

Visit to Norwich Prison

Hebrews 13:3 "Remember those who are in prison, as though in prison with them."

Ros Powell shares her experiences of a visit to Her Majesty's Prison (HMP) Norwich.

On Thursday 28th May 2015 Shauna McCue, Tessa McBrien and I, went along to HMP Norwich to speak and minister to the prisoners. We were greeted by The Catholic Chaplain, Ursula Edwards in the car park of the very large and quite overwhelming prison, which consisted of ten wings and a Special Care Unit. This prison has been situated overlooking the city of Norwich since 1887.

On the long drive from Stoke on Trent to Norwich we asked the Lord to show us His Heart for the lads who would be at the services: The Lord didn't disappoint - He gave us lots of wisdom and words of knowledge. (1 Corinthians 12)

Where ever we go to speak and minister we make sure that we storm Heaven's Gate. On the day we went to HMP Norwich there were hundreds and possibly thousands of people praying for the lads and their families. The request for prayer went viral via UCB, Revelation TV and other intercessors across Europe: people as far away as Rome and Tenerife were praying! Our prayer group at St Teresa's, Stoke On Trent has a Christian Text Ministry, whereby prayer group members text their prayer requests which are then forwarded to over 100 intercessors, who in turn forward the prayer request onto their own prayer partners.

We were led by Ursula through many securely locked gates until we came to the Chapel where I would be speaking. The four of us spent time praying in and around the Chapel then we stood at the back and greeted the lads as they came in – 16 in total. One hobbled in on crutches and we smiled at one another and said "that's the word of knowledge about the knee!". There was no music ministry apart from a worship cd playing in the background.

Ursula introduced us and I stood up and began to preach: I could feel every prayer that was being said on our behalf, the anointing was amazing and tangible in the room. I gave my testimony and told them how Jesus loves them: that He forgives all our sins when we come to Him in repentance and invite Him into our hearts.

To show them that the Lord forgives the biggest sinners I quoted the scripture from Luke 23:43 when Jesus was on the cross and said to the thief *"Truly I say to you, today you shall be with Me in Paradise"* I also quoted Luke 8:2 and I explained how Mary Magdalene had seven demons cast out of her but Jesus totally forgave all her sins.

After the talk I asked if anyone wanted to receive Jesus as their personal Saviour and I invited each one, in the quietness of their own heart to ask the Lord to forgive them, and in turn for them to forgive all who had hurt or harmed them or their family. There was an overwhelming response in the room as they asked Jesus to forgive them and to come powerfully as the Fire of Pentecost fell upon them. As the four of us ministered the manifest presence of the Holy Spirit was felt in the Chapel and tears flowed. It was very powerful and we prayed for baptism of the Holy Spirit – each one who asked received the gift of tongues.

We told the lad who hobbled in on the crutches that the Lord had given us a word of knowledge for him with regards to his knee, he told us that he had a tumour on his knee and as we prayed the fire of God fell upon him in an amazing way; he said his heart was racing and that he was on fire, then he put his crutches to one side and stated 'I'm healed.' God touched him mightily both spiritually and physically – which was a wonderful witness for the other lads to see.

One of the men during the ministry session said he'd have to go because he had a privileged job in the kitchen and if he wasn't on time he'd lose his job. Five minutes later he was back with his uniform on and a friend in tow! He told us his mate wanted a prayer and the Lord obliged and gave him tongues too!

At the end of the service the lads were all heading to the adjacent dining area and we were all buzzing with excitement at what the Lord had done. Suddenly the same lad came back and he asked if we'd pray for another friend, who came with his dinner plate in one hand and his other hand on his back where he was in excruciating pain. We all laid hands on him and he immediately tapped into the tangible anointing in the atmosphere. As a result the Lord healed his back; he received Jesus into his heart and started praying in tongues. Wow Lord!

Before we knew it another lad wanted prayer for his family – we suggested we pray for him so that he could in turn pray for his family - in the spirit!

On a spiritual high we left this wing and after lunch we were escorted by Ursula to the multi faith room at the other side of the prison to speak to another group of prisoners.

Our excitement level was high as an assortment of 26 lads of all nationalities asking for 'rosemary beads' came into the room. The one thing that struck us was how polite and well-mannered they all were. They took their seats; again the only music was via a Christian Worship CD, as I stood up to speak fully aware that this session was for three hours. I decided not to ponder too much on the time factor as the Lord was in charge and not me.

As I started to preach again you could feel the Holy Presence of the Lord. I explained about the gifts of the Holy Spirit – especially the gifts of tongues. One chap piped up saying "I have heard the gift of tongues on the Harry Potter films Miss" so I explained about the Holy Spirit's version from the Bible (the Real McCoy!)

I asked them to stand up as I took them through a prayer and again I invited them, in the quietness of their own heart to ask the Lord to forgive them, then each one was prayed over individually for the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. Whilst I was speaking I felt the Lord pointing out to me one particular man, as I felt he was being called by God in a special way, so I was surprised when he got up and walked out! I then thanked the Lord when 15 minutes later he came back into the room. I asked him if he would like prayer and he said no! I took him to one side and I said "The Lord is calling you but you know it don't you" and he answered "yes I do" then he asked for prayer and was baptised in the Holy Spirit and spoke in tongues.

With ample time left I asked the Lord what he wanted to do for the rest of the session and I was led to give out the general words of knowledge that had been given on our journey specifically for this group. As I prayed the words we had been given you could see the Lord ministering healing to past hurts. God is outside time and all things are possible to him. He can easily heal the wounds of the past as well as the now. Psalm 90:4 "*A thousand years in your sight are like a day that has just gone by, or like a watch in the night.*"

Then as the lads responded to the words of knowledge for physical healings, I encouraged those who had just received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit to come forward and lift up their hands towards those seeking healing. As a result there were healings of hands, shoulders, backs and even a short leg grew! The Biblical Model of Pentecost in Acts 2:41 shows us that the apostles and disciples received Holy Spirit anointing and fire and the following day they went out and brought 3000 into the kingdom of God! Bring it on Lord for the hour we are living in.

The Holy Spirit was moving powerfully in the room and there was such a hunger and a thirst. They were being healed physically, spiritually and emotionally; many were set free. The Spirit of Prophecy fell in the room and their thirst for more led them to ask us deep questions about Jesus.

One of the words of knowledge we received was a line from a Christian Song "...I see a generation rising up to take its place". The Holy Spirit was moving among the spiritually hungry and thirsty that day - revival was breaking out - The Finger of God came and touched HMP Norwich. The prisoners were parched, they were searching for the living water "...whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life" (John 4:14).

Before we knew it the 3 hours were up and the lads had to leave – we looked out of the window and saw the lad whose leg had been healed witnessing and shaking his leg for all to see; including the prison officers!

A few days later we received an email from Ursula to say that the lads were still buzzing from the day – some who hadn't been able to attend the service, were disappointed so Ursula and the ones who had received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit and Tongues prayed with them and they received the same gift. Ursula has also confirmed that the young man whose knee was healed is, as a consequence bearing witness in the prison of the power of God for healing him and setting him free! Wow eh – our God is a big God!