

Why get involved?

Many of us have given food to the hungry, clothing to those in need and responded to the other beatitudes, but most of us have yet to respond to the words "when I was in prison, you visited me".

Our faith stands firmly that NO ONE should be discarded – all of us are created in the image and likeness of God.

- Every person has God-given worth.
- No one is disposable.
- Conflict and harm are most effectively addressed by attending to the needs of everyone affected.

Pope Francis has spoken of the Church as a field hospital, and one of the great forms of wounding in the world, is the harm we do to each other. CCJS volunteers seek to mediate God's healing and restorative touch to all who have been impacted by crime.

“TRULY I TELL YOU,
WHATEVER
YOU DID FOR
ONE OF THE LEAST OF
THESE BROTHERS
AND SISTERS OF MINE,
YOU DID FOR ME.”
MATTHEW 25:40

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Would YOU like to volunteer with CCJS?



If you have a passion for sharing the love of God and serving others, we invite you to consider joining us. Whether your interests lie in

- Prison visitation
- Supporting released offenders
- Supporting victims of crime
- Becoming a Prayer Partner for the prayer intentions of those that are incarcerated
- Providing at-home support for programming administration

....YOUR participation can make a difference. We encourage you to look through the volunteer opportunities and prayerfully consider embracing Jesus' call to "remember the prisoners" by becoming a Catholic Charities Justice Services volunteer.

Contact

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<http://rcav.org/prison-ministry/>

I WAS IN PRISON
AND YOU CAME TO
VISIT ME MATTHEW
25:36b

*Catholic Charities
Justice Services
(CCJS)*



Roman Catholic
Archdiocese of Vancouver



What does Catholic Charities Justice Services do?

Catholic Charities Justice Services (CCJS) volunteers focus on faith-based and restorative justice activities inside correctional institutions and in the community. We visit in the 8 federal and 5 provincial prisons in the Archdiocese of Vancouver where approximately 25% of the inmates are Catholic and members of our faith community. We also attend to those returning to the community and offer support to victims and their families. We believe in educating the wider Catholic community on the principles of Catholic social teaching and restorative justice by engaging our Catholic schools and parishes. With the help of over 200 volunteers, CCJS seeks to mediate God's healing and restorative touch to all who have been impacted by crime.

Prison Programs

Our in-prison ministry addresses the spiritual needs of incarcerated men, women and youth and meets them on their faith journey. We are reaching out to people in prisons through programming such as Mass and Fellowship, Bible Study, Taize prayer, Rosary making, volunteer-led discussions, visitations, etc.

"I pray for those taking their time on people like me who for a while were lost. You gave me hope and strength." – an inmate

Community Programs

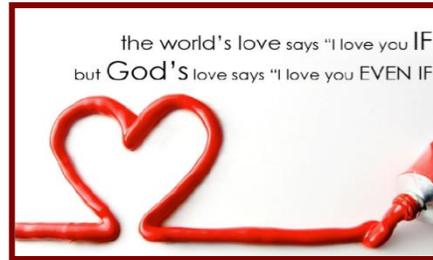
CoSA

Our Circles of Support and Accountability (CoSA) helps those that have been formally incarcerated find success and become contributing members of society. This aftercare ministry provides re-integration support for released high-risk offenders.

"When you come out of prison, I found that I don't belong anywhere. My friends are all gone, you have no more friends, and CoSA is kind of that anchor that you can hold on to." – released offender.

Fellowship with Released Offenders

We provide volunteer support for released offenders as they re-integrate back into the community.



HSC

Training of volunteers for our Healing Circles of Support (HSC) has begun and will provide group support for victims.

VaPH

Our Victims at Parole Hearings (VaPH) provides support for victims at parole hearings.

Social Justice and Educational Initiatives

Through our annual blank Christmas card and calendar drive, we engage the parishes in our Archdiocese to remember those who are incarcerated as well as aid in fostering positive communication by the inmate, with their family and friends. Many of our Catholic schools write Christmas cards to the inmates as well.

"Thank you for taking the time to think of all of us. You have no idea how much you have helped me through this difficult time." – an inmate

Along with education and awareness, we also have a vibrant prayer team which prays daily for the intentions submitted by the inmates.

"These inmate prayer requests are very moving; much beyond my expectations." – Prayer Partner

Our Volunteers

Our volunteers are regular people from diverse backgrounds; they are nurses, construction workers, lawyers, etc. They don't need degrees in theology...or have to have conducted Bible Study classes..... No special qualifications are needed, other than a caring, compassionate heart that's willing to journey with others. It is a ministry of presence.... With authenticity, gentleness, and respect, they model Godly attitudes and behaviours to those who are incarcerated, those that are released into the community and all who are affected by crime. We provide our volunteers with the training and the tools they need to share the life-changing truths of God's Word.

"Many men thank me and say that what they have learned is changing them, but I always laugh and say how much they are changing me!" – a volunteer