

Bishop Frank Costantino (12/1/39 - 04/02/06)



Bishop, The Society of Saint Dismas of the Charismatic Episcopal Church
Founder, Christian Prison Ministries & Bridges of America, Inc.
Dies at age 66 - December 1, 1939 - April 2, 2006.

COSTANTINO, BISHOP FRANK JOSEPH, December 1, 1939 - April 2, 2006. Frank Joseph Costantino was born in Boston, Massachusetts to Frank and Enita Costantino on December 1, 1939. Frank was the middle child of three children. On December 7, 1962 Frank married Cheryl "Bunny" Avedisian, who was from Whitinsville, Massachusetts. During their 43-year marriage and love affair, they had six children, four daughters and two sons, and were blessed with twelve grandchildren. Bishop Frank, as he liked to be called, was a former inmate turned inspired visionary and tireless soldier of God. He was called to the prison ministry shortly after he accepted Christ as his Savior on October 21, 1969, in Belle Glade Prison while serving a 22 1/2- year prison sentence.

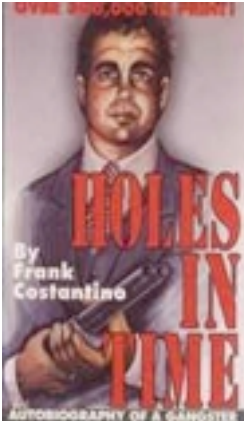
Upon his release from prison in 1972, Frank experienced the difficulties an ex-offender faces in reentering the society he has offended. The odyssey and experiences of those years laid the groundwork for an impassioned life that was dedicated to helping thousands of substance abusers, both in and out of prison, to conquer their addictions and become new persons with changed lifestyles and brighter futures. God blessed Bishop Frank with a long and distinguished career of service to his fellow man. In 1972, he formed two organizations, Christian Prison

Ministries and Bridges of America. His accomplishments during the ensuing years were numerous. As President and Chief Executive Officer of Bridges of America, he provided the leadership that resulted in establishing in- prison substance abuse treatment programs, community- based residential drug treatment centers, work release programs, and aftercare transitional living programs all across the State of Florida and beyond.



Additionally, Bishop Frank was President of the Coalition of Prison Evangelists, a worldwide organization that consists of 550 ministry members and President of Christian Prison Ministries with offices in the United States, England, Scotland, Estonia, Egypt, Uganda, Holland, and Switzerland.

Through it all, Bishop Frank never wavered from what he knew to be God's purpose for his life: addressing the body, mind and spiritual needs of desperate men and women whose lives had been ravaged by substance abuse and the crimes it wrought. In order to meet each of these clients where their spiritual journeys began, of necessity, his spiritual work with them was primarily nondenominational. However, his own spiritual journey was very specific and began in the Episcopal Church where he was ordained as a Deacon in 1979. He received a Doctorate of Christian Ethical Theology from Calvary Bible Seminary in 1993. He was ordained Priest of the Charismatic Episcopal Church in 1996 and ordained Bishop in 1999. In 2001, he was awarded the Doctorate of Divinity from St. Michael's Seminary in San Clemente, California.



Bishop Frank wrote his autobiography "Holes in Time" in 1979. As he liked to describe it, this story of his life tells how a taker who was a loser, through Christ became a winner. Over 500,000 copies of "Holes in Time" have been distributed in four languages to prisoners worldwide through International Prison Ministries. His autobiography was followed in 1983 by "More Than A Miracle - The Ministry of Aftercare" in which he shared the experiences that shaped his life and his ministry after he was released from prison. Bishop Frank was charismatic, charming, powerful and unforgettable but, more importantly, he was a loving husband and father and an inspiration for countless numbers of inmates and ex-felons. He made a positive difference in their lives and in that of their families and communities, not to mention so many others that knew and worked for and with him. His personal testimony and the legacy of his work will long continue to shine as a beacon of hope. And say we all, To God Be The Glory!

Frank was laid to rest at Woodlawn Memorial Cemetary in Orlando, Florida on Thursday, April 6, 2006.



