

# CRIMINAL JUSTICE MINISTRY DIOCESE OF BEAUMONT



Lent 2021

## UPCOMING EVENTS

February 24<sup>th</sup>: Pen Pal training 10-11am (Wed)

February 26<sup>th</sup>: Pen Pal training 10-11am (Fri)

March 4: Scheduled execution of Ramiro Ibarra

March 10: Pen Pal Training 2-3pm (Wed)

March 20<sup>th</sup>: Pen Pal Training 2-3pm (Sat)

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## *A Holy Lent to You!*

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Greetings! In an effort to stay in touch and keep you informed, I'd like to begin sending a monthly newsletter. As we begin this First Week of Lent, we recall from the Sunday Gospel that we are invited into the wilderness with Christ. What places in our spirit need renewal? What do we yearn for this Lent? Let us ask for the grace necessary to be aware of God's presence.

## LENTEN RESOURCES

[Catholic Mobilizing Network](#) is a national organization that mobilizes Catholics and all people of goodwill to value life over death, to end the use of the death penalty, to transform the U.S. criminal justice system from punitive to restorative, and to build capacity in the U.S. society to engage in restorative practices for people in the prison system.

This Lent they are offering a series of reflections and videos each week that corresponds to a book called *Harm, Healing, and Human Dignity*. Even if you don't use the book, you can view the short reflections and videos online at the following link. [CMN Lenten Reflections](#)

### Lenten Retreat

As you journey through Lent, I invite you to use this virtual retreat I created to help guide your meditations in the coming weeks. Each meditation focuses on a different theme. See what God may be wanting to share with you this Lent and open your hearts to truly listen. You can find the retreat link [here](#).

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*"For I was in prison, and you visited me."*

*Matthew 25:35*

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## WRITING TO PRISONERS

One way to visit prisoners during this time of pandemic is to write letters. For some, this is a safe way to still minister and do it at your convenience. I am implementing a Pen Pal Program and will be offering training sessions over the next few months on Zoom to share guidelines for writing to TDCJ inmates. If you'd prefer to be trained in person or on the phone, I can do that for you as well. Once you go through the training, I will assign you an inmate who has previously received Sacraments through our RCIA programs while in prison. This will be a wonderful way to continue to evangelize and share faith together. You can register for the training sessions here: [Pen Pal Training Sessions](#).





Questions? Comments? Want to share anything in the upcoming newsletters?

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## 87<sup>TH</sup> TEXAS LEGISLATIVE SESSION

For those of you who may want to stay up-to-date on the legislative process regarding criminal justice and the Texas Conference of Catholic Bishops, you can find more information [here](#). Once on the site, you can choose which topic of legislation you'd like to read more about.

### PRAYER FOR THE END OF THE DEATH PENALTY

God of Compassion, You let Your rain fall on the just and the unjust. Expand and deepen our hearts so that we may love as You love, even those among us who have caused the greatest pain by taking life. For there is in our land a great cry for vengeance as we fill up death rows and kill the killers, in the name of justice, in the name of peace. Jesus our brother, You suffered execution at the hands of the state but you did not let hatred overcome you. Help us to reach out to victims of violence so that your enduring love may help heal. Holy Spirit of God, You strengthen us in the struggle for justice. Help us to work tirelessly for the abolition of state sanctioned death and to renew our society in its very heart so that violence will be no more. Amen

—Sister Helen Prejean, CSJ



**“Let my prayer rise up like incense before you,  
the lifting up of my hands as an offering to you.”**