



Media Contact: John A. Thompson, Jr. (407) 629-4948

## **Kairos Outreach Supports Prisoners, Families**

ORLANDO, Fla. - The Kairos Prison Ministry program, headquartered in Winter Park, FL, provides faith-based Christian programs for prisoners and their families across the nation and Overseas. The ministry, which got its start in 1976, is made up of three programs: Kairos Inside for Incarcerated Men and Women; Kairos Torch for Youthful Offenders; and Kairos Outside for female family and friends.

### **Kairos Inside for Incarcerated Men and Women**

Kairos is a Christian outreach to imprisoned men and women. Well-organized and highly trained volunteer teams of men and women conduct an introductory three-day weekend retreat inside the prison. Kairos volunteers and leaders work with prison officials and the prison chaplain to identify inmate participants, usually incarcerated men and women seen as leaders among the prison population.

This short course in Christianity is conducted through education, meditation, group discussion and self-examination. After the initial three-day retreat, Kairos volunteers return to the prison for follow-up sessions with the Kairos program graduates. The graduates are also encouraged to meet in small groups together inside the prison on a weekly basis to continue their personal and spiritual growth.

### **Kairos Torch**

The fastest growing Kairos program is its program for juvenile offenders called Torch. The goals of Torch are to provide a safe place for juvenile offenders to explore their spirituality; to offer unconditional love and acceptance in a Christian setting; to encourage the sharing of life journeys and help the youthful offender to move forward with his/her life in a more positive way; and to foster spiritual growth through a long-term mentoring program.

Torch follows a similar format as the adult outreach program with a two-day weekend retreat followed up by continuing ministry that includes weekly, one-to-one mentoring by adult Kairos volunteers. Torch offers a significant potential to impact individual lives and the overall criminal justice system and prison population as a whole.

### **Kairos Outside**

Kairos Outside is a program designed to support the female loved ones of men and women who are or have been incarcerated. Relatives/friends "do time" right along with their imprisoned loved ones. The Kairos Outside program is a special weekend retreat where participants share with others how the incarceration of a loved one is affecting family life. Weekend retreats become a safe place where participants can share their experiences, share their faith and find comfort and support.

The goal of this Christian ministry is to bring about healing, forgiveness and spiritual growth in participants. Through small groups, Outside participants find the strength and support for the unique challenges they face.

For more information, call (407) 629-4948 and speak to our Executive Director, John A. Thompson, Jr., or visit the Kairos website at <http://www.kairosprisonministry.org>.

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