the form of a one-on-one interaction with a priest. However, it cannot be expected that priests are all-encompassing. For this reason, we have been working to create restorative justice programming described in this report. This plan is intended to support our local parishes, by providing a system of healing and care to the larger community and provoke change within the current punitive practices of our criminal justice system.

III. IN-CUSTODY SERVICES

PROGRESS REPORT

Service Statistics and Future Plans

8. Volunteers

8.1 New Volunteers

The following figure shows this fiscal year’s attendance at our Ministry Overview Presentations (described in paragraph 3.2a). It shows by language the number of attendees, and the number and percentage of attendees who eventually applied to the ministry.

Attendance	English	Spanish	Totals
Total Attended	22	6	28
Joined Ministry	16	6	22
% Joined			78%

Figure 8.1-1 Ministry Overview Presentation Attendance

8.2 Current Volunteer Participation

Figure 8.2-1 shows the number of volunteers serving in both the juvenile and adult ministries. There is consistently a higher number of volunteers serving in adult facilities mostly because adult populations are much higher than juvenile.

	Adult Ministry	Juvenile Ministry	Total
No. of Volunteers	81	40	121

Figure 8.2-1

Variations of both adult and juvenile contacts over the years may reflect drops in in-custody population and inmate classifications. These reductions reflect some of the new legislation enacted over the last decade and the progressive restorative changes taking place within the judicial and corrections system.

8.3 Volunteer Participation by Parish

One criterion of volunteering for this ministry is that the volunteer be an active member of a parish community. This keeps them in touch with parish activities, assists us in our volunteer screening process, and emphasizes the fact that we are not alone in ministry; we are one of many parts of the one body of Jesus Christ.

Parish	#Vols	Parish	# Vols	Parish	# Vols
Blessed Sacrament	9	St Anthony Claret	1	St. Thomas Moore	6
Christ Cathedral	1	St Bonaventure	3	St Timothy	2
Christ Our Savior	0	St Boniface	5	St Vincent de Paul	5
Corpus Christi	0	St Cecilia	2	St Simon & Jude	7
Holy Family Cathedral	4	St Columban	5		
Holy Spirit	2	St Edward the Confessor	2		
Holy Trinity	1	St Elizabeth Ann Seaton	3		
Korean Martyrs	1	St Hedwig	4		
La Purisima	5	St Irenaeus	1		
Mission Basilica	1	St Joachim	2		
OL Fatima	0	St John Neumann	4		
OL Guadalupe –Delhi	1	St John the Baptist	1		
OL Guadalupe La Habra	1	St John Vianney	0		
OL Guadalupe-SantaAna	1	St Joseph (Santa Ana)	0		
OL La Vang	1	St Joseph (Placentia)	0		
OL of Mt Carmel	0	St Julianna	2		
OL of Pilar	0	St Justin Martyr	0		
OL Queen of Angels	2	St Killian	4		
San Antonio de Padua	1	St Martin de Porres	4		
San Francisco Solano	4	St Mary (Fullerton)	3		
San Clara de Asis	0	St Nicholas	3		
Santiago de Compostela	2	St Norbert	6		
St Angela Merici	1	St Philip Benizi	0		
St Anne (Santa Ana)	4	St Pius V	2		
St Anne (Seal Beach)	0	St Polycarp	2		

*Non-Diocese of Orange parish

Figure 8.3-2 Volunteer Participation by Parish

8.4 Volunteer Turnover Rate

Last years turnover rate shows 6 outgoing volunteers and 6 incoming volunteers. 2022-2023 showed a significant loss of volunteers mostly due to their refusal to comply with County Health Care COVID restriction guidelines, the permanent effects of COVID related illness, and volunteers aging out. The number of new volunteers entering the ministry is steadily increasing.

8.5 Sacraments of Initiation

Unfortunately our sacramental prep program was put on hold in the juvenile facilities due to COVID restrictions, but was able to continue in the adult facilities through non-contact visitations with our volunteer catechists. In February 2024, we were able to resume our sacramental prep program in the juvenile facilities, in which **5 youth** are currently participating.

Service	Adult	Juvenile	Total
Bible Study	304	281	585
Communion Services/Masses	705	260	965
1-to-1 Visits & Reconciliation	359	325	684
Sacramental Prep. Sessions	14	24	38
Sacraments of Int. Received	2	0	2
Total number of services	1,384	890	2,274



Fig. 8.4-3 Number of services provided FY 2023-2024

9. Materials, Supplies & Handouts

9.1 Bibles

Bibles are given to inmates and minors upon request and to minors attending our sacramental prep program. Our cost for each Bible we purchase by the case is approx. \$5. We do our best to provide Bibles in other languages upon request, which are normally much more expensive and difficult finding a good translation. In some cases we are able to obtain a donor to make the purchase.

FY Bible purchases and deliveries:

Bibles	English	Spanish	Chinese/Fr/Arabic	Vietnamese	Totals
FY 2023-2024					
Incoming	696	320	0	0	1,016
To: CJX*	300	160	0	0	460
Theo Lacy	144	220	0	2	366
Musick	0	0	0	0	0
SA City Jail	18	30	0	0	48
Juvenile Facs.	150	2	0	0	152
*Total of Bibles distributed	612	412	0	2	1,026

*CJX=Central Jail Complex: Men’s Jail, Women’s Jail, Intake & Release Center.

Figure 9.1-1 Bible Inventory

Item	Adult	Youth	Totals
Rosaries	9,000	300	9,300
Catholic reading publications (books, holy cards, etc.)	3,500	375	3,875
Pencils	120	288	408
*Paper Copies (Scripture reading handouts, volunteer training and restock materials and application paperwork)	1,700	14,140	15,840

Figure 9.2-1 Material and Supply Distribution

In 2024, the Living Faith publishing co. informed us they are no longer publishing booklets in Spanish due to financial shortfalls. They did not say if and when they could resume.

*Paper copies are an estimate and do not include number of Scripture reading handouts printed and distributed by correctional staff to those who cannot get out for services and volunteers who print copies from home and take them in for adult jail services they are scheduled to cover.

10. Looking Ahead

10.1 County Adult Jail Facilities Future Plans

On January 1, 2019 Don Barns was elected Sheriff of O.C. Barns has publicly declared his support of restorative programming and treatment in the jails he believes will result in reducing recidivism and increasing the success of community reentry. The fact is, data shows this to be true and also shows a reduction of recidivism in facilities with extensive religious programming (See research by Byron R. Johnson, “More God Less Crime” Templeton Press, or <https://www.baylorisr.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/religions-12-00402.pdf>)

Together with corrections officials, our collaborative partners from other county agencies, our community non-profits, and our Catholic restorative justice efforts, we have made unprecedented headway in our efforts on the movement away from punitive attitudes and practices to one of compassionate care that has influenced the expansion of both in-custody and out-of-custody restorative reentry services. Unfortunately, realignment legislation like Prop. 47 and others are under threat this 2024 election year by those who insist on continuing with the old punitive model of “injustice” which, contrary to popular political rhetoric and unsubstantiated crime data, has failed miserably throughout criminal justice history.

Realignment legislation has helped provide the leverage and funding needed to reform not only the practice of punitive corrections models, but the attitudes of those in power to see another way of transforming criminal behavior. A way that is more sustainable and effective in reducing victimization, reducing recidivism, and increasing public safety. Or as we like to call it, “The Jesus model” (redemption). Failures in these reform measures are mostly due to opposition, lack of cooperation, and systemic undermining from some working in various criminal justice agencies and some in the political arena who also promote a misrepresentation of criminal data with the assistance media fear mongering rhetoric. Other recent factors have made it more challenging to reveal the effectiveness of restorative practices, such as the financial impact of the pandemic and the rising cost of living. Historically, an impoverished society and criminal activity go hand-in-hand and in this obvious case has not received acknowledgement for its role in criminal activity.

10.2 Juvenile Facilities Future Plans

Thanks to the passing of Realignment Bill 823, O.C. Probation received funding to construct several onsite facilities designed to offer restorative programming and vocational training to youth at Juvenile Hall. Facilities include, a gymnasium with basketball court, workout room and equipment, commercial kitchen for training in culinary services, an auto repair shop and equipment, and a multi-purpose conference room available for our church services and other religious activities.

Due to a change in legislation, some youth who qualify will no longer be charged as adults and some of those over 18 years old will be remanded to juvenile custody up to age 25. If all goes well, these young adults may be released with a sealed criminal record making it much easier to acquire gainful employment. Additionally, Juvenile Hall has already begin demolition on the old section of program units (G,H, K) and will be replacing them with apartments available for those aged out of the juvenile system to assist with housing needs as they transition into responsible adult community reentry. Additional primary resources available include higher education, employment, and life skills.

Within the next two years, juvenile probation will move the Youth Guidance Center (YGC) population to Juvenile Hall. A section of the Juvenile Hall property is going to undergo renovation simulating a detention camp environment as was the YGC site. This move will centralize all the juvenile populations into one detention site. The YGC facility will be taken over by the Sheriff's Dept. and used as a transitional reentry center for adult offenders preparing for their return to the community.

Juvenile Probation continues to acknowledge the contributions of religious services as part of the counties ongoing plan for rehabilitating youth offenders.

Over the second half of the FY, we have seen a significant increase in juvenile populations. The Probation Dept. sites the reason due to the criminal courts recognition of restorative proگرامing and the positive impact it has on the youth making juvenile detention in O.C. a better alternative than the offenders home environment.

10.3 Oranewood Children's Home (Foster Care Children) Future Plans

The current county foster care system has become a pipeline to jail and prison for children perpetually in the system. The larger percentage of these children are Catholic. We plan to maintain our current level of religious services at the Oranewood facility and would like to do more by reaching out to our Catholic faith communities in attempt to raise awareness of the need for placing foster care children into loving homes and offering support to the families providing their care.

“Project Hearts in Motion” is a faith-based collaborative of county social services (Oranewood Children's Home) and non-profit representatives working to advocate for children needing placement with loving foster care families. This past year we partnered with county social service representatives to create a parish outreach initiative to raise awareness of the needs of foster care children and families. Our target population was the Huntington Beach area, where according to social services there is a serious lack of foster care support.

This past FY we partnered with St. Simon & Jude parish mission outreach representatives to host a presentation led by our office and social service representatives. The presentation was promoted diocesan wide which brought in over 30 attendees, some whom signed up to be involved in the capacity they can while others are requiring more time for prayerful discernment of their involvement. We plan to continue offering our presentation to parishes in attempt to build our capacity and expansion of network involvement and resources.

10.4 Survivors of Crime Ministry

In order to complete the circle of pastoral care restorative justice covers, we had initiated a ministry for survivors of crime just prior to the outbreak of the pandemic. The ministry focused specifically on those who have lost a loved one by homicide. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic resulting in the layoffs of 4 office staff members, COVID restrictions not allowing us to maintain our group sessions in person, and lack of funding, the ministry did not survive. I am hopeful that we will be able to bring this healing and life restoring ministry back in the future.

11. Staff Training, Formation & Development

11.1 Staff Training, Formation & Development

In addition to the RJ/DM office staff completing advanced level diocesan faith formation certification, RJ/DM staff also attend additional ongoing training provided by our diocese and other community agencies and ministry organizations. For example, this last fiscal year staff members completed the following trainings:

Ruth Guzman:

1. “Let it Grow” by: presenter Michael Marchard-Exploring key ingredients to a growing ministry.
2. 2023 O.C. Public Safety Reentry Conference – “Healing in Kinship” by: Project Kinship
3. 2023 Orange County Substance Abuse Partnership Network (OCSAPN) Conference
4. 2023 Pastoral Center Staff Advent Retreat
5. 2024 Youth ministry – “Best Ministry Pastoral Practices”
6. 2024 Pastoral Center Staff Lenten Retreat
7. 2024 Diocesan Faith Formation Encounter Retreat

Fred LaPuzza:

1. “Journeying With Hope” *Finding Hope in Restorative Justice* – A diocesan statewide Synod (listening and dialog session) with all involved in the criminal justice system.
2. “2023 O.C. Public Safety Reentry Conference – “Healing in Kinship” by: Project Kinship.
3. “Listening with the Heart”: *An Insider's Experience* with Pope Francis and the world wide Synod, by: Sister Laticia Salzar, one of four US female Synod participants.
4. Diocesan Safe Environment Certification Renewal and Managerial Training.
5. 2023 Pastoral Center Staff Advent Retreat.
6. 2024 Pastoral Center Staff Lenten Retreat.
7. 2024 Diocesan Faith Formation Encounter Retreat.
8. “Voices of Redemption” *Amplifying Voices of Second Chances* by: Phoenix Arise in partnership with UCI, School of Criminal Justice.

9. “Ethics and Boundaries for Ministers” by Fr. Stan Bosch ST. PhD, Catholic Prison Ministries
10. “Recognizing the Dignity of Life in the Traumatized and Broken” by Fr. Stan Bosch ST. PhD, Catholic Prison Ministries
11. “Intersections of Juvenile Ministry” by Fr. Stan Bosch ST. PhD, Catholic Prison Ministries
12. “Diocesan Leadership Summit” by California Catholic Conference of Bishops

Gaby Vazquez:

1. 2023 O.C. Public Safety Re-Entry Conference – “Healing in Kinship” by: Project Kinship
2. 2023 Orange County Substance Abuse Partnership Network (OCSAPN) Conference
3. 2023 Pastoral Center Staff Advent Retreat
4. 2024 Pastoral Center Staff Lenten Retreat
5. 2024 Diocesan Faith Formation Encounter Retreat

Fr. Loc Tran

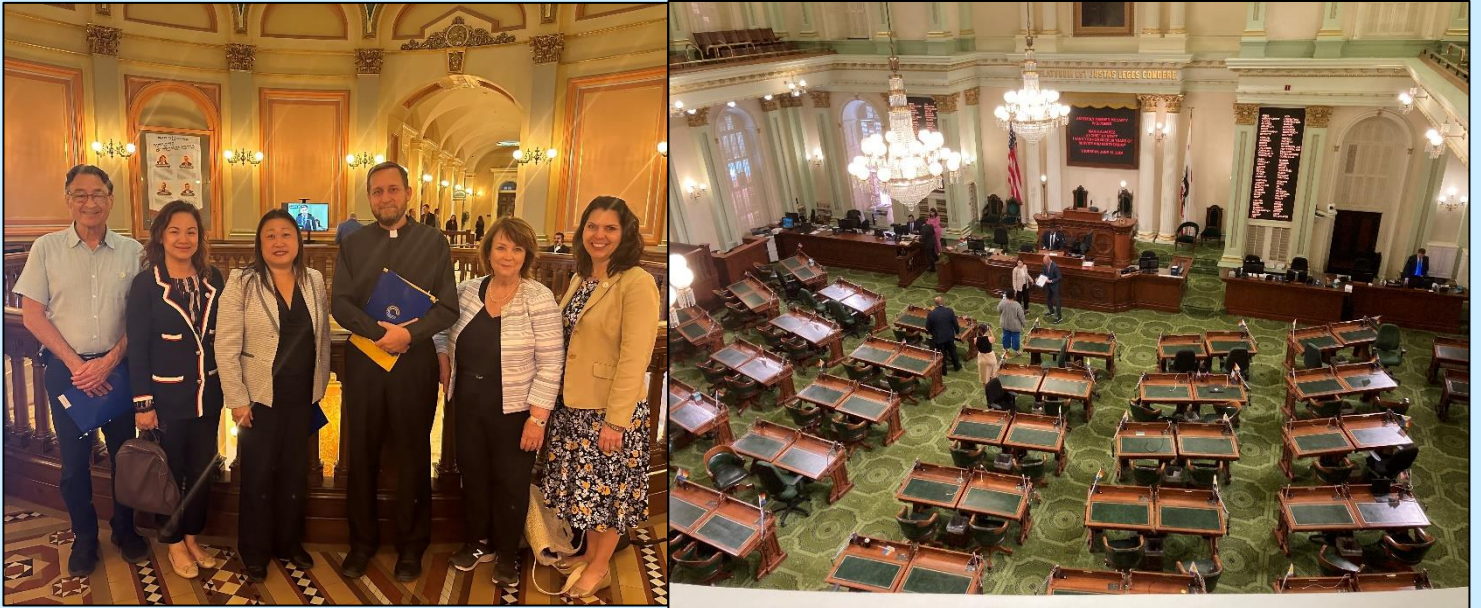
1. RJ/DM Substance Abuse Training Update
2. RJ/DM One-to-one Pastoral Visitation Update
3. RJ/DM Suicide Prevention Training Update

IV. POLITICAL ADVOCACY

Catholic Legislative Network's Progress on Restorative Justice Legislation



12. Catholic Legislative Network & Restorative Justice Progress



12.1 Catholic Legislative Network & Restorative Justice Progress

Over the past decade, the California Catholic Conference of Bishops (CCCB) Catholic Legislative Network (involved in public policy-making) placed Restorative Justice (RJ) high on its list of priorities. During that time, the CCCB hosted a collaborative network of all diocesan Directors of Restorative Justice/Detention/Victim Ministries, within California. Legislators were solicited to write or support restorative justice initiatives that we collectively reviewed for upcoming ballot initiatives advocating for those practices that are consistent with Catholic Social Teaching.

With the support of our local Bishops, we create strategies for bringing awareness to the faithful in our parish communities, as well as our state legislators who have the power to influence political support of restorative justice initiatives. RJ Directors meet regularly to discuss relevant issues, advocate for restorative justice legislation that promotes rehabilitation of the incarcerated over punishment, care for traumatized victims, raise awareness, implementation of restorative justice practices, share resources and create programs which support systemic change within the criminal justice system.

As a result of our work during the past two state elections, historic changes have occurred within California's criminal justice and corrections system. Although there were several initiatives we supported and lobbied for, including an end to the death penalty, AB2590 and Prop 47 (See Pg. 10-1 of this report) are two initiatives that our efforts contributed to successful policy changes. Both of these initiatives are attributable to the unprecedented reductions of county jail and state prison populations by having re-directed millions of taxpayer dollars into restorative justice alternatives instead of incarceration.

Because the legislation required funding community-based organizations capable of providing reentry services, community and government became "partners out of crime" – so to speak. Together, the amount of resources poured into restorative alternatives has put Orange County in the national spotlight for providing a more effective and humane way of doing corrections that has shown to reduce recidivism and as a result increase public safety (See Prop 47 Evaluation PDF link Pg. 12-3).

Restorative Justice alternatives include immediate and long-term services and resources such as: education, substance abuse and mental health treatment, transitional housing and shelters, employment, life skills, parenting education, medial healthcare resources, and the re-sentencing of non-violent and non-sexual convictions from felonies to misdemeanors increasing opportunities for employment and decreasing the risk of recidivism.

A portion of these funds were also allocated for crime victims services. Because of the passing of these initiatives, judges now have risk assessment resources and the authority to provide rehabilitative services as an alternative to incarceration as they deem appropriate.

PROP 47 ADVISORY COMMITTEE: The Prop 47 Advisory Committee, spearheaded by the O.C. Health Care Agency, held its final meeting here on the Cathedral Campus. The 6 million dollars of state funding invested into restorative justice programming and practices over the past 6 years has paid off. The results shared by our data tracking provider at the Urban Institute gave cause for rejoicing, again proving that restorative justice works for lowering recidivism. See link to Summary Report below and links to the California Board of State and Community Corrections. I've also included the California Catholic Conference of Bishops (CCCB) original Press Release on their endorsement of the Prop 47 Initiative that we (statewide RJ directors and Catholic Legislative Network) requested their support on.

PROP 47 GETTING A BAD RAPI! It is discouraging to see blame for crime being placed on Prop 47 happening in today's political and media arena. Statements being made by media sources, some politicians and members of law enforcement are unfounded, misrepresented, and blatantly not true in some cases. It's discouraging to see efforts being made to resend the Prop 47 initiative in a regressive move back to the inhumane conditions of mass incarceration that has not worked in past. Check out the documents and links below to see how much good Prop 47 has done, that unfortunately is not being acknowledged in any public media services.

[Prop 47 Grant Program Evaluation Shows Recidivism Cut.pdf](#)

[Prop 47 Lowers Recidivism.docx](#)

[Proposition 47 Grant Reentry Data Report 12-07-22.pdf](#)

Proposition 47 Site (links to evaluation reports)

https://www.bscc.ca.gov/s_bsccprop47/

- Proposition 47 Statewide Dashboard
<https://app.smartsheet.com/b/publish?EQBCT=f1cf46a86b2f4e8199bff93cc5d20e81>
- Proposition 47 Orange County Dashboard
<https://app.smartsheet.com/b/publish?EQBCT=7722113c6a1c402dabc2ba5e2ad456bb>

Figure 12.1-3 Prop 47 State & County Evaluations

V.
**COMMUNITY
COLLABORATIVE
PARTNERSHIPS**

Covers community partner relations, activities, and outcomes

13. Community Collaborative Partnerships

13.1

Over the course of the grant period, we have worked to form collaborative partnerships that have created greater potential for successful programing. Partnerships have included: local parishes, community non-profit reentry organizations and government agencies (Human Relations Commission, Probation Dept., Sheriff's Dept., Health Care Agency, Public Defender, District Attorney, Social Services, Santa Ana Police Dept., Padres Unidos, Project Kinship, Hub for Integration, Reentry, & Employment, Human Works Inc., St. Vincent de Paul Society, Returning Home Foundation, Phoenix Arise, University of Southern CA., University of Irvine, Chapman University, community colleges, and more).

These partnerships allow us to identify gaps in reentry services and build the capacity needed to serve a verity of needs within the majority of our target populations and to solicit supplemental funding and resources these government agencies are capable of providing. Some programs listed in 13.1, received leveraged funding by our partner agencies while others were initiated entirely with Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD) funds.

As a result of our programming success, some organizations have taken over complete financial responsibility, while other programs have become financially self-sustaining through the generosity of community contributions, government funding, and other resources and are no longer reliant on CCHD funding.

In the local community, we work with governmental and non-profit agencies, in addition to other faith traditions, to foster an environment of caring and concern. The long-term goal is to empower and support families, reduce recidivism and gang violence that as a result, make communities safer and encourage restorative programing over incarceration. Research shows restorative justice practices are most effective and are an investment of resources and tax dollars.

Fig. 13.1-1 lists our current community partnership organizations we work closely with to share resources and collectively provide support.

Figure 13.1-1 Current Community Reentry Collaborative Partnerships

Name	Purpose
Hub for Integration, Reentry & Employment (H.I.R.E.)	Non-Profit Re-entry Service & Resource Organization that connects and unites O.C. stakeholders to support the reintegration of formerly incarcerated community members. Use research informed and data driven strategies grounded in equity, and justice. Lift the voices of formerly incarcerated and system-impacted people.
Project Kinship Self-Sufficient	O.C.'s largest non-profit re-entry service provider. Provides training for Intervention Worker Certification, job placement, Restorative Justice Healing Circles and many other re-entry services to the formerly incarcerated.
Lights On	RV parked outside IRC providing nighttime assistance for released inmates during immediate hours of re-entry.
Phoenix Arise, Criminal & Gangs Anonymous parish Support Group	Bi-weekly Criminal and Gangs Anonymous Support Group located at St. Boniface parish that accompanies those release from jail or prison in their struggle refrain from criminal behavior and successfully reintegrate back into their community and family.



14. Collaborative Outcomes



14.1 Prop 47 Advisory Committee

Proposition 47 is a state initiative supported by the California Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCB) that went into law in January 2014. The goal of Prop 47

was to minimize the state’s incarceration of low-level offenders causing the over-crowding of our jails and prisons and to provide restorative alternatives over incarceration. As a result, millions of dollars in tax revenue savings were made available to counties through a grant application process. In 2017, the O.C. Health Care Agency spearheaded the formation of an O.C. Proposition 47 Advisory Committee Collaborative, in which Fred LaPuzza was invited as a member. The goal of the committee is to:

- identify and prioritize the most pressing needs to be addressed (to include target inmate population, target area, etc.);
- identify the strategies, programs and/or services to be undertaken to address those needs;
- create and develop an effective grant project, and ongoing implementation of the project

The committee was successful in receiving the maximum \$6 million in Prop 47 state grant funds. However, according to the grant requirements, a major portion of the initiative funds needed to be allocated to select community non-profit organizations capable of providing successful restorative reentry services. The organization selected was Project Kinship (PK), a non-profit reentry organization our office of Restorative Justice supported through a grant partnership during its early development and programing implementation stages in 2014.

Our ministry now has a reliable referral for those who attend our church services in the jails. Our religious supply boxes are stocked with referral request forms volunteers can handout to inmates requesting help upon release. The request form is processed within our office and forwarded to PK. Upon receiving our referral, a PK system navigator will be assigned to meet with the inmate to assess their needs and coordinate services needed immediately after release. The form can also be used for requesting Catholic pastoral care services.

A green form titled "CATHOLIC DETENTION MINISTRY INMATE REQUEST SLIP". The form is designed to be completed by an inmate requesting a chaplain or other religious services. It includes fields for the inmate's name, date, and preferred language. There are checkboxes for various services such as spiritual guidance, housing services, and medical assistance. A section titled "IF YOU WANT ANY ADDITIONAL HELP PLEASE CHECK THE FOLLOWING SERVICES" lists various support options like food, clothing, and health services. The form is intended to be used by volunteers to provide referrals to inmates.

14.2 Expansion & Progress

One of Project Kinships (PK) successes is attributed to hiring and training formerly incarcerated men and women in various areas of reentry and community outreach work. Today 75% of PK staff have experienced the criminal justice system, many of whom would not have been successful finding employment because of their criminal background history. In addition, who better to accompany and assist those struggling to reenter the community than those who have walked in their shoes.



Approximately ten years ago, PK began developing its vision with two staff members. Today, PK employs 130 staff members and is the largest reentry organization in O.C. acknowledged by the County Board of Supervisors and deemed the official consultant to the Sheriff's Dept. and partner in developing a new and more humane and restorative approach to doing corrections.

In 2024, the Sheriff's Dept. built a space inside the lobby of the Intake and Release Center (IRC) where PK staff can meet with and offer reentry resources and services to inmates exiting the jail immediately after release 24 hours a day 7 days a week. Shortly after, PK set up shop offering the same provisions to accommodate inmates released from Theo Lacy Jail. PK meets with both in-custody and out-of-custody men and women as well as youth in detention. PK is also a contracted resource for O.C. schools struggling with gang-related violence. Additionally, the O.C. Health Care Agency used their 25% share of Prop 47 funds to hire additional clinicians to assist both pre and post release inmates. Grant requirements limit the target population served specifically to those struggling with substance abuse, mental health disorders, and chronic homelessness, the three major causes of recidivism.

Acknowledgement of participatory contributions by the Office of Restorative Justice, Catholic Diocese of Orange, was mentioned in the O.C. Health Care Agencies 36 page Interim Evaluation Report. See page 6.

14.1-3 O.C. Health Care Agencies Interim Evaluation Report

[2019.08.12 OC Prop 47 Interim Evaluation Report final.pdf](#)

In addition, the success of restorative justice programming within the criminal justice system has caught the undivided attention of the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR). So much so, that in 2020, the CDCR revised their mission and vision statement and for the first time sited Restorative Justice as a way of facilitating successful community reintegration and enhancing public safety. The change in attitudes and programming towards restorative justice continues to influence a progressive systemic shift throughout the state's criminal justice system. Click PDF link to view CDCR statement:

14.2-3 PDF CDCR Mission Statement

[CDCR Mission Statement.pdf](#)

What we do know, the data is clear that restorative justice practices reduce recidivism that as a result reduces victimization and increases public safety over punitive methods of incarceration.

VI. MOVING FORWARD

Future plans for moving forward

15.1 Moving Forward

The following lists our vision moving forward with the ministry:

- Continue prioritizing the quality of volunteer training which has gained recognition by jail facility administration acknowledging our volunteers as the most well-trained of all the religious organizations serving in the facilities.
- Continue expansion of training/formation options for longtime volunteers to offer a variety of in person and virtual alternative resources for credit towards ongoing ministry training and certification requirements.
- Look into possibilities for hosting an all-volunteer gathering/day of reflection/retreat.
- Continue working in close collaboration with correctional agencies, community partners, and the legislative network on both local and state levels to advance the restorative justice movement upholding the principles of Catholic Social Teaching.
- Consider hosting a regional synod at the diocese of Orange inviting government and community representatives involved with or impacted by the criminal justice system to a restorative justice dialog and listening session.
- Continue building a network of parish resources to assist in addressing the spiritual, relational, and monetary needs of children and families in the foster care system.
- Plan at least one ministry fundraiser

VII. REVENUES

REPORT

Ministry Revenues (donations & fundraising)

Fig. 16.1-1 Ministry Revenues / Pg. 16-1

16. Revenues

16.1 Donations

Fig. 16.1-1 lists our donations received for fiscal year of 2023-2024. I am happy to report that this was a record-breaking year for donations received, in part by an especially large cash donation received during the second half of the fiscal year. We are extremely grateful for the generosity of all our donors, whether large or small in value. These donations are essential for extending our efforts into reentry outreach work, not covered under our general office budget revenues. Some of the donations received were extremely beneficial in subsidizing the costs of Bibles and rosaries offsetting the cost of overall budgetary expenses.

We are equally grateful for the generosity of parish community contributions to the Pastoral Services Appeal (PSA), which funds the general infrastructure of this ministry entirely. Without PSA, the lives impacted by this unique ministry of the diocese would not be possible. PSA contributions will not only help change lives but, in some cases, help save lives. The monies we receive are not money spent, but money well invested, into the lives of those the ministry serves both inside and outside jail walls. We must also keep in mind that every life impacted by this ministry has a ripple effect that extends outward to the families and communities of those we serve.

I was only invited by one parish to give a PSA presentation about RJ ministry at all the English Masses. The parish reported a significant increase in PSA donations as result of the presentation. We are committed to accepting invitations to give parish PSA presentations at every opportunity. It benefits both the parish and RJ Ministry.

Figure 16.1-1

Dedicated & In-kind Donations	Actuals End-of-FY Year 2023-2024
Cash donations received	\$37,596.35
*In-kind donations received	\$40,000.00 (approx.)
TOTAL REVENUES COMBINED	\$77,596.35

***In-kind donations are not cash, but the value of supplies, materials, equipment, or administrative resources donated.**

With the generous help of our Spanish volunteers, we were able to accomplish hosting a successful ministry fundraiser at St. Boniface parish that netted over \$3K.

For the past ten years, we have been fortunate to receive Catholic Campaign for Human Development funds we applied towards initiating restorative justice programming in O.C. (mentioned in previous pages of this report). Unfortunately, these funds are no longer available. To continue the great work of restorative justice, we have created a dedicated Ministry Outreach Account with the diocesan accounting dept. to accrue donations allowing us to continue our reentry outreach efforts. We are very grateful to donors who help us continue to grow the restorative justice movement in our diocese.

Donors now have the following three ministry donation options:

1. **General Ministry Fund:** contributes to all budget line items offsetting the overall cost of ministry expenses.
2. **Bibles and Rosaries Fund:** provides Bibles and rosaries to those we serve in the adult and juvenile facilities.
3. **Outreach Ministry Fund:** allows us to leverage funding with our community reentry partners who provide outreach services and resources to those released from jail and prison, to cosponsor advocacy or reentry events/activities, host community meetings and hospitality, in custody juvenile retreats, and to initiate and support restorative justice education, training, and practices within our parishes, schools, and throughout the community.

NOTE: All donation payments must be made out to the “Diocese of Orange c/o Restorative Justice” stating in writing which of the three donation options you choose for your contribution.