

### "Stewards of Forgiveness" SR RACHEL FLEURANT MGL

**Sr Rachel Fleurant MGL** is a chaplain at the Youth Justice Centre in Parkville, where she spends time with youth and young adults, offering practical, emotional and spiritual support. She describes her ministry as a ministry of presence, and says the experience of listening to the youth (some as young as 12 years old) has deeply changed her and challenged her in how she lives out her faith.



#### POINTS FOR REFLECTION/DISCUSSION:

1. Society largely tells us that the incarcerated deserve the punishment for their crimes. Yet Jesus tells us to look upon the lowly with eyes of compassion to see the face of God through these very people. *"Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me."* (Matthew 25:40)  
How does this challenge your perception of crime and punishment?
2. Prison chaplaincy is not very well-known to many Australians, and yet it is a vital part of the Church's mission to bring the face of Christ to every prisoner.\* Whilst it is not easy to enter a prison without proper permissions/an invitation from a prisoner, can you think of other ways with which you can 'visit the imprisoned'?
3. In describing her ministry, she says some of the prisoners are 'locked up in a place of guilt or unforgiveness toward themselves'. We too have felt this way at times. What are ways that can help us emerge from this place?
4. Reflect on the words of this prayer from St Teresa of Avila:  
*Christ has no body but yours  
No hands, no feet on earth but yours,  
Yours are the eyes with which he looks  
Compassion on this world,  
Yours are the feet with which he walks to do good,  
Yours are the hands with which he blesses the world,  
Yours are the hands, yours are the feet, yours are the eyes, you are his body.  
Christ has no body now but yours,  
No hands, no feet on earth but yours,  
Yours are the eyes with which he looks compassion on this world.  
Christ has no body now on earth but yours.*

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\*Australian Catholic Bishops Conference (2011), Building Bridges, Not Walls: Prisons and the Justice System, available at [www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au/files/SJSandresources/2011-SJS\\_summary.pdf](http://www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au/files/SJSandresources/2011-SJS_summary.pdf), p3.