

Dear Father John,

How often have airs of relief woken us from our nightmares, and our visions relax while leftover anxiety gradually fade into a new day? That's God's gift of choice and freedom to wash away failures; to stand again after we fall.

Then there are those who wake into a nightmare every day, years and years on end: Those of us who had forsaken God's behest and challenged the law - and lost. We wake up in a cage too small for life, yet big enough to swallow our future in a blink of time. We are taken away from people who loved us until the moment they concede to reasons why living will be better off without us.

Without mercy, the weary days keep on coming, although the letters come less with less words. Soon the visits decline into more or less a duty. Eventually, they will cease to be remembered, forgotten with our existence along with the meaning why we should continue existing.

People have said: "We don't value what we have until we are faced with the prospect of losing it." Perhaps that's why I've written like a prisoner facing many, slow years behind prison walls. I am, in fact, a victim who is in prison; who had lost beyond what a man can account for in a scant life to the anathema of drugs, and continue to be apprehended in torment - psychologically, emotionally and physically - of the coming of a future so bleak that it frightens even the toughest criminals.

Up until my arrest, I've objected many countries for not punishing murderers with the death sentence. After my drug arrest, I rescinded my objection. Now, I support the life-sentence because perpetuating pain won't end with their death.

I'm not serving a life-sentence and I daydream about the painless world following death, everyday. Because it soothes me, helps me sleep; because being alive in prison is not living at all. This is how

gray and miserable prison is.

Prison makes me feel like I've been buried in cement from my neck down. My lungs, compressed, unable to expand for air, yet the body fights for just enough to stay alive. And I remain living this way counting the meaningless, waiting for someone to rescue me, but no one will.

What I realized after my arrest is that no one will feel sorry for us. As far as the world is concerned, we are prisoners - we deserve it. But as far as I'm concerned, us prisoners are not worth the time to be concerned about.

The only people who share our grief are our parents. Their tears are made from despair, which are bled from their hearts. They didn't struggle a quarter of a century raising us children just to see us waste away inside prison.

Please think it over as many times as possible before retreating to drugs. The answer must be 'no'. When you're arrested, you won't be the only person immured. Your parents wait with you fettered to invisible chains and weights. They wait outside the prison walls constricted by air always sad and heavy, and in which the air strangles them, like hands tight around a throat.

Everybody is haunted by regrets, but like jumping off a building, long-term imprisonment is not the type of fate that can be altered as simply as waking up from a nightmare to a new inspiration. No, if you are foolish enough to traffic drugs; act as a 'mule', you will live in nightmares for years - or decades.

People say: "What doesn't kill you makes you stronger." Well... if prison doesn't kill you, how strong do you plan to be after a long-term prison sentence? When your hair grows white; when your muscles are eaten away by aging bones; when reality strikes - ~~no~~ one will be there to love you after prison, alone forever in this world. Everyone else same age is either married with a level of success

(any job is more successful than a fucking prisoner), or divorced three times with a heck of a story to tell. Many prisoners, including myself, haven't even lived and our life is over when we're out.

I have heard from countless brave peers who persist on a self-willed suicide if they were to be arrested (or lose their trial), as long as their family have enough money. And countless of arrests and losses later, these peers endure their 10-30 years sentence, still breathing, still suffering; their family unhappy with the money, if any.

After my arrest I understood that we can't put a price on our freedom and time. Ask yourself before you dig your grave: How much is your life really worth? Is there another way (there is always another way out, but there's no way out of prison)?

Why had I played with drugs? Like many, I was naive and wheedled by greed. I didn't know friends can lie, or, less provocative, make mistakes despite good intentions. Hence why I write, with personal insight that I have won with so much loss and pain, to help prevent the next batch of brave mules from removing themselves from the people who are truly important.

Mine is my endearing mother. You know who yours are. But have you paused to think that your loved one might die while you are in prison? You think you're sacrificing yourself for them, although unbeknownst to yourself, illegal cash and your own need for a sense of belonging will lead to the ruination for your whole family.

I've nested on the knowledge that no one is born bad. Life, as it progresses, channels through the necessity where money rules. To survive we must play the money game: A repertoire of tactics involving persuasive talk, which is sweetened with sex, drugs, and banknotes.

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No.

Date

3 However its occurring to you, the gut never lies. The issue with many victims (mules) is that in the drunken mist of inconspicuous propaganda, twisting and twirling with the deep and emotional, we play along with the charade despite intuitions.

Please accept that your 'sacrifice' doesn't make you a hero. When you're in prison your spouse will leave you; your children forsake you; and the promise by your so called brothers (you 'belong' to) to take care of your parents is close to bull-shit. You're not a hero - you are a 'mule'.

Maybe Pablo Escobar is your role model, but he died before he watched his son become a man. El-Chapo? He's in prison for the rest of his life despite his billions of US dollars.

Every person pays a price; risk for their dreams. But has 21st century not equipped us with enough opportunities and resources to realise our potentials without staking our lives? Was the concept of brotherhood and belonging worth turning into a mule for?

Drugs destroy innocent lives, and drug traffickers are just naive mules.

There's always life after prison. This, however, is the dreadful essence of prison. You will live to dread the outcome of your mistake after you suffer through the consequence that had been dealt.

Yours Truly,

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