

# STANDING FOR LIFE

## Our Catholic Faith and the Death Penalty



### 1999

**"I renew the appeal... for a consensus to end the death penalty, which is both cruel and unnecessary."**

-Saint John Paul II, Papal Mass, St. Louis, Missouri



### 2011

**"I draw the attention of society's leaders to the need to make every effort to eliminate the death penalty"**

-Pope Benedict XVI, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Africae Munus*



### 2017

**"The stark reality is that capital punishment fails to bring back life that has been lost. It does not provide healing, reconciliation or even peace to those impacted."**

-Archbishop Gregory M. Aymond of New Orleans, Statement of the Louisiana Conference of Catholic Bishops

## 2018: CATECHISM REVISED

"The Church teaches, in the light of the Gospel, that 'the death penalty is inadmissible because it is an attack on the inviolability and dignity of the person,' and she works with determination for its abolition worldwide." (*Catholic Catechism 2267*)



**CATHOLIC  
MOBILIZING  
NETWORK**

**ENDING THE DEATH PENALTY  
PROMOTING RESTORATIVE JUSTICE**

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# EXECUTE JUSTICE NOT PEOPLE

[www.LARepeal.org](http://www.LARepeal.org)



The movement to abolish the death penalty needs the religious community because **the heart of religion is about compassion, human rights, and the indivisible dignity of each human person made in the image of God.**

-Sister Helen Prejean, author of *Dead Man Walking*

## INEQUITY IN SENTENCING

Over 99% of persons sentenced to death are **men**; of the 65 people currently sitting on Louisiana's death row, only ONE is female. Additionally, while white persons make up 60% of Louisiana's population, **approximately 70% of people on death row are persons of color.**



## RELIGION & MORALITY

Louisiana is one of the most devout states in the Nation, with over 70% of residents saying they believe in a higher power. Many religious leaders have spoken out against the use of the death penalty and their followers are heeding those words, speaking out themselves and joining coalitions like LA REPEAL. The bottom line is that **the death penalty does not reflect the morals and religious values of the people of the state of Louisiana.**

## WRONGFUL CONVICTIONS

Since 1973, 164 people have been released from death row after evidence revealed that they were **not guilty** of the crimes for which they had previously been convicted.

**Louisiana leads the nation per capita in wrongful death sentences with eleven exonerations.** There has been one exoneration for every 2.5 executions in Louisiana over the last fifty years.



## FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

Death penalty repeal would put an end to the costly, years-long litigation that capital cases require, thereby **saving the state of Louisiana upwards of \$12 million per year.**



## SHIFT IN PUBLIC OPINION

Attitudes toward the death penalty have varied greatly since Gallup first polled Americans on the topic nearly 100 years ago. The most recent poll numbers reflect these societal changes, as **the percentage of Americans in favor of the death penalty has dipped to almost it's lowest approval rating in history.** If these trends continue as predicted, **the percentage of U.S. adults who favor the death penalty will drop well below 50% in the very near future.**