



Sharing Christ's Love with Prisoners

Kolbe Prison Ministries
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***Information Guide for
Prospective Volunteers***



Overview: Kolbe Prison Ministries (“KPM”) is a Texas 501(c)(3) charitable organization (IRS Tax ID 47-5446694). KPM is entirely a “volunteer only” organization with no paid staff and minimal overhead. KPM began presenting retreats in 2009 in Texas State prisons, was incorporated as a legal entity in 2015, and approved by the IRS as a tax-exempt nonprofit in 2017. Kolbe Prison Ministries is named for St. Maximilian Kolbe, a renowned Polish priest who was martyred at the Auschwitz death camp during World War II. KPM’s mission is “To share the agape love of Jesus Christ with those in prison and to teach the fullness of the truth of the Catholic Church to the incarcerated.” We carry out this mission by volunteers presenting a three-day retreat to inmates within the prison walls followed by ongoing faith-based education and formation. We are led by God’s call in Matthew 25:36 (“**I was in prison and you visited me**”) to minister to the imprisoned. This ministry, through corporal works of mercy, has enriched and reinvigorated the spiritual lives of many thousands of inmates. KPM does not proselytize but rather inspires retreatants to grow in faith, service and love of neighbor. More info on KPM can be found on our website at: kolbeprisonministries.org

Program: KPM ministers to men and women “retreatant” inmates (men serve men and women serve women) who spend 3 full days attending retreats with KPM volunteers. Inmates of all faith (or no faith) backgrounds are welcome to attend KPM retreats. These retreats involve close interaction with an average of 40-66 retreatant inmates and include fellowship, good food, Christian music, heartfelt talks and testimonials, comradery, religious activities and more. KPM has presented a total of 400+ retreats at 75 prisons to over 18,000 inmates. KPM expanded into Louisiana (2018), Florida (2023), Oklahoma and Kansas (2024). In 2024 alone, over 1,000 KPM volunteers presented 60 retreats at 55 different incarcerations facilities across 5 states, to more than 3,000 inmates. At those retreats, KPM volunteers provided about 60,000 total hours of service and served approximately 25,000 meals. The KPM retreats are followed up by weekly catechesis including OCIA, Bible studies, and more.





Board of Directors – Brief Bios of Officers

Kerry Johnston, President. Mr. Johnston was born and in St. Paul, Minnesota, and relocated to Texas more than two decades ago. He has an extensive background as a business owner, for-profit executive, non-profit director, fundraising organizer and web developer. Kerry has a bachelor's degree in Geological Engineering and an MBA. While his technical and business education has served him well in his long career in the energy industry, his true passion is to serve God and help others grow in faith. He has also been very involved in pro-life work, Knights of Columbus, ACTS retreats, Bridges To Life, and the Stephen Ministry. He was the recipient of a 2017 Lumen Gentium Award from the Archbishop of San Antonio for his ministry work. Kerry is also the webmaster for KPM.

Jim Murphy, Vice President. Mr. Murphy hails from Houston, Texas and has a rich and diverse background in business, politics, community service and non-profit boards. He attended Strake Jesuit College Preparatory school and has a BA from the University of Texas, Austin. He has extensive experience in the commercial real estate business as President of District Management Services. Jim was a Republican member of the Texas House of Representatives from 2007 to 2009 and again 2011 to 2023, representing District 133 in Harris County. He served as Majority Leader of the Texas House from 2021 to 2023 and was the former chair or member of various Texas House committees, most notably the chairman of the Corrections Committee. After retiring from politics, Jim has been intimately involved in giving back and ministering alongside fellow Catholics through Kolbe Prison Ministries.

John Errante, Secretary. Mr. Errante was born in St. Louis, Missouri, and now lives in Lenexa, Kansas, a suburb of Kansas City since 1987. He has a BS in Math Education, a MS in Interdisciplinary Studies, and a PhD in Educational Leadership with coursework emphasis on e-Learning Curriculum and Content Development and a thesis emphasis on Restorative Justice. John became an Oblate of St. Benedict in July 2021 after learning that there are 450+ Oblates behind wire and walls of prison. He has been active in prison and reentry ministries for more than two decades. He remains engaged in many ministries and stays active taking long bicycle rides. KPM has become another vocation and he serves as a core team leader with the Archdiocese of Kansas City in Kansas.

Keven Birck, Treasurer. Mr. Birck, a life-long Catholic, grew up in the Hill Country of Texas. He has a bachelor's degree in accounting from Angelo State University and is a CPA. His career has spanned years in government accounting, public accounting, and, for the past twenty-five years, entrepreneurship and self-employment outside of accounting. Keven has had extensive leadership experience in ACTS as well as Kolbe Prison Ministry for which he has served on team for retreats since 2017. His current role as an officer on the KPM Board further exemplifies his dedication to service and helping others.

Kolbe Prison Ministries – Key Information

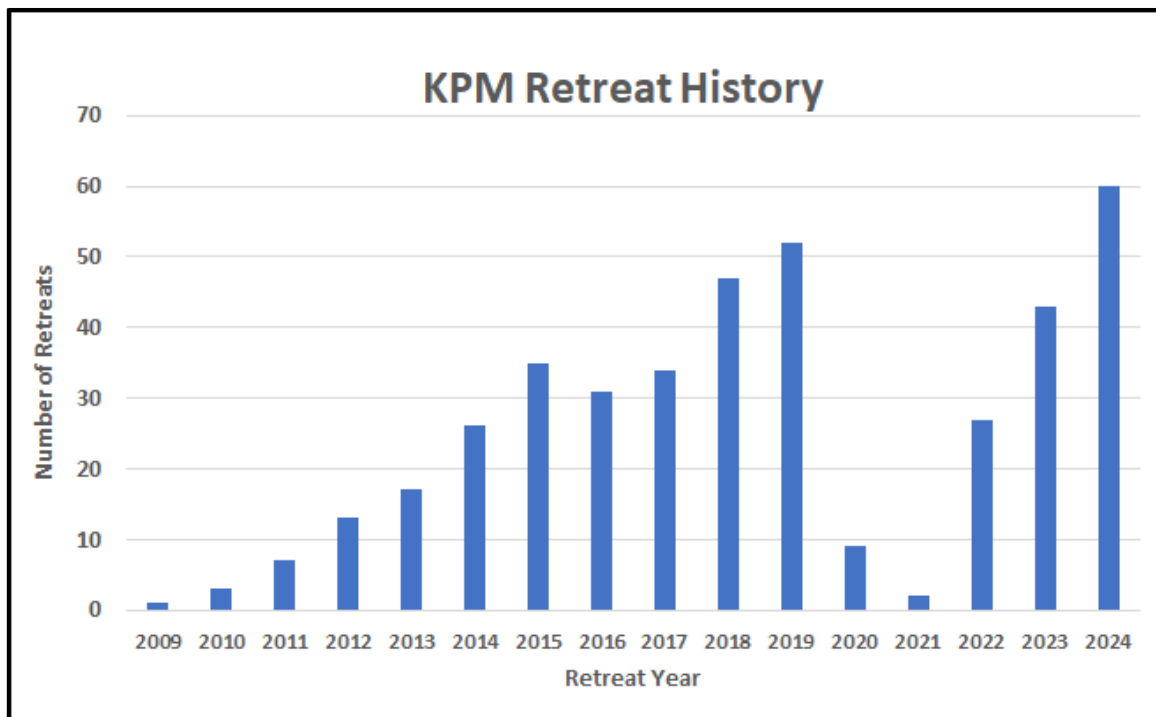
From 2009 through 2024

(some figures are approximations)

Total incarceration facilities served by KPM..... 75

Total number of states with KPM activities..... 5 (TX, LA, FL, OK, KS)

Total number of retreats presented..... 400+



Total number of inmate retreatants served..... 18,000+

Total number of “Free World” team volunteers at retreats..... 9,800+

Total number of meals served at KPM retreats..... 150,000+

Total number of miles driven by “Free World” team volunteers..... 1.1+ million

Total number of “Free World” team volunteer hours served..... 400,000+

Total amount of retreat team volunteer donations..... \$790,000+

Total cost to retreat volunteers for travel (mostly driving)..... \$950,000+

Total cost to retreat volunteers for lodging costs..... \$620,000+

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Total all cost to (donated by) retreat team volunteers..... \$2.36 million

Endorsements of Kolbe Prison Ministries

"We are blessed to have Kolbe Prison Ministries located in the San Antonio Archdiocese. I pray the KPM apostolate will continue to grow and spread to other dioceses as they seek to bring the healing love of Jesus Christ to our incarcerated brothers and sisters."

Bishop Gary Janak, on behalf of Archbishop Gustavo Garcia-Siller, Archdiocese of San Antonio

"I've had the opportunity to celebrate Mass at KPM retreats. I have been very impressed with this apostolate and have witnessed the impact it has had on the lives of our incarcerated brothers here in Oklahoma."

Archbishop Paul Coakley, Archdiocese of Oklahoma City

"Many of our diocesan prison ministers have witnessed the effectiveness of (KPM's) ministry that serves to enhance the good work done by our staff and volunteers in the penal system. Such a ministry is a sure sign of hope to those who are often abandoned or overlooked!"

Bishop Michael Duca, Diocese of Baton Rouge

"A bunch of my hunting buddies lured me out of the woods and into the prisons of Texas to hunt for souls with them. Beginning with offering Mass, hearing Confessions, and teaching Catechism to inmates, I have learned to love the incarcerated as they do. I am honored to be a part of the Kolbe Prison Ministries, and I plan to keep working with this great bunch of men and women who love the incarcerated as Christ has commanded us to do."

Fr. Mitch Pacwa, EWTN television host

"KPM focuses on faith formation of individual inmates, but the positive impact benefits, as they change values and behaviors, is widespread. Inmates, our officers, and our units have benefited. We appreciate and value their work."

Bryan Collier, Executive Director, Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ)

"I am deeply thankful for the opportunity to serve (on team) and am committed to supporting the continued growth and success of KPM retreats in Oklahoma. Through God's grace, we are witnessing the beginning of what I believe will be a lasting legacy of hope, transformation, and renewed faith."

Joseph Brantley, Oklahoma Department of Corrections Board Member

"My experience with Kolbe Prison Ministries has always been great! They provide meaningful spiritual programming and make a difference with both inmates and staff. Their ministry certainly works toward TDCJ's mission of rehabilitation and promoting a positive change in inmate behavior!"

C E Monroe, Retired Director III Region 2, Texas Department of Criminal Justice

KPM Retreat Photos



Road Often Traveled to Reach KPM



Life starts with challenges which may include broken families, fatherlessness, verbal and/or physical abuse, neglect or abandonment, experiencing or witnessing grave violence, deep-seated trauma, PTSD, lack of positive role models, & lack of safety/security.

Often followed by activation of fight-or-flight stress response, underdeveloped neural connections / cognitive abilities / emotional regulation, seeking refuge in the streets, drugs and/or alcohol abuse to numb the pain, dropping out of school, sense of hopelessness, depression, joining gangs for belonging/survival.



Leading to total self-centeredness, few job skills, little economic opportunity, keeping bad company, making wrong choices, committing criminal activities, getting arrested, landing in prison.

After some time behind bars, realizes the desire for something more in life, notices inmates who have strong faith lives, wants what they have, learns about Kolbe Prison Ministries, signs up to attend a retreat.



Initial entry into retreat filled with joy and welcome, experiences the love of Christ through KPM volunteers, seeks forgiveness (especially of self), realizes being made in the image of God and worthy of respect, decides to make positive life change and grow in faith.

After the retreat, the opportunity is available, if desired, to further explore the tenets of the Catholic faith through RCIA, Bible Study and more.



Thank You!

Thank you for taking the time to read through this information guide. KPM really needs and asks for your help. There are several ways to support and be a part of this life-changing ministry, including:

- Pray
- Donate
- Volunteer
- Recommend (tell others about us)

Pray: Please pray for the Lord's protection, provision and wisdom for our Board, Core teams, volunteers and benefactors. As expected, the Evil One does not want this ministry to exist or succeed, so we need your ongoing prayers.

Donate financial resources: Every KPM retreat has expenses to cover for materials used/consumed at the retreat including food items, serving supplies, print materials, table supplies and materials, and more. With the increasing number of facilities and scheduled retreats, covering these costs has become more and more burdensome on the volunteers. We need additional help from the broader caring community... people like you! Visit the KPM website "Support Us" page to learn about the different ways to financially donate.

Donate food and/or other material resources: As mentioned above, every retreat uses/consumes food items, serving supplies, print materials, tables materials, and more. But most especially meals. A generous food and/or material donation will go a long way toward helping to give our incarcerated brothers and sisters a life-changing (and hopefully soul-saving) retreat experience. The value of your in-kind donation may be tax-deductible; contact your tax advisor for more info.

Join us as a team member or ministry volunteer: Please prayerfully consider becoming actively involved in KPM by participating as a team member. There is also a need for volunteers to attend and help with prison retreat reunions, Bible studies, Communion service, and RCIA/OCIA classes. A number of men and women who initially dragged their feet and reluctantly volunteered as a retreat team member found the ministry to be very uplifting and rewarding... and they became repeat volunteers. How about you?

Recommend or endorse us: Be a witness and voice for KPM in your community. Everyone can be a prison ministry ambassador, a behind-the-scenes supporter, and an 'unofficial' KPM team member. All it takes is the willingness to promote the cause for bringing Christ to the prisons by passing along a gentle comment, a well-placed nudge or a sincere recommendation to a faith-filled man or woman to consider helping KPM. You may never know what such a simple, kind gesture will do to point a loving person toward becoming the hands, feet and voice for Christ in the prison and perhaps even save a previously lost soul. May God richly bless you for sharing your time and talent with these least brothers and sisters of ours.