



Tim Duncan: ministering to the marginalized

Tim Duncan and his wife Blanca have been involved with the Sisters of Notre Dame through their connections at their home parish, St. Cornelius in Long Beach. As Tim began his RCIA process for entering the Catholic Church, he became acquainted with Sr. Kathleen Burns, one of the instructors of the program. Later, he attended a Bible study with Sr. Kathleen who also introduced him to Sr. Valerie Roxburgh. Over time, Tim and Blanca became close friends with Sr. Val who suggested they become SND Associates, with Sr. Paulyne Tubick as their sponsor. Tim explains, "I have always been drawn to the loving nature of the Sisters of Notre Dame. Through the Associate program, I learned all about their ministries, and I think their efforts in Uganda have stood out the most to me."

Before his own journey of becoming an SND Associate, Tim had a profound spiritual breakthrough while on retreat, altering his relationship with Christ. As he recounts this instance he says, "My wife and I attended the Catholic Cursillo in 2016 and it changed our lives. After our weekend God kept sending people--inviting me to participate in one prison ministry or another. [After this] I finally said yes!"

Tim exemplifies the SND spirit in several ways. He is a special education math teacher at Warren High School in Downey. He also

serves on a Kairos retreat team for the inmates at the California City Correctional Facility, located 25 miles north of Lancaster. Kairos is a three-day program modeled after the Catholic Cursillo program that originated from Majorca, Spain in the 1940s.

The primary goal of this prison ministry is to give residents serving time in the facility an opportunity to encounter Jesus, and to cultivate a relationship with Him. The program is two three-day weekends a year consisting of 10 lay talks, three clergy talks, music sessions, group presentations and Mass. Approximately 45 residents participate. There is also a monthly group reunion every second Sunday. This provides the opportunity for an inside team member (an inmate) to speak, followed by group discussion on the topic presented.

Tim has enjoyed this meaningful and much needed work with the residents within the correctional facility--bringing his personal experiences, along with his faith, to share in group discussions. He believes his own spiritual journey as an SND Associate has nurtured his faith and outreach. As he said, "The Associate program helped to direct my attention to the marginalized members of society. For now, God has pushed me towards the imprisoned." How different the world would be if each person took the time to stop and recognize the humanity of the marginalized!