

Support Priests and Deacons who provide sacraments and religious instruction to inmates inside jail and prison.

- Get a team to go with the Priest or Deacon to help out, talk with the inmates, be available.
- Carry out duties assigned by clergy.
- Provide accompaniment and moral support.
- Provide musical support to services.

# Recommendations How to accomplish each Task Assigned to Parish Criminal Justice Coordinator

- Mission in the Parish is Criminal Justice Ministry
- Deal with the following TASKS: as a minimum:
- Explain to the parish members who is in prison how they got there and what we need to do about it.
- Be the contact with the Diocese for Criminal Justice Activities.
- Solicit volunteers to do the work in prisons and jails, work with developing support for families of inmates, children of inmates in the community.
- Keep the Pastor advised of the status of activities in the parish and ask for his help in developing parish support.
- Enlist the support of St. Vincent De Paul, Parish Social Ministries, Knights of Columbus, other parish social service organizations to help with parish level work.
- Get volunteers to training functions and conferences as they occur.
- Encourage Legislators to support criminal justice Legislation particularly alternatives to incarceration.

# Provide Support to Formerly Incarcerated Persons Encouraging Sobriety and Employment.

- Encourage Employers in the parish to hire Ex-Offenders who are stable and free from Substance Abuse.
- Show the CD on who is in prison and how they got there to employers.
- Interview ex-offenders seeking employment to determine their status.
- Talk to Employers in the Parish to determine possible job opportunities.
- Determine location and availability of support services in the community to include clothing, medical treatment, AA, NA, meetings and groups, public transportation assistance, food banks, meals served and temporary rental assistance.
- Determine conditions of the family to which the ex-offender is returning and provide help.
- Get parish support services such as St, Vincent De Paul, and Parish Social Ministries involved if there is a need.
- Find GED courses for those not yet through High School, encourage them to enroll at their level what ever it may be.
- Mentor persons who are trying to keep themselves straight. AA provides sponsors. Stay in touch where possible.

Work with victims Groups at Police or Sherriff's Departments to determine any material or moral support you may be able to provide.

- Police Departments and Sherriff's Departments have victim's assistance groups who work with those who have been victimized by crime.
- Victims often feel isolated and vulnerable because of criminal acts against them, Anger, Depression, Fear for a wide range of emotions can accompany their aftermath. Working with the victim's assistance groups you can help relieve their concerns. Money may also be needed or other material support.
- Involve Parish Social Ministry groups in cases of need.

Encourage Local Business Owners to hire Ex-Offenders who want to get dry and clean and stabilize their lives.

- Ex-Offenders who obtain employment have a good chance to stay out of prison.
- Call a meeting of Employers in the parish who may consider hiring an ex-offender and discuss what they are looking for and what they need in an employee.
- Get ex-offenders who are stabilized to talk to the group.
- Show the CD on “Who is in Prison”
- Get an employer who has hired ex-offenders to discuss his or her decision.

Encourage the Local Judiciary,  
District and County Attorneys to  
develop alternatives to incarceration  
for those who need treatment.

- The Texas Legislature has enacted a number of new laws governing probation, parole, and incarceration. They have refused the possibility of building new prisons but have authorized a number of new treatment beds for prisons. The purpose is to quit putting low level offenders in with high level offenders because to do so makes low level offenders into high level offenders.
- District and County Attorneys determine which offenders will be tried and when to recommend probation to the judges. They need to hear from constituents telling them we want behavioral change. Parishioners need to get involved.

- Adopt a Law Enforcement Unit and give that unit support and encouragement in their work.
- Ordained Clergy can volunteer as Chaplains with Police or Sherriff's Department units.
- Laity can make visits to ask if they can help with anything. Bring cookies, pies, or cakes, or lunch etc. Thank them for their service to the community.

Working with Local Sherriff and Police Departments and Mental Health Facilities help Reduce low level repeat population that fill most county jails. The largest Mental Treatment Facility in Travis County is the County Jail. That is not where most of these persons should be. Other counties are similar or have no place to deal with this population.

- Help to Develop Diversion, Treatment or mentoring programs for these repeat offenders by involving community support.
- The place we start with helping to deal with mental health problems other than jail is with the responsible MH/MR Agency. They don't have enough programs and need help to develop them.
- Study the local situation and form a group to develop what is needed. Get faith groups to become involved.
- The need is in every community. We do not have persons organized to deal with this. We need to get someone to begin to develop this response.



# Provide Spiritual Needs of Inmates without Priest or Deacons.

## County

- Become a Registered Volunteer at County Jail.
- Contact the Chaplain or Jail Administrator
- Receive the Orientation for that Facility.
- Get into the Pattern set by the Chaplain for Catholic Services.

## State

- Submit a volunteer application to the Huntsville Office.
- Get letters authorizing attendance at an Orientation Briefing.
- Attend an Orientation Briefing.
- Make visits to the institutions and be recorded as attending.

Work with the Chaplain or the Jail Administrator to determine what is needed and what you can provide.

Caveat! We do Catholic Worship Services.

- Pray the Rosary with Prison Inmates.
- Conduct Liturgies of the word or communion Services.
- Become a mentor to an individual inmate.
  
- Conduct Alcoholics Anonymous or Narcotics Anonymous support meetings in the prison.
- Be Consistent.
- Get a team so that one person's absence will not cancel the activity.

## Provide Material Support to Families of Incarcerated in Need, in Conjunction with Parish Social Ministries.

- Advertise the Availability of Assistance to Families of the Incarcerated.
- In the Parish News paper or Parish Bulletin.
- Through Social Services in the area.
- Let School Counselors know of the availability of Assistance.
- Be prepared to screen requests to determine status of clients.
- Use persons acquainted with case work to assist with communicating with clients.
- Know availability of Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous, ALANON and ALATEEN meetings in your area. Check Families for Substance Abuse needs.
- Enlist Support of local social service agencies.
- Get Parish organizations involved in Social Ministries, Knights of Columbus, St. Vincent De Paul.
- Determine availability of Financial Aid, Clothing, and Medical Assistance within the parish and within the community.
- Ensure understanding of Catholic Social Teachings among workers from the parish.

- Recognize that the following needs which formerly incarcerated persons require upon release from prison:

Food

Clothing

ID Cards

Bus Tickets – Transportation

Jobs

Medical Attention often

Shelter or funds for shelter

Drug and or alcohol abuse or addiction treatment

Mental health needs and follow up

GED or other educational training

Phone Cards

- Recognize these needs should be developed in each community:

AA/NA Meetings

Food Pantries

Medical assistance for offenders and family from Catholic Hospitals or physicians

### **Criminal Justice Professionals**

- Encourage each person to adopt a Law Enforcement Unit ( Police Station, Probation Office, Parole Office, County Jail, State Prison.) Law Enforcement is an extremely needy group and they have a high impact upon everyone who is under their supervision.