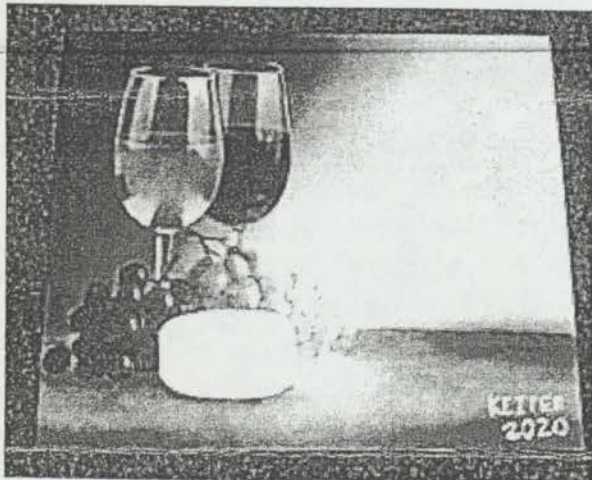


## Notes From The Pen

October 21, 2020

By Jacob Keiter



A painting done by Jacob Keiter in prison for his wife

*On Jan. 4, 2018, 24-year-old Jacob Keiter, from East Hanover Township, was sentenced to five years in federal prison on drug trafficking charges. Keiter reached out to The Sun from the Federal Correctional Institute in Minersville, hoping to share his story with our readers. This week, Keiter talks about finding himself in prison ...*

There comes a point in our lives when we realize we're not Superman and we indeed can not take on the world. Admitting defeat can be difficult, and accepting help can at time be even more tough. While some seek help on their own terms, others' find that it ends up on

their lap by chance. Whenever I hit rock bottom, I turned in the last direction I ever saw myself turning; I turned to God.

I know, I know, how cliché. Yet another person claiming to find religion in prison. Quick disclosure, this is not an attempt to "capture souls" or convert unbelievers, but rather I would like to share the blessings I have received in recent times.

Growing up, I was introduced to religion as a teenager. Already in a very rebellious stage, I immediately rejected it. I attended church simply to appease my parents, not taking any of it seriously. It's not that I didn't want to believe, I just had way too many questions. What about the dinosaurs? How come a snake has never unraveled from a tree to give me warnings? Can someone please better explain the virgin birth besides just saying "it's a miracle?" Nobody had an answer for me, so I inevitably couldn't believe.

Finding yourself in prison is officially the lowest low. Like I said, I hit rock bottom. Sitting in my current position, I was ready to say goodbye to everything. Goodbye to my family. Goodbye to my home. Goodbye to my friends. Goodbye to my wife. But the strangest



thing happened, instead of having to say goodbye to anything, these ties grew stronger and more concrete. My wife has stuck by and held a home for me to return home to one day, and my family ties grew tremendously. But wait, didn't I mess up? Do I really deserve this? There was only one answer to all this.

Before I can even depart on my own personal journey to search for this answer, it came right to me. A couple other inmates, some Christian brothers, came to me and introduced me to God's Word. They showed me what forgiveness means, how to repent, and exactly the way to receive salvation. They gave me my own copy of the Bible to continue my own studies. Every page I turned to seemed to speak directly to me and my current circumstance. I became instantly eager and hungry for The Word. Every night I studied

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The Word, and realized I have found the answer to all my recent blessings.

After accepting Jesus Christ into my life, I recognized within myself, an inward change of heart resulting in an outward change of behavior. Instead of feeling bad for myself and beating myself up, I decided to reap what I sow and plant seeds of positivity. Not only was I working on bettering my physical and mental health, but now I am striving to perfect my spiritual health as well. This has helped me to develop into the best me I've ever recognized.

Today, my wife and I have both welcomed God into our lives and into our marriage. I am currently studying Theology through ISOM and Vision International University and working towards my Associate's Degree in Ministry. Every night, here at the prison, the Christian brothers all gather together for a prayer circle to pray for one another's wellbeing as well as the safety and security of our loved ones while we're away. Finally, I have been designing my very own ministry to reach out to stubborn individuals just like myself and help them grow spiritually that I plan on starting the day I leave here.

It's OK to feel defeated. It's OK to seek help. When you have given up, and feel there is absolutely no hope; open your heart and mind and the solution will come to you.

*To read parts I through IV of Notes From The Pen, go to [news.thesunontheweb.com](http://news.thesunontheweb.com) and search "Notes From The Pen."*

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