



# Jubilee 2025



## Jubilee of Prisoners

13 – 14 December 2025

This weekend, we observe the Jubilee of Prisoners, acknowledging the humanity, dignity, and worth of all those who are incarcerated. We are reminded of the Gospel's call to mercy, forgiveness, and hope, recognising that everyone has the potential for transformation and redemption. We give thanks for the individuals and ministries who bring compassion, support, and encouragement to prisoners, as well as to their families.

Today, we renew our commitment to justice that is tempered with mercy, and we pray for the healing and reconciliation of all affected by imprisonment. May this Jubilee inspire us to see the face of Christ in every person and to work toward a society where forgiveness, second chances, and restoration are offered to all.

## Prayers

### Example prayers of the faithful

For all those imprisoned and those affected by incarceration, that they may find the courage to seek forgiveness, healing, and transformation. May they experience the Lord's mercy, and may society extend compassion and support to help them build new lives. **E te Ariki ...**

For all prisoners suffering with a sense of hopelessness, despair, and guilt. May the Lord shine His face upon them and bring them out of darkness so that they can come to a sincere, heartfelt repentance and change their lives. **E te Ariki ...**

For the families of prisoners, especially those struggling with pain, separation, and uncertainty. May God's love bring them peace, strength, and hope as they support their loved ones on the path of renewal. **E te Ariki ...**

For all who work in the justice system, including prison staff, chaplains, and volunteers, that they may be guided by wisdom, mercy, and compassion in their roles. May they be instruments of God's love, bringing light and hope to those in their care. **E te Ariki ...**





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## Other prayers for Prisoners

Merciful and loving God,

You are the source of all freedom and new beginnings, and through Your grace, we are offered release from all that holds us captive. As we gather in this Year of Jubilee, we remember the call to mercy, restoration, and justice for all Your children. We lift up to You, especially, those who are imprisoned.

We pray for those who are held in the chains of guilt, despair, and isolation. Shine Your light into their darkness, Lord, so that they may encounter Your boundless mercy. Grant them the courage to seek reconciliation, to embrace repentance, and to allow themselves to be transformed by Your love.

For families separated by walls and circumstances, we ask Your healing presence. Bring peace and strength to those who wait, worry, and mourn. May they find comfort in knowing that no heart is beyond Your reach, and may they be uplifted by Your promise of renewal.

We pray for all those who work within the justice system—officers, chaplains, volunteers, and advocates. May they be empowered to show compassion and fairness in their service, bringing hope and dignity to all those in their care. Guide them, Lord, to see each person as Your beloved child, worthy of forgiveness and a fresh start.

Lord, in this Jubilee, remind us that true justice is born from love and that Your mercy is wider than our understanding. Help us to embrace one another with open hearts, seeing past mistakes to the person You created and love. May we, too, be set free from prejudice, indifference, and the barriers that divide us.

As we celebrate this Year of Jubilee, renew in us a spirit of solidarity, reconciliation, and peace. Empower us to work for a world where freedom and dignity are upheld for every person, especially those who are most vulnerable. May we live as people transformed by Your mercy, and may we reflect Your grace in our actions toward all we meet.

We ask this through Christ, our Redeemer, who has broken every chain and brought life to the world.

**Amen.**

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### Teach Me, Jesus (An Inmate's Prayer)

Teach me, Jesus, to love all people, both friend and enemy; teach me how to wish them well.  
Teach me how to be an instrument of Your peace.





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Look at my heart, remove from my heart all bitterness and hatred.  
Fill my heart with a great love for You, and for my neighbour.

Bless the chaplain, that they will be a light to those of us who are in darkness, a safe guide on the path that leads to You.

Bless those who are in charge of this prison and those who work here.

Help them to do their duties according to Your holy will, for the physical and spiritual well-being of all who are confined here.

Bless my fellow prisoners.

Help us to see and acknowledge all the errors we have made in life, and help us to return to our Father's house.

Bless our families and all who seek You, Lord.

Keep us, show Your face to us, and have mercy on us.

Turn Your face to us and give us Your peace.

**Amen.**

From <https://www.catholicprisonministries.org/blog/teach-me-jesus-an-inmates-prayer>

## Reflection on the Jubilee of Prisoners

*Read the following reflection out during Mass/within your faith communities over the week of 13 – 14 December 2025, or distribute for personal reflection.*

Over the years, I've frequently felt drawn to prison chaplaincy through unexpected conversations, notices in parish bulletins, and announcements at Mass. Each time, I found a reason to delay my response, believing I was called to other areas. This reflection isn't a recruitment drive for new volunteers but a commentary on my own slow response to being present and walking alongside those in prison as a chaplain. Serving in a prison has been a gift from God to me and to the paihere (prisoners or ex-prisoners).

In my early days as a chaplain, a paihere expressed deep gratitude for my listening. He had never shared many of his experiences before and had never truly been heard. Being vulnerable and discussing physical and sexual abuse, common among those in prison, can be isolating and lonely. Speaking out is a courageous act.

My days typically begin with a drive from Palmerston North to Whanganui, preparing for the day. Sometimes, they end in the car park or dealing with incidents after picking up my keys and radio. Most of my time is spent working with volunteers, having one-on-one conversations, and





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leading services. These services may not resemble our traditional liturgies but are filled with meaning and questions.

Prisoners attend services for various reasons—loneliness, guilt, or a search for deeper meaning. Recognizing that their choice to attend can be an act of worship and faith is crucial. My role focuses on faithfulness and unity, as described in Ephesians 1:10. Communion is a slow journey and a joyful destiny, and I strive to highlight God’s plan for unity in all relationships and activities within the Chaplaincy team and the wider prison community.

Chaplaincy can be challenging but immensely rewarding. For those called to this role, it offers profound moments of connection and support, bringing joy through the understanding that God is present in this liminal space where significant change occurs daily.

*Sean Ryan*  
*Whanganui Prison Chaplain*

## Suggestions for celebrating this Jubilee in your communities

- **Use the provided prayers of the faithful or write your own**  
Include prayers for prisoners, their families, and victims of crime, asking for mercy, healing, and opportunities for transformation.
- **Share a reflection on forgiveness and redemption**  
Read the provided reflection during Mass or gatherings focused on God’s mercy, the possibility of redemption, and the call to compassion for those who are incarcerated.
- **Organise a donation drive for re-entry essentials**  
Collect items such as hygiene products, clothing, and books to support recently released prisoners as they reintegrate into society.
- **Invite a speaker from prison ministry**  
Host a talk by someone involved in prison ministry to share insights, testimonies, and ways the parish can support restorative justice.
- **Organise a drive for books or religious materials**  
Collect religious items such as rosary beads, Bibles, and spiritual reading materials to donate to local correctional facilities.

