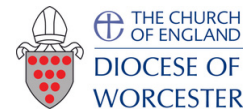


Worcester Diocesan Criminal Justice Affairs Group

Prayer Guide - March 2026



The Diocese of Worcester hosts a group whose focus is criminal justice and offers a faith perspective on criminal justice matters & raises awareness of the issues.

CJAG offers this bi-monthly prayer guide which we hope will be useful for personal & intercessory prayer in local parishes. Do pass it on to those who would be interested and encourage its usage. Welcome to the CJAG Prayer Guide for March.

Those being supervised in the community

The probation service, re-established in 2021 with origins in the Church of England Temperance Society in the 19th century, has experienced multiple structural changes, including nationalisation, partial privatisation, and then renationalisation. These shifts have challenged staff, affecting mental health and job performance, as highlighted by the Public Accounts Committee. With a shortage of nearly 10,000 full-time staff and new policies increasing community sentencing to reduce the prison population, public safety is at risk.

The service supervises individuals under court orders and post-release, assesses risks for courts, and manages sentences. Offending behaviour is shaped by a complex combination of risk factors, including personal characteristics; environmental conditions such as poverty, education, housing, substance misuse, & mental health; and social influences. Effective crime prevention and rehabilitation therefore requires collaboration with external support services, which are often inadequate for offenders' needs. Reconviction rates are high (42% within one year of release), often due to lack of such support. Managing change requires time to work directly with people under supervision, developing a relationship that encourages & supports their desire to lead a fulfilled life without offending.

Heavenly Father, We lift up to you all who are under supervision in the community today. You know their stories, their struggles, and their hopes for a better future. Grant them strength to make wise choices, courage to face challenges, and patience to walk the path of change. May all those working alongside them in the probation service and supporting services guide them with compassion, fairness, wisdom, empathy, and perseverance. May our communities be places of second chances, where grace is stronger than judgment. Protect them from discouragement, and help them see their worth beyond past mistakes. May they find healing, purpose, and the confidence to rebuild their lives. Amen

Especially we pray for:

- All those engaged in a life of crime who see offending as the only route to surviving or living within a society that values material success above all else
- Those subject to supervision in the community that they would desire change, engage with and take opportunities that prevent reoffending
- Those released from prison on licence particularly those in constant fear of being recalled
- Resources and services being available to support offenders to address their problems and for the staff providing them
- Offenders who feel unsupported in the areas that would prevent them reoffending eg accommodation, substance misuse and mental ill health
- Meaningful engagement with offenders by all involved and the fulfilment of hope into reality
- The well-being of overloaded and stressed probation staff