Marcos Gray
Inside/Out
Prof. Moe

What is prison in Christmas like in prison

Prison spent in "CEMENTED COFFINS" is horrible. The isolation from our families is the worst; its compounded by the feeling of knowing we're separated from loved ones, especially if you call home & there is a gathering of loved ones. Seasonal depression is a valid psychological ordeal even for non-prisoners, but I believe the aspect of being in prison during the holidays is abhorrent.

How do you celebrate the holidays with your families?

Well, if you're fortunate enough to have a visit from family, during the holidays, you'll be able to spend that hour with them at a table, eating unhealthy processed food, but that familial bond supercedes the less-than ideal circumstance I find myself in.

What can Friends/Family do for the incarcerated to buoy their spirits this time of year.

I believe simply sending cards, visits, accepting phone calls from us. I'm fortunate to receive the aforementioned, but ultimately, even with all of that, it only mitigates the pain.

What are some challenges when it comes to keeping positive attitude during holidays.

The aforementioned positives are nice, however, the pains from imprisonment are massive; the depths of being taken away from family isn't easy to quantify. I mean, you can't walk around with a dark cloud over you all the time, so you have to make a conscientious effort at keeping oneself positive. This is done by your faith (if you possess it); you can do this with dealing with trustworthy guys while here (they do exist). But whatever you do, you must seek to gravitate towards the positive.

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Gray

What sorts of resources do prisons offer around this time of year?

They have Church services to those who wish to attend it (if they have christian on their Identification card). A local church, Willow Creek, gives us reading material, junk food, spiritually encouraging material as well. But the most valuable resource inside of these prisons, I admit, is the guys here. We have to help one another find humanity in such a bleak circumstance.

What is Christmas like in prison?

Just another day. The combination of being separated from family and friends, and being devalued by the judicial / prison system complex - broadly - according to the scarlet lettered level of the offense(s) incarcerated persons have been convicted of committing - whether wrongfully or not - noticably diminishes the spirits of the vast majority of us in respect to holidays on a whole. And, it's mainly because we feel left out or unable to meaningfully participate in celebratory fashion - in freedom - with our loved ones, but, we also look forward / or imagine returning home to our families and friends and being present with them again for the holidays - which may also return its value to our lives again.

Eric

CHRISTMAS IN PRISON IS LIKE ANY OTHER DAY IN PRISON; WITH THE EXCEPTION OF A BETTER THAN NORMAL MEAL AND DIFFERENT MOVEMENT SCHEDULE.

FRIENDS AND FAMILY SHOULD BE ABOUND TO BUOY OUR SPIRITS EVERY DAY, NOT JUST ON THE HOLIDAYS. VISITS AND MAIL BOLSTER YOUR SPIRITS YEAR ROUND.

THERE IS NO CHALLENGE TO KEEPING A POSITIVE ATTITUDE DURING THE HOLIDAY IF YOU LOOK AT IT AS EVERY OTHER DAY. THE PLACE IS HORRIBLE NO MATTER WHAT TIME OF YEAR IT IS.

PRISONS OFFER NO RESOURCES OF A SPECIAL NATURE THIS TIME OF YEAR. IF YOU HAVE PSYCOLOGICAL ISSUES TO DEAL WITH YOU CAN SEEK MENTAL HEALTH ASSISTANCE BUT RISK HUMILITATION ISOLATION AND MISTREATMENT FOR DOING SO.

I was asked to write a paper in response to several questions about the Christmas season while incarcerated. Christmas for me, although it is a very special time, is like any other day. The institution tries to bring holiday spirits by putting up holiday lights in the Kitchen (chow hall) and they prepare a meal but its not like moms!

I don't get to spend the holidays with my family. most of them live out of State. I do the phone call but it isn't nearly the same, and because they are out of State I don't get visits. There isn't much friends and family can do. I believe it is up to the individual to keep himself/herself or spirits lifted. For me, as a Christian, I focus on the birth of Christ my Savior and what He has done for me. This helps me to keep my attitude positive because I understand that I have been forgiven and I am loved; but most importantly is that God isn't finished with me.

~~Edward~~ Eddie