

Salvations Abound as Sheriff's Office and Inmates Celebrate Baptisms

An Indiana sheriff's department recently celebrated the new year by commemorating the baptisms of around 40 incarcerated men and women.

The Decatur County Sheriff's Office sparked thousands of likes and shares last month on Facebook after announcing the baptisms and sharing photos of prisoners turning their lives over to the Lord.

"What a great way to celebrate Christmas and a New Year!" the post read. "DCDC Chaplain Dave Burnett, along with REC members, baptized nearly 40 men and women after a personal, public profession of Jesus Christ in their lives."

And that's not all. The Decatur County Sheriff's Office concluded the statement by noting this is hardly the first time detained inmates have made similar decisions.

"Over the past four years, nearly 300 men and women have given their life to Jesus Christ while incarcerated at the Decatur County Detention Center," the post read. "All glory to GOD!"

The Daily News reported there were actually 59 baptisms, with these actions taken as part of an effort to prevent recidivism. The inmates who took part "each committed to changing their hearts."

Outgoing Sheriff Dave Durant has said he believes changing the heart is paramount to stopping repeat offending and helping change lives.

"If you can change the heart during that journey, everything will follow suit," Durant told The Daily News in 2019.

“Whether it be alcohol or drugs or poverty that are creating the cycle, we only have to change their hearts to stop the process.”

The baptism message and photos received a wide array of responses. While some offered encouraging messages, others criticized the baptisms and claimed the inmates were a “captive” audience being manipulated into making these faith-based decisions.

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