



“

I was in prison
and you
visited me.

”

Matthew 25:36

IHI Prisoners' Sunday

11 October 2026

What is Prisoners' Sunday?

Prisoners' Sunday is the national Catholic day of prayer and action for prisoners and their families.

It is a moment to reflect on the lives of those affected by imprisonment — those in prison, their children and families, and all who struggle with the lasting impact of justice system involvement. It is an invitation to respond with compassion, prayer and practical support.

Why this matters

Prisons are in crisis. Too many people are held in overcrowded, unsafe conditions. Too many leave prison with no home, no income and no support.

Behind every person in prison is a family — often children — trying to cope, many struggling to get by.

Pact is there for all those in need. Last year, with the help of parishes like yours:

- We supported **over 485,000 prison visits**, including nearly 100,000 for children and young people
- We awarded **almost 600 emergency grants** to families in crisis
- We worked in **over half the prisons in England and Wales**, supporting prisoners to maintain or rebuild the relationships that provide the foundation for lasting change.

We offer hope, dignity and the chance of a fresh start.

Message from Archbishop Richard Moth

As President of Pact, the national Catholic charity for people in prison and their families, I invite you to join with me in supporting this year's Prisoners' Sunday, on 11th October. Pact supports people throughout England and Wales, whatever their beliefs. Pact's work is varied and includes care for children whose parents have been sent to prison, as well as offering practical assistance to people leaving prison, who are trying to make a fresh start and put their past behind them.

Pact workers can be found inside many prisons, courts and in the community. An important element of Pact's work is to support prisoners and their families to maintain their family bonds, recognising the anxiety, isolation and perhaps hardship they may be experiencing while a loved one is

in prison. This work has been hugely influential, and it is now recognised that it is one of the most effective means to reduce the risk of re-offending by former prisoners.

In the gospel, Jesus reminds us to show concern for prisoners: 'I was in prison and you visited me'. Pact continues to rely strongly on the support of Catholic parishioners. I encourage you to play your part in its important work, whether through prayer, volunteering or financial support, putting the values of the Gospel into action, and working for the common good of all.



Archbishop Richard Moth

What we are asking you to do

Pray

- Include prayers for prisoners and their families in your Mass
- Use the bidding prayers and resources provided

Act

- **Encourage parishioners to volunteer with Pact**, supporting prisoners and their families in courts, prisons and communities, and helping to bring hope where it is most needed

Give

- Hold a **second collection for Pact** on Prisoners' Sunday (or a suitable date). We have provided Gift Aid envelopes for this purpose, and ask you to enable donations via your **Dona machine** where possible



Bidding prayers for Prisoners' Sunday

God of mercy,

you offer freedom to all people.

We pray for those in prison

and for their children and families.

Break the bonds of fear and isolation.

May your love bring hope and new life.

Lord God,

we commend to you all who work and volunteer

in courts, prisons and communities.

Be with them in their service,

and help us to share your love more widely.

If your parish is unable to mark Prisoners' Sunday on 11 October, we warmly encourage you to choose another Sunday that fits your parish calendar.



The day I didn't come home: Faye's story

In the morning I saw my daughter off to her first day at secondary school. That afternoon, I was sentenced to prison. I had managed to get my court hearing delayed so I could be there for that important moment, and my son's seventh birthday the day before. But after that, I didn't walk through my front door for almost two years.

My children are my world. Like any parent, the first thought in my mind when I entered prison wasn't about me, but about them. How would they cope? Calling them to tell them I wouldn't be home that night was one of the hardest things I've done.

“My children are my world.”

The children came to visit me for the first time soon after I arrived in prison. I wasn't sure whether it was the right thing to do, so I decided to let them come and then decide what they wanted. They chose to come back every single week for the whole 22 months I was inside. I always told them that if they wanted to spend time with friends or do something else, they should. But they never wanted to miss a visit.

Those visits became our lifeline. The support provided by Pact made it possible for us to stay connected as a family. Through visits, family days and video calls, I was able to remain their mum, even from behind prison walls. One of my happiest memories is from

a Pact family day. My son and I lay on the grass together looking up at the clouds, making shapes and laughing – something we used to do before I went to prison. Even now, he says he'll never forget that day.

“Pact's support meant I was able to remain their mum, even from behind prison walls.”

Many women I met in prison faced much more complicated situations than me. I met women who had experienced domestic abuse, or who shoplifted for food for their children which led to their imprisonment, and whose children had been taken into care because there was nobody able to look after them. I saw Pact helping mums maintain contact with their children, liaising with social services, and generally acting as a bridge between women and their families.

After seeing Pact's work, a friend and I decided to raise money for them while we were still in prison. We rowed the equivalent distance of the Channel so that Pact could buy toys, games and activities for children visiting. Later, some of the money also helped provide Christmas gifts for children from their mothers in prison. Those gifts let mums tell their children, “I'm thinking about you. I love you.”

“Your children are doing your sentence with you.”

I still carry guilt about the time I missed with my children. I still feel as though I'm trying to make up for that lost time. And I still wonder about the impact it may have had on them. People often think that when someone goes to prison, the punishment is theirs alone. But in many ways, your children are doing your sentence with you.

That's why Pact's work is so important. It helps children stay connected to the people they love. It helps parents remain parents. And when families are facing one of the hardest periods of their lives, it provides the practical and emotional support that can make all the difference.



About Pact

Pact is the national Catholic prison charity. We support prisoners, people with convictions, and their families. Rooted in Catholic Social Teaching, we believe in the dignity of every person and in the possibility of a fresh start.



Further resources and support

For resources, including prayers, a homily guide and parish materials:

prisonadvice.org.uk/prisoners-sunday

For support or questions:

parish.action@prisonadvice.org.uk
07710 170 942

How to give

Your parish's support helps us to continue our vital work and reach more people in need.

Online: via QR code / the Pact website

Bank transfer:

Prison Advice and Care Trust (Pact)

NatWest

Sort code: 60 00 01

Account number: 49089307

By cheque:

Please return in the attached prepaid envelope. You can also enclose your parishioners' Gift Aid envelopes.

For all methods, please use 'PS26' and your postcode as a payment reference.

Please donate now

Your parish's support helps us to continue our vital work and reach more people in need.



PACT (Prison Advice and Care Trust)
5th Floor, R+ Building,
2 Blagrove Street, Reading RG1 1AZ
Charity no. 219278 | Company no. 356443



@PactFaithAction



#PrisonersSunday

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