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How Religion Contributes to the Common Good, Positive Criminology, and Justice Reform

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Abstract: This paper argues that religious freedom has consistently been linked to volunteerism and the work of faith-based individuals and organizations in addressing a variety of social problems including crime and delinquency, substance abuse treatment, offender rehabilitation, and prison reentry. Moreover, the emerging subfield of positive criminology is beginning to document the ways in which faith-based efforts are providing more positive and restorative approaches that tend to be effective in reducing crime and promoting prosocial outcomes. Indeed, religious interventions are proving to be some of the most innovative and consequential at a time when jurisdictions are faced with ever-tightening budgets. Moreover, the role of faith-based volunteers and even offender-led religious movements in the process of identity transformation and reform is particularly relevant and timely when there is such a widespread call for evidence-based approaches to justice reform.

Keywords: religion; freedom; volunteerism; prosocial; crime; positive criminology; desistance; identity transformation; rehabilitation

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1. Religion and Volunteerism in Contemporary American Society

Volunteers make enormous contributions to civil society in the US (Putnam 2000; Putnam and Feldstein 2003). The nonprofit sector is a volunteer-rich resource and plays an increasingly important role in the engagement of local jurisdictions. This is particularly striking in the human services sector, where volunteers are able to provide social service delivery when federal, state, and local funding continues to shrink.

We know that many Americans volunteer and that volunteers make critical contributions to American civil society. For example, volunteers provide a host of community services that the formal sector is either unwilling or unable to effectively provide, such as remedial education, sporting and recreational programs, medical and health services, mentoring of at-risk youth, shelters for the homeless, substance abuse counseling, offender treatment programs, educational programs for prisoners, and prisoner reentry initiatives.

According to a study by the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), more Americans than ever are volunteering.[1] The 2018 Volunteering in America study found that more than 77 million adults volunteered their time through an organization in the previous year. These extraordinary figures do not even account for the millions of Americans—some 43 percent—who voluntarily serve and support friends and family, or more than half of American adults (51 percent) who do favors for their neighbors—what might be called acts of "informal volunteering". In sum, volunteers provide a staggering economic benefit to American society.

Volunteering is also a key ingredient in the formation of what is often called social capital—social connections that build trust and engagement in communities (Putnam 1995). Robert Putnam believes that communities with high social capital are more likely to exhibit trust among their inhabitants, thus establishing a more cohesive community that also reaps economic as well as social benefits (Putnam 2000).

Americans not only give financially, but they are also generous with their time. Volunteers donate to charity at considerably higher rates as nonvolunteers. For example, they

are more likely to talk to neighbors, contribute to civic groups, invest in local communities, participate in public meetings, help their neighbors, and participate in elections.

What factors predict the likelihood that one will volunteer in the first place, though? As it turns out, religious affiliation and participation is one of the key factors predicting volunteer engagement, both in sacred and secular organizations. In sum, the more religious people happen to be, the more likely they are to volunteer (Hustinx et al. 2014).

Joseph Johnston found that increased religiosity is associated with increased service to others (Johnston 2013). This research provides longitudinal evidence that religious practices were linked to increased volunteering over time. In fact, volunteer work in faith-based associations improved the chances that volunteers would participate in additional volunteering activities (Johnston 2013).

Utilizing data from more the US Congregational Life Survey, Jennifer McClure examined factors of congregational life in order to determine which were correlated with adherents offering assistance to nonfamily members (McClure 2013). The most reliable relationship to providing social support came from involvement in private devotions. Those spending elevated time in prayer, meditation, or Bible reading were more likely to provide a loan, care for those in need, and help people to find employment (McClure 2013).

Americans who volunteer for religious groups are overwhelmingly more likely to also volunteer for secular groups than those who do not volunteer for religious groups, according to Robert Putnam of Harvard University and David Campbell of the University of Notre Dame.

I recently interviewed a group of faith-motivated volunteers who regularly travel to a correctional facility in a rural area where they work with prisoners in a faith-based trauma and healing program, supported by the American Bible Society. The volunteers were all senior citizens, and some of them would drive several hours just to get to the correctional facility. They stayed in a local hotel for several days a week, working with prisoners before driving home. The expenses of this weekly routine were covered by the volunteers themselves. Without exception, the volunteers claimed that they were the real beneficiaries of working with these prisoners.[2]

According to Putnam and Campbell as well as other researchers, a major reason for the higher levels of volunteering among religious people is the vibrant social systems and linkages that exist in congregations. Churches, synagogues, and mosques are unique communities that encourage volunteerism and other- focused outreach and introduce individuals to secular as well as religious opportunities to serve others. This service creates social bonds which make it more likely that people will respond to volunteering invitations. Moreover, these connections often reach well beyond houses of worship. In fact, there is support for the notion that for nonreligious people, having strong connections to those that are highly active in congregational life increases the likelihood that they will volunteer (Lim and MacGregor 2012; Merino 2013). This is important because volunteerism means a great deal to America in ways that are substantial as well as positive, and if religion can help to multiply volunteerism, society will benefit from this good will.

Out of a concern for the welfare of others, religion can be seen as a catalyst that stimulates or generates volunteers. Whether through retreats, classes, small groups, camps, church-sponsored volunteer work, or a host of other related group functions, such events link people to networks of social support that are often quite meaningful. We now have a mounting body of evidence suggesting social support in houses of worship is associated with better coping skills (Krause 2010), increased life expectancy (Brown et al. 2003; Krause 2006a), stress reduction (Krause 2006b), and better self-reported health (Krause 2010). In fact, according to Harvard scholar Robert Putnam, congregations are storehouses of reciprocity that yield social capital[3].

If Putnam is right, congregations could logically be understood as fertile training ground for civic engagement and much more. More recently, Putnam has extended this argument by stating that people connected to congregations are more pleased with their lives as a result of attending religious services more frequently and building these vibrant

social networks, thereby building a unique sense of belonging to a faith-based community (Putnam and Campbell 2010). Putnam argues that these faith-based networks generate unique effects that cannot be explained in any other way. Simply put, these faith-motivated networks of support are responsible for significant and beneficial outcomes (Lim and Putnam 2010).

In an important study using multiple national datasets, Stephen Monsma reports that religiously committed individuals who give to philanthropic causes and volunteer tend to be more civically engaged (Monsma 2007). Moreover, the highly religious are also more likely to volunteer for secularly based causes than secular respondents are to support religiously based community causes. Finally, the most religiously involved are significantly more likely to display behavior that reflects responsible citizenship.

This study seems to challenge stereotypes of religious volunteers in that it shows it is the religious among us, not the irreligious, who are most likely to volunteer. Evangelical Protestants—whose growing influence some have argued is a concern to democracy—are more likely to volunteer and give than are the nonreligious. In general, religiously active people tend to be more involved in features of civic responsibility than do the irreligious[4].

In sum, religious freedom has been catalytic to the growth of religion in America, which continues to be linked to other-mindedness and concern for one's neighbor. A tangible expression of this concern is manifested in the varied and ubiquitous acts of service provided everyday by countless volunteers in America. Putnam's calculation of the contribution of religious congregations to America's overall storehouse of social capital and good will—coupled with a growing body of evidence on the important role of religiously motivated volunteers—is truly immense.

2. The Role of Religion in Prosocial Behavior

Prosocial behaviors are those generally intended to help others. Prosocial behavior is recognized by a concern for the feelings and welfare of other people. Behaviors that can be described as prosocial include not just feeling empathy and concern for others, but actually behaving in ways that benefit or help others. In *The Handbook of Social Psychology*, C. Daniel Batson explains that prosocial behaviors refer to "a broad range of actions intended to benefit one or more people other than oneself—behaviors such as helping, comforting, sharing and cooperation." (Batson 2012).

In recent years. the term prosocial behavior has come to mean far more than the opposite of antisocial behavior. As criminologists, we have argued that the field of criminology has been preoccupied with only "half" of a field[5]. Its general focus has largely been limited to understanding antisocial behavior, with little focus on prosocial activities. That is, criminologists tend to ask why people commit crimes; they rarely ask why people do good deeds. Rather than neglecting "half" of human behavior, we think criminologists should also be interested in studying a number of important questions that center on positive or prosocial factors. For example, positive criminology is interested in understanding: (1) Why do the vast majority of Americans choose to obey rather than break laws? (2) Why do most people raised in communities of disadvantage turn out to be not only law-abiding, but also good citizens? (3) How is it that offenders who previously exhibited antisocial patterns of behavior can undergo transformations that result in consistent patterns of positive behavior, accountability, and other-mindedness? (4) What is the role of religious communities in not only guiding individual behavior in positive ways, but the role of faith-motivated groups and organizations in fostering prosocial activities?

Involvement in religious organizations and faith-based groups can enhance the development of and assimilation into personal networks that provide both emotional and social support (Johnson et al. 2000a, 2000b; Jang and Johnson 2004; Putnam and Campbell 2010).When these networks overlap with other networks, it is reasonable to expect these networks will not only restrict illegal behavior but may also protect one from the effects of living in underprivileged areas (Krohn and Thornberry 1993). In other words, an individual's integration into a community-based religious network may lessen the effects of

other factors that might otherwise lead to illegal behavior. Thus, religious networks can protect individuals from the deleterious effects of negative stimuli (Johnson 2006; Johnson and Siegel 2006a).

This influence may help us to understand why church attendance among youth from deprived communities makes them less likely to abuse drugs than comparable youth from non-urban settings who attend church less often or do not attend at all (Johnson and Siegel 2006b). Relatedly, prior research has assessed the intergenerational influence of religion and concludes parental religious dedication is a protective factor for crime (Regnerus 2003; Petts 2009). Taken together, the research literature confirms that the effect of attendance is significant and unique. Either through the networks of support provided, the learning of self-control through the teaching of religious moral beliefs, or the condemning of illegal or inappropriate behavior, religious service attendance appears to be quite consequential.

Over the last several decades, scholars have produced an emerging research literature that demonstrates the many ways in which religious activities and involvement are connected to beliefs that are meaningful for a number of important outcomes. These include overall flourishing and wellbeing (VanderWeele 2017; Makridis 2019), social integration and support (Lim and Putnam 2010), delivery of social services to disadvantaged populations (Cnaan 2008; Johnson and Wubbenhorst 2017), mental and physical health (Koenig 2015; Rosmarin and Koenig 2020), forgiveness (McCullough et al. 2005; McCullough 2008), voluntary activities (Wilson and Musick 1997; Lam 2002), crime reduction (Johnson 2011; Kelly et al. 2015), prisoner rehabilitation (Hallett et al. 2016), family relations (Mahoney et al. 2003; Edgell 2013), substance use/abuse (Bahr and Hoffmann 2008, 2010), sobriety (Lee et al. 2017), healthcare utilization (Benjamins and Brown 2004), coping strategies for stressful conditions (Park 2005; Ellison and Henderson 2011; Makridis et al. 2020), and even longevity/mortality (Hummer et al. 1999; VanderWeele et al. 2017). Consequently, efforts to restrict religious freedom will unnecessarily inhibit the effort of faith-motivated volunteers, acts of service, reduce social capital, and come with a significant cost to society.

We live in an age when discussions about inequality and discrimination and the need to correct injustice in all its manifestations are clearly front and center in contemporary society. Examples of injustice receive ample attention—and it is good that they do. Receiving far less attention, however, is the empirical evidence documenting that many people are working diligently in an effort to remedy many of the injustices and social problems found in our society. It is one thing to complain about injustice, inequality, or various social problems; it is quite another to intentionally work to reduce or even eliminate these problems. Stated differently, there are those who spend a great deal of time *looking* for justice, while there are others who spend a great deal of time quietly *doing* justice. Oswald Chambers provides a critical insight when it comes to the issue of justice. He argues that people who *look* for justice can easily become sidetracked by any number of distractions. He goes on to invoke the teaching of Jesus from the Sermon on the Mount, suggesting that a better way of correcting injustice is to simply give or do justice at every opportunity. Chambers puts it this way: "Never look for justice in this world, but never cease to give it." (Chambers 2017). One can make a compelling argument that this is the very essence of what countless volunteers—often motivated by faith—do each day without any fanfare.

3. Religious Freedom and Positive Criminology

A relatively new subfield known as "positive criminology" (Ronel and Elisha 2011) touts more restorative tactics—building positive social linkages, spirituality, service, honesty, and identity transformation—that tend to be more efficacious than more traditional and punitive approaches (Ronel and Segev 2015). From this perspective, correctional systems that promote virtue development ought to be examined seriously by correctional decision makers[6]. Although examples of this are not common, a tangible and exemplary initiative can be found at the Louisiana State Penitentiary (Angola). This facility has had a reputation for being one of the most troubled and unethical correctional facilities in the US. However, Angola is recognized today for the many inmate-led congregations within

the institution and a fully operational seminary. In fact, adjudicated juveniles from New Orleans are being given the option to serve their sentence at Angola and to participate in an inmate-led mentoring project.

Research now confirms that even modest interventions such as visitation can help to reduce recidivism. One study sought to determine if visits from community volunteers —specifically clergy and mentors—had any influence on recidivism by examining 836 offenders released from different prisons in Minnesota. The results indicated that community visits significantly reduced all three measures of reoffending (rearrest, reconviction, reincarceration). The positive effect on recidivism increased as the proportion of community visits to all visits increased. The findings suggest that visitation by community volunteers should be considered a programming resource to be used with offenders who otherwise lack social support (Duwe and Johnson 2016).

Angola is America's largest maximum-security prison and is a working prison farm housing over 6300 inmates. It inhabits the property of a former slave plantation. Approximately 75% of inmates currently serving time at Angola are serving life sentences with no hope for parole (Louisiana Department of Corrections 2015). The average sentence length for prisoners not serving life sentences was 92.7 years in 2012. For many decades, most guards at Angola were convicts themselves. The practice of using inmates as guards saved money but also contributed to the violence and low morale of prisoners at Angola over many decades. The corruption, brutality, and violence heightened Angola's notoriety for being the "Bloodiest Prison in America."

In 1995, Burl Cain was appointed the new warden at Angola. Knowing the dismal history and challenge of this under-resourced and notorious prison, Cain knew it was necessary to do something dramatically different to put Angola on a more humane and prosocial trajectory. His idea was a novel one: establish a Bible College as a means of providing educational programs for prisoners and of giving them another chance to make something positive out of their life. Cain was optimistic that a prison-based seminary could successfully train prisoners to become ministers who over time would become effective change agents in the prison—ultimately replacing a culture of violence and corruption with a culture that was redemptive, hopeful, and personally transformative.

Later that year, Warden Cain was able to convince leaders of the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary to open a satellite campus within the walls of the Louisiana State Penitentiary. The building housing the Angola seminary was paid for with private donations. While legal doctrine has long rejected the notion that inmates have anything positive to contribute to the management of prisons, the Angola prison seminary and its unique inmate minister program operation challenge this notion.

In 2012, we led a research team in launching a major five-year study of prisoners at Angola, especially those participating in the Bible college. Previous research on religion within prisons had focused largely on faith-based programs administered by faith-motivated volunteers and generally confirms that these programs can increase prosocial behavior inside of prison and even reduce recidivism following release from prison (Johnson 2011). However, very little was known about what happens when inmates form and lead their own religious groups, interpret theology from inside of prison, and practice their faith communally inside of the cellblocks. Our research culminated in a book entitled *The Angola Prison Seminary: Effects of Faith-Based Ministry on Identity Transformation, Desistence and Rehabilitation*. (Hallett et al. 2016).

Our research team analyzed survey data from 2200 inmates at the Louisiana State Penitentiary and conducted more than 100 life-history interviews of inmates and staff at this maximum-security prison. We examined the role of religious education and involvement in inmate-led religious congregations that were central to transforming prisoners and the housing units where they reside.

Utilizing a mixed-methods approach, a series of studies were produced that document the process of identity transformation and the catalytic role that religion plays in this process. We also found significant linkages between participation in the prison seminary

and inmate-led churches on disciplinary convictions, crime desistance, rehabilitation, and prosocial behavior within the prison environment. Most importantly, the research points to the central role of inmate-led efforts to bring about these salutary findings.[7] The prison seminary graduates who had now become inmate ministers led most of Angola's roughly two-dozen autonomous churches. Their ministry, however, transcends these formal gatherings, as their elevated status also enables them to enjoy a unique freedom of movement to minister among their peers on a daily basis. As one Inmate Minister described it, we have "the opportunity to actually practice what we preach. It gives us the opportunity to actually *be* the church instead of just *having* church." This sense of service is the hallmark of an authentic faith that is common among the inmate ministers that we observed.

Ethnographic accounts of inmate graduates of Angola's unique prison seminary program suggest that inmate ministers assume a number of pastoral service roles throughout the prison. Inmate ministers lead their own congregations and serve in many different capacities, including hospice, cellblock visitation, tier ministry, officiating inmate funerals, and through tithing that supports indigent prisoners. Despite the fact that most will die in Angola, inmate ministers are able to find purpose for their lives. The inmate ministers assist others in finding that meaning, thereby providing them with the human grace and dignity they may have thought they lost or perhaps never had.

Faith helps prisoners to care about others and display their humanity on a daily basis. By choosing a better self, inmates are able to transform their lives. Several themes of positive criminology emerge from inmate narratives: (a) the importance of humane treatment of prisoners by correctional staff, (b) the value of building trusting relationships for prosocial modeling and improved self-perception, (c) repairing harm through faith-based intervention, and (d) spiritual practice as a roadmap for building a constructive self-identity and social integration among prisoners[8].

Though research on how inmates can help other prisoners to change is uncommon, the Field Ministry program within the Texas Department of Criminal Justice is an exemplar in this regard. The program enlists inmates who have graduated from a prison-based seminary to work as "Field Ministers", serving other inmates in various capacities (Duwe et al. 2015). Colleagues and I have recently examined whether exposure to Field Ministers is inversely related to antisocial factors and positively to prosocial ones at three maximum-security prisons where the Field Ministry program operates. Preliminary results indicate that inmates exposed to Field Ministers more frequently and for a longer period of time tend to report lower levels of criminological risk factors, aggressiveness, and higher levels of virtues, human agency, religiosity, and spirituality. We find that prisoners who are the beneficiaries of the inmate-led field ministry help other prisoners to make positive and prosocial changes. We conclude that inmate ministers play an important role in fostering virtuous behavior (Jang et al. 2018b) and achieving the goal of offender rehabilitation (Hallett et al. 2016). Moreover, we find that some offenders in prison should be viewed as potential resources waiting to be reformed with the help of other offenders (Jang et al. 2018a).

Furthermore, there is empirical evidence that faith-based prison programs are cost-effective. Duwe and Johnson found that participation in a faith-based prisoner reentry program that has operated within Minnesota's prison system since 2002 is effective in lowering recidivism. The program relies heavily on volunteers, and the program costs are privately funded, with no additional costs to the State of Minnesota incurred. The study focused on estimating the program's benefits by examining recidivism and post-release employment. The findings showed that during its first six years of operation in Minnesota, InnerChange produced an estimated benefit of $3 million, which comes to nearly $8,300 per participant (Duwe and Johnson 2013).

4. Offender-Led Religious Movements and Positive Criminology

A 2017 book and documentary film, both titled *If I Give My Soul: Faith Behind Bars in Rio de Janeiro,* argue that inmate-led Pentecostalism thrives inside of prison because it offers prisoners—mostly poor, darker-skinned young men—a platform to live moral and dignified lives in a social context that treats them as less than human, or "killable" (Johnson 2017). Additionally, a recent study conducted in El Salvador by scholars at Florida International University concluded that the only realistic hope for incarcerated MS-13 gang members to desist from a life of crime and violence is by means of a conversion to Christianity and subsequent involvement in Evangelical or Pentecostal churches (Maslin 2018). This initial study is intriguing, but more rigorous and systematic research is necessary to understand how, if at all, inmate-led religious interventions may be linked to positive and consequential outcomes (Cruz et al. 2018).

In the book *The Wounded Healer* (1979) Henri Nouwen states, "the great illusion of leadership is to think that man can be led out of the desert by someone who has never been there" (Nouwen 1979). This line of reasoning would seem to suggest that prisoners may well be the most appropriate people to aid other inmates in the process of being reformed. Who is more suited to challenge, affirm, or relate to a prisoner than another prisoner? Similarly, offenders participating in 12-step programs are essentially working from a similar "wounded healer" paradigm—where addicts help other addicts to stay sober through various social support acts and acts of service. Perhaps there is a unique authenticity enjoyed by offenders that enables them to be connected to other offenders in ways that free-world people cannot.

A new line of research is necessary that will focus specifically on religious groups indigenous to the cellblocks—what we are calling Offender-led Religious Movements (ORMs). ORMs have the capacity to provide participants with a strong identity, an alternative moral framework, and a set of embodied practices that emphasize virtue and character development. Though there are significant roadblocks to the proliferation of ORMs, this innovative approach to rehabilitation and reform holds significant potential to transform the character of not only individual prisoners, but particular cellblocks or housing units, and possibly entire correctional facilities. Though nearly invisible to scholars and co-religionists on the outside, studying ORMs may provide rich insight into how virtue and character are developed inside of correctional facilities through inmate-led religious groups. This kind of research will help scholars and practitioners to understand whether ORMs can provide a path for prisoners to experience an identity transformation that is consistent with the need to rehabilitate offenders. Moreover, this line of research will shed light on how, if at all, ORMs emphasize or facilitate prosocial behavior, spiritual awakening, service to others, prayer, perseverance, and forgiveness. It will address questions such as: How and why do ORMs emerge? What character traits and virtues are promoted by ORMs? How are these values and behaviors developed by prisoners participating in ORMs? What impact do ORMs have on the broader prison environment? How can social scientists measure the impact of ORMs on individual offenders, housing units, and the prison environment more generally?

5. Implications for Justice System Reform

Today, there is widespread consensus on the need for criminal justice reform. Preliminary research into offender-led religious movements suggests that these movements may be a key factor in rethinking some of our approaches to correctional programs and rehabilitation. Obviously, we need empirical research to confirm the nature, prevalence, and consequences of these movements. Are ORMs isolated or quite common? Are these inmate-led interventions effective? If so, can ORMs be replicated in different jurisdictions and correctional environments?

The question regarding potential replication of ORMs, however, presents policy makers with a dilemma. ORMs, such as those led by inmate pastors at Angola, pose a legal challenge to correctional agencies. The well-documented trusty system dating back to the

early 1900s allowed inmates to wield authority over prisoners. Angola was one of many prisons where correctional staff designated select inmates to control and administer physical punishment to other inmates based on a hierarchy of power. The legal case of *Gates v. Collier*[9] ended the flagrant abuse of inmates under the trusty system at the Mississippi State Penitentiary (Parchman) that had existed for many decades. Other states using the trusty system were also forced to do away with the trusty system due to this ruling. Following the *Gates v. Collier* decision, states adopted policies preventing prisoners from holding positions of authority over other prisoners.

This legal decision and subsequent policy change have made it virtually impossible to organize and establish inmate-led congregations. In spite of this, at least twenty states have launched prison seminaries. Nonetheless, Louisiana remains the only state so far to allow inmates to form and lead their own religious congregations. Thus, Angola is the only prison we know of that currently allows inmate-led congregations to exist.

Interviewing inmate pastors at Angola, as well as correctional officers and other prison administrators, it is apparent that inmate ministers do not have "authority" over other inmates. A more accurate description is that ministers simply serve other prisoners. Indeed, the varied acts of service that our research uncovered at Angola suggest that inmate pastors represent anything but abusive authority. As one Inmate Minister expressed to us, "[M]y status as Inmate Minister makes me even more of a servant to others, to give my time to the advancement of God's mission, which is the comforting of his people: 'Feed my sheep.'" (Hays et al. 2018). In inmate-led churches, inmate ministers surely *lead* other inmates, but how and what they practice is actually "servant leadership", where the leader's main goal is to *serve*, not control, dominate, or lord authority over others.

The current push for criminal justice reform has brought together leaders from both political parties. However, solutions to criminal justice reform often remain difficult to find because of budgetary constraints. Research in the subfield of positive criminology suggests restorative approaches—including those that foster social connectedness and support, service to others, spiritual experience, personal integrity, and identity change—may well be more helpful than long-established approaches to punishment (Ronel and Elisha 2011).

Consistent with restorative justice practices, these approaches seek to develop active responsibility on the part of individuals who have grown accustomed to a lifestyle of irresponsibility (Braithwaite 2009). From this perspective, correctional practices should be devised to promote virtue. Consequently, the goal of justice or punishment should not be to inflict pain or exact revenge but rather to reconstruct and reform individuals (Johnson et al. 2016).

Should offender-led religious movements continue to be found to foster rehabilitation and identity transformation, as well as recidivism reduction, there may be significant potential for ORMs to make prisons and communities safer, and to do so as a cost-effective alternative. Thus, it would seem to make sense to pay more attention to these kinds of faith-based approaches and to promote them as potential aids to the common good. Policy makers and practitioners should have access to rigorous research which evaluates the value of ORMs in addressing topics such as rehabilitation, drug treatment, educational and vocational programs, prisoner reentry, and criminal justice reform more broadly.

The ubiquitous nature of religious programs within correctional facilities provides an opportunity to better employ these positive criminology approaches. In addition, programs such as AA provide a platform and ready-made environment to make addiction treatment more accessible to prisoners in various kinds of correctional facilities. In fact, AA is already in existence in most prisons. Religious activities could easily be extended to allow inmates time and instruction for completing the steps.

Faith-based activities in prisons are very popular. For example, beyond work, education, or vocational training, religious activities attract more participants than any other personal enrichment program offered inside of a prison (Beck et al. 1993). In addition, faith-motivated volunteers and programs already supply the biggest percentage of volunteers that come into prisons with the intention of working with prisoners in ways that

are restorative (Duwe and Johnson 2016). These positive criminology programs advance increased spirituality that is linked to greater personal change when combined with service and represent our best chance of achieving evidence-based solutions to the problem of crime and offender rehabilitation.

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Notes

1 *2018 Volunteering in America*. Corporation for National and Community Service. Washington, DC.
2 Interview with volunteers took place at the Riverside Regional Jail, in Prince George County, Virginia, on 14 January 2020.
3 Social capital is the effective functioning of social groups through interpersonal relationships, a shared sense of identity, a shared understanding, shared norms, shared values, trust, cooperation, and reciprocity. Social capital is a measure of the value of resources, both tangible (e.g., public spaces, private property) and intangible (e.g., actors, human capital, people), and the impact that these relationships have on the resources involved in each relationship, and on larger groups. It is generally seen as a form of capital that produces public goods for a common purpose. Social capital has been used to explain the improved performance of diverse groups, the growth of entrepreneurial firms, superior managerial performance, enhanced supply chain relations, the value derived from strategic alliances, and the evolution of communities.
4 Ibid.
5 See the mission of the Baylor ISR's Program on Prosocial Bahavior: Criminology has always been only "half" of a field. Its focus is limited to antisocial behavior, with almost no attention ever given to prosocial activities. That is, criminologists ask why people do, or do not, commit crimes; they rarely ask why people do, or do not do, good deeds. The Program on Prosocial Behavior emphasizes the neglected "half" of human behavior. For example, why do so many people generously give money to help those in need? Or, why do most of the people reared in 'bad' neighborhoods turn out not only to be law-abiding but to be good citizens? Indeed, how are people transformed from antisocial patterns of behavior to positive patterns? In keeping with the overall mission of ISR, the role of religion in promoting prosocial behavior will be the central concern. Not only the role of religiousness in guiding individual behavior but the role of faith-based groups and organizations in fostering prosocial activities. https://www.baylorisr.org/programs-research/program-on-prosocial-behavior/ (accessed on 27 May 2021).
6 For a creative example, see (Cullen et al. 2001).
7 Ibid.
8 Ibid.
9 *Gates v. Collier*, 501 F.2d 1291, was a landmark case decided in the US federal court (in 1974) that brought an end to the Trusty system and the flagrant inmate abuse that accompanied it at Mississippi State Penitentiary in Sunflower County, Mississippi.

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