

Saints Prison Ministry
P.O. Box 681
Moorestown, NJ 08057

Hello,

My name is Daniel Monko and I am writing this letter to say Thank You. Shame on me for not writing it sooner.

I have been in prison for the past 36 years. In 2003-4 the Saints visited Shawangunk Corr. Fac., whipped us good in a friendly game of softball, then took the time to share some much-needed brotherly spiritual love. I recall sitting in the grass along the third base line, watching and listening to the Saints, moved by the thought that a group of men cared enough about me and my comrades, such that they would collectively subject themselves ^{to} through the security protocols of being admitted into a maximum security prison. That afternoon of civility stayed with me, and many times over the past 17-18 years I've reflected on the fact that, but for some bad choices and circumstances that were outside of our control, we were all one and the same; we were all children of God.

I was born into a very small, very dysfunctional family. I came to prison in 1984, when I was 25 years old. I am now 61 years old, and for the past 36 years I have been a very lonely man. I've had no outside love. No outside support. No one ever sent letters to me, or birthday cards. But, for the past 17 years the Saints remembered that my birthday was on November 5th, and no matter where I was — in this prison or that prison — they made it their business to locate me and send me a birthday card, reminding me that I am loved. My birthday had become such a non-issue in my mind, that several times it was the Saints birthday card itself that reminded me that "Wow! Today is my birthday!"

Every time I received a card from the Saints I would spend a day or two reflecting on the fact that their card was the only mail I received — the only reminder that I was not in this world alone, that

Someone, somewhere genuinely loved me and cared for me and my soul, and each year I would say to myself "MAN - I gotta' write these guys and say 'Thank you'". But, as would be every year, I'd set the card aside with the full intention of writing that letter, and days would pass without me writing it, then weeks, then months, and before I knew it, I'd get another Birthday Card from the Saints wishing me another Happy Birthday, and the process would repeat itself - year after year. Shame on me.

Well, by the Grace of God, tomorrow I am going home. Nearly 36 years after this bid has started, I am finally going home. During this final week of my incarceration I have been trying to fill my days with meaning and purpose, both for myself and for others, and in these final hours of this final day, I want to take the time to write this long-over-due letter, expressing my thanks and my

gratitude for your love and your spiritual guidance. When I met the Saints, in 2003, I was not the same person I was, way back in 1984, just as I am not the same person today that I was way back in 2003. I like to think that I am a better man, and that is in no small part due to the example set by the Saints Organization. The character of each of you men and of the Saints Organization itself is admirable at the very least, and the example you fellas have set is precisely the sort that I have strived to model my own character on. With the benefit of the example set by the Saints, I have been able to re-calibrate my moral compass. I have become ~~more~~ more empathetic and compassionate towards my fellow man, striving to live each day by the Golden Rule. I have discovered how service-work adds a sense of meaning and purpose to my life that wouldn't otherwise exist, and, most of all, I have become closer in my relationship with Christ, my Lord and Savior.

Thank you for being there for me
when I thought that nobody loved me or
cared for me. You have helped me to get
through these long, lonely years, and for
that I am eternally grateful. God bless
you, and God bless the Saints.

kindest regards
 your brother
 in Christ,

Daniel

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