

## The Busy Life of Prison

Boy, I can't wait until I get out of prison so that I will have more free time to concentrate on fun stuff like this blog. That may sound like a crazy statement, but lately there is some real truth to it. I've gotten myself involved in so many things that when you add in the scheduling restrictions of prison, my days are really hectic.

In case you are wondering how, here is a rundown of all my activities:

- First, I pray the Liturgy of the Hours twice and read the Bible and some other religious material daily. I also read the USA Today basically cover-to-cover Monday thru Friday.
- I am an alternate dog handler for the NEADS program. Check it out at [www.NEADS.org](http://www.NEADS.org) to learn more about it. I work with dogs daily and have a class Thursday afternoon.
- Toastmasters - a public speaking/communication group. We meet twice a week. I joined in January and have made 7 speeches as well as participated in a mock debate. [www.Toastmasters.org](http://www.Toastmasters.org)
- I am a peer educator in a weekly Health Awareness class.
- Runners Club - I am vice president, responsible for organizing, scheduling and running all our events. I type up and distribute all the results. I also do some coaching. And oh by the way, I compete. In case you haven't noticed, check out all the results I have posted. I run 6 days a week in my training.
- I workout (some form of calisthenics, plyometrics, and abs) 5 days a week.
- I'm on a softball and soccer team. Each one plays 1 to 2 games per week. Oh...and volleyball starts soon...ugh!

Then there is all my church commitments. We have a wonderful Catholic Community here and I am fully involved. Here's my schedule:

- Monday evening - Mass followed by some sort of talk or discussion.
- Tuesday afternoon - Bethany Prayer Group - a Lectio Divina prayer and sharing group.
- Tuesday evening - twice each month I am part of a small, super intense Scripture Study group. We are studying Acts of the Apostles and have been doing so for over a year. We're only on chapter 13. The other weeks, my friend James and I meet to discuss a Jesuit Guide book we are reading. James and I both feel a calling toward the Jesuit Order and are exploring it.
- Wednesday evening - once a month is the Ultreya - a celebration and gathering of all who lived their Cursillo. Cursillo is a 4 day retreat to get closer to Christ. It is lived here annually. I made mine in May of this year.
- Thursday afternoon - Just started helping out in a Bible Basics course. It goes from 1-3:30 but I show up at 2:30 because I am in the NEADS class.

- Friday afternoon - all but one afternoon each month, a small group of us meet for a book discussion based on a series of books by Father Oscar Lukefahr, C.M. about the Catholic faith. The other Friday each month is a writer's group. We're all given a subject to write about, then we share.
- Friday evening - Cursillo Reunion Group - each week a small group of us that lived the Cursillo (see Wed. eve) gather to pray, partake in the Eucharist, and share.
- Sunday afternoon - MCI Norfolk has 1 of only 2 Lay Fraternities of St. Dominic located in a prison, in the world. I am a friend of the Order and thus, most weeks I join them for whatever activity they have scheduled (mass, meetings, talks, etc.).

So that's about it. It's been 5½ years now, but it seems like all I remember of my activities from my days of freedom are work, run, do something foolish. We won't get into what the foolish activities were, but it is safe to say that each and every one of the things I listed above would have been a healthy addition to my schedule.

When I say to people that I am truly happy with my life right now...locked up or not...it is the truth. It is because of all these things that I am doing. I feel productive and I'm not sure that was the case when I was free.

I also want to mention that each and every one of the groups I mentioned with the Church here is facilitated by a volunteer who joins us from the outside. These are some of the most wonderful, loving, giving people I have ever met. I know my life, and the lives of many other guys here, are so much better because of them. They all try to tell us that they get as much out of being here with us as we do. I don't know if I buy it, but I hope so.

Until next time...