

## **If you would like to write a note, here's some helpful information:**

- Cards and letters provide an important means of support for detained immigrants who may have little contact with the outside world. Your role is one of friendship and goodwill.
- Write messages of hope and encouragement. Many detainees are trying to learn English, and if they can't read it, they'll get someone to help teach them. Simple English. Is best
- Once your note is written, sign your first name only, if you would like.
- Put each individual card or letter in an envelope. Make a clear division of cards in different languages. No mailing address needed. We will provide that.
- Add a stamp to each envelope. Drop off your letters in stamped, blank envelopes in the Parish Office mail slot with a note to Caitlyn with your name on it (so we can keep track of who has written).
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## **Other guidelines to remember when writing:**

- Know your boundaries. We advise you to not to share your personal phone number, mailing address or pictures of yourself.
- It is important to give people hope but not make false promises. Please be especially careful not to give any false hopes about the possible outcome of their immigration case.
- Keep your promises. Don't make commitments you can't keep.
- Do not romanticize detained immigrants or victimize them to the point of taking power away from them. Many have been successful business people, survived horrendous situations due to their own resourcefulness, traveled the world to arrive here, learned to speak several languages, attended university, been leaders in their communities of origin.
- Keep in mind your letters may be read by a guard. Be mindful and conscientious.
- Be sensitive to the fact that the person reading your letter may infer messages different from what you mean due to their current circumstances. Loneliness, power and language differences could play into misunderstandings or feelings of being more intimately connected to you than you intend.
- It is not appropriate to try to convert anyone to your religion. Some people may have faced death due to their beliefs, making it even more inappropriate to try to convince them to adopt your religious beliefs. People detained at Stewart come from different faith backgrounds and it is important to respect their beliefs.
- Also, keep in mind that we fully support people with different gender identities. Some people have fled their country because of attempts on their life due to their sexual orientation or gender identity .
- If you'd like for them to write back to you, (many like to!), include a stamped envelope with your name and the St. Martin's address (5220 Clemson Ave, Columbia, SC 29206). Caitlyn will rerouted it to you.