

THE ANGOLITE

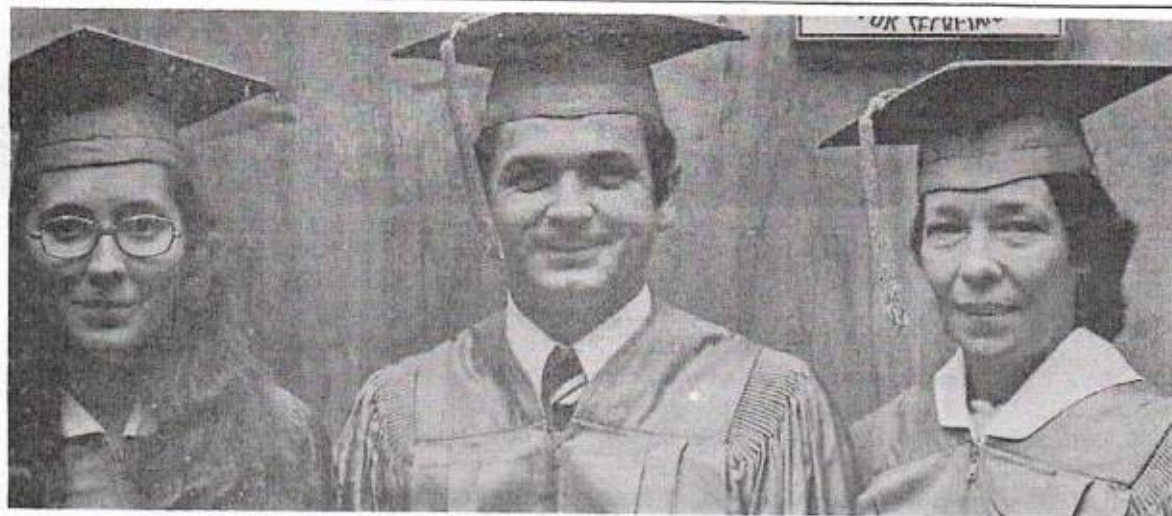
THE PRISON NEWSMAGAZINE

JULY-AUG.
1980

In This Issue

THE ESCAPE OF NIGGER JOE

LOUISIANA STATE PENITENTIARY



FIRST GRADUATES: RYAN, GREMILLION & GRESHAM

sponsored many club activities for them. Unable to attend his funeral, inmates and a number of organizations sent cards and flowers to his widow, who reported that some were so touching that they sounded as if they were from her own children. "Pop Sam" was buried in Plaucheville, carried to his final resting place by pallbearers all dressed in correctional uniforms. The funeral was attended by just about every employee from across the river that the prison could allow to take the day off without jeopardizing the operation of the prison.

COMING YOUR WAY - SOON

The Louisiana State Penitentiary will have its own radio station in the not too distant future. Prison authorities have been working toward making the idea a reality for the past year. Associate Warden Peggy Gresham estimates that it will be perhaps about another nine months or so before we can begin broadcasting because of the bureaucratic red tape that must be waded through before an FCC license can be obtained. A non-profit corporation will be established to serve as the licensee. The radio station will be set up in the Main Prison and will be inmate-operated.

IF YOU'RE INTERESTED

A writer who is presently trying to get a book together entitled EQUAL TIME is in need of information. The book is to be about the effects of a man's imprisonment upon his wife and children. The writer requests that wives of inmates or ex-convicts share their feelings about their husbands' imprisonment and how they are/or were able to support themselves and their families without their husbands' income. The writer assures anonymity for those who participate in the survey. Those wives interested can obtain a questionnaire by writing: K.K. Comeau; P.O. Box 205; Richmond, Virginia 23202 ...

INSIDE/OUT is a new publication aimed at publishing the writings of people in prison. Editor Matthew Hejna announces that they welcome submissions of short stories and poems from prisoners and are looking forward to publishing some of the best. Short stories should not exceed 3,000 words nor are poems to be longer than 100 lines. \$20 is paid the author upon publication. Address to: Matthew Hejna, Editor; INSIDE/OUT; GPO Box 1185; New York, New York 10116 ...

The Soul-Savers



Famed Watergate conspirator Charles "Born Again" Colson, accompanied by an entourage of reporters and assistants, brought his message to a group of Angola prisoners who had just completed a week-long religious seminar by PRISON FELLOWSHIP, a national prison ministry he heads.

He laid it on the line. "Look, I don't mind telling you this -and you should know it already- but I'd say that about 80 percent of the people in this country would just as soon have you drawned and quartered as to spend five cents on you," he told the inmates. "They don't care about you or about prisons. They don't know anything about prisons, and they don't want to know. They don't care what happens to you." He urged the men to care about themselves and, given their situation, to care about their fellow inmates and what's happening and to work for something

better for all. He told them to take what they had learned from the seminar back to their fellow inmates in the prison population and try to bring them to Jesus.

Colson's visit to Angola was sponsored by the Louisiana Interchurch Conference, the same group that has spearheaded the statewide drive to raise funds to construct an interdenominational chapel here at the prison. Executive Director Rev. James Stovall accompanied Colson to Angola and also gave the inmates a brief report on the progress of the planned prison chapel. Angola Chaplain Rev. Joseph Wilson, who supervised the arrangements here for the ministry, emceed the program and had inmates give their frank opinions about how they felt about the seminar they had attended during the past week.

The week-long seminar preceding Colson's visit was conducted by Dr. George Saltau of Dallas, who got involved in prisons six or seven years ago because he "couldn't understand why churches were not concerned with helping people, particularly those who desperately need help behind bars." A pastor for 20 years, he created and designed the program for PRISON FELLOWSHIP. Those prisoners attending the sem-



CHUCK COLSON



SALTAU: LAYING THE FOUNDATION

inar praised it, and it's evident that Saltau loves doing it. "There is a challenge to this kind of work," he told THE ANGOLITE. "You meet all kinds of people and it is a blessing to work with these people and bring them to God."

PRISON FELLOWSHIP is aimed at helping those behind bars. Only four years old it has 60 staffers, 6,000 volunteers, and is supported by contributions from about 45,000 persons around the nation. In addition to conducting religious seminars, it tries also to secure penpals for prisoners who have no one to write to and helps ex-offenders to find gainful employment upon their release from prison.

On the Final day of the week-long program for selected Main Prison inmate religionists, Colson asked them to not think of his visit



THE SOUL-SAVERS (Cont.)

as the end because it was not. "We're going to start trying to do something to help you. There will be more people coming back to the prison; there will be more seminars," he said. "And there's this singer who's served time who you all know - Johnny Cash. He told me that anytime we're ready, just let him know and he'll come with me to the prison and put on the biggest show anybody has ever seen. And when I leave here, I'm calling Johnny and tell him 'Johnny, we're going to Angola.' And we'll be back - with Johnny Cash." In closing, he urged the inmates to always remember who Jesus took to heaven with him - "the thief hanging on the cross next to him," he pointed out, something "those on the outside of prison tend to forget."

A group who hasn't forgotten and who has become increasingly involved with religion behind bars is the FULL GOSPEL BUSINESSMEN FELLOWSHIP INTERNATIONAL, a nondenominational religious organization of businessmen and professionals. It was only about a year ago when its Monroe chapter moved for the establishment of a chapter in Angola. The Warden liked the idea and designated Prison Food Manager F. Berlin Hood to create it and serve as its internal sponsor. Working with Richard Garland of West Monroe and former Angola warden Victor Walker, both members of the laymen organization and two of the major forces pushing for an Angola chapter, Angola Chapter #1708 of the international organization became a reality. Once each month, members from the parent organization visit the Angola chapter, always with some prominent businessman or professional as a featured speaker for the group, talking to them about religion and what it means to them personally. Their most recent meeting here at the prison featured TV personality Dan Diamond



DIAMOND & BERRY: NOT FORGETTING

THE SOUL-SAVERS (Cont.)

of WVUE-TV of New Orleans, who preached, and recording artist Joe Berry, who sang. The meeting was well-attended by prisoners and was televised by Diamond's station as well as by a film crew from GOOD NEWS AMERICA, a syndicated religious TV program. It was the best-covered religious affair here in recent times. But then, the businessmen have been quite serious about their religious involvement in Angola. Their chapter is presently the strongest-backed inmate religious organization in the prison, and showing much promise for the future.



Convicts Aid Child

Prisoners have been called selfish and callous - and more often than not they are, except when it comes to kids. No matter how criminally hardened they may be, they can reach out to help a needy child. Prison organizations have worked on many fund raising projects to help handicapped or diseased children - and they did it expecting nothing in return.

Recently three Camp A prisoners, Walter Burnette, John Willie, and Alvin Clark, initiated a campaign to raise money for little Betsy McLain. A beautiful child, little Betsy was born with a birth defect and had to have her leg amputated. The community of Covington, Louisiana joined together to raise money to help Betsy's parents, Douglas and Kitty, pay for the medical expenses. The Betsy McLain Fund was formed, and upon hearing about the fund, Burnette and the other inmates were able to raise \$160.00 through donations by Camp A prisoners.

Despite the successful operation, little Betsy's problems are not over with. She will require a new leg every 3 to 5 years at a beginning cost of \$5,000. So people working for the Betsy McLain Fund are still collecting money to pay for future artificial limbs. Anyone wishing to contribute to the fund may do so by sending your donation to: Betsy McLain Fund, 1st National Bank, Bouge Flaya Plaza, Covington, Louisiana.

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FEATURING:

THE CROWDED CAGE

religion in prison

BY: TOMMY MASON, STAFF WRITER

LEADERSHIP SEMINAR

"And Jesus came and spoke unto them saying, All authority is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

"Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit,

*"Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the age. Amen."
St. Matt: 28:18-20.*

These words were spoken by Jesus to eleven of His disciples in Galilee. The three verses make up what is called Jesus' Great Commission to His disciples. It is a command from the risen Saviour to all who would believe on Him to go and to do after this order.

Plainly, the age has not yet ended and today men and women are teaching all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Just as then, the Bible reveals, "And when they saw him, they worshipped him, but some doubted.", men today continue to doubt. Just as then they continue to be duped by the bribe-born deceptions of the corrupt elders.

It is a willingness to obey the Great Commission by ministering Reverends Bill Hudson, Beverly Hudson and Jim Rentz, along with Dr. Craig Feldbaum, to name a few, which has contributed to a spiritual awakening of great proportions within the

confines of the Louisiana State Penitentiary.

While the most recent Seminar to be conducted here at Angola involved the Hudsons, Rev. Rentz and Dr. Feldbaum in affiliation with New Beginnings organization, other seminars have been conducted with great regularity. The most consistent seminary programs are those sponsored by the Prison Fellowship Organization.

Each seminar is geared to provide the faith-seeking prisoner with a greater understanding of God's word, and a better awareness of how to witness for Christ.

In any endeavor there is a nucleus upon which to build. The faith movement at Angola has such a nuclei. It was these "leaders" to whom the latest in the series of seminars was geared.

Reverend Joseph E. Wilson is the Louisiana State Penitentiary's Head Chaplain. He oversees all the prison's multi-faceted religious activities. In a recent interview with THE ANGOLITE, he explained the purpose and intent of the seminar. "It was for a selected group of inmates that had already demonstrated some degree of leadership," the Chaplain said, "some who are already leaders of groups and some who have shown a knowledge of knowing how to accept leadership and use it in the proper way."

Just the occasion to provide the pris-

RELIGION IN PRISON (Cont.)

oners with the Leadership Seminar had taken a lot of effort on the part of the parties involved. Wilson explained. "This was a program that Bill (Hudson) and I had talked about for over a year." He said. "In fact, we had scheduled it at least twice, but breakdowns in communication kept us from having it any earlier." The seminar had to be postponed on two previous occasions. "We finally got all the information in in time to get it cleared." Wilson added.

In addition to its design to address the needs of inmate religious leaders, the seminar had other unique aspects. The Chaplain described one such facet in the design of the seminar. "One of the unique things about it was that the inmates were asked to participate - sent them invitations to participate." He explained farther that "this is a kind of turn of events, because the average inmate is told to do something."

The privilege extended to the religious leaders by invitation gained a favorable reaction from them. "One of the inmates expressed that this was the thing that made him really want to get in there, because it recognized him as somebody." Wilson said, "Bill had sent those invitations out to the inmates that had been selected and it was only, of course, after we had gotten approval that they would be the ones that would be in the seminar, but it was well worth getting."

The seminar was on "The Principles of Leadership. "It was a four part program." Wilson commented. "The first session was on leadership philosophy, regarding the definition of leader, an appropriate view of man, an appropriate view of work, and a realistic view of authority. The second session had to do with leadership organization." He said. Dr. Craig Feldbaum was the director of the second session, while Rev./Mrs. Beverly Hudson was the director of the previous session. "The second session had to define the purpose and goals of an organization, what the established

policies are, carefully structured organization, the keeping of adequate records, establishing communication, and assignments of leadership."

Rev. Bill Hudson conducted the third session. It addressed leadership administration and government under God. "Part of that had to do with a sense of timing, and setting priorities, disciplining of self, making of decisions and delegating of authority," Wilson explained.

"And the fourth session was Reverend Jim Rentz. It had to do with communication, ethics of leadership, involvement, and then was followed by motivation and momentum and was concluded with the developing of strategy." Wilson said.

Wilson explained that "the seminar took leadership as a subject and develops it." He pointed out however, that, "even at that, it's just a bird's eye view."

The after effect of the seminar has been positive. "We've had letters from inmates, who have expressed their deep appreciation for what it has meant to them." Wilson told THE ANGOLITE.

One such leader who appreciated the seminar was Andrew Joseph. Joseph is the Pastor of St. John's Institutional Baptist Brotherhood, one of the prison's largest religious congregations. The religious leader had this to say when asked about the seminar. "The seminar in itself brought to us a better understanding of how to coordinate our efforts." He said. "It provides information on how to be more effective with the things that we do. Being coordinated helps you to utilize that time element more efficiently."

Joseph was enthused in elaborating on the impact of the seminar. "The subject was dynamic. The people were." He remarked. "You know God's business is a business - the church is a business and the better that you handle that business, the better it will be run, the more profit

RELIGION IN PRISON (Cont.)

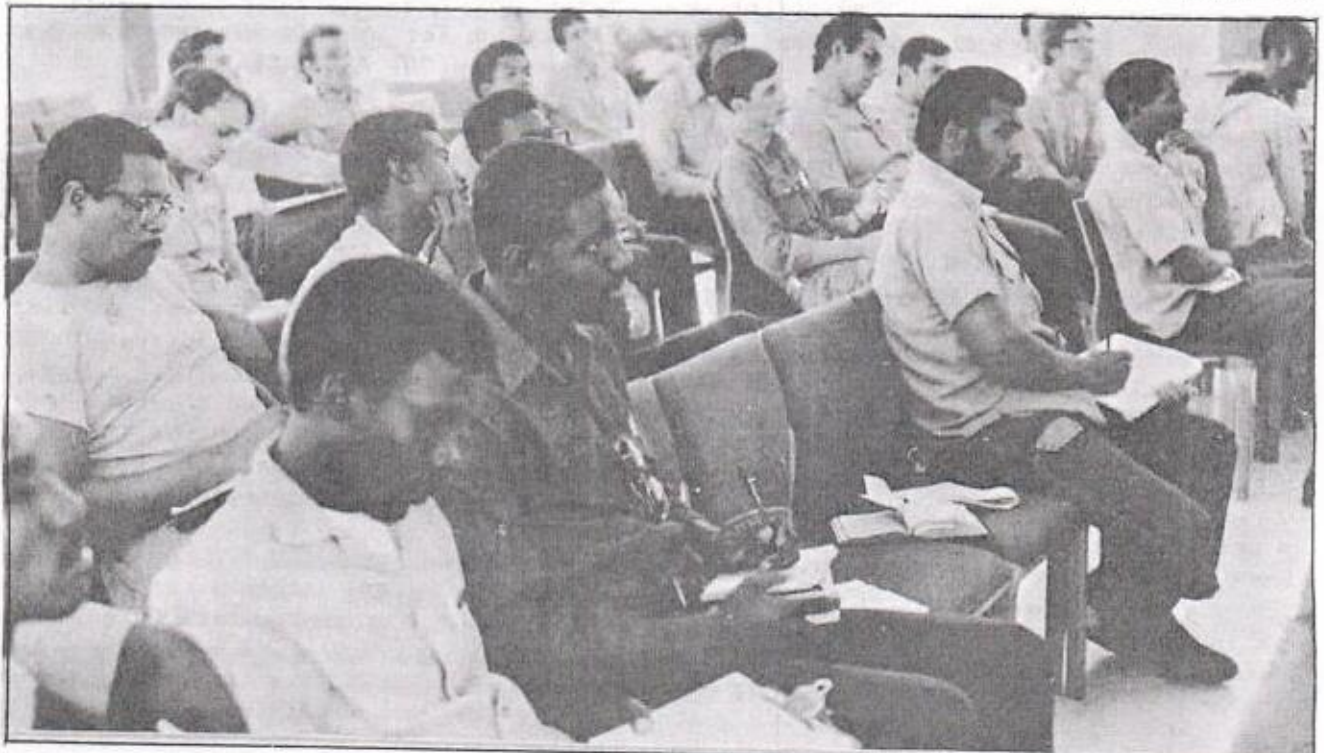
you'll gain in the spiritual realm." Joseph said, "the better the church is organized, the more soul-winning processes you can develop, and the more souls you will be able to win." However, the aspect of the seminar which seemed to impress the Baptist Brotherhood's Pastor most was the presentation by Rev. Jim Rentz. "He came out of the scriptures with the magnetic characteristics of a leader," Joseph commented. "A leader should be a person that is able to draw people, which means his attitude plays 90% of the part of his leadership."

In reinforcing the aspects essential to a leader, Rev. Rentz "spoke about how the Lord just walked up to people and called them and said, 'Follow me,' Joseph continued, His character, the way He spoke, the authority that He spoke with, the decisions that He was able to make. So all in all, the Seminar was dynamic I'm looking forward to the next one."

Samuel Starks is a soft-spoken, poised and respected leader in the religious com-

munity. Starks is a Senior Deacon in the prison's Church of God in Christ congregation. He had this to say when asked about the Leadership Seminar. "My feeling on the Leadership Seminar is that it is something that has been needed here for a long time." He said. "I'm sure that it is something that all the leaders got something out of in terms of direction and showing what God would have us do as leaders and as potential leaders." Starks continued, "for me personally, the seminar was very enlightening, because it opened up a lot of areas in my life that I was not aware of. It also gave me a lot of insight on how God expects us to plan and to organize His church so things will go as He wants them to go and I never really looked at it, but through the leadership seminar, I truly found out that God expects us to plan things, to activate plans to use young men and to designate --delegate authority."

Larry Barr, like Starks, is a member of the Church of God in Christ congregation and is a Deacon also. "I enjoyed the



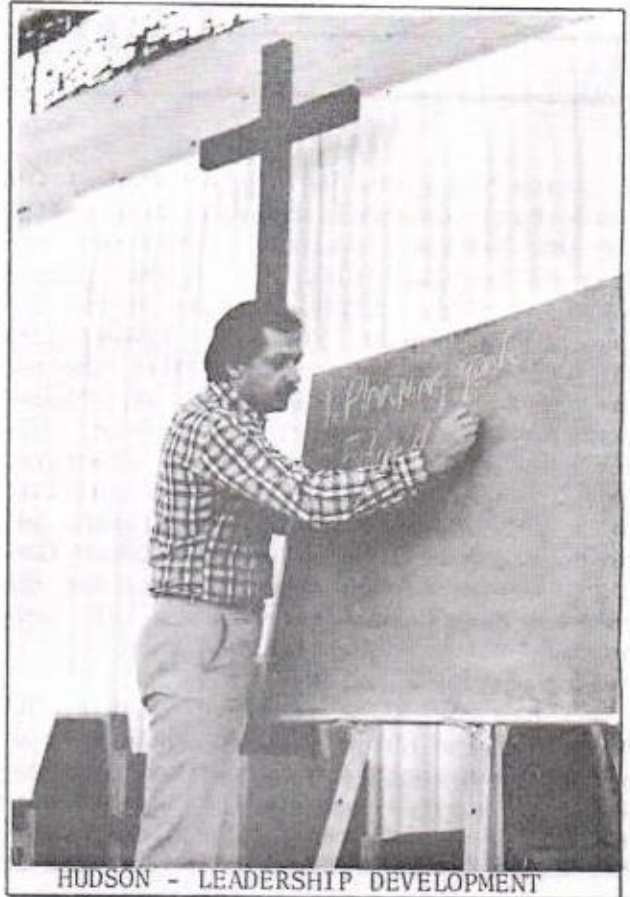
RELIGION IN PRISON (Cont.)

seminar." Barr said. "In our community we really need it, because we all are striving to reach this higher goal and we can't do it by ourselves." He added. "What the seminar brought out was something that we all truly need to work on."

Patrick Mullins is the President of the prison's newest religious congregation: The United Pentacostal Apostolic Fellowship. Prior to the forming of the new fellowship, Mullins fellowshipped as the moderator of the prison's Interfaith Chapel activities. "I enjoyed the seminar very much." Mullins commented. "It shed some light on how to cope with problems and to go about finding a solution to the problems and coming to an end - about never giving up, never quitting, yet going over it and seeing where you made mistakes. Mullins pointed out that he can see some value in making this type leadership seminar a regular endeavor. "I believe it would be beneficial to the people that feel they have a calling on their lives, add to that the seminar should be maybe wider in scope."

Gary Morton, another of the religious leaders attending the seminar, explained that it had been a long-term plan of the Hudsons to organize and conduct a leadership seminar "for those who are in positions of leadership within the churches here, to better equip them in how to guide their fellowships and to organize them that they would function more sufficiently." One of the features that Morton saw in the seminar was he "felt that it would give a more personal acquaintance with people and provide a desire to help better oneself, and to help one better understand how to reach out to the lives of people."

Already there are plans for the next seminars. "I'm trying to establish another program like it--similar to it." Wilson told THE ANGOLITE. Rev. Gene Neill is scheduled to take part in an upcoming sem-



HUDSON - LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

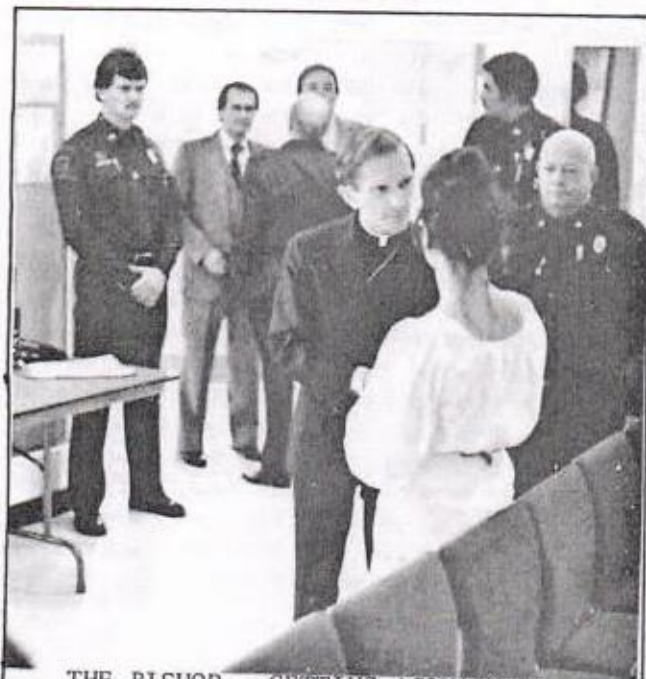
inar. Neill is a former race car driver, public defender, who was appointed as a special prosecutor in Dade County. He consequently got involved with crime and was sentenced to 50 years in prison. His story begins there and is continuing to unfold today through his world-wide prison ministry.

The Chaplain is quite enthused about the effect of the seminar. "I think all of us are anxious to see plans for another one." Wilson said. "I don't have any problems with ideas for the Seminar. I don't know anyone else that does either, just the idea that this is something different and something that caught the attention of everybody that was concerned with it...I wanted to express appreciation for what has been done."

Open House

Since his installment as head of the Baton Rouge Catholic Diocese, Bishop Stanley Ott has been making a concerted effort to acquaint himself with the people of his diocese. Angola is part of the diocese and Bishop Ott recently traveled to the prison. The prison chaplaincy hosted an "Open House" at the InterFaith Chapel to coincide with the bishop's visit. Bishop Ott attended the affair, chatting, exchanging pleasantries and circulating around the chapel talking to prison employees and visitors. The Open House featured two sessions: a morning one for the prisoners and an afternoon one for personnel - Bishop Ott attended both.

"I was very pleased that Bishop Ott took the time out of his schedule to come up here and spend a good part of his day with the inmates and staff," Maggio told THE ANGOLITE. "He went through the hospital wards, to Death Row and to a couple outcamps and it meant a lot to the inmates to meet and talk with him."



THE BISHOP - GETTING ACQUAINTED

The purpose of the Open House was to afford an opportunity to allow representatives of different faiths to get together and fellowship. Others in attendance were Rev. Arnold Norsworthy, director of Christian Ministry Division of the Louisiana Baptist Convention; Rev. James Stovall of the Louisiana Interchurch Conference; Rev. Fred Salter, pastor of the Tunica Hills Baptist Church; Senior Chaplain Frederick Clemmons of Hunt Correctional Center; and Rev. Bobby Henderson of Shreveport. The prison was represented by Warden & Mrs. Ross Maggio and Deputy Warden & Mrs. Marty Lensing, along with the members of the Chaplaincy.

"I feel everyone gained a better understanding of the peculiar needs of the prison ministry," Angola Chaplain Joseph Wilson said, adding that Rev. Norsworthy was so impressed that he scheduled a return trip to the prison before Christmas for a more in-depth study of what all is involved in the ministry at Angola.



RELIGIONISTS - JUST GETTING TOGETHER