

# Voices of Texas

MURDER VICTIMS' FAMILIES SPEAK OUT AGAINST THE DEATH PENALTY

Chris Castillo



Joanna Rankin

## Joanna Rankin, Josephine's daughter

### *Pearland*

On April 2, 1991, my mom and her boyfriend were murdered by my former stepfather who had come into my life when I was 13. After he murdered them, he turned the gun on himself.

Though I didn't have the greatest relationship with my mom, she was liked by everyone. She was friendly and devoted to God, serving as a Eucharistic minister in the Episcopal Church. In the year before her death, she had become a realtor and shortly before her death, she sold her first house.

One of the greatest sorrows of her sudden death is that I was no longer able to reconcile with her in person. It has taken therapy, talking with friends, personal reflection and dialogue with God to get past the anger and hurt of not having resolved the problems within our relationship.

I am opposed to the death penalty because I believe that killing someone is wrong; it doesn't respect life. I believe that murderers should be apprehended and held accountable for their actions, but killing them is treating them without dignity or respect for them as a person, a human being, a creation of God.

I wish people could understand that there is nothing outside of yourself that can bring closure to what happened. No matter what happens to the killer, the person that was murdered is still dead. Nothing will bring them back.

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For more information or to become a member or donor of Murder Victims' Families for Reconciliation: contact Chris Castillo at [ccastillo@mvfr.org](mailto:ccastillo@mvfr.org) or 877-482-9334, or go to: [www.mvfr.org](http://www.mvfr.org)

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## Joanna Rankin, la hija de Josephine

### *Pearland*

El 2 de abril de 1991, mi mamá y su novio fueron asesinados por mi expadraastro, quien llegó a mi vida cuando yo tenía 13 años de edad. Después de matarlos, él solo se disparó y murió.

Aunque yo no tenía la mejor relación con mi madre, ella le caía bien a todo el mundo. Era amigable y estaba dedicada a Dios, sirvió como ministra de la Eucaristía en la Iglesia Episcopal. En el año previo a su muerte, se hizo agente inmobiliario y un poco antes de su muerte había vendido su primera casa.

Una de las mayores penas que me causó su muerte tan inesperada fue que ya no me pude reconciliar con ella personalmente. Para poder superar el enojo y el dolor de no haber resuelto los problemas de nuestra relación, he tenido que ir a un terapeuta, hablar con amigos, hacer reflexiones personales y dialogar con Dios.

Me opongo a la pena de muerte porque creo que es incorrecto matar a otra persona; no muestra respeto por la vida. Creo que se deben detener a los asesinos y que ellos deben hacerse responsables y rendir cuentas por sus acciones pero matarlos es tratarlos sin dignidad, y no respetarlos como personas, como seres humanos, como creaciones de Dios.

Quisiera que la gente entendiera que no hay nada fuera de uno que pueda traernos paz y dar por resuelto lo que sucedió. Independientemente de lo que suceda con el asesino, la persona que fue asesinada seguirá muerta. No hay nada que la pueda hacer volver.

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