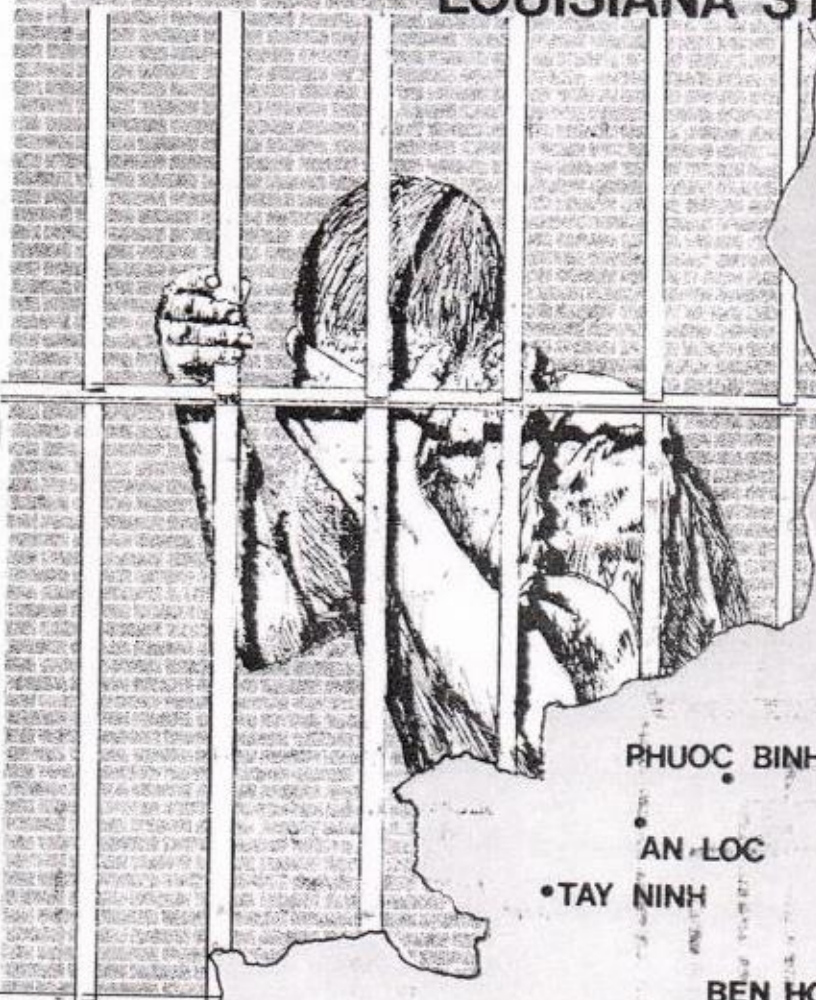


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THE ANGOLITE

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Featuring:

VIETNAM: A CRIMINAL LEGACY

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religion in prison

A BEACON OF PROMISE

Great things come to men who have the vision, and the courage, to dream - who grasp at the ungraspable; who try to touch the untouchable. In this world of casual death, unspeakable terror, and a crisis of fear, it's not an easy thing for a man to seize a dream and pursue it to fulfillment. A man's heart must possess dogged determination, uncompromising will, and quiet patience if he's to transform the hope and promise of a dream into a satisfying reality. But most of all a man's heart must possess faith - not only faith in his own ability to achieve, but faith in an omnipotent power.

Joseph Wilson came to Angola in 1968. There was only 1 chaplain at the prison at that time. The prison suffered from a woefully inadequate budget and was torn by a violent inmate subculture. At best the prison could only pay lip service to the spiritual needs of the tortured, forgotten souls who live in the belly of the devil-beast. Still, Wilson was determined to do his best, to inject hope in a seemingly hopeless situation. He instantly recognized the need for a prison chapel - and from the moment he walked through the Front Gate, he heard talk about a chapel being built at the prison. But he found that, at Angola, time sows one bitter disappointment after another. A chapel at Angola became an almost mocking thought kicked around in complaining conversations.

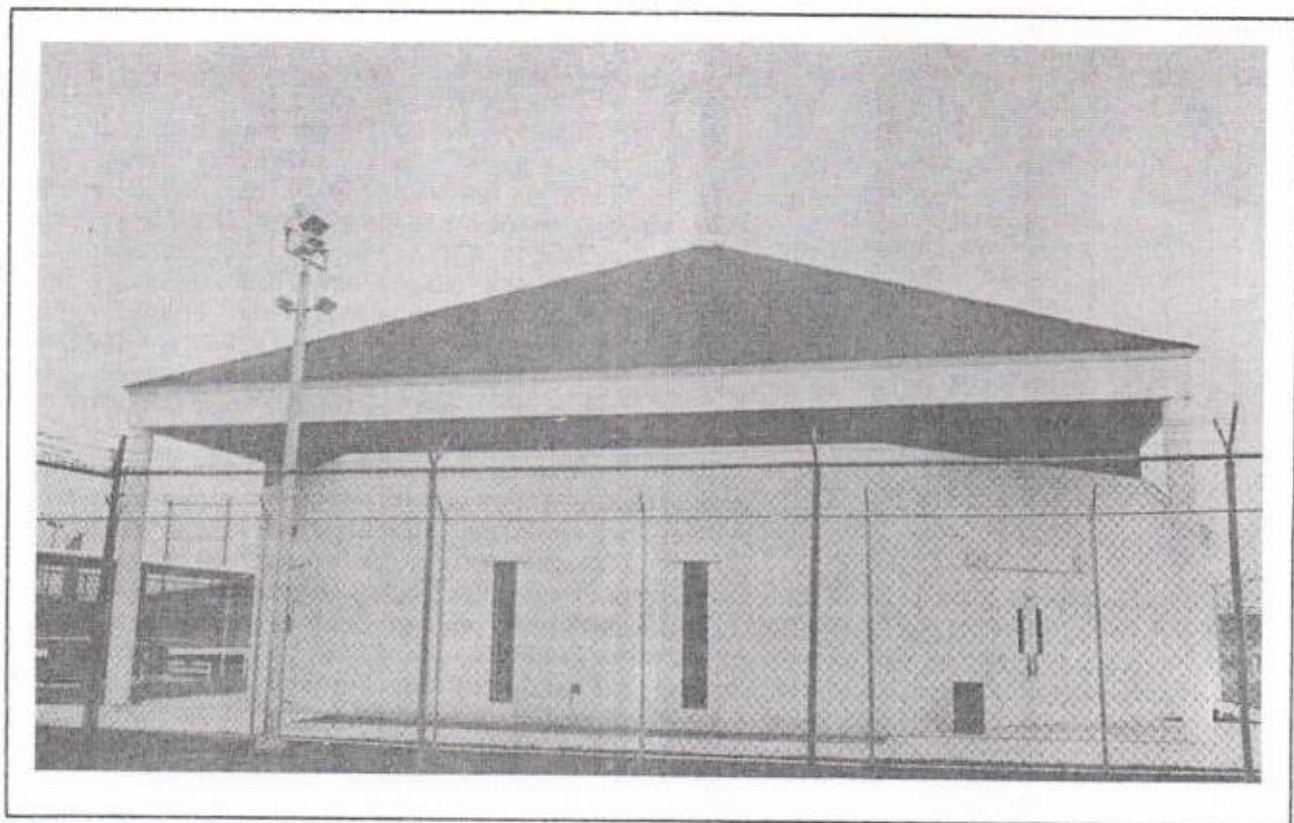
Wilson, however, believed in the chapel idea. He had faith that it would one day be built at the prison. That was his dream. He became an ardent supporter of the Angola chapel idea. He was often heard telling inmates "to have faith" - that they would one day be able to worship in a chapel on the prison grounds. Many of the inmates didn't believe it. They, too, had heard the chapel idea kicked around for years - and time had worn their faith out.

Another man also had a dream that a chapel would be built at Angola - the Rev.



WILSON & STOVALL - KEEPING THE FAITH

RELIGION IN PRISON (Cont.)



James L. Stovall who is Executive Director of the Louisiana Interchurch Conference. Through diligent efforts, Stovall brought together in 1978 a group of the state's most prominent religious leaders and they established a fund to raise money for the chapel. Firm roots were at last finally planted. Religious leaders like Bishop Joseph Sullivan of the Diocese of Baton Rouge and Dr. Robert L. Lee of the Louisiana Baptist Convention joined and help spearhead the mammoth fund-raising drive that would eventually raise more than \$450,000.

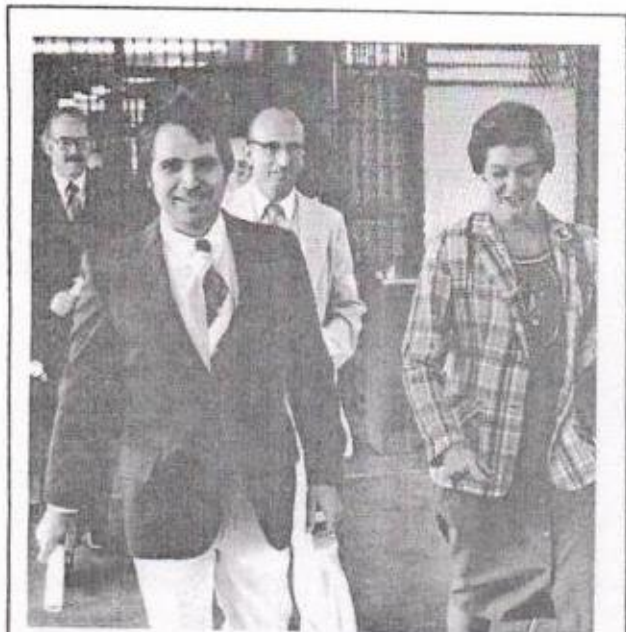
Three years later, the efforts of countless phone calls, letters, trips, and lectures paid off. The money needed for the chapel had been raised and the Woodrow Wilson Construction Company was awarded the contract. Ground-breaking ceremonies were conducted at Angola's Main Prison Complex under the oppressive, scorching July heat last year. From that

time the inmates have each day passed up-and-down The Walk watching the progress of the chapel being built before their eyes. A few old-timers recalled Wilson's past remarks "to keep the faith."

Inmates hate prison construction - a sinister dread passes over them when they see new dormitories and cellblocks being built. Such construction means more prisoners, more hopelessness - it stands as a paradigm of the system's failure. Every new cell built demonstrates just how bankrupt the system really is. That's why the construction of the chapel had an ameliorative effect - it became a symbol of hope, of belief. In a world of darkness, despair, and sorrow, it became the light at the end of the tunnel - a beacon of promise that no man walks alone; a final dwelling place for the suffering to seek mercy.

The chapel is a dream no more. It is

RELIGION IN PRISON (Cont.)



WARDEN MAGGIO & MARGARET BROWDER (Front)
JOHN KING & CHAPLAIN WILSON (Rear)

the rest of the prison buildings and can be seen from all directions. The chapel was christened the "New Life Interfaith Chapel." The chapel will accommodate 200 worshippers of all the religious faiths at the prison. Each religious organization will be allowed one night a month to conduct their services. That night will be an addition to the regular meeting nights the organizations enjoy in the prison's A-Building and Education Department. The chapel has four offices - three for the prison's resident chaplains and one for two inmate clerks. The chapel will also accommodate Bible studies and baptisms and prisoner marriages.

The chapel was recently dedicated at the prison. Rev. Stovall moderated the ceremonies. Featured speaker was Charles "Chuck" Colson, a staunch prison reformist and head of a national-based prison ministry called Prison Fellowship. Colson called the chapel a "magnificent demonstration of Christian love - and he told the 100 prisoners on hand that if Jesus were here on earth in physical form He

now a white octagonal building sitting directly across from the Main Prison Dining Room. It's towering steeple stands above



RELIGION IN PRISON (Cont.)

would be in the midst because "He's a prophet of those who are downtrodden, forgotten and oppressed."

Prominent corrections officials were also present at the dedication, including Corrections Secretary John T. King who told the gathering that the chapel was realized because of a \$250,000 donation from the Louisiana Interchurch Conference, \$81,000 from the Louisiana Baptist Convention, and \$120,000 from the state.

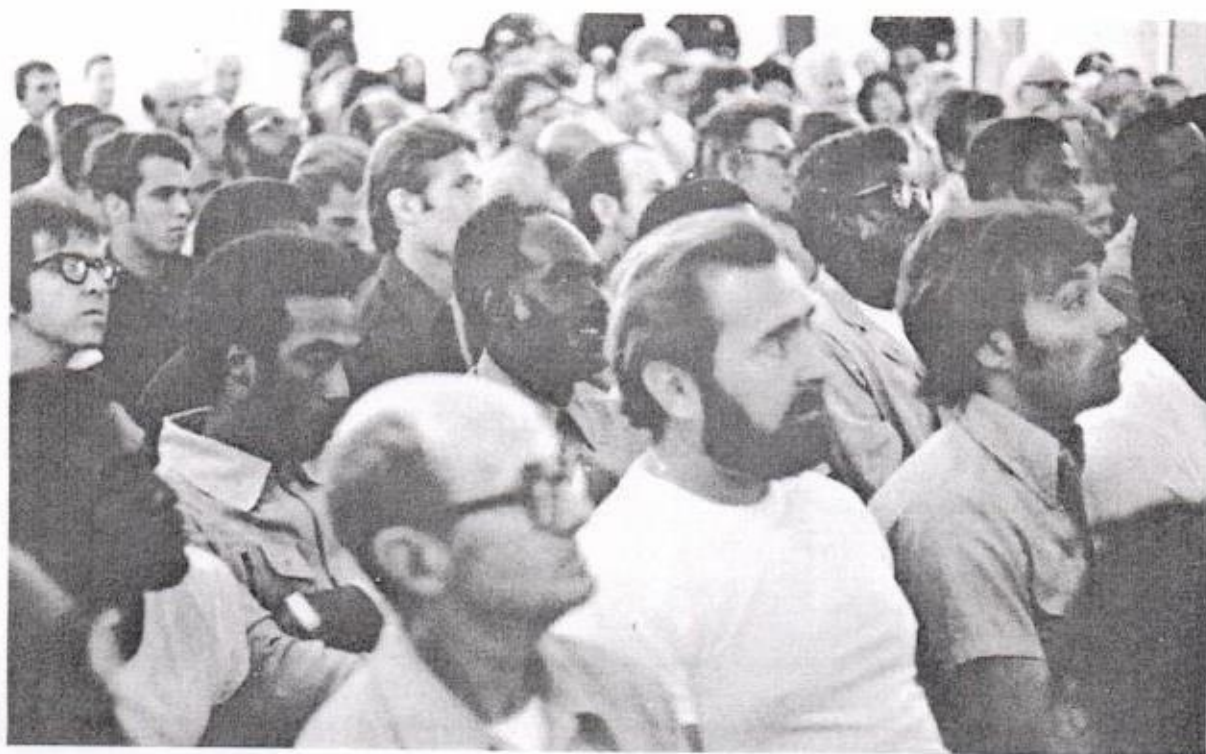
"Every day and every night," Warden Ross Maggio told the gathering, "I feel the full weight of the responsibility I have at this prison - the largest maximum security prison in the nation. I can assure you that everything will be done to see that this chapel is used to its very fullest to enhance the spiritual rehabilitation of those persons in my care and responsibility."

Archbishop Philip Hannan of the Dio-



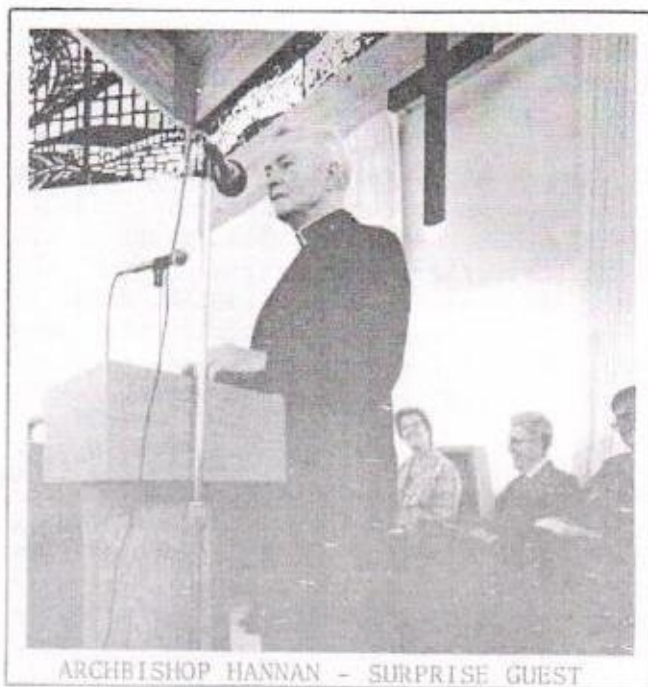
COLSON - HE WOULD BE IN THE MIDST

cese of New Orleans was a surprise guest. He added humor to the occasion when he told the gathering of the difficult time he had getting into the prison. "I had a hard time getting in and you are having a hard time getting out," he told the smil-





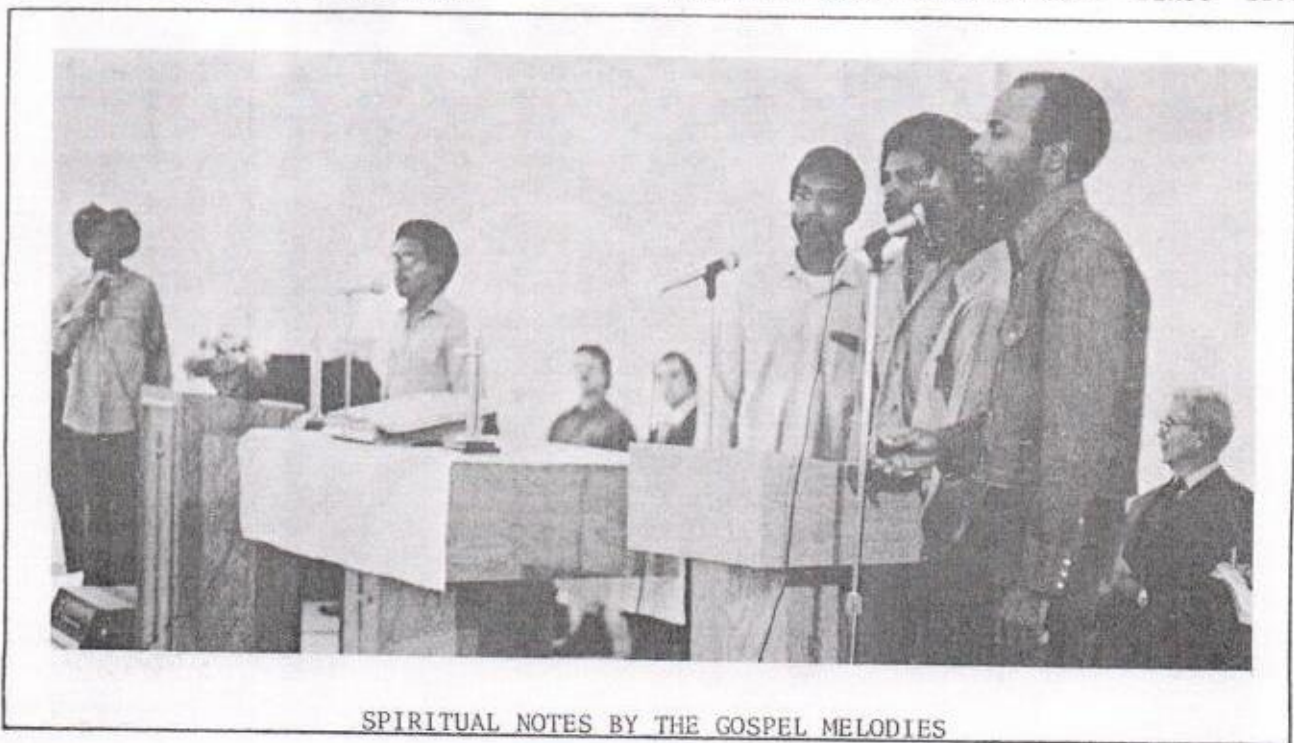
BISHOP SULLIVAN DEDICATES BAPTISMAL



ARCHBISHOP HANNAN - SURPRISE GUEST

ing prisoners. Other religious dignitaries on hand included Margaret Browder, president of the Louisiana Interchurch Conference and Don Mabry who coordinated much of the fund-raising drive.

Colson gave the gathering - a blended mixture of corrections and religious leaders as well as inmates - a sobering thought to ponder; one that the state's decision-makers should heed. "Since 1975



SPIRITUAL NOTES BY THE GOSPEL MELODIES

RELIGION IN PRISON (Cont.)

in the state of Louisiana," he said, "you've had close to a 100 percent increase in the number of people incarcerated. You've gone from 4700 to 9200 inmates in seven years. If that same rate of progression continues, you will add 9000 inmates to your prison system between now and 1990. The American Corrections Association says the average cost of building a new prison cell is \$50,000. Multiply that - and even if you get it a little cheaper in some cases - you will see that that is a cost of \$450 million dollars to the taxpayers of this state if you continue to put people in prison at the same rate you're doing now."

"This is a rich state," Colson added. "You've got a lot of minerals and a lot of resources, but you will bankrupt yourself building prisons that way."



INMATE LAWRENCE JASPER EXPRESS GRATITUDE

