



# Little Lambs Inc

A John & Eileen Sala Prison Ministry

<http://www.littlelambsinc.org>

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## BLESSING EVEN IN THE SORROW

During the last 4-5 weeks our nation has been on 'lock down' to prevent spread of the corona virus. We had to close the ministry to protect the health of our volunteers. Because we knew that the same thing was happening in the prisons, we also realized that we had become an avenue of ministry during this time of crises. So many inmates would depend on us for spiritual food and fellowship during this time of isolation. A few of us dedicated ourselves to not going out in public at all. Because of that, we were able to keep the lessons going out during this time. Usually one person a day picked up the mail and processed it. We left some on our porch to be graded by other volunteers, some we delivered discreetly. Of course we all took many, many lessons home to be graded. And surprisingly we graduated about 20 inmates!

Nevertheless we were able to get all the lessons out to date. But as we worked, we kept a keen eye on the news for reports of the virus inside the prisons. Slowly, the insidious pestilence was introduced into prisons and infected staff and inmates. Florida had early infections in mainly 3 of it's 157 facilities, Sumter CI, Tomoka CI and Blackwater CI. These 3 facilities account for 169 of 179 confirmed cases in the Florida prison system. California, which represents a large part of our student body, has 166 inmates testing positive and 113 staff positive. They have experienced only 1 death whereas Florida in Blackwater prison has had 4 deaths early on. Now it is reported many positive tests with NO symptoms confounding researchers.

The Federal Bureau of Prisons has had a worse problem with widespread infections of 649 inmates and 336 staff testing positive. They had had 25 deaths throughout their national system. One Marion, Ohio, prison has 73% of it's inmates test positive for the virus. With intensive testing Ohio identified 12,919 cases but they have no deaths. Michigan last reports 572 positive inmates and NY has 1,000 inmates positive and 794 staff.

All of these reports has kept us on our knees praying for inmates and staff and making decisions in how to proceed. Almost all of our staff are high risk due to age and chronic conditions. We want our best for them. Speaking with the post office employee about mail and corona virus policy, she produced a notice for her employer stating that mail, paper mail, is not a problem or source of the virus. They claim that it does not live on paper and they have no restrictions. Their vulnerability is contact with persons either in the post office or on their routes and ask that no one make contact with the mail carrier while on their rounds. Also to limit their exposure through social distancing. We still use caution with masks and gloves to open the mail.

We have been receiving mail from inmates and an increase in requests for lessons. Some lessons were returned from a year or two ago indicating that with time on their hands in lockdown they pulled out their old lessons and began again. PTL. We get letters and notes thanking us for continuing to serve them right at this time and that they are praying for us. Yes, this season has brought each one of us the tests that the Lord has decreed. "I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, *and* according to the fruit of his doings." Jeremiah 17:10 (KJV). I pray that through all our tests, the trials of our faith, "being much more precious than of gold that perishes, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: 1Peter 1:7 God has kept many prisoners safe from this harm and for this I praise Him greatly and stand amazed at His Grace and Mercy! He has kept too, all our volunteer staff, for which I am very grateful!

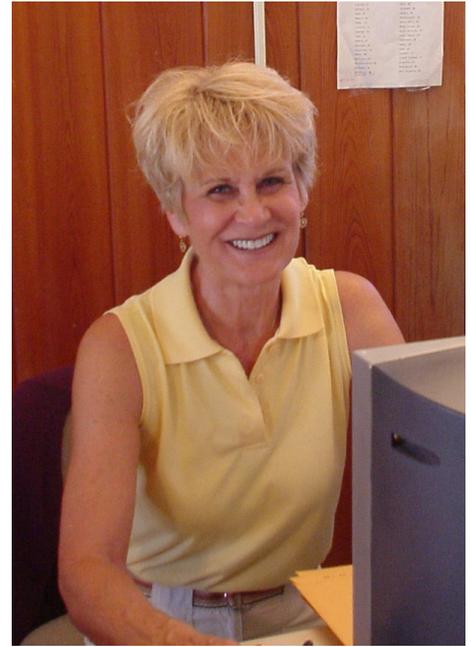
## WHY I VOLUNTEER AT LITTLE LAMBS by Ruth Esposito

Twenty years ago Eileen and John spoke at our church and God drew my husband and me to this ministry. I have always volunteered somewhere for the last 50 years, but Little Lambs was different. It was God centered. Philip and I started folding papers and stuffing envelopes, and eventually Philip went to Avon Park Correctional Institution with John and started his own Bible Study there—Spirit, Soul and Body.

I graduated from folding to a computer desk (which is a miracle in itself) and love my time every Tuesday with Eileen, Jan and Diane and whoever stops in at the office. Love the work and the Spirit filled conversations. Then we all bring home Bible Studies to correct.

It is so rewarding when we read how God, Jesus Christ and the Little Lambs Lessons have changed the lives of these prisoners all over the United States. In any given month we have over 2,000 students. If you have any spare time, give working at the office or correcting a lesson a try. **YOU WILL BE BLESSED.**

Thank you, Eileen, for giving me a great opportunity to serve God. Love you, Ruth



## A Tribute to a Mom

Dear Salas, My name is Amber and I am in prison in Ok. There was a girl here named Robin who left me the lesson 1 packet and so I completed it and really would love to continue in the studies.

I came here in May 10, 2018 on robbery 2 of 8 years. I was pregnant and I had my son, Samuel, on Nov.19. I also have a daughter who was 6 months old when I got arrested. Her name is D. I haven't seen my daughter physically but my mom sends me pictures of her and my son. And also **my mom is awesome!** She goes all out for my babies and yes, I know that God has blessed me tremendously because there's women here who don't get pictures or even know where their kids are who they are with. So I'm very thankful. When I got arrested my kids dad left me and it turns out to be another blessing. At first it hurt, but the closer I get to God the more I know that its a door that He closed. He's still out there hanging with the same people doing the same things and getting high and drinking and don't even want nothing to do with my kids. Being here I've gotten closer to God and He's changing me from the inside out and it's not easy at all, but the rewards of it are. Plus I'm so tired of doing the things I was doing and having nothing and doing nothing with my life. Now God has blessed me with 2 babies who count on me and so yes, I'm excited about my future and thankful for Him allowing me to come here and Him opening my eyes and heart to trust and know Him. My prayers are with you all and I look forward to my next lesson. Amber.

*Surprisingly it is not often we get a letter like this. Sometimes they are so worn out they don't even care. Or the family is so broken the children aren't kept with the family. Or perhaps the family cannot keep the children. Sometimes, drugs has taken away the ability to love! But praise God for this grandmother who rescued these 2 babies from the world's system and is loving them. Scripture often talks of the bond between a mother and her child, even comparing His relationship to us to a mother's love: Can a woman forge her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yes, they may forget, yet I will not forget you. Isa 49:15*

Hey, Little Lambs Staff...

Boy, You know, it's always good (smiley o's) to hear from you. It's a blessing and a true honor for me to just be a part of this ministry and to learn what the true Word of God says and means. I'm running around like a kid in a candy store:) the inspiration I get from these lessons are a very big eye opener. I enjoy very much doing the digging for the answers. I hope that I've done them right and I'm looking (smiley o's) forward to the next lesson.

I know how hard it is to spread the word. It takes a lot of time and hard work. It seems your work is never done. You all are special to me and I pray that you will continue to do the Lord's work.

I pray that out of His glorious riches He may strengthen you with power through His Spirit in your inner being. In Jesus name ..Bill in IL.



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**Hi...This was such a great study. thank you so much for your time and effort. This is the 12th study I'm enrolled in and it is by far the Best! The format is great and is strengthening my ability to study with the KJV.**

**We are on lockdown due to covid-19 and I have plenty of time right now. I would greatly appreciate if you could send the next 2-3 lessons at once and I will send them back together. Thank you again! May God bless you and your family. Justin** *It is just not possible to send more than one lesson as we have found that we lose track of studies and it confuses our computer tracking.*

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*Dear Little Lambs, May this letter find you in good health and safe from the virus. I write to you because I loved this study. You guys are blessed with a spirit of teaching. Thank you so much. I do not tithe, but this study has me thinking. So I am going to start tithing to a church. I have prayed that God guides me to a church. May our Lord and Teacher bless you daily. Frank. (Some of our inmates are released and continue the lessons. We always strongly suggest that they find a good church home, disclose themselves to the pastor and sit under authority.)*

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Dear John and Eileen, first of all I would like to thank you for all your encouraging words. I hope and pray that this letter find you all full of God's amazing love and grace. As I write this letter to you, you are most likely been quarantined against the rapid spread of the virus. We are declaring Psalm 91 over our lives daily, and I recommend you do that as well. We have all been quarantined here on the Dalhart unit. But I am feeling great and am believing in God for our protection as that we may continue to serve Him until the very moment He takes me home. What an exciting time to be alive and to know who we are in Christ Jesus! I feel that God has appointed us to be living at this exact moment in history, near the end of days, because He know we will properly represent Him through the challenging days ahead. We must stand strong, be filled with encouragement and boldly proclaim His message of hope, salvation and deliverance to those around us, wherever we may be. From my understanding now more than ever, we must be the light in the darkness. Let the Holy Spirit fill you so full of His peace and joy that you are over-flowing! As we are consistently maintaining calmness in the midst of a very trying and worrisome circumstances, unbelievers around us will be compelled to come to you to ask, "What must I do to be saved? I want what you have!" from my little understanding of the Word the Holy Spirit has put it on my heart that as believers we strongly entering the "beginning of birth pains" of Matthew 24:8. The earth will be facing many problems this year, not just this virus. May the Lord keep you and your ministry filled with His amazing love, joy and grace. I am enjoying this study and look forward to the next one. It makes me feel good to be able to study with so loving and understanding people. Tony.

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Dear Little Lambs Inc....My name is Eric . I used to be in a bible study class of y'all and I wish I still were. I lost your address years ago and I just have found it again. It used to help me understand the bible more. I used to take bible study courses and you would grade them for me and send them back. I would love to do these again if you still do the. **This was about 15 years ago** so I hope you still do these things. If you do please send me one to do. I hope everyone of y'all are doing good and I still pray every day and live for God so please write me back very soon. I would love to hear from you. Thanks a lot, Eric.

Dear Partners and Friends,

I don't know about you but I'm ready for this to be over! Yet we yield to the Lord as Sovereign! I am thinking that it truly may be the beginning of sorrows as we must wait to see the fallout as time passes from the initial period. Last night a huge thunderstorm thundered throughout the night, big crashing rolls of thunder. I lay there and listened thinking, Lord, is this what it will sound like when you come or in the final war because the huge rolls of thunder sounded like war!

Despite what awaits us after this is over, keeping our faith is the most important thing, to overcome to the end. To be able to change and adapt will be a trait we will have to develop. The world has been ravished and changed by this new type of virus; economies have been brought to their knees. What will this all bring? Only God knows! Having taught a class on Genesis in January, I am struck by the number of times God references creation to describe His power as in Job 38 when He asks Job, "Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth?" Indeed all of Job 38 is a recitation of His sovereign power! And we must trust Him in all things! I think I would like a study finding all the references to creation by God in the Bible.

Our local prison Chaplain Vinsen has kept in touch but the prison is still on lockdown and inside they are using masks throughout the prison. The Pride Unit, an industrial plant on the grounds of the prison staffed by inmates is making hand sanitizer and other cleaning products to use in the prison and at some local businesses. Of course everyone is asking when will classes start again. They still have no visitation and confined to their quarters. When I called in, I asked Robert, one of our chapel clerks, if he would write and tell us what it is like for the inmates. Perhaps he will write this week.

To be able to quietly minister to these inmates at this time has been a great blessing to us. And it has kept hope and life alive rather than boredom. I know that it has been a huge blessing for the inmates. I hope we can reopen to our volunteers very soon, of course with all the guidelines!

Our ladies group met for the first time in over a month with an outdoor meeting and social distancing. They found it rather pleasant sitting under the trees and feeling the breeze. Everyone was careful for a very huggy group and kept their distance. The outside noise, however, was a little difficult to cope with. You just don't often factor in planes, big trucks, traffic, and people at meetings, but nevertheless, they felt it was greatly needed and helpful. Thank you, Mary.

I think the biggest benefit of this sanctuary time has been the ability to spend lots of time with the Lord, in worship, in prayer, in study. It is like old times when I didn't have to work outside and I could devote long hours at His feet. I have truly been blessed.

Mother's Day is around the corner and it has been my privilege to work with lots and lots of mothers in the ministry. It is really a great thing because they have a mother's compassion to minister to someone's children. We all do it hoping that in return God will send someone to minister to our own children. As a mother of 4 children and now 9 grandchildren, they have been the greatest pleasure and reward of my life. To be treasured, loved, honored, care for, respected, even sought after by them, is a great joy. Truly, God knew that it would be through our children we would have our greatest treasure. And I know we all wish we could have been better mothers. I have learned to forgive myself knowing I did the best with what I had. Adding to that is the fact that I was 40 years old when I came to know the Lord and knew little about the Word. But God in His mercy to my children, changed me. This week in being home I have been reading my journals and the verses again that brought me through so many trials and troubles. With an abundance of tears, I remembered the times that God was there to see me, no, to carry me through. This has redoubled my desire to offer thanksgiving, and it has encouraged me in the Lord. I often think that's what David did to encourage himself in the Lord, read the Psalms that he had written earlier in times of trouble and when God delivered him.

My prayer is that all mother's are blessed abundantly by God and His Son, Jesus Christ. As a 'family' of Father and Son, they were aware of the mother's role in bring Jesus, the Messiah, to the earth to bless themselves with more children! Little sons of God!

God bless you and keep you very safe!

Eileen Sala