



Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Green Bay

10 Steps to Begin Jail Ministry

1. Prayer and Discernment
2. Notify your priest or pastoral leader of your desire to serve in this capacity
3. Formation/Training
 - a. See options under “Resources for Training”
4. Figure out where and how you want to serve.
 - a. Local county jail or prison? (note: a jail is very different from a prison) 2: there will likely be differences between individual jails and individual prisons)
 - b. Do you want to accompany those in jail/prison, or help coordinate re-entry efforts to help those who have gotten out of prison?
5. Contact the jail/prison to see if there is a chaplain. If there is, ask the chaplain what spiritual activities are already going on and what opportunities there are to serve.
6. Fill out necessary paperwork needed to volunteer at local jail OR learn how you can get involved with re-entry efforts. These will likely involve background checks and orientation.
7. Shadow an Experienced Jail Minister to learn how to operate in the facility you will be ministering in so that you are not doing it alone until you are comfortable.
8. Continue to pray about how you want to serve:
 - a. Bible studies/teaching a class
 - b. Mentoring
 - c. If you are a priest, celebrating Mass, hearing confessions, or making pastoral visits
 - d. After-care ministry and helping with re-entry
 - e. If you are a deacon, doing Liturgy of the Word with Communion.
9. Prepare and plan for content – what book of the Bible to go through, series to watch, etc. then do solid research to prepare. However, be open to the Holy Spirit. If the inmate wants to talk about something different, or if you feel that it is better to listen and converse, do so. Listen to the inmate's concerns and suggest specific parables, NT book or Genesis 1 to help them in their situation.
10. Schedule a time with the chaplain for regular visits and be consistent. (e.g., every Tuesday at 6:00pm or every other Thursday from 6:30 to 7:30, etc.)

Resources for Training

VIRTUS and Diocesan background volunteer application

Ellen Mommaerts and Cathy Kulibert in-person training

Jail & Prison Ministry 101: <https://www.catholicprisonministries.org/resources#featured>

Foundational Training for Ministry: Catholic Prison Ministries Coalition:

<https://www.catholicprisonministries.org/foundational-training> Catholic Charities will help subsidize the cost associated with this program!

One Hour Video Training - Messengers of Hope: Dismas Ministry <https://dismasministry.org/moh/>

Organizations

Dismas Ministry: <https://dismasministry.org/>

Catholic Prison Ministries Coalition: <https://www.catholicprisonministries.org/>

Prison Fellowship: <https://www.prisonfellowship.org/>

Prison Aftercare Network (NEW): <https://sites.google.com/view/prisonaftercarenetwork/home?authuser=0>

St. Vincent DePaul Society Re-Entry: <https://www.svdpgb.org/advocacy-and-education>

Fox Valley Jail Ministries: <https://www.fvjm.org/>

If you have any questions or want to learn more, please contact Lucas Holt, Human Dignity and Life Advocate at Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Green Bay: 920-272-8321 or lholt@gbdioc.org