



'Do you see me, or are you just looking?'

Prisoners' Sunday
20th November 2011

As President of the Prison Advice & Care Trust (**pact**), I am writing to ask you to join with me in supporting Prisoners' Sunday this year. On the third Sunday in November, we traditionally remember and pray for those who are in prison or whose lives are affected by imprisonment – prisoners' children, families and friends.

Their needs are great and growing, especially in this time when the stresses and strains on our society are particularly acute. Inevitably when times are hard we are properly concerned to look after those closest to us, but in consequence of this may be tempted to turn away from the needs of others.

This year's theme, 'Do you see me, or are you just looking?', reminds us that noticing the plight and distress of others requires more than a passing glance. No doubt many who passed by the place of Jesus' execution saw only the distressingly familiar scene of a cruel death. Today we may be tempted to look, and then look away, but however uncomfortable we may feel, the Gospel calls us to maintain our concern for the stranger and the prisoner with a view to genuinely seeing in their lives a humanity like our own; a humanity that Christ shared with us and so redeemed for us.

Through its work in prisons and communities up and down the country, **pact** is helping to address the needs of prisoners and their families which are easily overlooked. It cares for those who feel lonely, isolated and abandoned; above all, it carries a message of hope for a fresh start and a new beginning.

On Prisoners' Sunday, I would be most grateful if you could join with me in prayer for all prisoners and their families. I also ask you to give generously in support of **pact's** work so that it can continue to carry out its valuable mission during the year ahead.

Yours sincerely

+ Vincent Nichols

✠ Vincent Nichols
Archbishop of Westminster
President of **pact**