

We're People

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Sitting nervously in a room full of criminals
A new chaplain faces his fears.
He listens. He observes. He learns.
Behind the tough talk, tattoos
And long scruffy hair,
They're people.

Sitting pensively in a now-empty room
A Bible College intern is moved to tears.
She has listened. She has observed. She has learned.
Behind prison walls, they're no longer to be
Forgotten and faceless.
They're people.

Sitting mournfully in a memorial service for a slain colleague,
A working girl suddenly holds up *The Ottawa Sun* and jeers.
"I've listened. I've observed. I'm spurned!
"Hooker. Prostitute. That's all they write.
"Can't they just see that behind all that
"We're people."

Sitting hesitantly in a prayer meeting
That chaplain, now seasoned, wants to share with his church peers.
He has listened. He has observed. He still learns.
Behind their calm exterior, each believer is a forgiven sinner
Who needs reminding that
Prisoners are people.

Sitting in that prayer meeting
A mother of five hears.
She listens. She observes. She yearns.
Behind her lie years of now-healed pain
That she wants to share with these,
Because they're people.