

# CRIMINAL JUSTICE MINISTRY DIOCESE OF BEAUMONT



September 2021

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Sept 2 Prayer Vigil 1pm

Sept 8 Execution of John Ramirez

Sept 28 Execution of Rick Allen Rhoades

## *Unit Updates*

These last several months, the main priority has been to bring what TDCJ calls primary services in the units. For us, that's the Mass and Communion services. At this time, we have primary services in 8 out of 10 units and working on the other other 2 as well as the Federal Units. Renew continues at Polunsky, Gib Lewis, and Stiles. RCIA is off and on depending on the unit and available staff.

Retreats will most likely be postponed for a while longer. We are still limited to 2 volunteers for an hour at a time. I ask you to keep

the staff and correctional officers in prayer. Covid is messy and challenging for us all! We remember all those who have suffered illness or loss from Covid and ask God to continue to protect us all in this time of uncertainty.

Interested in how many Covid cases are reported at each unit? Click [here](#) to see the TDCJ Covid Dashboard. You can choose to view on desktop or mobile.

*Trust the past to the mercy of God, the present to His love, and the future to God's Providence.  
~St. Augustine*

## EXECUTIONS

Two inmates are scheduled to be executed in Texas this month. John Ramirez on September 8<sup>th</sup> and Rick Rhoades on September 28<sup>th</sup>. Let us continue to pray for an end of the death penalty and for all victims of crime.

## FIRST FRIDAY PRAYER VIGILS

On the First Friday of each month, Catholic Mobilizing Network holds a Virtual Prayer Vigil to lament upcoming executions and bear witness to the inviolable dignity of all human life.

These virtual spaces offer a place to pray together as a faith community in response to the injustice of the death penalty. They include time for guided prayer, petitions, Scripture reflections, and contemplative silence. The vigils feature the voices of Catholic bishops, Church leaders, and allies across the death penalty abolition movement.

**The next First Friday Prayer Vigil is scheduled for Friday, September 3<sup>rd</sup> at 2 p.m. EDT / 1 p.m. CST. Please RSVP [here](#) to attend.**

## VOLUNTEER STATUS FOR TDCJ PRISONS

During the Covid restrictions, you can renew online. If you have not completed a training online before, you'll need to choose "Register" to create a profile here

[https://www.tdcj.texas.gov/php/prod/volunteer\\_training/](https://www.tdcj.texas.gov/php/prod/volunteer_training/)

If you have questions, call me or the TDCJ Volunteer Services at (936) 437-3035. When you renew, please send me your renewal date.

## VOLUNTEERS FOR THE FEDERAL UNIT

Questions? Comments?

Want to share anything in the upcoming newsletters?

Contact:

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The Federal Correction Complex here in Beaumont is opening up for ministry once again. This year we will rely on volunteers rather than having a contract approach. If you're interested, the unit will have a volunteer training that you'll need to take in order to minister. The next scheduled training will be on **Saturday, September 18<sup>th</sup>** beginning at 9am. Please contact the office if you're interested so I can submit your name and share more information. Volunteers/priests/deacons can facilitate Bible studies, RCIA, Rosary, Divine Mercy, offer Mass or communion service. Please take this to prayer. If you'd like to talk more about this opportunity, contact the criminal justice office and we can set up a meeting.



## ALPHA VOLUNTEERS

A big thank you to all who attended the Zoom session with Gregg Bergerson, director of Alpha in Houston. Feel free to contact Gregg at [greggbergersen@alphausa.org](mailto:greggbergersen@alphausa.org) if you have any questions.

## Prayer to End the Death Penalty

Merciful Father, we ask your blessing on all we do to build a culture of life. Hear our prayers for those impacted by the death penalty.

- + We pray for all people, that their lives and dignity as children of a loving God may be respected and protected in all stages and circumstances.
- + We pray for victims of violence and their families, that they may experience our love and support and find comfort in your compassion and in the promise of eternal life.
- + We pray for those on death row, that their lives may be spared, that the innocent may be freed and that the guilty may come to acknowledge their faults and seek reconciliation with you.
- + We pray for the families of those who are facing execution, that they may be comforted by your love and compassion.
- + We pray for civic leaders, that they may commit themselves to respecting every human life and ending the use of the death penalty in our land.

Compassionate Father, give us wisdom and hearts filled with your love. Guide us as we work to end the use of the death penalty and to build a society that truly chooses life in all situations.

We ask this Father through your Son Jesus Christ who lives and reigns with the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever. Amen