

Joyous Reunions

A hard reality of prison life is separation. Every inmate deals with loneliness. Contact is often lost with our friends and families as the people on the outside go on living their lives. Perhaps it is the reason why many prisoners form tight bonds with each other. Our prison friendships are not impervious to loss; we are often transferred to different institutions for many reasons. The results are frequent good-byes. One never knows if they will see, or hear from, even the closest of comrades again. So, with a recent move back to a familiar place, I was happily reunited with some dear fellows.

Words alone will never convey the depth of emotion my friends displayed when they saw me back in their midst. The outward manifestations ranged from barely controlled tears to bear hugs and back slapping. Yet, as wonderful as it was to greet them I had a new host of companions that got left behind when I returned here. The endless cycle of change is inevitable behind bars. Today I am enjoying the laughter and conversations that surround me as I get reacquainted with men whose company I cherish. One man recently exclaimed, "I thought I'd never see you again this side of heaven." I am grateful that God allowed us to reunite for however long it may last. The pain of recent separations gave way to the happiness of joyous reunions. Such is life in prison; it is a treasure to have friends that comfort and encourage me to face whatever comes my way.....

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