



Are your parish's social ministry efforts lagging due to the pandemic? Could you use an energy boost to re-ignite your passion for the social justice work of the Church?

Then join Catholics from around the diocese on **Thursday May 6** for the **annual diocesan social ministry conference**, happening on Zoom— so you don't even have to travel to attend.

- ♥ Reflect on Pope Francis' recent encyclical, Fratelli Tutti: On Fraternity and Social Friendship.
- ♥ Connect with other social ministry volunteers and with great Catholic organizations to strengthen your parish ministries
- ♥ Join in interactive workshops on issues of Catholic Social Teaching like: Racism—Life Issues—Dignity of Work—Creation Care.
- ♥ Learn how to make your Zoom meetings more fun and energizing!

The event is free, but registration is required. [Click here to register.](#)

“In prison and you visited Me...” Solidarity with our Incarcerated Sisters and Brothers

During this joyful season of Easter, we celebrate that in Christ, sin and death do not have the final victory. Despite our own sins and failings, Christ loves us and brought that love to the cross and grave to redeem us. We now share in the hope and life His Resurrection gives us. We are called to extend forgiveness, redemption, and love to everyone, especially the marginalized, the people who are His presence in the world.

Our Diocesan Public Policy Committee is asking parishes to learn about and speak up for the God-given human dignity of our sisters and brothers who are incarcerated. Ask your parish staff to print the bulletin notices and use the prayers at Mass found in the packet at www.dor.org.



We believe in redemption... **PAROLE REFORM IN NEW YORK STATE**

In New York State, even as the overall prison population has declined, the percentage of older incarcerated people has increased. One in four are 50 or older. The vast majority are Black and brown people, highlighting the racial bias in the system. Research shows older people, especially those who were convicted of serious crimes, have the lowest reincarceration rates of any age cohort, posing little to no risk.

We are asking for your support of two bills that would give more prisoners the opportunity to be released on parole. The **Fair and Timely Parole** (S.1415/A.4231) bill would mandate that prisoners who've served their terms be granted parole unless they pose a clear risk of violating the law. It would give people a chance to be assessed for parole on the reforms they've made to their characters, and not just on their past crimes. The **Elder Parole** (S.15/A.3475) bill allows people in New York State prison aged 55 and older who have served 15 or more consecutive years to be considered for parole, regardless of their crime or sentence.

Please call your Assembly member and State Senator and ask them to support these bills:
State Senate switchboard: **(518) 455-2800** State Assembly switchboard: **(518) 455-4100**

You can also join other advocates from around the state in a virtual lobby day for people of faith in support of these bills on TUESDAY APRIL 13. Register [here](#).

VICTORY! **HALT Solitary bill becomes law!**

Thank you for advocating for reform of solitary confinement in NYS. The bill was passed by the legislature and signed by the governor!

"For generations far too many men, women, and even teens have been left to suffer for months and years in solitary confinement, an experience that amounts to torture.

The extreme isolation only serves to exacerbate the root causes that lead to prison disciplinary issues to begin with, such as anger, anti-social behavior, or mental illness, putting public safety at further risk when incarcerated individuals are released back into society, sometimes directly from a solitary confinement cell."

[Statement from the NYS Catholic Conference](#)

VICTORY! **Nourish NY continues!**

Nourish NY has become a permanent program in the NYS Dept. of Agriculture, and will receive \$25M in funding this quarter and an additional \$25M for the upcoming budget year. Thank you for advocating for this program to provide funding to food banks to purchase surplus food from NYS farmers. It's a win-win all around!



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