

One-Man Prison Crusade: Hospital Chaplain Reaches 1,000 Inmates With Gospel

From mid-August to October 31st, the Clearwater, Florida, hospice and hospital chaplain Eddie Donnally will share his testimony of faith in prisons throughout the Lone Star State. Donnally, an ordained and endorsed chaplain by the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel, has lived a most unusual life. The former jockey was in bondage to crack cocaine, alcohol, greed, sex, shame and self-loathing but was set free in a California jail holding cell nearly 23 years ago and has been in full-time Christian ministry since.

Donnally has shared his testimony in a dozen Florida and Louisiana prisons and has been booked to share his unusual testimony in 30 by the end of October. Based now in Houston, he has spoken in six so far to some 1,000 prisoners, with at least 150 giving their lives to the Lord, and averages 40 at each event coming forward for prayer for healing, renewal and leading in their decisions to become ministers.

The former sexually abused youth who holds a doctorate in ministry has also taught his class on healing from sexual abuse to hundreds of inmates. As a jockey, he rode some 12,000 races and since retiring, has appeared on several national television shows, and has written three books. His biography, *Ride the White Horse: A Checkered Jockey's Story of Racing, Rage and Redemption* was recently the No. 1 bestseller in the Christian Biography category on Amazon Kindle. He left his work at Suncoast Hospice and BayCare Health System to travel the thousands of miles needed to visit 30 Texas prisons.

Before his conversion, he lived for seven years as a bisexual, and the shame and guilt caused the sexually abused adolescence

to attempt suicide. He has been a patient in two behavioral health facilities. After a fixed race went wrong, he was threatened with death by Boston's infamous Winter Hill Gang, led by the notorious late James "Whitey" Bulger, who was later convicted of killing 11 persons, virtually all potential witnesses. Donnally found himself between U.S. Marshals who offered him a new identity and a place in their Witness Protection Program in exchange for his courtroom testimony, and the notorious gang who would have tried to kill him if he did.

Statistics show that up to 50% of males and 80% of female inmates were sexually abused as children or adolescents. "If they are released into the community without dealing spiritually with the pain, shame and anger [sexual abuse] produces, I am convinced their chances of reoffending are far greater," he said. "Thus far a score have spoken about their sexual abuse for the first time and will be counseled by their chaplains. All who attended know that Christ's forgiveness can heal them and hundreds have prayed for healing.

"I believe that prisons are the largest, most spiritually ripe church in America, and Christ has been preparing me for this crusade since a dozen prisoners and I stood in a large holding cell in 1996 and saw what I am convinced was God's *shekinah* glory. It changed my life forever, and I go with the expectation the next revival and outpouring of the Holy Spirit will be birthed in our nation's prisons. I'm not an experienced preacher, but God has given me a story to tell, and He has a habit of using the most unlikely to accomplish His most mighty works." {eo}

Eddie Donnally attends and often speaks at Flowing River Church in Clearwater, led by Pastor Kathleen Peck, and is part of its Flowing River Ministries. More information is available on his website,. He can be reached at 818-653-3711 or eddonnally@.