



YOKEFELLOWSHIP PRISON MINISTRY

VOLUNTEER SELF-SCREENING

*"For we do not preach ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord,
and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake."*

2 CORINTHIANS 4:5



More than fifty years of experience have revealed the good, as well as the harm, that comes from well-intentioned volunteers who are filled with the Holy Spirit and eager to minister behind bars. As an organization, it is YPM's responsibility to do all within its power to: 1) equip and protect our volunteers, 2) share our beliefs with inmates and ex-offenders to help yoke them to Christ, and 3) protect the good name of the YPM so that we can minister for years to come. Part of this process is to carefully screen potential volunteers to assure they are willing to: 1) serve under YPM's leadership and oversight, 2) share and profess YPM's beliefs, and 3) comply with all the rules and guidelines of the institutions in which YPM ministers.

First and foremost, to be a YPM volunteer you must be in complete agreement with our Statement of Faith. To those who are in agreement, being a YPM volunteer is both an awesome privilege and a tremendous responsibility.

It's a Privilege

It is indeed a privilege for YPM volunteers to enter prisons to minister to inmates. Because of YPM's long-standing and excellent reputation, many institutions have opened their doors to our ministry. These institutions recognize that YPM provides oversight to their ministries and holds their volunteers accountable. The YPM Board of Directors works hard to assure this happens. YPM volunteers can feel confident that there is a solid "roof" over their heads.

YPM volunteers should **never** take this privilege for granted and become lax in obeying the rules. It can be snatched from them in an instant for the slightest violation or perceived violation of a rule. If falsely accused, they may rest assured their Area Council and, if necessary, the central organization will endeavor to resolve the problem.

Your Responsibilities

As a YPM volunteer you represent Christ, other Christians, as well as YPM. You have an awesome responsibility. Everything you say and do reflects on Christ, other Christians and YPM. Inmates, as well as staff, listen and watch you. Inmates, especially, are very adept at picking up on un-Christlike attitudes and prejudices, and insincerity. You must make every effort to reflect the love of God at all times and keep a humble spirit. *Prison ministry is never about you and always about those to whom you minister.*

YPM's Responsibilities

YPM provides all volunteers with literature, annual training opportunities, and a dynamic annual conference to equip them for the ministry. New volunteers are also mentored by existing volunteers and the YPM Volunteer Handbook is especially helpful in a volunteer's initial training. Significant time, energy and resources are invested into the training and certification process. Local Area Councils provide direct oversight and address local needs.

Is YPM for You?

Here are a few of the questions an YPM Area Council representative will ask and discuss to see if volunteering under the YPM umbrella will be beneficial to everyone involved.

1. Why do you want to minister to inmates and/or ex-offenders?
2. What is your religious background or training?
3. Are you willing to participate in mandatory YPM training/certification events at least once every two years?
4. Are you willing to comply with YPM's Ministry and Security Do's and Don'ts, and other directives determined by either the local AC or the central organization?