

COMPASSION MINISTRY RESOURCES

Prayer Guide for Starting a Compassion Ministry

*Seven days of prayer for churches, nonprofits, leaders,
volunteers, and teams preparing to serve with compassion*

Pray before you plan. Listen before you launch.



Purpose of This Resource

This prayer guide is designed for anyone who is sensing a call to begin or strengthen a compassion ministry. It can be used by churches, small groups, nonprofits, recovery ministries, reentry ministries, food ministries, mentoring programs, education ministries, resource closets, senior adult outreach, family support ministries, and other efforts that offer practical help and gospel-centered care.

Before a ministry needs a name, a logo, a budget, or a program calendar, it needs prayer. Prayer helps leaders slow down, listen well, depend on God, and serve people with humility instead of assumption. This guide invites your team to pray before you plan, listen before you launch, and seek God before you build.

How to Use This Guide

- ☐ Use one prayer focus each day for seven days.
- ☐ Invite a small prayer team to pray through the same daily focus.
- ☐ Write down names, needs, questions, and next steps that come to mind as you pray.
- ☐ Ask God to reveal real needs, not just assumed needs.
- ☐ Pray for the people you may serve before you design the ministry that will serve them.
- ☐ End the week by choosing one faithful next step.

A Starting Prayer

Lord, give us eyes to see people as You see them. Give us wisdom to understand real needs, humility to listen well, courage to serve faithfully, and discernment to move at Your pace. Let this ministry be rooted in love, guided by truth, protected by wise boundaries, and used to bring hope to people who need practical help and the compassion of Christ.

DAY 1

Pray for God to Confirm the Calling

“Commit your work to the Lord, and your plans will be established.” — Proverbs 16:3

Prayer Focus

Ask God to clarify whether this ministry idea is truly a calling, a burden to pray over, a need to share with others, or a step that should be developed slowly over time.

Pray

- Pray for wisdom to recognize God’s direction.
- Pray for patience not to rush ahead of His timing.
- Pray for humility to lay down any idea that is not His best.
- Pray for courage to obey if He is calling you to begin.

Reflection Question

What burden, need, or group of people keeps coming back to your heart?

Notes / Names / Next Steps

DAY 2

Pray for Eyes to See the Hurting

“When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.” — Matthew 9:36

Prayer Focus

Ask God to help you see people clearly—not as projects, statistics, problems, or interruptions, but as men, women, children, families, and neighbors made in His image.

Pray

- Pray for compassion that notices people who are often overlooked.
- Pray for sensitivity toward those living with poverty, trauma, addiction, loneliness, grief, disability, crisis, or instability.
- Pray that your ministry will protect dignity and never use people’s pain for promotion.
- Pray for the ability to listen before trying to fix.

Reflection Question

Who in your community may be hurting quietly or falling through the gaps?

Notes / Names / Next Steps

DAY 3

Pray for Humility and Wisdom

“If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him.” — James 1:5

Prayer Focus

Compassion ministry requires more than a tender heart. It also requires wisdom, discernment, healthy boundaries, and teachability. Ask God to shape the heart of every leader and volunteer.

Pray

- Pray for humility to learn from others already serving well.
- Pray for wisdom to know what your ministry should do and what it should not do.
- Pray for protection from pride, rescuing, control, fear, or discouragement.
- Pray for leaders who can love people deeply while still leading with clarity.

Reflection Question

Where do you need more wisdom before moving forward?

Notes / Names / Next Steps

DAY 4

Pray for the Right People to Serve With You

“Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil.” — Ecclesiastes 4:9

Prayer Focus

A compassion ministry should not rest on one person alone. Ask God to bring people with the right hearts, gifts, maturity, steadiness, and willingness to serve together.

Pray

- Pray for a prayer team before you build a program team.
- Pray for volunteers who are dependable, humble, compassionate, and willing to be trained.
- Pray for leaders with different gifts: organization, teaching, mentoring, hospitality, administration, prayer, safety, community connections, and encouragement.
- Pray for unity and clear communication among those who serve.

Reflection Question

Who might God be preparing to serve with you?

Notes / Names / Next Steps

DAY 5

Pray for Community Partnerships

“Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.” — Philippians 2:4

Prayer Focus

Compassion ministry is stronger when leaders understand what is already available and partner wisely instead of duplicating efforts. Pray for open doors and trusted relationships in your community.

Pray

- Pray for churches, nonprofits, schools, agencies, businesses, recovery groups, and community leaders who may become partners.
- Pray for honest conversations about real needs and existing gaps.
- Pray for favor with people who understand the population you hope to serve.
- Pray for a spirit of cooperation rather than competition.

Reflection Question

Who should you listen to before launching this ministry?

Notes / Names / Next Steps

DAY 6

Pray for Wise Boundaries and Safety

“The prudent sees danger and hides himself, but the simple go on and suffer for it.” — Proverbs 22:3

Prayer Focus

Healthy compassion ministry must be safe for participants, volunteers, leaders, churches, and families. Pray for wisdom to create boundaries that protect people and allow the ministry to remain faithful over time.

Pray

- Pray for clear expectations for volunteers and participants.
- Pray for wisdom about confidentiality, transportation, money, social media, crisis situations, and one-on-one care.
- Pray for discernment to know when to help directly and when to refer to a professional or partner agency.
- Pray for courage to say no when no is the most loving and responsible answer.

Reflection Question

What safety or boundary questions need to be answered before people are served?

Notes / Names / Next Steps

DAY 7

Pray for the People God Will Send

"Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ." — Galatians 6:2

Prayer Focus

Before you know names or faces, God already knows the people who may one day walk through the door. Pray for them with dignity, tenderness, and hope.

Pray

- Pray for those who need practical help, encouragement, direction, healing, friendship, or a safe place to begin again.
- Pray that people will be met with dignity instead of shame.
- Pray that the ministry will offer truth without harshness and grace without confusion.
- Pray that every act of service will point people toward hope and the love of Christ.

Reflection Question

What kind of welcome do you want people to experience when they encounter this ministry?

Notes / Names / Next Steps

After the Seven Days: Choose One Faithful Next Step

After a week of prayer, do not feel pressured to have every detail solved. Compassion ministry often begins with a small obedient step. Use the space below to record what you sensed, learned, or need to explore next.

What needs became clearer during this week of prayer?

Who do we feel called to serve first?

Who should we talk with or listen to next?

What is one small step we can take in the next 30 days?

Final Encouragement

A compassion ministry does not have to begin big to begin faithfully. Start with prayer. Listen well. Gather wise people. Serve with humility. Let God shape the ministry one obedient step at a time.

When you are ready to move from prayer to planning, continue with the community and church assessments and the Compassion Ministry Planning Guide.