



## ST. JOHN'S PREP

Arthur Bembury  
230 Central Street  
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Dear Arthur,

Thank you again for speaking to our students this week about your work. Your insight provided a unique perspective for students as they learn about the criminal justice system and discern how they can become advocates for reform. On a more personal note, I would also like to thank you for the impact that Partakers has had on me.

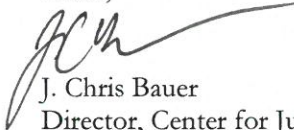
As a graduate student at the Boston College School of Theology and Ministry, I served on a mentor team for two different men at MCI Norfolk. This was my first experience entering a prison and was a formative component of my education at Boston College. I can remember feeling a little nervous before meeting my mentee, James, for the first time. After we sat down and introduced ourselves to each other he asked me, "Why did you decide to visit someone in prison?" Although I should have been prepared for this question, I was caught off guard by it and stumbled over my answer. James eventually answered for me by remarking that it was important that we visit because people in prison are disregarded and forgotten by most of society.

I look back fondly on my time as a mentor with Partakers and will always remember that first encounter with James. As someone who grew up in a predominately white middle-class suburban neighborhood, I never knew anyone who went to prison. As a mentor, I realized how important it was to build bridges from my social locale to the margins of society and those that are incarcerated exist in some of the furthest margins. Over the years, I have been able to share stories of my experience as a mentor with many who are otherwise removed from those that are incarcerated. I hope that I can continue to bridge communities in this way.

In my current role as an educator I have been able to use what I learned during my experience with Partakers to humanize incarceration for students, many of whom are growing up with a similar socio-economic background as I did. Further, my experience as a graduate student encouraged me to continue working with men who are incarcerated and I currently run a faith sharing group at the jail in our county. Partakers has informed the direction of my personal and professional life in many more ways than I could have imagined at that first meeting with James.

Thank you again for the impact you have had on my life and the lives of many both inside and outside of prison. I look forward to having you on campus again soon.

Peace,



J. Chris Bauer  
Director, Center for Justice and Peace

